



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

### **GlocalEAST**

Developing a new curriculum in Global Migration, Diaspora and Border

Studies in East-Central Europe

Project number: 2020-1-SK01-KA203-078263

---

# **GlocalEAST**

## **National Report on Migration Policies and Dynamics - Croatia**

---

Date: March 2021

#### **Authors:**

Dragan Bagić, University of Zagreb

Marijeta Rajković Iveta, University of Zagreb

Tijana Trako Poljak, University of Zagreb

Drago Župarić-Iljić, University of Zagreb

Legal notice: This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. The content of this document does not necessarily reflect the view or legislation of the European Commission. This report reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for the contents and any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

## Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>Overview of Key Data in National and Historical Context .....</b>                                   | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>National Policies and Strategies in the Field of Migration and Migrant<br/>Integration .....</b>    | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>Readiness of HEI Graduates for Work in the Field of Migration and Migrant<br/>Integration .....</b> | <b>16</b> |
| <b>Conclusion .....</b>  | <b>22</b> |
| <b>Statistical Appendix .....</b>  | <b>26</b> |

## OVERVIEW OF KEY DATA IN NATIONAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The general context of migration in Croatia is largely influenced by its national and political heritage, as well as its complex historical legacy owing to the centuries of different political regimes. Ever since the 15th century, most migration was of permanent and irreversible outflow character. However, when assessing migrants' stocks and net migration from and to Croatia, there is a problem of reliability and validity of migration data. Demographers have approximated that during the 20th century alone 2 million people have left Croatia moving to all continents, while 800 000 people immigrated into the country during the same period.<sup>1</sup> Post-World War II emigration was driven by diverse political motivations of the dissidents and economic motivations of temporary guest-workers, both groups leaving for the western and northern European job-markets.

The Homeland War in Croatia in the 1990s was marked by atrocities that resulted in a large numbers of displaced persons. At the same time, Croatia in the 1990s entered the period of social, economic and political transition toward a modern democracy on its way to the become the EU member-state, a goal finally realized in 2013. In the last twelve years, Croatia has negative net migration values, with a steep progression of emigration after joining the EU. The key host countries for Croatian emigrants are: Germany (dominantly), Austria and Switzerland, and lately more prominent outflows go to Ireland, Sweden and Canada. The most significant economic factors that might have motivated individuals to move out of the country include low national economic growth, a drop in general economic productivity, high unemployment and long-term unemployment rates, decreasing standard of living for many citizens, indebtedness, difficulties in finding a job that matches the citizen's level of education, poor wages, and problematic business environment. Other social and political factors such as citizens' perception that there are significant levels of corruption and clientelism, the lack of trust in the state institutions and the

---

<sup>1</sup> See: <https://doi.org/10.11567/met.30.3.6>

rule of law, a general democratic deficit, a lack of political culture, and ideologically deeply divided Croatian society, also add to the push factors.<sup>2</sup>

Most immigrants in the past two decades came to Croatia from the neighbouring countries following an ethnically driven regional migration pattern within the former Yugoslavia. For example, in 2013 half of all immigrants came from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and among them, more than two-thirds were of Croatian ethnicity (co-ethnics) already with Croatian citizenship (often possessing dual citizenship). The largest number of work permits in the last decade was issued to the citizens of former Yugoslav republics, traditionally getting employed in the construction industry, shipbuilding, tourism, and catering industry. After five years of temporary residence they may apply for long-term residence and many of them strive to obtain it, and after eight years they could apply for Croatian citizenship.

In the last seven years, the share of foreign citizen immigrants rose slightly due to joining the EU with EU nationals coming to Croatia for work (especially from Slovenia, Germany, and Italy), or Croatian nationals returning from the EU countries (most often from Germany). Croatia has one of the lowest shares of foreigners (those without Croatian citizenship), similar to other Central and East European countries, which was around 1% a few years back, although doubling from 2016 till today (2,1% in 2020), according to the Ministry of Interior Statistics.<sup>3</sup> It significantly rose in 2019 and 2020 with just a slight share of third-country nationals coming from Central and South-East Asian countries such as Bangladesh, India, China, Nepal, who got employment in the low-intensive sector, including 3D jobs, under the annual quotas of work permits. This is an outcome of two parallel processes: higher emigration rates that have resulted in further demographic decline, and consequently more permissive quotas for employment of foreigners as the needed workforce.

---

<sup>2</sup> See: <https://hrcak.srce.hr/file/310958>

<sup>3</sup> However, if we take into account the share of foreign-born in total population which is 13,7% Croatia ranks 11<sup>th</sup> among EU-28 member states (see Table 2 in the Appendix, and: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/pdfscache/41896.pdf>, Figure 8, p. 13). Most of them were born in regional neighbouring countries, majority of them as Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus, by ethnicity, language, culture, and even family ties, they are close to domicile Croat(ian)s, relatively accepted in local communities and well-integrated in society, and rarely perceived as “foreigners”, although some of them perceive stereotyping in general public, especially those who came to Croatia as refugees during the 1990s (See: [https://rig-td.si/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/RiG-82\\_01\\_podgorelec.pdf](https://rig-td.si/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/RiG-82_01_podgorelec.pdf)).

Croatia is a highly homogenous society - according to the 2011 census more than 90% of the population declare themselves as Croats. With 22 constitutionally recognized national minorities on its territory, Croatia has a long history of ethnic, linguistic, religious, and cultural diversity. Living with others has therefore influenced the national identity throughout history. However, some nations from the former Yugoslavia that used to be regarded as constituent nations are degraded to the status of national minorities after Croatia gained independence. This situation does not affect the recent migration dynamic besides the fact there were some discussions on whether the rights of autonomous national minorities (such as cultural or educational rights such as, for example, the right to have schools in their own script and language) should be taken into consideration when developing different modes of integration for new immigrants.<sup>4</sup> There was also a discussion on the role of the Islamic community in Croatia as well integrated religious-based community in assisting the newcomers during the process of their inclusion into the society.

In the early 1990s, state agenda was prone to offer incentives for attracting and inviting diaspora members to repatriate, with facilitated access to citizenship.<sup>5</sup> However, besides a few scientists, journalists, sportsmen, and entrepreneurs, the return has never occurred on a massive or significant scale. In the context of economic and demographic decline, with troublesome administrative, bureaucratic procedures for starting new jobs, many repatriates reconsidered their return and long-term stay in Croatia, ultimately deciding to re-migrate, or maybe circulate in transnational social space. There is no precise data, not even an approximation of how many diaspora returnees are now residing in Croatia, but our crude assessment would say not more than few tens of thousands. According to the statistics, returnees mostly come from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, and other European countries, and are mainly around the age of retirement. Very often they live bi-locally (and oftentimes seasonally), in their West destinations and in locations in Croatia (or Bosnia and Herzegovina), where they also could own a real estate. Elderly, retired returnees oftentimes participate in private, family capital investments in tourism, construction, and services, mostly at the Adriatic coast. Some young returnees come from transcontinental

---

<sup>4</sup> See: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/kroatien/13058.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> See: [https://hrcak.srce.hr/index.php?show=clanak&id\\_clanak\\_jezik=87385](https://hrcak.srce.hr/index.php?show=clanak&id_clanak_jezik=87385)

countries of Australia or the Americas, like the fourth or late generation in search of their ancestors' homeland, wishing to spend some time studying here, learning Croatian, or starting a business. However, there is no significant influence on Croatian society or the economy.

Cross-border migration remains an important issue in Croatia, especially with increasing migration outflows of thousands of young people. At the same time, immigration to the country has not been seriously discussed among stakeholders and experts nor debated in public, and it is mostly being shaped by ad hoc governmental responses based on the needs of the job-market. After the closure of the Balkan corridor in March 2016, Croatia found itself as the newest EU member and a Schengen candidate at the external border of the EU, taking an active role of becoming a "buffer zone" for numerous irregular migrants who try to cross the Balkan route venturing further west. Croatian police practices of push-backs when a person is apprehended after an irregular border crossing and collectively returned to a neighbouring country without assessing their individual circumstances on a case-by-case basis became everyday news.<sup>6</sup>

In the last couple of years, the number of asylum seekers is steady, with the highest number of applicants coming from Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Pakistan, Iran, Algeria, Turkey, Morocco, and other countries. Positive recognition rate usually stays below 10% (except for 2018 when it was 25%), and it is on the lower level of the EU-27 average. The Ministry of Interior very often uses the argument of high cancellation rate between 60% to 80%, pointing to the fact that many asylum seekers leave the procedure before the first instance decision in their desire to venture further West. Additionally, gaining the legal status has also not prevented half of the recognized refugees to partake in secondary movements further West as well. However, these four processes have not impacted the migration governance framework, in a sense that Croatia had produced its last migration strategy for the period of 2013-2015, and since then it did not try to develop any sensible migration policy that would tackle the issues of societal, economic, political, cultural, demographic or other effects of contemporary emigration and immigration, of regular or irregular

---

<sup>6</sup> See: <https://www.ecre.org/balkans-new-brutal-pushbacks-from-croatia-to-bosnia-where-a-humanitarian-crisis-unfolds/>

type. Also, nothing is done in the direction of any kind of regional (West)Balkan approach toward a joint migration governance framework.

In a societal sense, domicile majority of Croats still express somewhat moderate to high levels of ethnic distance towards Serbs (seen as disloyal and threatening from the period of the Homeland war) and Roma (as “usual suspects”), and partly towards Slovenians (because of the border disputes) and Muslims in general (maybe due to overall rise of Islamophobia in Europe). One recent research points to result that attitude of the majority of Croatian citizens towards persons granted international protection, i.e. refugees is neutral, although they support the non-assimilationist model of integration in Croatian society, which means that they expect the persons granted asylum to accept Croatian culture and customs, but at the same time approve of them maintaining their own culture.<sup>7</sup> Quite contrary, another research suggests that Croatia was among one of the least accepting countries of migrants in 2019.<sup>8</sup>

Very recently, in 2019, with the second cycle of resettling Syrian refugee families from the refugee camps in Turkey, stakeholders tried to promote social cohesion and foster a welcoming culture to new refugees (250 in total, but only half of them stayed). Additional efforts were made especially by local Islamic communities and Bosniak national minority councils in two mid-size cities - Sisak and Karlovac, who assisted in the early integration and sensibilization of the local population to the arrival of refugees. This is also an example of how a decentralized model of locally boosted integration practices could sometimes be more effective than a national top-down overtly bureaucratic approach.<sup>9</sup>

Migration becomes a salient issue mostly in pre-election times through political campaigns of various political parties. Two topics are the most represented and discussed in public and the media lately: moderately high emigration rates and the situation at Croatian borders. It seems though that discourses are mostly alarmist pinpointing to a 'demographic and economic

---

<sup>7</sup> See:

<https://pravamanjina.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/Challenges%20of%20Integrating%20Refugees%20into%20Croatian%20Society.pdf> (p. 10).

<sup>8</sup> See: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/320678/world-grows-less-accepting-migrants.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> See: <https://jrseurope.org/en/news/the-challenge-of-social-inclusion-in-croatia/>

catastrophe' that the nation rushes to with no concept of how to retain its population or attract the compatriots to return from abroad. The second topic relates to overtly securitized discourses on the urge and duty to stop irregular flows of transit migrants through Croatia, by protecting borders, domicile population, and properties. Cultural and religious aspects are tackled from time to time, emphasizing good experiences with Croatian own Muslim national minority population and satisfying levels of coexistence for decades. It was also accentuated that Croatia could serve as an example to other western European countries for a successful integration model of the Muslim minority.<sup>10</sup>

The overall impression is that the humanitarian approach during the Balkan corridor to ensure state-organized swift transit of migrants to Germany gave way to securitization as the dominant paradigm. In 2016 troublesome practices started: ethnic profiling of migrants (Syrians allowed, others stopped), oftentimes violent push-backs reported on a weekly basis on the borders with Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and making the territory and asylum procedure harder, if not impossible for many. In the same manner, criminalization of migration and humanitarian assistance was introduced in order to curb the solidarity of domicile activists and volunteers towards refugees and migrants.<sup>11</sup> Few right and far-right politicians invoked the erection of walls and barb-wires, while the unofficial yet implicit attitude of the Ministry of Interior has become the separation between "deserving refugees" (those who opted to come to Croatia via the EU resettlement program), and "undeserving migrants" (those who are stuck at the borders trying to cross-national territory irregularly).

At the same time, a number of return transfers of asylum seekers under the Dublin III Regulation procedure has risen to a few hundred per year, feeding the fear of some politicians that Croatia will become "a hotspot". Attenuation of the Balkan route which now goes through Bosnia and Herzegovina to Croatia resulted in the fact that the number of irregular crossings and interceptions raised four times from 2016 to 2019. The focus of the mainstream media has become more desperate in portraying the domicile youth who are leaving the country, and more negative

---

<sup>10</sup> See: <https://hrcak.srce.hr/file/289318>

<sup>11</sup> See: [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92741-1\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92741-1_5)



in focusing on the incidents done by migrants or refugees, with a high tone of generalization, and prejudice.<sup>12</sup>

Coronavirus has definitely had some influence on this dynamic. For example, if we look at the usage of the Annual quota for foreigners' employment in 2020, at the beginning of that year it was almost completely filled.<sup>13</sup> By the end of the year, it was halved.<sup>14</sup> Let alone other possible reasons for this significant decrease, the pandemic surely contributed to this process. When it comes to the refugee population, according to the UNHCR report, the situation for the asylum seekers accommodated in the two Reception Centres for Asylum Seekers in Zagreb and Kutina "remains safe and calm, with adequate epidemiological measures in place... People under the UNHCR mandate keep benefiting from non-discriminatory access to services and are prioritized for COVID-19 testing following medical assessment... New arrivals are placed in two-week self-isolation and tested for COVID-19 based on a medical assessment."<sup>15</sup>

## **NATIONAL POLICIES AND STRATEGIES IN THE FIELD OF MIGRATION AND MIGRANT INTEGRATION**

In the period leading to the accession to the European Union, Croatia amended its strategic documents on migrations, integration of migrants, and national minorities. These areas are governed by several pieces of legislation, namely Croatian Citizenship Act,<sup>16</sup> Act on International

---

<sup>12</sup> See: <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/the-wages-of-fear-attitudes-towards-refugees-and-migrants-in-croatia>

<sup>13</sup> See:

<https://mup.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/statistika/2020/Kvote/ISKORISTENOST%20GODISNJE%20KVOTE%20ZA%202020.%20NA%20DAN%2003.01.2020..pdf>

<sup>14</sup> See: <https://mup.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/statistika/2020/Kvote/ISKORISTENOST-GODISNJE-KVOTE-NA-DAN-31-12-2020-GODINE.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> See: <https://www.unhcr.org/ceu/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2020/10/UNHCR-Croatia-Update-July-August-2020.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> Official Gazzette 53/91, 70/91, 28/92, 113/93, 4/94, 130/11, 110/15, 102/19.

and Temporary Protection,<sup>17</sup> Act on relations of the Republic of Croatia with Croats abroad,<sup>18</sup> Constitutional Act on Rights of National Minorities,<sup>19</sup> and Aliens Act.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to this legislation, Croatia also issues supplementary decrees and rules as appropriate. Such resolutions and rules are in force for a specific number of years or sometimes just one year, like the *Decree on annual quota for employment of aliens in 2020*.<sup>21</sup> Last year, *Rules on eligibility of highly-qualified third-country nationals to live and work in the Republic of Croatia* (OG 146/2020) were issued to regulate the eligibility of highly-qualified third-country nationals (EU blue card holders) to live and work in Croatia and eligibility of their family members to live in Croatia.

Croatia's last migration policy covers the period 2013 – 2015 (OG 27/2013). The authority responsible for this policy and more specific to its integration part is the Republic of Croatia Governmental Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities. This body coordinates the intergovernmental work of other ministries together with civil society organizations and academic representatives in order to develop and implement migration and integration policies. It has been in charge for development of national strategic policy documents, the first of which was the *Action Plan for the Removal of Obstacles to the Exercise of Particular Rights in the Area of Integration of Foreigners for the period 2013-2015*, and the last of which was the *Action plan for the integration of persons granted international protection for the period 2017 – 2019*.<sup>22</sup> In these two crucial documents integration is understood and defined as a dynamic, two-way process mutual adaptation of both foreigners and Croatian citizens to the consequences of post-migration processes, which is in line with the Common Basic Principles for Integration policies of the Council of the European Union from 2004. The integration process is seen as “a lengthy process that, in addition to the active participation of the immigrants, also includes an interdepartmental approach of the government bodies, local authorities and civil society”. The national interest

---

<sup>17</sup> Official Gazette 70/15, 127/17.

<sup>18</sup> Official Gazette 16/2012.

<sup>19</sup> Official Gazette 155/02, 47/10, 80/10, 93/11, 93/11.

<sup>20</sup> Official Gazette 130/11, 74/13, 69/17, 46/18, 53/20, 133/20.

<sup>21</sup> Official Gazette 133/20. [https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2019\\_11\\_113\\_2271.html](https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2019_11_113_2271.html)

<sup>22</sup> See

<https://pravamanjina.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/AKCIJSKI%20PLAN%20ZA%20INTEGRACIJU%202017-2019.pdf>

defined in relation with migrants' admission and integration briefly refers to beneficial outcomes of immigration to the "economic and social development of the country and society."

The Aliens Act was harmonised with the EU legislation in 2020. It governs the entry, movement, stay, and work of third-country nationals, e.g. nationals of EEA countries, seasonal workers, unaccompanied minors, and digital nomads. The Act on International and Temporary Protection deals with asylum seekers as applicants for international refugee protection (which can be granted to third-country nationals or stateless persons, in the form of full asylum, i.e. refugee status or subsidiary protection status). As an EU member, Croatia has been implementing a number of action plans, such as the latest *EU Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027*. The plan proposes new measures for integration and inclusion into a host society. They include education, employment, healthcare, and housing. The plan also fosters partnerships between key integration players, tackling racism and discrimination, promoting the active participation of migrants and EU citizens with a migrant background in host societies, and designing integration and inclusion policies. It also takes into account the specific needs of different groups: citizens with a migrant background, women, religious minorities, and persons with disabilities.<sup>23</sup> Apart from that, the Croatian national context includes the new *Action plan for the period 2020-2022*, which has already been drafted. However, its adoption is behind schedule because the Croatian Government gave priority to dealing with the consequences of the earthquakes in Croatia in 2020.

Ever since Croatia gained independence in 1990, the national strategy has included numerous policies and programmes addressing/attracting diasporic communities. Central State Office for Croats Abroad (<https://hrvatiizvanrh.gov.hr/>) plays the key role for expatriates and repatriates. The Government has also established The Croatian Government's Advisory Council for Croats Abroad and introduced the status of a *Croat without Croatian citizenship*. Croatian Heritage Foundation ([www.matis.hr](http://www.matis.hr)) plays an important role. Article 4 of the Act on Relations between the Republic of Croatia and Croats Abroad provides as follows: "Expatriated Croats are an integral part

---

<sup>23</sup> Action plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021-2027.

of one indivisible Croatian nation and equal among equals". The same piece of legislation governs the relations between various bodies responsible for affairs concerning Croatian expatriates, protection of their rights and interests, strengthening of their communities, models of collaboration with them, measures and activities on their return home and repatriation, as well as other important questions. Article 57 provides for a "homecoming office" established within the State Office. Homecoming office would provide information on (and assistance with) legal and other formalities, which includes services of an advisor/counsellor, to persons taking their first steps into Croatian society, as well as information on customs and tax benefits and reliefs.

Croatian expatriates have the right to vote and run in Croatian parliamentary and presidential elections.<sup>24</sup> Under Article 8 of the Act on Parliamentary Elections,<sup>25</sup> voters who do not have registered domicile in the Republic of Croatia have the right to 3 seats in Parliament, filled by three representatives elected from the list of candidates for the special constituency. Under Article 16, national minorities have the right to 8 seats in Parliament. According to the Croatian Constitution,<sup>26</sup> Croatia is a nation-state of the Croatian nation and the state of the members of its national minorities.

MIPEX research provides an insight into the main challenges of integration ([www.mipex.eu/croatia](http://www.mipex.eu/croatia)).<sup>27</sup> With a score of 39/100 (in the last cycle of research in 2019), the Republic of Croatia is among the countries with slightly unfavourable integration policies. In comparison to 2015, immigrants in 2019 enjoy slightly better basic rights to health, employment and discrimination protections, but slightly less security and support for equal opportunities, due to other changes in family reunification and public sector employment. Croatia's policies are more restrictive than the average EU country, and similar to other 'equality on paper' countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

---

<sup>24</sup> Act on Elections of the President Republic of Croatia (Official Gazzette 22/92, 42/92, 71/97, 69/04, 99/04, 44/06, 24/11, 128/14).

<sup>25</sup> Official Gazzette 116/99, 109/00, 53/03, 69/03, 167/03, 44/06, 19/07, 20/09, 145/10, 24/11, 93/11, 120/11, 19/15, 104/15, 98/19.

<sup>26</sup> Official Gazzette 56/90, 135/97, 08/98, 113/00, 124/00, 28/01, 41/01, 55/01, 76/10, 85/10, 05/14).

<sup>27</sup> MIPEX is long-term research project that monitors and indexes the development of migrant integration policies in different countries of the world. Its results are used to assess, compare and improve these policies.

Thanks to the *Action plan for the integration of persons who have been granted international protection* (2017-2019) refugees can be better informed about health services (among other areas such as employment and social protection. In contrast, no reforms took place on political participation and access to nationality, which remain far more restrictive and below-average compared to other MIPEX countries. Positive changes on MIPEX indicators are public employment services, law covers positive antidiscrimination action measures, information for migrants concerning entitlements, and use of health services and Information for migrants concerning health education and promotion. Negative changes on MIPEX indicators are access to public sector and economic resources for family reunification (ibid.).

The latest research on integration of newcomers to Croatia was conducted by a group of psychologists and sociologists. The results were published in study “Challenges of Integrating Refugees into Croatian Society: Attitudes of Citizens and the Readiness of Local Communities”.<sup>28</sup> By mapping institutional gaps and practical needs the research encompassed all Croatian regions and numerous stakeholders involved in the integration of refugees into local host communities and resulted in general recommendations for local self-governed units (cities/municipalities or counties). They should organize systematic provision of information; appoint a chief contact-coordinator; encourage the adoption of local action plans, derived from the national Action Plan; provide systematic training and information; encourage cooperation of the government and civil sectors by recognizing potential and opportunities for joint action.

As an EU member state, Croatia takes part in European Integration Network<sup>29</sup> through the Governmental Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities (ured@uljppnm.vlada.hr; www.uljppnm.vlada.hr), which facilitates communication and learning exchange among national bodies responsible for integration issues. Furthermore, the ministries have their own specialised units or administrations tackling migration and integration issues specific to the remit of the

---

<sup>28</sup> See:

<https://ljudskaprava.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/Challenges%20of%20Integrating%20Refugees%20into%20Croatian%20Society.pdf>

<sup>29</sup> See <https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/network/european-integration-network-3>

respective ministry. E.g. Ministry of the Interior has an asylum, migration and integration unit as well as a state border protection and visa unit (pitanja@mup.hr; [www.mup.hr](http://www.mup.hr)),<sup>30</sup> and it is also the National Contact Point for European Migration Network.<sup>31</sup> However, it seems that neither the Ministry of the Interior nor the Governmental Office have sufficient administrative and institutional capacity to effectively and sustainably coordinate and systematically monitor the implementation and evaluation of the integration process at national and local levels.<sup>32</sup>

Late 2020 marked the establishment of a *Permanent commission for the integration of aliens into Croatian society* (OG 119/2020). The commission counts 17 members and is chaired by Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities. It coordinates organisations and other bodies working on the inclusion of asylum seekers and non-nationals under subsidiary protection into the society. The commission's activities include: providing the task force with the guidelines for the development of national strategies and plans on integration; monitoring and coordination of the implementation of regulations, programmes, strategies, and plans on integration; cooperation with international and civil society organisations dealing with integration questions; and keeping up to date with the recommendations for development of integration policies at EU-level.

Numerous international organisations have their branch offices in Croatia, e.g. United Nations High Commissioner for refugees (UNHCR) (hrvza@unhcr.org; [www.unhcr.hr](http://www.unhcr.hr)), which helps the asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, refugees, returnees, and stateless persons, United Nations Children's Fund (info@unicef.hr; [www.unicef.hr](http://www.unicef.hr)), Croatian Red Cross (redcross@hck.hr; [www.hck.hr/](http://www.hck.hr/)) and Caritas Europa (caritas.croatia@caritas.hr; [www.caritas.hr](http://www.caritas.hr)). International Organisation for Migration (IOM) - Europe (iomzagreb@iom.int; [www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)) is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental partners.

The local and regional governments have their own county and city offices, e.g. City of Zagreb - City office for social welfare and persons with disabilities - Social welfare unit (guszoi@zagreb.hr;

---

<sup>30</sup> See <https://mup.gov.hr/uprava-za-europske-poslove-medjunarodne-odnose-i-fondove-europske-unije/281613>

<sup>31</sup> See: <https://emn.gov.hr/en>

<sup>32</sup> See: [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-50979-8\\_12](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-50979-8_12)

[www.zagreb.hr](http://www.zagreb.hr) ).<sup>33</sup> In addition to all of the above, there are also various non-governmental organisations with projects aiming at the integration of immigrants, mostly refugees: The Centre for Peace Studies ([cms@cms.hr](mailto:cms@cms.hr); [www.cms.hr/en](http://www.cms.hr/en) ); Jesuit Refugee Service ([info@jrs.hr](mailto:info@jrs.hr); [www.jrs.hr](http://www.jrs.hr) ); Are You Syrious? ([areyousyrious@gmail.com](mailto:areyousyrious@gmail.com); <https://areyousyrious.eu/> ); Stress and Trauma Rehabilitation Centre ([info@rctzg.hr](mailto:info@rctzg.hr); [www.rctzg.hr](http://www.rctzg.hr) ), Centre for the cultivation of dialogue ([center@ccd.hr](mailto:center@ccd.hr); [www.ccd.hr](http://www.ccd.hr) ). Organisations like football clubs NUR (<https://nknur.hr/> ) and Zg041 ([skolanogometa@nkzagreb041.hr](mailto:skolanogometa@nkzagreb041.hr); [www.nkzagreb041.hr](http://www.nkzagreb041.hr) ) are trying to integrate immigrants through football.

When it comes to integration of immigrants, especially refugees and international protection seekers into Croatian society, the Taste of Home is an example of good practice. This initiative of the collective Taste of Home and the Centre for Peace Studies which was supported over a period of about ten years (2009-2018) by numerous organisations (e.g. the European Commission, the US Embassy in Croatia) which funded the activities of empowering and training the socially endangered group – refugees in Croatia, so that they can independently start with the process of employment and/or the development of the idea of social entrepreneurship to achieve better integration into society, a media campaign and a documentary film about refugee integration in Croatia and cooperation with organisations of civil society in providing support to refugee integration.<sup>34</sup>

Another successful project is “TrAZILica – social inclusion and strengthening the position of refugees in the Croatian labour market”, funded by the European Social Fund, Operational Program Effective Human Potentials 2014-2020, conducted by the Jesuit Refugee Service and Zagreb Open University. Fifty persons with refugee status in Croatia underwent occupational training provided under this project. They qualified as cooks, hairdressers, wall painters, web designers, and computer operators, in addition to which they attended a Croatian language course.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> See: [www.zagreb.hr/gradski-ured-za-socijalnu-zastitu-i-osobe-s-invali/16814](http://www.zagreb.hr/gradski-ured-za-socijalnu-zastitu-i-osobe-s-invali/16814)

<sup>34</sup> See <https://www.okus-doma.hr/en>

<sup>35</sup> See <https://ika.hkm.hr/novosti/izbjeglice-uz-pomoc-jrs-a-diplomom-do-zaposlenja-i-novoga-zivota/>

Centre for Integration of Foreigners in Sisak (Centre) was recently opened with the main goal of increasing support for integration of foreigners into Croatian society while respecting international human rights standards.<sup>36</sup> In the same time, there are great examples of early integration measures and sensibilization activities in local host communities with indispensable help of NGO sector and an active role of local Islamic community.<sup>37</sup>

## **READINESS OF HEI GRADUATES FOR WORK IN THE FIELD OF MIGRATION AND MIGRANT INTEGRATION**

Six interviews were conducted for the needs of this report, with people working in organizations or institutions involved in the integration of migrants in Croatia. All respondents are directly involved in the integration of migrants, either through providing direct support to migrants or by working on shaping public policies and monitoring their implementation and evaluating their impacts. Three respondents work in public institutions, while another three come from the non-governmental sector. Regarding public institution employees, we included a school, as an example of an institution directly working with migrants, a local self-government body and a state institution involved in the care system for migrant integration. All three non-governmental organizations provide various forms of support and various services to migrants during their integration process. In this way, we aimed at encompassing a wide spectrum of organizations and jobs related to migration and migrant integration.

It is worth noting that 'migrant integration' in Croatia is primarily related to asylum seekers, people under international and subsidiary protection, and largely refers to the latest immigration waves from Northern Africa and the Middle East to Europe. In general, 'migrant integration' as a concept is rarely used in practice in relation to voluntary migrants. Croatia has a long tradition of voluntary migrants (13.8% of the population is composed of people born abroad), but no public policies for their integration exist nor has a system for voluntary migrant integration been developed, hence also no jobs in that system. The main reason that no system for caring for voluntary migrant integration and no adequate public policy have been developed has to do with

---

<sup>36</sup> See: <https://gimg-sisak.hr/novi-projekt-na-kojem-smo-partneri-center-for-integration-of-foreigners/>

<sup>37</sup> See: <https://epicamif.eu/new/testimony-on-integration-a-journey-of-mutual-learning-empathy-and-patience/>



the fact that the majority of voluntary migrants are people from the neighbouring countries (for example, 70% are from Bosnia and Herzegovina), whose language and culture differ only slightly from those of the domicile population and their integration was, therefore, left up to a spontaneous process. Therefore, the entire system of migration management and migrant integration in Croatia is de facto related to forced migrations/ migrants, or in other words asylum seekers and people under international and subsidiary protection, which has also had a significant impact on this analysis results.

### *Knowledge, skills and attitudes required to work in the field of migration and migrant integration*

Each job consists of a number of activities regularly performed by the person employed at that job, whose performance requires a specific combination of knowledge, skills and adequate attitudes. Naturally, certain knowledge, skills and attitudes are used in performing several different activities, while other knowledge, skills or attitudes are primarily related to just one type of activities. For that reason, as we continue, we shall organize knowledge, skills and attitudes according to groups of related activities our respondents mentioned as part of their tasks.

It should be emphasized that we have singled out only those skills and knowledge which are not specific to any particular job but are applied on the job regardless of the type of beneficiary. For example, we have not singled out here knowledge and skills needed, for example, by a social worker or a teacher to carry out their activities in a “regular situation” which does not include working with migrants.

The first group of activities mentioned by our respondents *were shaping, advocating and monitoring public policies in the field of migration and migrant integration*. A whole range of specific knowledge is needed to carry out this group of activities:

- Knowledge of national legislation regulating migration and migrant integration (general overview).
- Knowledge of international and supranational conventions, agreements and regulations regulating the field of migration and migrant integration.
- Knowledge of national, international and supranational strategic documents.

- Knowledge of human rights' history, key documents and conventions regulating human rights, as well as other accompanying documents and literature dealing with the interpretation of human rights in the field of migration and integration.
- Knowledge of formal and procedural aspects of the legislative process and the process of shaping and adopting public policies.
- Knowledge of monitoring implementation and evaluation of public policies.
- Knowledge of recent trends in public policies and disputes over public policies in the field of migration and migrant integration.
- Knowledge of local, national and international actors relevant to shaping public policies in this field.
- Knowledge in the field of social research methodology.

When it comes to skills crucial for performing these activities, our respondents singled out the following types of skills:

- Public policy advocacy.
- Communication skills in terms of clear, precise and substantiated spoken and written expression in the Croatian language. Regarding written expression, shaping arguments in the form of policy proposals/papers.
- Spoken and written communication in the English language.
- Analytic and research skills in order to collect data as a support for proposed public policies or their evaluation.
- Working in a multidisciplinary team.
- Negotiation skills and finding compromise solutions.

In terms of attitudes and world-views needed to carry out this group of activities, respondents primarily emphasize *a positive attitude toward migrants and cultural and racial differences, as well as honestly believing in the concept of human rights*. In addition, our respondents believe that, to actively deal with this issue, one needs a certain disposition which they describe as *activism and a desire to "change the world"*.

The second group of activities our respondents carried out refers to *working directly with migrants and helping migrants during the integration process*.

Knowledge needed for this group of activities is:

- Knowledge of laws and by-laws regulating various migrant rights from various domains: education, social welfare, residence and citizenship, labour market etc.
- Knowledge of specific procedures and the institutional framework for exercising certain rights.
- Knowledge of stakeholders (governmental, non-governmental, commercial) providing aid or specific types of services to migrants.
- Knowledge of cultural characteristics, religious teachings and norms and customs of different migrant groups.
- Good knowledge of one's own culture and society to be able to pass on information and teach migrants.
- Familiarity with theories of migrant integration and regional migration flows.

In this domain of particular importance are skills that a person performing activities from this domain must possess:

- Strong communication skills that enable the person to communicate with people who do not speak (fluently) major languages. It is desirable to have at least the basic level of several foreign languages as it makes it easier to communicate with people who do not speak English.
- Cultural sensitivity, understood as the ability to recognize cultural differences which can either facilitate or hamper the process of migrant integration or the exercise of a certain right or obligation.
- Cultural mediation, i.e., the skill of familiarizing migrants with cultural norms of the receiving society and vice-versa, familiarizing the receiving society with cultural norms of migrants.
- Work with vulnerable groups and people who have been through horrible situations.
- Active listening skills.
- Coping with stressful situations (for e.g., coping with migrants' traumatic experiences) and failure (for e.g., if people in whose integration a lot of effort was put decide to leave the country).
- Resourcefulness and creativity in finding solutions to migrants' individual problems and needs.

- Helping users to set their own goals and shape life plans, without imposing what experts believe would be good for them.

Regarding attitudes and values needed to perform this group of activities, our respondents emphasized *tolerance and openness to cultural differences, absence of ethnocentric and cultural-centric dispositions, sensitivity to migrants and empathy*. Along with these, they also emphasised *strong intrinsic motivation to deal with this topic and do this job*. Our respondents believe activities within this domain cannot be performed well if approached as “regular 9 to 5 jobs”.

The third large group of activities done by people we interviewed in this research are *designing, preparation of proposals and managing projects*. The experience of respondents, whether coming from the institutional or the non-governmental sector, is that most activities related to migrant integration and migration are generally organized and funded on a project base, either from European and national funds or local self-government budgets.

As key knowledge in this domain, our participants emphasize:

- Knowledge of various sources of project and activity funding related to migration and migrant integration.
- Knowledge of basic rules of various project funding sources related to migration and migrant integration.
- Basic knowledge in the field of project management.
- Basic knowledge in the field of marketing and communications.
- Basic knowledge in the field of finance and accounting (basic financial literacy).

In addition to this knowledge, complementary skills are required:

- Organizational skills, primarily planning and organization of complex tasks.
- Team management.
- Skills in designing and writing project proposals and preparation of project reports.
- Computer skills, including the use of various software and social networks.
- Communication and marketing skills needed to promote projects, design and run public campaigns, etc.

The attitudes needed for this type of activities are a *positive disposition towards an institutional approach to solving problems, which requires a positive attitude towards the rules, procedures and a bureaucratic way of public affairs organization.*

#### *Graduates' readiness for working in the field of migration and migrant integration*

Our respondents were mainly educated in social sciences and hold education in social sciences and some humanities as the best foundation for working in the field of migration and migrant integration. However, they agree that neither they themselves nor their colleagues acquired sufficient knowledge and skills during their studies to work in this field, hence they all heavily rely on additional formal (various educations, courses, etc.) and non-formal education to gain knowledge and improve skills they need. All of them said that they learned the most while working jobs related to migration and migrant integration. Therefore, all respondents believe it would be good and useful to have study programs focused on the education of experts in the field of migration and migrant integration. Such a program should be extremely multidisciplinary, and in a way, combine different knowledge and skills currently gained and developed in separate study programmes: law, sociology, social work, political science, psychology, cultural anthropology etc. In addition to the introduction of a new study program, respondents believe the existing study programs in the aforementioned fields should be enriched with appropriate courses that would provide graduates with knowledge and skills they currently do not acquire but which are useful for the work in the field of migrations. Naturally, every study program lacks other knowledge and skills. While law provides knowledge of regulations and procedures, it does not provide sufficient knowledge in the field of migration theory and history or experience in working with beneficiaries; social work provides a lot of experience in working with various marginalized social groups, but likewise does not provide enough theoretical knowledge in the field of migration studies and public policies; political science provides some knowledge in the field of public policy, but does not provide experience in working with beneficiaries and knowledge of theories of migration studies; sociology provides knowledge in the field of methodology and theories of migration studies, but does not provide sufficient knowledge of regulations and strategic documents or in working with beneficiaries; psychology provides knowledge and skills for working with people, but psychology students do not gain enough experience during their studies to work with diverse

social groups. None of these study programs, on the other hand, provides sufficient knowledge and skills in the field of project management, team management, marketing and communications, finance and accounting, etc., as this knowledge and skills are mainly acquired in study programmes in the field of economics.

#### *Needs for additional education in the field of migration and migrant integration*

All respondents emphasized how much of what they need in their work they learned outside the formal system of tertiary education. Knowledge and skills most often acquired in this way can be grouped into the following fields:

- Design, submission and management of (European) projects.
- Cultural mediation skills and knowledge of other cultures and civilizations, as well as further deepening of knowledge and understanding of their own culture and society, in order to get closer to migrants.
- "Life coaching", as a group of skills that helps raise awareness of how people can manage their lives, which is important for helping migrants to manage their lives in a new environment and situation, when they have to shape their lives from scratch.
- Communication skills, especially social media promotion and marketing skills.
- Analytical and research skills.
- Knowledge of the policy-making process.

## **CONCLUSION**

The findings from the HEI review in Croatia revealed that there is currently only one program within the Croatian HE system that fits into scheme of Migration, Diaspora and/or Border Studies. Alongside this program, there are 15 other HEI courses that are within this thematic scope. One of the main issues with these courses is the fact that they are spread out across various disciplines, thus narrowing the focus of this topic to a certain perspective (law, sociology, security studies, ethnicity studies, history, demography etc.). The analysis of available HEI courses in Croatia showed that they cover a variety of relevant topics regarding migration and integration, such as: migration motives, patterns, flows and mobility; transnationalism; inclusion; statuses, rights and

integration of migrants and refugees; migration, asylum and integration policies; ethnic aspects; demographic aspects; border and security studies, etc. However, their individual foci remain very specific and discipline-based, thus offering deep knowledge on one aspect of migration and integration and very little to no knowledge on other aspects. The consequence of this has been described by the interviewed actors in migrant integration who point to the lack of connectedness between actors working in various aspects of in the system of migration and integration. Secondly, most of the courses are mainly situated in the capital of Zagreb, while only two are taught at universities in other Croatian cities. Thirdly, all of the courses except one are elective, which means that if students do not elect them, they will not receive education in the field of migration and migrant integration. Fourthly, the geographic scope is mostly national and regional, although there are some courses that tackle migration as a global issue as well. Particularly interesting is the only full program in this field (integrated BA + MA program), “Demography and Croatian Diaspora”, whose scope is mostly limited to Croatia and Croatian diaspora.

We, therefore, conclude that while there is one program and a number of HE courses dealing with the issues of migration and migrant integration, the HE system regarding these topics in Croatia suffers from covering them in mostly elective and sporadic individual courses, primarily located in the capital Zagreb, with very specific discipline-related foci. Therefore, if the students elect one of these courses (which they are not always obliged to do), they do not develop a wider multi-dimensional perspective crucial for migration, diaspora, border, and integration studies.

Interviewed actors in migrant integration have specified a number of topics and skills, which they described as necessary in working in this field. When comparing their responses to the learning outcomes of HEI courses in Croatia, one of the most prominent issues is the lack of multi-disciplinary perspective. The interviewees point to the need of having a comprehensive knowledge from various fields such as sociology, politics, social work, psychology, history, cultural anthropology, public policies, migration and ethnic studies, law, etc. Secondly, they warn about the lack of practical experience in the field through a direct interaction with various actors in the migration and integration system as well as with migrants and other marginalized groups. Thirdly, the interviewees identify clear gaps in the current education system, which they had to fill by work experience, additional workshops and formal and informal education, etc. Comparing their

responses with the findings from the HEI review in Croatia, we conclude that these needs in the workplace relating to migrant integration are indeed not covered by the educational programs. The three most prominent needs not covered by current education migrant and integration related HE programs are: 1) the knowledge and skills in applying for and managing larger projects (mostly EU funded), especially in the area of leadership skills, analytic and research skills, and financial skills; 2) well-developed communication skills, both written and spoken, especially in dealing with various actors such as traditional and non-traditional media, marketing, interacting with government institutions, NGO-s, funding agencies, and the migrants themselves; and 3) the knowledge and skills for proposing, influencing and shaping public policies.

The comparison between the education outcomes as listed in the description of HEI courses in Croatia and knowledge, skills and attitudes needed in the workplace relating to migration and integration, as identified by the interviewees, reveal discrepancies between the theoretical disciplinary knowledge/skills/attitudes gained in HE and real-life workplace requirements. Firstly, with regards to knowledge, the courses offer scientific and expert knowledge on specific disciplinary topics with regards to migration and integration (e.g. at the Faculty of Law the students will gain knowledge on national and international law, human rights, asylum, etc.) but they lack a more comprehensive multi-disciplinary coverage. However, a more noticeable issue is with skills. Most courses do not promise to develop any skills beside the general knowledge and academic skills of writing, analyzing and presenting seminars, nor do they specify any particular employment opportunities for students when they finish, which in itself points to the gap between the academic and “real” world. Skills that are mentioned more concretely in courses’ outcomes are related to developing migration strategies, working in the public administration and civil agencies, and protecting national interests and working with Croatian diaspora.

The interviewees have generally agreed on three major groups of activities that happen in the workplace relating to migration and integration, and the majority of skills listed for these activities are not directly covered in the academic courses. The first group of activities is related to shaping and influencing public policies. No courses mention this in their outcomes nor do they connect the theoretical knowledge on migrations with specific skills in shaping and influencing public policies. The second group of activities includes direct work with migrants during integration, and the gap



between theoretical knowledge and the necessary knowledge and skills as identified by the interviewees is perhaps most noticeable here, as there is a complete lack of experience in the fieldwork. The third group of activities relates to applying for and managing larger projects, and there are no aspects of project management developed in HEI courses. Interviewees have also mentioned the need for developing analytic and research skills, and having more knowledge and experience in different humanities and social sciences' methodologies, which is again not found in HEI courses. Also, more practical communication skills such as working in a multi-disciplinary teams and knowing how to negotiate, discuss argumentatively and find compromise solutions were identified as necessary by the actors in migration and integration field, but are not specifically developed in the HEI courses.

Finally, with regards to attitudes necessary for working in the field of migration and integration, only one course mentions the need for understanding the value system but this is more directed to the domestic value system in Croatia and of its diaspora abroad. On the other hand, the interviewed actors were very clear on the need to develop particular attitudes among the students, which include cultural sensitivity, the ability to work in high-pressure and stressful situations, with marginalized and traumatized groups, being non-discriminatory, open-minded, flexible and adaptable, etc.

## STATISTICAL APPENDIX

### Key facts and figures describing the situation of migrants and migration trends in Croatia during the last decade (2010-2020)

Table 1: Total population, immigrants and acquisition of citizenship 2010-2020

|                                     | 2010      | 2011      | 2012      | 2013      | 2014      | 2015      | 2016      | 2017      | 2018      | 2019      | 2020      |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Total resident population (persons) | 4 302 847 | 4 289 857 | 4 275 984 | 4 262 140 | 4 246 809 | 4 225 316 | 4 190 669 | 4 154 213 | 4 105 493 | 4 076 246 | 4 058 165 |
| <b>Immigrants (stock):</b>          |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |
| Foreign citizens (persons)          | -         | -         | -         | 27 854    | 31 704    | 36 679    | 40 926    | 45 951    | 51 995    | 66 473    | 86 765    |
| Foreign citizens %                  | -         | -         | -         | 0,7%      | 0,7%      | 0,9%      | 1%        | 1,1%      | 1,3%      | 1,6%      | 2,1%      |
| Foreign-born population (persons)   | -         | -         | -         | 574 383   | 568 678   | 561 093   | 547 929   | 539 588   | 528 982   | 527 308   | 533 769   |
| Foreign-born population %           | -         | -         | -         | 13,5%     | 13,4%     | 13,3%     | 13%       | 13%       | 12,9%     | 12,9%     | 13,2%     |
| <b>Immigrants (flow):</b>           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |           |
| Number of immigrants                | 8 846     | 8 534     | 8 959     | 10 378    | 10 638    | 11 706    | 13 985    | 15 553    | 26 029    | 37 726    | -         |
| Number of citizenships granted      | 3 263     | 3 269     | 1 081     | 960       | 686       | 1 196     | 3 973     | 688       | 853       | -         | -         |

#### Notes and sources:

**Total resident population** - The number of persons having their usual residence in a country on 1 January of the respective year. When usually resident population is not available, countries may report legal or registered residents. Source: Eurostat - Population on 1 January (online data code: TPS00001)

**Foreign citizens** - Number of persons not having the citizenship of the country where they reside (the reporting country), including citizens of other EU Member States, non-EU citizens as well as stateless persons, usually resident in the reporting country on 1 January of the respective year. Source: Eurostat - Population without the citizenship of the reporting country (online data code: TPS00157)

**Foreign-born population** - Number of persons born abroad, (according to present time borders), whether in other EU Member States or non-EU countries, who are usually resident in the reporting country on 1 January of the respective year. Source: Eurostat. Foreign-born population (online data code: TPS00178)

**Number of immigrants** - Immigration is the action by which a person establishes his or her usual residence in the territory of a Member State for a period that is, or is expected to be, of at least 12 months, having previously been usually resident in another Member State or a third country. Source: Eurostat. Immigration (online data code: TPS00176)

**Acquisition of citizenship** - Citizenship means the particular legal bond between an individual and his or her state, acquired through birth or naturalisation, whether by declaration, choice, marriage or other means according to national legislation. Naturalisation is one of the most common ways of acquiring citizenship. It is a formal act of granting citizenship to an alien who applies to be a citizen. Source: Eurostat. Acquisition of citizenship (online data code: TPS00024)

Table 2: Foreign-born population in Croatia by country of birth 2010-2020

**Foreign-born population** - Number of persons born abroad, (according to present time borders), whether in other EU Member States or non-EU countries, who are usually resident in the reporting country on 1 January of the respective year. Source: Eurostat [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/migr\\_pop3ctb/default/table?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/migr_pop3ctb/default/table?lang=en)

**NOT Applicable from the EUROSTAT datasets, i.e. no detailed (disaggregated) data are available** - as in <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/pdfscache/1275.pdf> (p. 13, footnote)

The only data available is from the **2011 National Population Census**, where the Country of Birth is understood as the country of residence of the mother at the time of the birth for population census data. And data on Foreign-born population was as following:

Overall (TOTAL) population was: 4 284 889, out of which **Foreign-born: 584 947 (13,7% of TOTAL)**, and among them 409 537 those born in Bosnia and Herzegovina (70% of Foreign-born), 52 763 in Serbia, 34 148 in Germany, 20 347 in Kosovo, 19 803 in Slovenia, 10 167 in Macedonia, and 38 362 in “other countries”.

Table 3: **Number of valid residence permits for foreigners in Croatia**

NOTE: Due to lack of data and very poor statistical information, a service which is run by the Ministry of Interior in Croatia<sup>38</sup> on status of foreigners and issued residence permits the only sensible data we may present here is the table on Residence permits for 2017 (the point of reference is taken as 31 Dec 2016). For the same reason of data lacking the table “Foreign citizens employed in Croatia by category and citizenship” cannot be presented.

| Country / area of citizenship  | Temporary Residence Permit<br>TOTAL: 24071 (out of which) |             |                 | Permanent Residence<br>Permit | SUM          | %    |
|--|---|-------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|--------------|------|
|  | Family reunification                                      | Work        | Other purposes* |                               |              |      |
| <b>European Economic Area (EEA)</b>  | 3230  | 2306        | 4503            | 5147                          | <b>15186</b> | 37,5 |
| (out of that) Slovenia   | (754)   | (353)       | (1150)          | (1430)                        | (3687)       | 9,1  |
| (out of that) Germany  | (673)   | (196)       | (1047)          | (1327)                        | (3243)       | 8,0  |
| <b>Third Country Nationals (TCNs)</b>  | 1467  | 3355        | 1239            | 8107                          | <b>14168</b> | 35,0 |
| (out of that) Bosnia and Herzegovina   | (518)   | (1783)      | (429)           | (4916)                        | (7646)       | 18,9 |
| (out of that) Serbia   | (90)  | (379)       | (131)           | (898)                         | (1498)       | 3,7  |
| <b>Family members of citizens of EEA Member States and Croatian citizens</b> | 7950  | -           | 21              | 3156                          | <b>11127</b> | 27,5 |
| <b>SUM</b>   | <b>12647</b>  | <b>5661</b> | <b>5763</b>     | <b>16410</b>                  | <b>40481</b> |      |
| <b>%</b>   | <b>31,2</b>   | <b>14,0</b> | <b>14,2</b>     | <b>40,6</b>                   |              |      |

\* includes use of properties and education as two dominant reasons, and to lesser extent scientific research, autonomous residence and ‘other’ reasons (such as tolerated status on humanitarian ground)

Source: Republic of Croatia - Ministry of Interior (MUP HR): <https://mup.gov.hr/gradjani-281562/moji-dokumenti-281563/stranci-333/statistika-169019/169019> (aggregated data for 2017, authors’ adaptation).

<sup>38</sup> <https://mup.gov.hr/gradjani-281562/moji-dokumenti-281563/stranci-333/statistika-169019/169019> Lately, the Ministry of Interior present data on “Status of utilization of the annual quota of residence and work permits on by (economic) activities and occupations” four times per month(!). This basically implies temporary work/residence permit, although age, gender, nationality or any other sociodemographic data of permit holders are not recorded. The data and statistic are presented on the official web page with many inconsistencies, lacks and errors, thus of questionable plausibility.

**Table 4: Number of irregular migrants' interceptions in Croatia 2013-2019**

Note: Interceptions presented here occurred either at official border check-points, in the near vicinity of the land border(s), deep within the national territory (dominantly), or as the specific category from 2016 onwards as „accepted by police of another state“ (in case of readmissions). Data with minus is not necessarily missing, but presumably some data is subsumed (for example data for Somali and Sudan from 2016 onwards).

| Citizenship  | Interceptions |             |             |             |             |             |              |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
|              | 2013          | 2014        | 2015        | 2016        | 2017        | 2018        | 2019         |
| Afghanistan  | 611           | 388         | 386         | 903         | 965         | 1669        | 3776         |
| Albania      | 263           | 421         | 380         | 435         | 401         | 428         | 463          |
| Algeria      | 255           | 128         | 12          | 196         | 131         | 285         | 1223         |
| Bangladesh   | 33            | 107         | 25          | 39          | 67          | 255         | 1129         |
| Bosnia&Herz. | 195           | 187         | 171         | 137         | 129         | 92          | 90           |
| Eritrea      | 194           | 246         | 1           | -           | -           | -           | -            |
| India        | -             | -           | -           | -           | -           | 161         | 389          |
| Iraq         | -             | -           | -           | 259         | 107         | 356         | 1730         |
| Iran         | -             | -           | -           | 106         | 204         | 900         | 894          |
| Kosovo       | 276           | 251         | 133         | 458         | 787         | 501         | 662          |
| Morocco      | 131           | 36          | 11          | 160         | 61          | 132         | 829          |
| Pakistan     | 207           | 194         | 66          | 333         | 367         | 1186        | 4060         |
| Syria        | 720           | 550         | 1041        | 343         | 196         | 416         | 1258         |
| Serbia       | 78            | 103         | 78          | 103         | 92          | 79          | 85           |
| Somalia      | 314           | 90          | 24          | -           | -           | -           | -            |
| Sudan        | 94            | 53          | 3           | -           | -           | -           | -            |
| Tunisia      | 163           | 30          | 4           | 17          | 29          | 83          | 241          |
| Turkey       | 101           | 67          | 58          | 246         | 517         | 942         | 1874         |
| Others       | 1099          | 1063        | 1366        | 761         | 755         | 722         | 1575         |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>4734</b>   | <b>3914</b> | <b>3759</b> | <b>4496</b> | <b>4808</b> | <b>8207</b> | <b>20278</b> |

Source: Republic of Croatia - Ministry of Interior (MUP HR): <https://mup.gov.hr/pristup-informacijama-16/statistika-228/statistika-mup-a-i-bilteni-o-sigurnosti-cestovnog-prometa/283233> (authors' adaptation)

**Table 5: Number of asylum applications, asylums, and subsidiary protection in Croatia (1993-2020)**

| Year | Number of asylum applications submitted | Asylum granted | Subsidiary protection granted | International Protection (SUM, per year) |
|------|---|----------------|-------------------------------|--|
|------|---|----------------|-------------------------------|--|

|              |               |            |            |            |
|--------------|---------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 1997-2003    | 309           | -          | -          | -          |
| 2004         | 152           | -          | -          | -          |
| 2005         | 171           | -          | -          | -          |
| 2006         | 88            | 1          | -          | 1          |
| 2007         | 198           | -          | -          | -          |
| 2008         | 154           | 3          | 3          | 6          |
| 2009         | 148           | 11         | 2          | 13         |
| 2010         | 290           | 5          | 9          | 14         |
| 2011         | 807           | 4          | 9          | 13         |
| 2012         | 1195          | 21         | 14         | 35         |
| 2013         | 1089          | 7          | 17         | 24         |
| 2014         | 453           | 14         | 10         | 24         |
| 2015         | 152           | 36         | 7          | 43         |
| 2016         | 2234          | 83         | 17         | 100        |
| 2017         | 1887          | 183        | 27         | 210        |
| 2018         | 1068          | 239        | 25         | 264        |
| 2019         | 1986          | 157        | 1          | 158        |
| 2020         | 1932          | 36         | 6          | 42         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>14 313</b> | <b>800</b> | <b>147</b> | <b>947</b> |

Source: Republic of Croatia - Ministry of Interior (MUP HR): <https://mup.gov.hr/pristup-informacijama-16/statistika-228/statistika-trazitelji-medjunarodne-zastite/283234>

(aggregated, authors' adaptation), the data prior to 2008 from the authors' previous studies, also according to MoI and UNHCR data.

**Table 6: Population of Croatia by nationality (ethnicity) according to the 2001 and 2011 censuses**

| Nationality (ethnicity) | 2001      |       | 2011      |       |
|-------------------------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
|                         | in person | in %  | in person | in %  |
| <b>Croatian</b>         | 3 977 171 | 89.63 | 3 874 321 | 90.42 |
| <b>Albanian</b>         | 15 082    | 0.34  | 17 513    | 0.41  |
| <b>Austrian</b>         | 247       | 0.01  | 297       | 0.01  |
| <b>Bosnian</b>          | 20 755    | 0.47  | 31 479    | 0.73  |
| <b>Bulgarian</b>        | 331       | 0.01  | 350       | 0.01  |
| <b>Montenegrin</b>      | 4 926     | 0.11  | 4 517     | 0.11  |
| <b>Czech</b>            | 10 510    | 0.24  | 9 641     | 0.22  |
| <b>Hungarian</b>        | 16 595    | 0.37  | 14 048    | 0.33  |
| <b>Macedonian</b>       | 4 270     | 0.10  | 4 138     | 0.10  |
| <b>German</b>           | 2 902     | 0.07  | 2 965     | 0.07  |
| <b>Polish</b>           | 567       | 0.01  | 672       | 0.02  |
| <b>Romany</b>           | 9 463     | 0.21  | 16 989    | 0.40  |
| <b>Romanian</b>         | 475       | 0.01  | 435       | 0.01  |
| <b>Russian</b>          | 906       | 0.02  | 1 297     | 0.03  |
| <b>Ruthenian</b>        | 2 337     | 0.05  | 1 936     | 0.05  |
| <b>Slovak</b>           | 4 712     | 0.11  | 4 753     | 0.11  |

|                                       |                  |               |                  |               |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|
| <b>Slovenian</b>                      | 13 173           | 0.30          | 10 517           | 0.25          |
| <b>Serbian</b>                        | 201 631          | 4.54          | 186 633          | 4.36          |
| <b>Italian</b>                        | 19 636           | 0.44          | 17 807           | 0.42          |
| <b>Turkish</b>                        | 300              | 0.01          | 367              | 0.01          |
| <b>Ukrainian</b>                      | 1 977            | 0.04          | 1 878            | 0.04          |
| <b>Wallachian</b>                     | 12               | 0.00          | 29               | 0.00          |
| <b>Jewish</b>                         | 576              | 0.01          | 509              | 0.01          |
| <b>Others</b>                         | 21 801           | 0.49          | 8 052            | 0.19          |
| <b>Regional affiliation declared</b>  | 9 302            | 0.21          | 27 225           | 0.64          |
| <b>Religious affiliation declared</b> | /                | /             | 10 182           | 0.24          |
| <b>Uncategorised</b>                  | /                | /             | 731              | 0.02          |
| <b>Not declared</b>                   | /                | /             | 26 763           | 0.62          |
| <b>Unknown</b>                        | 17 979           | 0.41          | 8 877            | 0.62          |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>4 437 460</b> | <b>100.00</b> | <b>4 284 889</b> | <b>100.00</b> |

Source: Croatian Bureau of Statistics (Državni zavod za statistiku Republike Hrvatske, [www.dzs.hr](http://www.dzs.hr)): Population by ethnicity in cities/municipalities, Census 2001 (Stanovništvo prema narodnosti po gradovima/općinama, popis 2001.) and: Population by ethnicity in cities/municipalities, Census 2011 (Stanovništvo prema narodnosti po gradovima/općinama, popis 2011.).

**Table 7: Number of Croatian diaspora communities residing abroad and the most important host countries**

NOTE: Sources vary concerning the number of Croatian diaspora and it is always an approximation. Data presented here are based on the data provided by **the Central State Office for Croats abroad** (<https://hrvatiizvanrh.gov.hr>), which applies three main categories: Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina (according to the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croats are one of three constituent nations), Croatian emigrants (transcontinental expatriates of historical and more recent type), and Croatian minority abroad (basically old Croatian diaspora in European countries, with some officially recognized status, most notably ethno/national or linguistic minority). Given that the people have been emigrating from the Croatian lands since the 15th century, in certain countries where they live today they are both recognized as a national minority (in Croatia we call them diaspora), and considered as immigrants of more contemporary type - one such country is Italy and Austria. This is the reason why such countries are listed twice in the tables.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina</b> | 544 780 (15.4 % of total Bosnia and Herzegovina population, census 2013)                      |
| <b>Croatian emigrants</b> <sup>39</sup> |   |
| Argentina                               | cca. 250 000 (estimates by Croatian embassy, Croatian heritage groups, and Catholic missions) |

<sup>39</sup> See <https://hrvatiizvanrh.gov.hr/hrvati-izvan-rh/hrvatsko-iseljenistvo/86>

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Australia                                    | 176 952 (Australian census 2016)<br>cca. 250 000  |
| Austria                                      | cca. 90 000   |
| Belgium                                      | cca. 7 000  |
| Luxembourg                                   | cca. 3 000  |
| Bolivia                                      | cca. 5 000  |
| Brazil                                       | cca. 70 000   |
| Chile  | cca. 200 000  |
| Denmark                                      | cca. 2 500  |
| Ecuador                                      | cca. 4 000  |
| France                                       | cca. 40 000   |
| Ireland                                      | cca. 20 000   |
| Italy  | cca. 60 000   |
| South African Republic                       | cca. 8 000  |
| Canada                                       | cca. 250 000  |
| Netherlands                                  | cca. 10 000   |
| Norway                                       | cca. 2 000  |
| New Zealand                                  | cca. 100 000 (cca. 2 500 have Croatian citizenship)   |
| Germany                                      | 414 890 have Croatian citizenship <sup>40</sup>   |
| Paraguay                                     | cca. 5 000  |
| Peru   | „between 6 000 Croatian descendants to 14 800 Peruvians of Croatian descent”  |
| United States, USA                           | cca. 1 200 000  |
| Sweden                                       | cca. 10 000 (Bureau of Statistics, Sweden)<br>cca. 40 000   |
| Switzerland                                  | 31 678 have Croatian citizenship (data by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office of the Swiss Confederation)<br>cca. 80 000 |
| Uruguay                                      | cca. 5 000  |
| United Kingdom                               | cca. 5 000  |
| Venezuela                                    | cca. 5 000  |
| <b>Croatian minority abroad<sup>41</sup></b> |   |
| Austria                                      | cca. 50 000   |
| Bulgaria                                     | cca. 300 families (numbers vary „from a few hundred to a few thousand“)   |
| Montenegro                                   | 6 021 (Census in Montenegro, 2011)<br>cca. 10 000 (Church data)   |
| Czech Republic                               | 1 448 (Census in Czechia, 2011)<br>cca. 2 000   |

<sup>40</sup> Federal Statistical Office of Germany 31/12/2019. The number does not include persons with dual citizenship.

<sup>41</sup> See <https://hrvatiizvanrh.gov.hr/hrvati-izvan-rh/hrvatska-manjina-u-inozemstvu/1616>

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Italy           | 1 822 (Central Statistical Office (ISTAT) of Campobasso Province in Molise, census 2011)<br>cca. 16 000   |
| Kosovo          | cca. 240  |
| Hungary         | 26 774 (Census in Hungary, 2011)<br>cca. 50 000   |
| North Macedonia | 2 686 (Census in North Macedonia, 2002)<br>cca. 4000  |
| Romania         | 5 408 (Census in Romania, 2011)<br>cca. 6 000   |
| Slovakia        | 1 022 (Census in Slovakia, 2011)<br>cca. 4 000  |
| Slovenia        | 35 642 (According to 2002 census in Slovenia; Croatian was the mother tongue of 54.079 people). 2011 census did not include data on ethnicity and mother tongue)<br>cca. 55 000 |
| Serbia          | 57 900 (Census in Serbia, 2011)   |