



PROJEKT GRAĐANSKIH PRAVA Civil Rights Project

Activity Report – November 2009

Office activities

In the reporting period, CRP Sisak received **320** clients, out of which there were **33** new, both in Sisak and Glina.

Target groups:

NEW clients by status:

<i>Status</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Domicile	18
Refugee	2
Returnee	6
Bosnian Croat	4
Not defined	3
<u>Total</u>	33

NEW clients by reception mode:

<i>Mode</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Office	15
Field	16
Letter	2
<u>Total</u>	33

TYPE OF CASE	NUMBER OF EVENTS
Citizenship	15
Documents and status	42
Ownership	42
Pension and health and social security	48
Housing care	21
Tenancy rights	15
Labour	7
Misdemeanour	6
Family violence	7
Free legal aid	34
Other: other legal issues, information, courses, etc.	149
TOTAL	386

During the reporting period, there were **130** successfully solved request. They mainly relate to documents, establishment of ownership and other cases.

ASSISTANCE

Personal documents issued	10
Appeals/complaints	15
Letters	49
Administrative lawsuits	2
Constitutional complaint	2
ECHR application	1
Requests	40
Submissions – other	28
Legal and psychosocial and other types of counseling	166
Quick advises	75
TOTAL	388

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, not encouraging the return of refugees, 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.

The process of repossession of property, within the areas of special state concern, owned by persons that fled Croatia in 1995, is coming to an end. However, the remaining cases represent serious violation of human rights.

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Unfortunately, the repossession of property cases mainly finished by buying of houses by the State Agency.

However, some owners cannot repossess their property for over 14 years. The owners initiated court proceedings for eviction of temporary users. The courts decide to accept claim, but execution is postponed until accommodation for temporary users is solved. The relevant ministry does not solve the alternative accommodation for years and the court decision cannot be executed within reasonable time. The constitutional complaints of such owners have been rejected, despite of the decision of the European Court of Human Rights, which considers the execution of court decision as a part of the proceedings.

The following case shall demonstrate the above said. In March 2003, CRP filed a lawsuit for repossession of property for the client Z.G. (CRP case no. 5531/9726). During 2003 and 2004, there were 5 court hearings and in January 2005, the Municipal court in Sisak brought a decision, saying that the defendant should evict the property after he gains right to housing care. CRP filed an appeal to the Sisak County court.

In August 2006, the County court brought its decision and returned the case back to the first instance court. There was only one court hearing during 2007. In January 2008, the court brought its decision, saying that the defendant should vacate the house and property within 15 days. However, the defendant filed an appeal. Again, after almost 2 years, in August 2009 the County court accepted the appeal of the defendant and returned the case back to the first instance court. There was one court hearing in December 2009, where nothing new happened, but the Court said that they would again ask the information on housing care of the defendant from the Regional Office for displaced persons and refugees in Petrinja.

CRP filed a request for protection of client's right to trial within reasonable time, as he cannot repossess his property, given for temporary use by the Republic of Croatia, for almost seven (7) years.

Other activities

On 2 November 2009 a dialogue workshop was held in the Citizens' Centre Glina. The workshop was organised to discuss "Quality of life in the post war local community." The quality of life in the post war community has been significantly compromised by slow economic development, poor social capital (population), lack of systematic care and development, as well as lack of motivation of community for change and progress. There was an interesting discussion on reasons (that were mainly external circumstance) for decision on living in Glina. This issue was openly discussed by the domicile population, with refugee experience, of Croatian and Serbian ethnicity, settlers from BiH, as well as settlers from other parts of Croatia, who came to this region after the military action Storm for employment and housing care reasons. There was no conflict during discussions, but mutual tolerance. The local community representatives showed interest for such work and it is a special value of this workshop.

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On 3 November, CRP participated at the meeting of the Town of Sisak and NGOs, with the aim of electing the members of the Council for development of civil society of the Town of Sisak.

On 12 November, CRP organised a workshop on project cycle management in the Citizens' Centre in Glina. The aim of the workshop was to educate women on project cycle in order to be able to work on future projects in Glina. It was established that women in Glina have no basic knowledge about projects, and therefore, the basic information and materials were provided. It was concluded that there was need for another workshop to further develop skills and knowledge on projects.

On 19 November, Paal Nesse of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) from Oslo visited the CRP Sisak. The entire day was used to discuss projects and activities of the CRP. The accent was given to the strategy of the CRP.

On 20 November, Paal Nesse and CRP met with the Mayor of Glina and his assistants. The mayor expressed his appreciation for the work of CRP, as well as for the past NRC's work. However, he said that the Town of Glina has no premises to be provided for the Citizens' Centre.

On 23 November in Zagreb, Paal Nesse and CRP met with Mr. Erol Akdag of the Delegation of the European Commission in Zagreb to discuss present and future CRP projects.

On 23 November in Zagreb, CRP and Paal Nesse met with Mr. Jens Erik Grondahl of the Norwegian embassy to discuss the situation in the Sisak-Moslavina county, CRP's present and future projects and activities, as well as Norwegian future support to CRP.

On 26 November in Glina, CRP participated at the round table organised by the MI NGO of Split on importance of local initiatives for development.

Sisak, 14 December 2009

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