

## Universal Periodic Review

(22<sup>nd</sup> session)

### Contribution of UNESCO to Compilation of UN information

(to Part I. A. and to Part III - F, J, K, and P)

#### Croatia

#### I. BACKGROUND AND FRAMEWORK

##### A. Scope of international obligations: Human rights treaties which fall within the competence of UNESCO and international instruments adopted by UNESCO

1. Table:

<i>Title</i>	<i>Date of ratification, accession or succession</i> <i>dd/mm/yyyy</i>	<i>Declarations /reservations</i>	<i>Recognition of specific competences of treaty bodies</i>	<i>Reference to the rights within UNESCO's fields of competence</i>
Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)	06/07/1992 Notification of succession	<i>Reservations to this Convention shall not be permitted</i>		Right to education
Convention on Technical and Vocational Education (1989)	Not the state party to this convention			Right to education
Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972)	06/07/1992, Succession			Right to take part in cultural life
Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003)	28/07/2005, Ratification			Right to take part in cultural life
Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005)	31/08/2006, Approval			Right to take part in cultural life

## II. Input to Part III. Implementation of international human rights obligations, taking into account applicable international humanitarian law to items F, J, K, and P

### Right to education

#### Constitutional Framework:

2. The **Constitution of the Republic of Croatia**<sup>1</sup>, adopted on 22 December 1990, as last amended in 2010, provides in its **Article 66** that “In the Republic of Croatia, everyone shall have access to education under equal conditions and in accordance with his/her aptitudes. Compulsory education shall be free, in conformity with law.” **Article 67** adds that “Subject to the conditions specified by law, the establishment of private schools and learning institutions shall be permitted” and **Article 68** specifies that “The autonomy of universities shall be guaranteed.” **Article 64** provides that “Parents shall bear responsibility for the upbringing, welfare and education of their children, and they shall have the right and freedom to make independent decisions concerning the upbringing of their children. Parents shall be responsible for ensuring the right of their children to the full and harmonious development of their personalities. Physically and mentally disabled and socially neglected children shall be entitled to special care, education and welfare.” According to **Article 14** “All persons in the Republic of Croatia shall enjoy rights and freedoms, regardless of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other conviction, national or social origin, property, birth, education, social status or other characteristics. All persons shall be equal before the law” and **Article 15** adds that “Equal rights for the members of all national minorities in the Republic of Croatia are guaranteed. [...] The freedom of the members of all national minorities to express their nationality, to use their language and script, and to exercise cultural autonomy shall be guaranteed.” In regard with languages, **Article 12** provides that “The Croatian language and the Latin script shall be in official use in the Republic of Croatia. In individual local units, another language and Cyrillic or some other script may be introduced in official use together with the Croatian language and Latin script under conditions specified by law.”

#### Legislative Framework:

3. Croatia legislative framework is composed of:

- a) **The Anti-Discrimination Act**<sup>2</sup>, entered into force on **January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009** whose **article 1** provides for the protection and promotion of equality, applying to state bodies including education (**Article 8**).
- b) “The **Constitutional Act on the Rights of National Minorities**<sup>3</sup> (Official Gazette, No. 155/02) guarantees to national and ethnic communities or minorities rights and freedoms in the most important fields of life, among which are non-discrimination and equality, and freedom of choice in education.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.sabor.hr/Default.aspx?art=2405> ,

<http://www.unesco.org/education/edurights/media/docs/794dbd2f591920a0adf529395136c621e3956835.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.ombudsman.hr/dodaci/The\\_anti-discrimination\\_act.pdf](http://www.ombudsman.hr/dodaci/The_anti-discrimination_act.pdf) ,

<http://www.unesco.org/education/edurights/media/docs/afbcd30ae40709aac24fa76080dde882d84a3aba.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/untc/unpan017847.pdf> ,

<http://www.unesco.org/education/edurights/media/docs/80f96a4a328feb3b13319a74b47b844e4c4c9517.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Croatia Report submitted for the Seventh Consultation on the implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (2000-2005), 2006, p. 8

- c) “The **Act on the Education in Languages and Scripts of National Minorities**<sup>5</sup> (Official Gazette, Nos. 51/00 and 56/00) guarantees national minorities the right to education acquired by earlier regulations and on the basis of international agreements signed by the Republic of Croatia.”<sup>6</sup>
- d) The **Pre-school Education Act** (Official Gazette, No. 10/97) regulates the right, but not the obligation to form and educate children from their earliest age till the beginning of the primary school education.”<sup>7</sup>
- e) The **Primary Education Act** (Official Gazette, Nos. 59/90, 27/93, 7/96, 59/01, 114/01 and 76/05) makes primary education compulsory for all **children, in principle, from six to fifteen years of age regardless their citizenship (article 3). It also prescribes the primary education of children and young people with developmental difficulties (article 60).**
- f) The **Secondary Education Act** (OG, Nos. 19/92, 27/93, 50/95, 59/01, 114/01 and 81/05) which provides for secondary education for children of members of ethnic minorities (article 5) as well as **pupils with greater developmental difficulties are educated in special institutions (article 19).** *The Ordinance on secondary education of pupils with development difficulties and greater development difficulties (Official Gazette, No. 86/92)* prescribes the special organizations, programs, conditions, manner and admissions procedure for pupils with developmental difficulties and greater development difficulties. “Secondary education is **accessible to everyone, is free for pupils who attended the regular forms in so-called state-run schools** (local ownership); conditions of education and status of the pupils are regulated by the said act and implementation regulations. [...] **Articles 9 and 23** of the said Act prescribe the **possibility of running the educational process in Croatian state-run schools in foreign languages**, as well as the possibility of experimental work in teaching that would enable the organization of classes in vocational education training in more foreign languages, as is for example the right to teach in languages of national minorities.”<sup>8</sup>
- g) “**The State Matura** was introduced into the Croatian educational system by holding a test State Matura in the school year 2008/2009. It comprises external evaluation of examinations that reviews the **sophomore's knowledge under equal conditions**, great care in the drafting of the Regulations on the State Matura (Official Gazette 127/10) was given to the equal status of all participants. In order to secure an equal position for all candidates of the State Matura exams, Article 2 of the Regulations stipulates that State Matura exams are standardized tests that are conducted throughout the state at the same time under the same conditions and criteria for all students respectively candidates for school- leaving examinations.
- h) The **Act on Scientific Activity and Higher Education**<sup>9</sup> (OG, Nos. 123/03, 198/03 – The Croatian Government Regulations on Amendments to the Act Article 122 1 in force from July 1, 2004, 105/04 and 174/04) In May 2001 Croatia signed the ***Bologna declaration*** and accepted all the principles of the *Bologna process* that were installed

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.see-educoop.net/education\\_in/pdf/law\\_on\\_education-cro-enl-t04.pdf](http://www.see-educoop.net/education_in/pdf/law_on_education-cro-enl-t04.pdf) (Accessed 2/05/11)

<sup>6</sup> Croatia Report submitted for the Seventh Consultation on the implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (2000-2005), 2006, p. 9

<sup>7</sup> Croatia Report submitted for the Seventh Consultation on the implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (2000-2005), 2006, p. 13

<sup>8</sup> Croatia Report submitted for the Seventh Consultation on the implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (2000-2005), 2006, p. 17

<sup>9</sup> <http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/306330.html> (in croatian)

in the **Scientific Work and Higher Education Act, from July 2003** and in the amendments and supplements of the same act from July 2004.

- i) “On 15 July 2008, the Croatian Parliament adopted the new **Gender Equality Act**, which [...] prescribes the general prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital or family status and sexual orientation. [...] The central body for the implementation of this Act is the People’s Ombudsman.”<sup>10</sup>
- j) “**Act on the Recognition of Equal Value of Foreign School Leaving Diplomas and Certificates** (Official Gazette Nos. 57/96 and 21/00)
- k) **Act on Primary and Secondary School Textbooks** (OG, Nos. 117/01, 59/03 and 36/06)
- l) **Education and Inspection Act** (OG, Nos. 50/95 and 73/97)
- m) **Act on Professional and Educational Supervision** (Official Gazette No. 73/97)
- n) **Act on Adult Education Centers** (OG, 54/97, 5/98 and 109/99) [...]
- o) **Research Activity Act** (OG, No. 59/96, Final Draft)
- p) **Student Assembly Act** (Official Gazette, No. 139/97)
- q) **Technical Terms and Academic Degrees Act** (Official Gazette, No. 128/99, 35/00 and 120/03)
- r) **Act on the Recognition of Equality of Foreign School Diplomas and Certificates** (OG, Nos. 158/03 and 198/03)
- s) **Act on the Recognition of Equal Value of Foreign School Leaving Diplomas and Certificates** (Official Gazette Nos. 57/96 and 21/00)”<sup>11</sup>
- t) **Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education** (April 3, 2009)<sup>12</sup>

### **Institutional Framework:**

4. “At its 24th session, held on 28 October 2011, Croatian Parliament adopted the strategic document *the Higher Education Institutions and Study Programmes Network*. The document was, in accordance with the provisions of the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (OG 45/09), proposed by the National Council for Higher Education. On the same occasion Croatian Parliament accepted *the Activity Report of the National Council for Higher Education for 2010*. *Network* document includes the analysis of the existing network of higher education institutions and study programmes and gives overview of conditions related to its development as well as challenges occurred during that process. Document sets out qualitative criteria that should serve as a basis for future assessments of justifiability/feasibility of establishing new higher educations and study programmes: teacher workload, teacher-student ratio, percentage of classes held by own

<sup>10</sup>UNICEF, “Croatia – Analysis of Gender Issues”, 2011, p. 4,

[http://www.unicef.hr/upload/file/356/178134/FILENAME/Gender\\_Analysis\\_Report.pdf](http://www.unicef.hr/upload/file/356/178134/FILENAME/Gender_Analysis_Report.pdf) , Accessed on 27/02/2014

<sup>11</sup> Croatia Report submitted for the Seventh Consultation on the implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (2000-2005), 2006, pp. 20-21

<sup>12</sup>Decree promulgating the Act on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education

[https://www.azvo.hr/images/stories/o\\_nama/Act\\_on\\_Quality\\_Assurance\\_in\\_Science\\_and\\_Higher\\_Education.pdf](https://www.azvo.hr/images/stories/o_nama/Act_on_Quality_Assurance_in_Science_and_Higher_Education.pdf)

teaching staff, space for each student in square metres, labour market needs, interest for the field of study, number of enrolled students in summer deadline for admission, carrying out study programmes on Areas of Special State Concern compliance with priorities of the Republic of Croatia and compliance with state and county developmental strategies, expenses from the governmental budget, carrying out programmes together with other institutions, ratio between number of students and the number of pupils who finish secondary school by region.”<sup>13</sup>

5. The following are the Croatian educational institutions<sup>14</sup>:

- Kindergartens
- Primary schools
- Secondary schools
- Higher Education Institutions
- Scientific Institutes
- Technology and Research and Development Centers
- Centre for Karst
- Technology-Development Centre Osijek Ltd.
- Technology-Innovation Centre Rijeka Ltd.
- Technology Centre Split Ltd.
- Centre of Technology Transfer - CTT Ltd.
- Research and Development Centre for Mariculture, Ston

### **Policy Framework:**

#### **i) General information**

6. “**Preschool education** in the Republic of Croatia encompasses education and care of the children of preschool age, realized through educational, health care, nourishment and social care programs for children from six months of age until school age. **Eight-year elementary education** in the Republic of Croatia is compulsory and free for all children between the ages of six and fifteen. Following elementary education, **secondary education** enables everyone, under equal terms and according to one’s capabilities, to acquire knowledge and skills required for work or continuation of education. **Quality higher education** is a precondition for a successful society. Therefore, one of the main tasks of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports is care for the creation of an intellectual nucleus which would implement this important task with the assistance of Croatian universities, two-year and four-year colleges.”<sup>15</sup>

7. The Development Strategy of Croatia, set out in the government document entitled **Strategic Framework for Development for 2006 to 2013** is in accordance with the

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<sup>13</sup> Agency for Science and Higher Education Croatia

<https://www.azvo.hr/index.php/en/component/content/article/63-izdvojeno/778-mree-visokih-uilita-i-studijjskih-programa>

<sup>14</sup> MZOS webpage on institutions, <http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?sec=3143>

<sup>15</sup> Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, <http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?sec=2497>, Accessed on 27/02/2014

constitutional changes which final result would be an **extension of compulsory education until the first acquisition of qualifications.**<sup>16</sup>

8. “In accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations Literacy Decade the Croatian Government launched in the period from 2003 to 2012 the project **"For a Literate Croatia: The Way to a Desirable Future - A Decade of Literacy in Croatia 2003 -2012"** The project is under the authority of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, and stake-holders are government offices in the counties, primary schools and adult education institutions that implement licensed primary education for adults.”<sup>17</sup>

#### ii) Inclusive Education

9. “The **National programme for the Roma and the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 - 2015** provides measures that contribute to the elimination of long-standing marginalization and discrimination of the Roma minority, and contribute to their integration into the regular educational system. This applies particularly to a fivefold increase of attendance of compulsory primary education of the Roma minority in the past five years, providing a pre-school program in the year before they start primary school and parental co-share in the cost of preschool education for children of the Roma minority, the provision of learning the Croatian language for Roma children who known insufficiently Croatian language or not at all, providing transportation and extended stay. In secondary education, all members of the Roma minority receive scholarships, as well as Roma students in higher education with the assumption that they identify themselves as members of the Roma minority.”<sup>18</sup>

#### iii) Quality education

10. Since it was established in 2005, the Agency for Science and Higher Education has been working on organising a system of quality assurance in higher education and science.<sup>19</sup>

11. “To ensure the same quality of education and teaching in all primary schools in Croatia, the **State Education and Teaching Standards for Elementary Education** was passed (Official Gazette 63/08 and 90/10), and in 2011 the Decision on the **Network of Primary and Secondary Schools and Boarding Homes for Students** (Official Gazette 70/11) was enacted.”<sup>20</sup>

#### iv) Curriculum

12. In July 2010, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports issued a **National Curriculum Framework for Preschool education and general compulsory and secondary education**. The introduction states that: “*The goal of developing a knowledge-based society and continuing globalisation has highlighted the role of education in personal and social development. The Republic of Croatia has recognised the need to transform the*

<sup>16</sup> Croatia Report submitted for the Eighth Consultation on the implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (2006-2011), 2013, p. 8

<sup>17</sup> Croatia Report submitted for the Eighth Consultation on the implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (2006-2011), 2013, p. 10

<sup>18</sup> Croatia Report submitted for the Eighth Consultation on the implementation of the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education (2006-2011), 2013, p. 22

<sup>19</sup> ASHE website,

<https://www.azvo.hr/index.php/en/kvaliteta/osiguravanje-kvalitete>

<sup>20</sup> Croatia Report submitted for the Eight Consultation on CADE implementation, p 3

*school system in order for it to meet the demands of modern times, with the changes in the national curriculum being an important element of these changes.*<sup>21</sup>

13. The Framework also provides for human rights education stating that:

*“Students will:*

*- describe what the right to human dignity means for them and recognise that this is a universal human right and is granted to everyone, irrespective of their age, sex, skin colour, health condition etc.*

*- specify and describe their rights and duties, as well as the rights and duties of people in their immediate surroundings, and assess their importance for everyday life.*<sup>22</sup>

#### **v) Financing of education**

14. “In most counties in Croatia, local communities participate in co-funding of primary and secondary school student transportation on the basis of their decision on the conditions and manner of financing the costs of transportation for students, setting out the terms of co-financing and costs of transportation, which is usually expressed as a percentage of total costs of transportation of primary and secondary school students.”<sup>23</sup>

15. “In order to improve the living conditions of teachers and provide for their professional employment in all parts of Croatia, a **Decision was signed in August 2007** stipulating the terms and conditions of granting subsidized interest rates for housing loans to teachers in primary schools and secondary school temp professors from August 31 to December 31 2007.”<sup>24</sup>

16. “Within the **European Union Programme for Croatia**, IPA Component IV Human Resources Development, a service contract was conducted under the title "Inclusion of students with disabilities in education for employment". The project developed elements for innovative mechanisms at national and regional level that will enable students with disabilities to have access to vocational education and the labour market. The project was directed towards the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular vocational education taking into account their specific and individual needs, with special emphasis on the assessment of vocational and social opportunities abilities of people with disabilities. Within the same contract grant funds were awarded as a grant by signing seven agreements with a total value of EUR 1,568.814,11s with the goal of increasing educational achievement of students with disabilities in accordance with their needs and labour market needs and their overall social inclusion.”<sup>25</sup>

#### **vi) Gender equality**

17. “The **National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality** is the basic strategic document of the Republic of Croatia which it has adopted in order to eliminate discrimination

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<sup>21</sup> National Curriculum Framework for Preschool education and general compulsory and secondary education, Introduction, p 9

<http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?sec=2501>

<sup>22</sup> National Curriculum Framework for Preschool education and general compulsory and secondary education, Introduction, p 134, <http://public.mzos.hr/Default.aspx?sec=2501>

<sup>23</sup> Croatia Report submitted for the Eight Consultation on CADE implementation, p 15

<sup>24</sup> Croatia Report submitted for the Eight Consultation on CADE implementation, p 3

<sup>25</sup> Croatia Report submitted for the Eight Consultation on CADE implementation, p 3

against women and to establish genuine gender equality by the implementation of the policy of equal opportunities for the period from 2006 to 2010.”<sup>26</sup> In 2011, The Croatian Parliament revised the policy for the period 2011-2015.<sup>27</sup>

### **Cooperation:**

18. Croatia is **party** to the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education since 06/07/1992.

19. Croatia **did not report** to UNESCO on the measures taken for the implementation of the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education within the framework of the **Sixth Consultation** of Member States (covering the period 1994-1999).

20. However, Croatia **did report** to UNESCO within the framework of the:

a) **Seventh Consultation** of Member States (covering the period 2000-2005)

b) **Eighth Consultation** of Member States (covering the period 2006-2011).

21. Croatia did not report to UNESCO on the measures taken for the implementation of the 1974 UNESCO Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms within the framework of the:

c) **Fourth Consultation** of Member States (covering the period 2005-2008),

d) **Fifth Consultation** of Member States (covering the period 2009-2012).

22. Croatia did not report to UNESCO on the measures taken for the implementation of the 1976 UNESCO Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education within the framework of the **First Consultation** of Member States (1993). However Croatia did report to UNESCO within the framework of the **Second Consultation** of Member States (2011).

23. Croatia is **not party** to the 1989 UNESCO Convention on Technical and Vocational Education.

## **Freedom of opinion and expression**

### **Constitutional and Legislative Framework:**

24. Freedoms of thought and expression are guaranteed under Section III Article 38 of the Croatian Constitution (2001)<sup>28</sup>.

25. Defamation is considered as criminal offence under the Criminal Code of Croatia.

26. In 2003, the Right of Access to Information Act was passed in Croatia.

### **Media Self-Regulation:**

27. There is a media self-regulatory mechanism in Croatia including the Union of Croatian Journalists. Additionally, there also exist the Croatian Journalist’s Association.

<sup>26</sup> The National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2006-2010,

<http://www.ured-ravnopravnost.hr/site/preuzimanje/biblioteka-ona/7-nacionalna-eng.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> The National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2011-2015

<http://www.ured->

[ravnopravnost.hr/site/images/pdf/kb%20strategija%20za%20ravnopravnost%20spolova%20knjizica%20eng.pdf](http://www.ured-ravnopravnost.hr/site/images/pdf/kb%20strategija%20za%20ravnopravnost%20spolova%20knjizica%20eng.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.sabor.hr/Default.aspx?art=2405>

### Safety of Journalists:

28. UNESCO recorded two killings of journalists or media professionals in Croatia between 2008 and 2013. They are journalists Ivo Pukanic and Niko Franjic<sup>29</sup>. The Director-General of UNESCO condemned these killings and called on the government to inform UNESCO, on a voluntary basis, of the actions taken to prevent the impunity of the perpetrators and to notify the Director-General of the status of the judicial inquiries conducted on each of the killings condemned by UNESCO<sup>30</sup>. Based on the information provided by the Member State, the perpetrators of the crimes had been convicted for their crimes.

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Right to Education**

29. **Recommendations made within the framework of the first cycle of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, considered on (please check the date on the following web site: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/Documentation.aspx>)**

30. The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue listed below have been examined by Croatia and enjoyed its support:

- i) A - 96.6. Give special attention to educating **Roma girls**, many of whom are often unable to finish school because of their gender (Finland);

31. The following recommendations enjoy the support of Croatia, which considers that they have already been implemented or are in the process of implementation:

- ii) A - 97.9. Take supplementary measures aimed at the integration of **human rights education** and training into school curricula, and at training Government officials, as coordinated action along these lines could facilitate better implementation of the existing legal and institutional framework (Morocco);
- iii) A - 97.25. Strengthen efforts to combat **racial discrimination, especially against the Roma and Serb minorities**, in particular in the areas of education, employment, housing, citizenship and political participation (Ecuador);
- iv) A - 97.35. Step up the education and awareness-raising campaigns so as to **prevent ill treatment of boys and girls**, in accordance with recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (Chile);
- v) A - 97.36. Further improve prison conditions, with a special focus on tackling overcrowding (Azerbaijan); continue legislative and practical efforts to improve living conditions **in prison and detention facilities**, in particular with regard to reducing overcrowding and ensuring access to health care and education (Austria);
- vi) A - 97.66. Pursue its ongoing positive efforts to promote and protect the rights of children in the area of access to health and education, as well as to ensure the **empowerment of women** (Cuba);
- vii) A - 97.67. Ensure **equal access to quality education for Roma children** (Finland);

<sup>29</sup> See

<sup>30</sup> See Resolution 29 adopted by the 29th General Conference of UNESCO in 1997.

- viii) A - 97.68. **Reach out to the parents of Roma children** to make sure that they fully understand the importance of education and, in this effort, use school assistants with a Roma background (Finland);
- ix) A - 97.69. Tailor and design **tuition in special schools** on the basis of the child's individual needs rather than ethnicity (Finland);
- x) The following recommendations will be examined by Croatia, which will provide responses in due course, but no later than the 16th session of the Human Rights Council, in March 2011:
- xi) A - 98.19. Increase measures to **integrate ethnic Serb and Roma minorities** into the fabric of Croatian life, including through a broadcast media campaign to communicate and strengthen themes of reconciliation and tolerance. Such a media campaign could also target the minority communities themselves with messages on how to address some of the issues that perpetuate discrimination, such as Roma-language broadcasts on birth registration, education and health services (United States);

### **Analysis:**

31. Croatia adopted a special plan to further promote inclusion of Roma population in its educational system. In addition, human right education is included in National curricula. Moreover, Croatia is still promoting women and girls position through national policy. Moreover, according to available information, though Croatia adopted measures to ensure minorities' rights, it has not yet adopted specific measures for the Serb community. In addition, no sufficient measures to address ill treatment or to reduce tuitions of special schools have been taken.

### **Specific recommendations:**

- 32. Croatia should be encouraged to continue to submit state reports for the periodic consultations of UNESCO's education related standard-setting instruments.**
- 33. Croatia could be encouraged to improve access to education, especially in special schools.**
- 34. Croatia may be encouraged to take additional measures to promote minorities' rights.**

### **Freedom of opinion and expression**

35. Croatia is recommended to decriminalize defamation and place it within a civil code that is in accordance with international standards<sup>31</sup>.
36. Croatia is encouraged to further develop self-regulatory mechanisms in the media.

### **Cultural rights**

37. As a State Party to the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972), the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible

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<sup>31</sup> See for example, General Comments No 34. of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 2006 Recommendation of the 87<sup>th</sup> Session Human Rights Committee, the recommendations of the UN Special Rapporteurs on the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, and Resolution 1577 (2007) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Cultural Heritage (2003)<sup>32</sup> and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005), Croatia is encouraged to fully implement the relevant provisions that promote access to and participation in cultural heritage and creative expressions and, as such, are conducive to implementing the right to take part in cultural life as defined in article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. In doing so, Croatia is encouraged to give due consideration to the participation of communities, practitioners, cultural actors and NGOs from the civil society as well as vulnerable groups (minorities, indigenous peoples, migrants, refugees, young peoples and peoples with disabilities), and to ensure that equal opportunities are given to women and girls to address gender disparities.

**Freedom of scientific research and  
the right to benefit from scientific progress and its applications**

38. With regard to contribution of science and technology to development, Croatia is encouraged to report to UNESCO within the framework of the on-going consultations with Member States on the monitoring of the implementation and the proposed revision of the 1974 Recommendation on the Status of Scientific Researchers, in particular on the measures undertaken in the country to implement such principles of the Recommendation as the obligation of state authorities to ensure that scientific researchers have the responsibility and the right to work in a spirit of intellectual freedom; to participate in the determination of the aims, content and methods of research, which should be compatible with respect for universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as ecological and social responsibility; to creativity, occupational mobility, international cooperation for furtherance of international peace, cooperation and understanding, etc.

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<sup>32</sup> See UNESCO. 2012. Croatia Periodic Report on the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/doc/download.php?versionID=18797>