

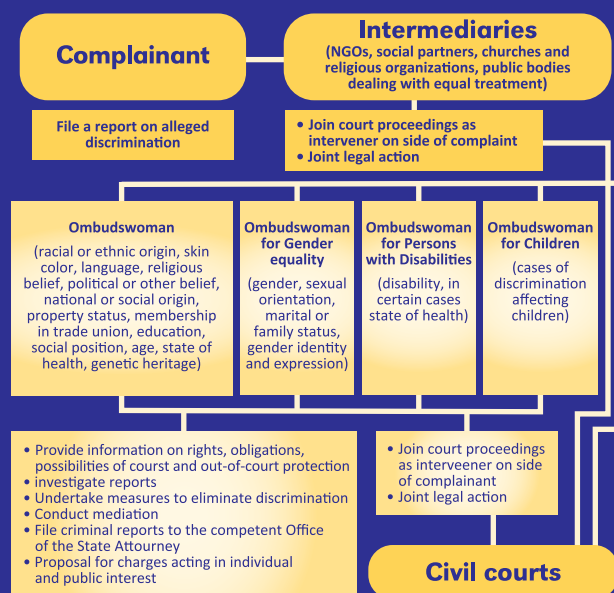


OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The overall objective of this Twinning project was to establish an efficient and effective system for combating discrimination in the Republic of Croatia. The cooperation of the staff of the two beneficiary institutions – the Ombudsman as the central equality body responsible for combating discrimination and the Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities as the state body directly involved in combating discrimination – with experts from EU Member States strengthened the capacities of the beneficiaries. The project supported the development of systematic data collection on reported cases of discrimination and on equality issues. Finally, suggestions for a comprehensive system for supporting victims of discrimination have been elaborated.

ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE PROJECT

The system for combating discrimination in Croatia is based on the Anti-discrimination Act and involves a wide range of stakeholders.



The efficiency and effectiveness of the system combating discrimination depends on

- the awareness for and recognition of discrimination among key stakeholders responsible for the implementation of anti-discrimination legislation,
- easy access to institutions supporting potential victims in gaining access to their right to non-discrimination and therefore justice,
- complaints handling competences of the equality body to solve cases e.g. by intervening in court cases or by participating in associational action (i.e. strategic litigation) or by way of mediation,
- systematic collection of data on reported cases of discrimination, hate crime and equality issues,
- well established and transparent cooperation of all relevant institutions involved in the system,
- a comprehensive Annual report on occurrences of discrimination – including the views and expertise of all ombud institutions as well as NGOs – analysing the situation of especially vulnerable groups, depicting trends and issuing recommendations how to further improve the system of combating discrimination,
- the visibility and out-reach work of the central equality body among marginalized groups and at the regional/local level in order to overcome under-reporting,
- institutionalized social dialogue involving the equality body, NGOs, and social partners.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Take enough time to reflect on internal procedures within the BC institutions in order to develop a pool of resources of ideas, suggestions and recommendations to build on in the aftermath of the project,
- Continuously test and further develop the guidelines and principles for complaints handling as well as the criteria identified for selecting cases most eligible for mediation or strategic litigation within the Ombudsman institution,
- Continue to work on lowering the threshold for potential victims of discrimination to gain access to the Ombudsman and specialized

ombuds to report cases of discrimination,

- Use the project as an opportunity to establish and strengthen relations with potential co-operation partners like the Ministry of Justice, bodies collecting data on equality issues (e.g. Croatian Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Education, etc.), the Data Protection Agency, etc.
- Continue raising awareness for the concepts of discrimination and for EU case law on discrimination among judges, who play a key role in developing domestic case law on discrimination issues,,
- Define, institutionalize and further work on the cooperation with specialized ombuds and NGOs,
- Intensify and continuously work on outreach to key stakeholders at the local and regional level (including trainings),
- Establish and institutionalize social dialogue facilitated by the Ombudsman.

PROJECT PARTNERS

Republic of Croatia

- Ombudsman
- Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities

Member State

The leading Member State partner is the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights, which is supported by:

- the Austrian Ombud for Equal Treatment
- the Austrian Ombudsman Board
- Labour and Social Court, Federal Ministry of Justice
- Federal Social Welfare Office
- City of Vienna – Department for Integration and Diversity
- Federal Province of Salzburg – Department for Women and Equal Treatment

DURATION AND FUNDING

The implementation phase of the project started in November 2011 and ended in June 2013.

The overall amount of the budget was € 690,000. The amount of € 655,500 was financed by the EU and € 34,500 by the Republic of Croatia.

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The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) provides assistance within the framework of the European Partnership of the potential candidate countries and the Accession Partnership of the candidate countries.

IPA is created as a flexible instrument made up of 5 components, with its main objective to support institution-building and the rule of law, human rights, including the fundamental freedoms, minority rights, gender equality and non-discrimination, both administrative and economic reforms, economic and social development, reconciliation and reconstruction, and regional and cross-border cooperation.

The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.



Find more on project on
www.ombudsman.hr
<http://www.uljppnm.vlada.hr>

The European Union's IPA Programme for Croatia

IPA 2009

TWINNING PROJECT

ESTABLISHING A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM FOR ANTI-DISCRIMINATION PROTECTION

The project is implemented by

Republic of Austria

Ombudsman

Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities

Republic of Croatia