



# PROJEKT GRADANSKIH PRAVA Civil Rights Project

## Activity Report - October 2007

### Office activities

Despite of the moving of the office, in the reporting period, CRP Sisak received **281** clients, out of which there were **32** new clients and **249** old clients revisiting **354** times.

There were **21** court hearings scheduled and attended by the CRP external lawyers before the municipal courts in Sisak, Hrvatska Kostajnica, Glina, Petrinja, Vojnic and Zagreb.

### Target groups

#### *New clients by status:*

<i>Status</i>	<i>Totals</i>
<b>Domicile</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Refugee</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Returnee</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Bosnian Croat</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Not defined</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

#### *New clients by reception mode:*

<i>Mode</i>	<i>Totals</i>
<b>Office</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Power of attorney Kosovo</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Power of attorney Serbia</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

As it can be seen in the above statistics that there are no clients received in the field, CRP finished the OSCE funded project "Mobile team providing free legal aid to returnees, refugees, IDPs, minorities and other socially vulnerable population in the Areas of special state concern". The project was successfully implemented and it showed further need for such activities. Therefore, CRP decided to keep the office in Glina and have a lawyer once a week there. It was decided so because the CRP

lawyer is from Glina and the office is provided free of charge and therefore the expenses for running of such office are minimal. Anyhow, CRP shall try to find other donors to continue with mobile team.

TYPE OF CASE	NUMBER OF EVENTS
Citizenship	15
Documents and status	46
Ownership	120
Pension and health and social security	59
Housing care	35
Tenancy rights	27
Labour	16
Misdemeanour	11
Other	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>365</b>

#### **LEGAL ASSISTANCE**

Appeals/complaints	15
Letters	55
Lawsuits	28
Administrative lawsuit	4
Constitutional complaint	4
Submissions	86
Legal counselling	150
Quick advises	55
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>397</b>

#### **Legal issues**

The rate between the court and administrative cases remains the same, i.e. there was two times more of court cases than administrative. Also, property related cases remain dominant. Other frequently dealt with issues were: housing care and tenancy rights, compensation for damage (mainly against the State), pension (mainly related to the war period), status issues of returnees (residence and citizenship), etc.

Also, the practice of courts and administrative bodies remains the same: lengthy proceedings, favouring of temporary users over the owners, not encouraging the return of refugees, etc.

#### **Housing care**

There are only 4.500 applications for housing care outside the areas of special state concern. According to the statistics of the Office for displaced persons and refugees (ODPR) only 1.709 applications are completed, among which 695 applications are positively solved. Therefore, even though there is a small number of ex-occupancy/tenancy rights (OTR) holders that applied for housing care, they have problems with its realisation. Namely, the priorities for ODPR are the Homeland war veterans.

Among hundreds of CRP clients that are ex-OTR holders, there is only one relatively positively solved case, but the clients are old and sick and they could not accept the apartment on the fourth floor, without elevator. The consequences for rejecting of offered housing are not predicted, but it is sure that they will wait even longer for the new offer.

As the collective centre *Barake Tehnika* have been closed, the returnee families have been provided with housing care, except for a few families that have been transferred to another collective centre near Sisak. All the families have been provided with housing care inside the Areas of special state concern, in Dvor, Petrinja and other villages. Generally, the problem for clients is that the accommodations are not in good condition, i.e. they are not equipped, furnished, etc. It is very difficult to find donors for such things and the clients are all with no or little income.

Anyhow, four Roma families from the collective centre have been provided with very good housing, i.e. they got two houses in the same yard in the village of Petrinjci, between Sisak and Sunja. One of the houses is a big three-storey house, which accommodates three families, who are two generations of the same family. The other small house accommodates another family, who are relatives to the first mentioned family and have three children. In the same yard, in the garages, there are two other Roma families accommodated temporarily, while they are waiting for housing care. CRP Sisak applied and received the grant from the US Embassy for the project "Support to housing care programme for the Roma returnees in the collective centre Barake Tehnika in Sisak", which should contribute to sustainability of the return of the Roma refugees and of the housing care programme. The Project will provide the Roma families, including the mentioned families, with small tools and equipment, bikes and seeds for gardening. CRP hopes that the implementation of this project shall enable the Roma to improve their living conditions and generate some small income, by doing some works with donated machines/equipment to the neighbours or similar, and so contribute to their integration into the community.

### *Other activities*

On 1 October 2007, the Town of Sisak and the CRP Sisak signed a contract on use of office premises. The premises are provided by the Town free of charge. During October CRP shall be doing some necessary repair works in the new office and will be moving end October/beginning of November.

CRP Sisak signed, together with around 10 NGOs, the agreement on the Co-ordination of the NGOs in the Sisak-Moslavina County. The aim of the Co-ordination is to promote the civil society and establish the co-operation with local authorities.

CRP continued to be involved in the process of making of the Law on free legal aid in Croatia. Namely, the draft of the Law that was made approximately two years ago did not go to the procedure before the Parliament during the mandate of the present Government. It was partly due to pressure put by the coalition of NGOs that provide free legal aid on the Parliament and Government, because the draft of the Law was

not good, as it was too bureaucratic and too restrictive. The Parliament closed down, due to the parliamentary elections on 25 November 2007. The Coalition shall now try to be involved as much as possible in making of the new Draft.

Sisak, November 2007

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