



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

Distr.: General  
18 August 2014

Original: English

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child

Sixty-seventh session

1–19 September 2014

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

Consideration of reports of States parties

### List of issues in relation to the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Croatia

Addendum

### Replies of Croatia to the list of issues\*

[Date received: 16 July 2014]

## Part I

#### 1. Please provide a systematic overview of funds spent in the areas covered by the National Plan of Activities for the Rights and Interests of Children 2006–2012 and the results achieved

1. The achievement of goals, the implementation and the consistent realisation of measures and activities of the National Plan of Activities for the Rights and Interests of Children 2006–2012 (hereinafter: the National Plan) are obligations of state administration bodies, local and regional self-government units, the media and non-governmental organisations whose programmes are aimed at protecting the rights of children in the Republic of Croatia. The systematic National Plan implementation monitoring is the responsibility of the Council for Children, and the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, as the National Plan implementation coordinator, has prepared the 2010 and 2011 implementation reports for the National Plan of Activities for the Rights and Interests of Children 2006–2012. The preparation of the 2012 report is still in progress.

2. For the performance of measures during 2010 and 2011 state administration bodies spent HRK 1,555,260,300.00 (see Table 1 for a detailed specification). The total spending for the performance of measures and activities is much greater than the above amount, since considerable amounts have been provided and spent through the regular activities of state

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



administration bodies and in form of funds spent by local and regional self-government units, as shown in individual reports.

Table 1  
**Overview of spending according to fields of activity**

<i>Field of activity</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>
1. Education	505,885,890.00	458,228,977.00
2. Health care	90,327,211.00	83,217,238.00
3. Nutrition	50,000.00	35,000.00
4. Role of the family in child upbringing and education	8,397,248.00	31,561,808.00
5. Social welfare	489,916.00	594,810.00
6. Children with behavioural disorders	3,507,110.00	784,710.00
7. Children members of national minorities	6,792,082.00	8,272,000.00
8. Children — trafficking victims	100,000.00	—
9. Children with special needs	104,538,103.00	17,244,697.00
10. Abused and neglected children	7,399,556.00	660,767.00
11. Children affected by war and war consequences	91,891,413.00	95,516,180.00
12. Children's free time and culture	21,526,358.00	12,090,992.00
13. Media	3,521,215.00	2,627,019.00
14. Strengthening the implementation of international obligations assumed by the Republic of Croatia in the field of children's rights	Funds intended for regular activities of state administration bodies	Funds intended for regular activities of state administration bodies
<b>Total</b>	<b>844,426,102.00</b>	<b>710,834,198.00</b>

3. The analysis of measures has shown that only 2 % of the measures could not be performed, and that others have been performed or are being performed continuously.

4. The following is a summary of performance results according to fields.

**(a) Education**

5. Significant funds have been invested in the construction, renovation and furnishing of new school facilities, teacher education and the implementation of preventive programmes. There has been a slight increase in the number of schools working in a single shift, with extended stay and daylong classes. The number of professional employees in preschool and primary-school institutions has increased. The number of children with developmental difficulties included in regular departments of children's day care facilities and elementary schools has increased, and the number of children attending special institutions has been reduced. The number of children of the Roma national minority attending secondary schools has increased significantly, by almost 45 %. The Citizenship Education programme has been introduced, the number of topics concerning children's rights in textbooks has been increased and a series of programmes have been carried out and professional gatherings held with the aim of preventing risky behaviours.

**(b) Health care**

6. Today, 29 of 31 maternity hospitals in Croatia carry the title of "Baby Friendly Maternity Hospital", the breastfeeding rate on leaving the maternity hospital has grown to

95 percent, and more than two-thirds of mothers breastfeed their babies during their first months of life. The “Croatian National Programme for HIV/AIDS Prevention 2011–2015” and the “Children and Youth Suicide Prevention Programme 2011–2013” have been adopted. Neonatal mortality has been reduced, as well as the mortality rate of children less than 5 years of age. The number of children killed in traffic has been reduced significantly, as well as the number of seriously injured children and children with minor injuries. A series of projects and programmes aimed at the prevention of injuries, advancement of mental health and the promotion of sex and health education have been implemented.

**(c) Nutrition**

7. The breastfeeding promotion programme has been included in the National Health Care Strategy 2012–2020. The Action Plan for Preventing and Reducing Excess Bodyweight 2010–2012 has been adopted. National guidelines concerning nutrition in elementary schools have been issued and educational activities on healthy nutrition in elementary schools have been performed.

**(d) Role of the family in child upbringing and education**

8. Through the work of the family centres, a series of counselling and prevention activities have been performed and projects of associations aimed at support to families have been financed, especially those oriented towards single-parent families, development of parental competences, development of successful and responsible parenting, preparation of young people for partnership, parenthood and family life, juvenile parents and the prevention of family violence. The “Situation Analysis of Children’s and Women’s Rights in Croatia” and the “Situation Analysis and Recommendations for Action in Cases of Juvenile Pregnancies and Parenthood” have been prepared.

9. From 2010 to the end of 2012, employees of the family centres have implemented the “Responsible Parenting” programme and, during 2013, treatment officers at the Valtura Penitentiary and the Pula Prison have performed the programme approved by the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth. During 2013, the Department of special programmes for prisoners and juveniles of the Ministry of Justice prepared a programme under the title “Prisoner as Parent”. A manual has been written concerning this programme, and a pilot project has been conducted in the Lipovica-Popovača Penitentiary. During 2014, educational activities concerning the implementation of the mentioned programme in 12 penal institutions will be performed for the interested treatment and security personnel of penal institutions.

**(e) Social welfare**

10. The “Plan for Deinstitutionalisation and Transformation of Social Welfare Homes and Other Legal Entities in the Republic of Croatia 2011–2016 (2018)” and the “Guidelines for Preparation of the Individual Plan for Deinstitutionalisation and Transformation of Social Welfare Homes and Other Legal Entities” have been prepared. In May 2010, all social welfare centres have received the instruction to ensure that children without adequate parental care younger than three years of age are placed in a foster family, and only exceptionally in a children’s home, whereas the 2011 Social Welfare Act prescribes the same for children up to 7 years of age. In the course of transformation, the number of children placed in institutions is being reduced, and the number of children in non-institutional forms of care is increasing. Educational activities organised for employees of social welfare centres included activities related to their work with sexually abused children and activities for the improvement of interdepartmental cooperation in family-law and criminal-law protection of children, youth and the family. There were also educational activities on the new work methods, as well as a number of educational activities on other

topics. The process of introducing supervision of psychosocial work in the social welfare system has been initiated.

**(f) Children with behavioural problems**

11. The National Strategy for the Prevention of Drug Abuse in the Republic of Croatia 2012–2017 has been issued. The Committee for Monitoring and Improvement of Work of the Bodies in Criminal Proceedings and the Execution of Juvenile Sanctions has been established. The surveys “Substance Abuse among the General Population of the Republic of Croatia” and “European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs for 2011” (ESPAD) have been conducted. Funds were provided for three-year projects of associations which contributed to the development of peer support in the local community and the inclusion of children in the prevention of behavioural problems, as well as for projects focused on the prevention of drug abuse and all others forms of addiction. A series of activities for the improvement of alternative sanctions for juvenile offenders has been performed. In cooperation with the UNICEF Office for Croatia, the State Attorney’s Office of the RoC and the Association for Out-of-Court Settlement, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth performed a one-year education course for 39 mediators in out-of-court settlement. This enabled the mediation process to be conducted on the entire territory of the RoC. In partnership with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety of Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Co-operation Overseas — NICO (its EU Member State Twinning partner), the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth implemented the Twinning project entitled “Improving Experts’ Capacities for the Protection of Rights and Interests of Children and Youth Placed in Homes for Children and Youth with Behavioural Disorders”, which was financed within the EU IPA 2009 programme for Croatia. Project activities included experts from all 12 homes for children and youth with behavioural disorders in the RoC. Key components of the project focused on the development of managerial competences of directors general, development of expert knowledge and skills in the field of non-institutional programme development, deinstitutionalisation, work with traumatised children and improvement of interdepartmental cooperation. For the purpose of project result sustainability, 36 experts have been educated within the Train the Trainers programme.

**(g) Children members of national minorities**

12. New curricula have been prepared for primary and secondary school classes in Czech, Hungarian, Italian and Serbian. A series of textbooks for the purposes of classes in the language and script of national minorities have been prepared, translated and/or printed. Educational programmes for preschool children are being implemented. A number of professional gatherings have been held for teachers teaching in the languages of national minorities. The activities for the preparation of the new National Strategy for the Inclusion of the Roma People 2013–2020 have been initiated in this period. Non-governmental organisation projects encouraging multi- and interculturality, also among members of national minorities, have been financed, and the development of national minorities’ cultural amateurism and cultural events has been stimulated. Activities of the national minority libraries are being financed.

**(h) Children — trafficking victims**

13. The National Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings 2009–2011 has been prepared, in which children are an especially significant target group. Educational activities for all target groups of the National Plan (elementary school students and beneficiaries in homes) are being performed continuously. The Amendments to the Protocol for Identification, Assistance and Protection of Human Trafficking Victims, entitling the guardian of a juvenile trafficking victim to decide on his/her participation in the assistance

and protection programme, with due regard to the best interest of the juvenile and taking into consideration his/her opinion, have been adopted. In 2013, the Government of the Republic of Croatia issued a new Protocol on the Treatment of Children Separated from their Parents — Foreign Citizens, which prescribes interdepartmental cooperation and defines, taking into consideration the needs of unaccompanied children, the placing of unaccompanied children in appropriate facilities, where international instruments are applied, under consistent compliance with the four principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: non-discrimination, best interests of the child, right to life, survival and development and the right of the child to be heard. In partnership with the Ministry of the Interior, with the support of and in cooperation with the UNHCR and the Association for New Initiatives, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth held three regional workshops focused on the successful implementation of the Protocol in practice, intended for the experts from the fields of social welfare and health care and police officers.

**(i) Children with developmental difficulties**

14. Currently in progress are the development of early interventions, the expansion of the support network for children with neurodevelopmental difficulties and the improvement of the physical accessibility of educational institutions in order to ensure uniform availability of education to students with major motor difficulties. The number of teaching assistants for children with developmental difficulties and the number of sign language interpreters for deaf and deaf-blind persons who are financed from the state budget has been increased. The number of parents obtaining the status of parent carer has increased in relation to 2009, when this right was first introduced. A great number of educational activities and professional gatherings for experts working with children with developmental difficulties have been performed. Five mobile expert teams offering counselling services to schools have been established. Projects prepared by associations of persons with disabilities and associations whose programmes include persons with disabilities are continuously financed.

**(j) Abused and neglected children**

15. The Act on Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse has been adopted. Criminal offences from the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse have been fully implemented in the Criminal Code which was adopted in 2011 and entered into force on 1 January 2013. The Protocol for Responding to Sexual Violence and the Guidelines for Planning, Implementing and Evaluating the Prevention and Treatment Programmes for the Protection of Children against Violence have been prepared. A number of activities have been performed within the Council of Europe “One in Five” campaign. A series of prevention and intervention programmes for the protection of children against abuse and neglect have been financed, as well as projects focused on the prevention of violence against and among children. The International Epidemiological Study on Child Abuse and Neglect — BECAN has been conducted. The number of criminal offences from the field of criminal-law protection of children and minors has been reduced (3.8 % less in 2011, as compared to 2010).

**(k) Children affected by war and war consequences**

16. According to the Act on the Rights of Croatian Homeland War Veterans, the children of veterans killed in the war had, among other things, the rights to free textbooks, to secondary and tertiary education scholarships and to refund of expenses for national secondary school leaving examination preparation courses. Psychosocial support and a series of playgroups and creative workshops have been organised for children affected by war and war consequences. Considerable funds have been spent for demining of mined and

suspected hazardous areas and a series of educational lectures on the dangers of improper and illegal use of weapons, pyrotechnics and other explosive materials have been held. According to the Criminal Code which was adopted in 2011 and entered into force on 1 January 2013, the recruitment of children into armed groups distinct from the armed forces and their use in armed conflict and forced recruitment of children into armed forces (in accordance with the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict) is a criminal offence.

**(l) Children's free time and culture**

17. The International Children's Festival in Šibenik, the most significant Croatian event dedicated to creativity for children and by children, has been held since 1958. The State Championship of Primary and Secondary School Sports Clubs and the State Championship of Children with Difficulties in Mental Development have been held. Children's councils and children's forums meetings have been held. A number of programmes have been financed: pedagogical and educational programmes of museums; programmes intended to stimulate children to socialisation, knowledge expansion, creative research and action, active holidays and entertainment; sports and drama gatherings for children and youth from homes for children without adequate parental care; youth club programmes; the furnishing of children's departments of public libraries throughout Croatia as rooms for implementing children's free time programmes.

**(m) Media**

18. The 2011 Juvenile Courts Act defines (additional) provisions on the privacy of children in the media which prescribe secrecy of criminal inquiries and procedures with respect to juveniles. The new Criminal Code prescribes that "the child is entitled to legal protection against arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence and against unlawful attacks on his honour and reputation". Protection of privacy has been expanded to include all children — up to now, only children younger than 14 have been protected.

19. The analytical study entitled "Upbringing, Values and Media Manipulation" has been prepared. Projects focused on the development of multiculturalism, tolerance, human rights, non-violent conflict resolution and the promotion of children's rights have been financed and numerous magazines started at the level of individual children's day-care facilities, towns and cities, associations, and so on, have been co-financed. A number of recommendations on the protection of children's rights to privacy in the media have been addressed to the media.

**(n) Strengthening the implementation of international obligations assumed by the Republic of Croatia in the field of children's rights**

20. At its session held on 30 December 2010, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the third and fourth periodical reports of the Republic of Croatia in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The report was published on the website of the former Ministry of the Family, Veterans' Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity. Also, in 2011, the reports were translated into English.

21. Preparation of the Initial Report in accordance with the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography is in progress, and the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth has established an interdepartmental working group for the preparation of the report in accordance with this Optional Protocol.

**2. Please provide information on the share of the State party's gross domestic product (GDP) allocated to education, health and social protection in 2014, and how these allocations were spent, and budgets planned or projected for 2015 and 2016**

22. According to the budget plan for 2014, financial allocations in the education and science system amount to 3.5 % of the GDP, where about 80 % of funds are spent on salaries of the employees in the education and science system. The rest are funds intended for the development of the education system, including primary and secondary school education and higher education. The health care system allocation of about 7.2 % of the GDP is planned for 2014, including funds intended for the settling of liabilities of the county medical institutions, as well as of other unmet liabilities of the state medical institutions from the previous years and the settling of immediate liabilities of medical institutions incurred in 2013, in the amount of 1 % of the GDP. About 2.4 % of the GDP are intended for the salaries of personnel in the health care system, while the remaining funds are directed towards the safety of citizens and their rights to medical services, as well as capital investments in health infrastructure. The planned allocations in the social protection system amount to about 1.9 % of the GDP, and include social assistances and benefits, the care for the socially disadvantaged groups of the society and the social empowerment of the family, youth and children and of persons with disability. Having regard to the fact that, since January this year, the Republic of Croatia is under the excessive deficit procedure, and that it was necessary to adopt structural measures for the 2014–2016 period, and in order to meet the EU Council Recommendations, the share of projected expenditure in the value of the gross domestic product in the observed systems has been decreased. Thus the allocations for education, science and sports will amount to 3.3 % of the GDP in 2015 and 2016. Projected allocations for the health care system amount to 6.3 % of the GDP for 2015 and 6.1 % of the GDP for 2016. In accordance with the implementation of structural measures in the social protection system, allocations at the level of 1.8 % of the GDP and 1.7 % of the GDP in 2015 and 2016, respectively, have been projected.

**3. Please explain why the Council for Children is not functioning and what measures have been taken to strengthen it**

23. The Council for Children (hereinafter: the Council) has been operating continuously since 1998 as a national-level coordination body with the purpose of permanently monitoring the achievements of the national programme for children, the coordination of work performed by state and other bodies with regard to the monitoring of application of the Convention and other international acts concerning child protection and the monitoring of the implementation of national legislation and programmes.

24. According to the latest changes, of 2012, the Council consists of the president (deputy prime minister of the Republic of Croatia in the field of social activities and human rights) and members, including the representatives of state administration bodies and offices of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (9), scientific and expert institutions and other bodies and institutions (9), child care associations (3) the Croatian Journalists Association (1), the National Student Council (2) and a representative of the children (1). Since the last changes (2009), the number of members has been increased from 21 to 24, and two representatives of the children are included in the Council's work. The expert and administrative activities are performed for the Council by the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth.

25. After the Government of the Republic of Croatia had issued the Decision on the Establishment of the Council for Children and the Decision on the Appointment of the President, Deputy President, Members and Deputy Members of the Council for Children during 2012, the constitutive session of the Council was held in 2013. The Council's

workplan for 2013 was adopted at this session. As the preparation of a strategic document for children's rights for the period from 2014 to 2020 was a priority among the planned annual activities of the Council, a working group for the preparation of the national strategic document for the protection and promotion of children's rights in the Republic of Croatia, consisting of Council members, was appointed at its first session.

26. During 2013 and 2014, the working group for the preparation of the national strategic document for children's rights has worked continuously on the preparation of the document.

27. Please note that members of the Council for Children include representatives of the state administration bodies and prominent experts and scientists in the field of children's rights protection. During 2014, the list of Council members and their deputies was updated, since during 2012 and 2013 seven members of the Council for Children and eight deputies had changed. Their functions have not been professionalised, which can contribute to their inability to fully engage themselves on these functions. Moreover, it should be stressed that, in 2003, the institute of ombudsperson for children was established in the Republic of Croatia, which also influenced the change of the role of the Council for Children, which had been the only independent body dealing with children's rights in the Republic of Croatia up to that time. Besides the Council sessions, members of the Council for Children also meet for celebrations of special events such as the presentation of the award for the promotion of children's rights in the Republic of Croatia.

**4. Please inform the Committee about the impact of the European Court judgment in the case of *X v. the Republic of Croatia* (No. 11223/04 of 17 July 2008) and how it was implemented by the State party**

28. Based on the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights of 17 July 2008 in the case of X against Croatia, for the purpose of standardising the work, i.e., the procedures of the social welfare centres in the adoption process and harmonising them with the provisions of international regulations, especially with the provisions of the Hague Convention on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Co-operation in Respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children and with the European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights, and indirectly with other conventions protecting human rights, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare distributed expert instructions concerning the institute of adoption and the further activities of the social welfare centres in adoption procedures, so as to avoid any violation of provisions of the Convention in the future.

29. The Instructions on the Obligatory Procedure in Case of Adoption of a Child whose Parent is Completely Deprived of Legal Capacity prescribe the inclusion of the parent completely deprived of legal capacity in the procedure of adoption of his/her child, by enabling him/her to give his/her opinion in form of a statement to the record which is an integral part of the adoption case file. Instructions of the Ministry are binding for the social welfare centre.

30. The provision of Article 130 of the then applicable Family Act prescribes that the consent of the parent who is completely deprived of legal capacity is not required for adoption, but it should be stressed that the provision of Article 179 paragraph 2 of the same Act prescribes that, before undertaking any significant protection measures concerning the personal or property interests of the ward, the guardian is obliged to consider the opinion, wishes and feelings of the ward.

31. The new Family Act reforms the family legislation and is harmonised with the international legal standards and binding international documents, primarily the European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights, the UN Convention on the Rights of



Persons with Disabilities, the judgements of the European Court of Human Rights and the Council of Europe recommendations.

32. Amendments introduced by the new Family Act include changes to the provisions concerning the guardianship of adults and child adoption. The complete deprivation of legal capacity has been abolished, the deprivation of legal capacity and the deprivation of the right to parental care have been clearly separated and, for all parents with long-term incapacity to care for their child, whatever may caused it, a new institute is introduced — a court ruling replacing the parent's consent to the adoption of the child.

**5. Please provide information on the draft National Strategy for the Protection against Family Violence for the period 2011–2016, its adoption and its implementation**

33. The National Strategy of Protection against Family Violence for the Period 2011–2016 (hereinafter: the National Strategy) was issued at the session of the Government of the Republic of Croatia held on 3 February 2011. It is based on the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and international agreements, declarations, recommendations and conventions on the protection of human rights which oblige the signatory states to introduce non-discriminatory legislation and ensure equal rights for women and men (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women — CEDAW, the 1993 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the 1995 Beijing Platform, the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Human Rights Resolution 2005/41, the 1992 General Recommendation No. 19 of the Committee of the United Nations for the elimination of discrimination against women, Recommendation Rec (2002)5 of the Committee of Ministers of Europe, the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals). The 2005 Concluding Observations of the Committee of the United Nations for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women have also been used in the preparation of the guidelines of the National Strategy of Protection against Family Violence for the Period 2011–2016.

34. Along with constitutional and international bases and the legal framework, the National Strategy also contains a detailed analysis of the current situation in the Republic of Croatia and represents an upgrade of the already established system of prevention and protection of victims of family violence.

35. The National Strategy covers seven areas which include the following: (1) Prevention of family violence, (2) Improvement of interdepartmental cooperation, (3) Education of experts working in the field of protection against family violence, (4) Psychosocial treatment of family violence perpetrators, (5) Legal framework in the field of protection against family violence, (6) Care for and support to the victims of family violence and (7) Sensitisation of the public on the issue of family violence. Each area contains objectives, measures, indicators and designated competent authorities of the activities and the prescribed time limits for the implementation of measures. Please note that the National Strategy has introduced a number of measures which, in the field of family violence prevention, prescribe child protection and the exercise of professional care for the needs of each child who experienced exposure to family violence, the development and implementation of the programme of universal prevention of violence in partner relationships in the youth population and ensuring access to psychological treatment for children and youth traumatised by violence.

36. It authorises the competent authorities acting as designated competent authorities and co-designated competent authorities for the performance of measures to carry out the necessary activities for the purpose of preventing family violence and protecting the victims of family violence.

37. The National Strategy measures have been directly and continuously applied since 2011.

**6. Please provide information on the results of the implementation of the first phase of the projects aimed at testing the efficiency and costs of a social response to family violence. Please also provide information on programmes and measures taken for the prevention of violence against children in all other settings**

38. The implementation of the project “Efficiency and Costs of Social Reaction to Family Violence” had been started by the Ministry of Family, Veterans’ Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity in cooperation with the Society for Psychological Assistance. Based on the recommendation of the research coordinator, project implementation was not continued due to great difficulties in data collection. Therefore, in 2010, the Ministry of Family, Veterans’ Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity in cooperation with the Society for Psychological Assistance started a new three-year project “Monitoring and Evaluation of the Provision of Services to Victims of Family Violence Placed in Shelters”. In accordance with the new organisational structure, the Ministry of Social Policy has taken over the implementation of this project. The said project estimated the efficiency of interventions for family violence victims placed in homes and shelters from the beneficiary perspective and from the expert perspective, in light of improvements to the safety of members of families where violence had occurred. An analysis of the cost estimate for the services and assistances to family violence victims placed in homes or shelters has also been conducted within the project.

39. In 2010, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports co-financed 10 preventive programmes in primary and secondary schools, as well as the printing of professional literature dealing with prevention. Twenty-nine projects of civil society organisations oriented towards the preparation and implementation of different intervention and prevention programmes concerning the protection of children against abuse and neglect have also been financed. During 2010, the continuous implementation of the programme of the UNICEF Office for Croatia aiming to prevent peer violence and abuse entitled “For Safe and Stimulating Environment in Schools” has been continued in the 275 elementary schools involved so far, with another 26 elementary schools having joined in 2010. In 2010, another 9 schools completed the basic programme and received the status of “Violence-free School”. So far, a total of 157 schools have successfully completed the basic programme and received the status of “Violence-free School”, and together they create the “Violence-free School Network”. More than 150,000 children and 12,000 teachers participate in the programme. Furthermore, during 2009, the UNICEF Office for Croatia developed the “Break the Chain!” programme for the prevention of electronic violence and abuse. Since the programme has been designed as an integral continuation of the basic programme “For Safe and Stimulating Environment in Schools”, all schools which successfully completed the basic programme and received the status of “Violence-free School” can join voluntarily. In 2010, 31 schools joined the implementation of the “Break the Chain!” programme.

40. With the aim of preventing violence among children and youth in primary and secondary schools, the Ministry of the Interior employees carry out educational activities for students and education system employees on the subjects of criminal-law protection of children and minors, juvenile delinquency and family violence. During 2010, 7,405 preventive educational activities were carried out by the police, of which 4,122 were oriented towards students/wards at educational institutions, 1,309 were designed for teachers and other employees of educational institutions and homes and 1,211 for parents of students and wards of educational institutions. During 2011, a series of educational activities were carried out on the following subjects: “Peer Violence”, “Leading a Life without Violence”, “Prevention and Alternatives”, “I Can if I Want to 1 and 2”, “MAH 1 and MAH2”, prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation of children, “One in 5”, lectures

on the topics of the “World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse”, “Vandalism, Alcohol and Violence among the Youth”, “Children Have the Right to Protection”, “Prevention of Violence in Peer Relationships”, “Abusive Behaviour Towards Family Members — What Should We Do?”, “Recognising Sexual Abuse of Children and Youth”.

41. Family centres have implemented different prevention and intervention programmes for the protection of children from abuse and neglect in accordance with their operational programmes, thus making a major contribution at their local levels (e.g. “What is Violence”, “Friendship”, “Anger and Its Control”, “Prevention of All Types of Violence among Children and Youth”, “Why Report Violence”, “Nonviolent Problem Solving”).

42. Also, within the “IPA 2009” pre-accession assistance programme of the European Union, from 2010 to 2012, the Ministry of the Interior implemented the project “Capacity Building in the Field of Fight against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children, and on Police Assistance to Vulnerable Crime Victims”. The project included a number of activities relating to the fight against child abuse via the Internet and mobile phones, and was financed by the European Commission in the amount of EUR 800,000.00.

43. For the purpose of preparing programmes for the protection of children from the dangers they are exposed to when using computers, the Internet and other means of distance communication, the then Ministry of Family, Veterans’ Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity approved projects prepared by civil society organisations.

44. In 2011, the Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities financed 6 projects in the field of stopping sexual violence against children and promoting children’s rights and the culture of nonviolence.

45. As part of the “One in Five” campaign, a series of different activities have been performed, including the financing of 7 projects oriented towards the prevention of sexual exploitation and child abuse and the protection of children from dangers of sexual exploitation and abuse.

46. Through tenders for projects of associations aimed at affirmation of rights and interests of children, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth financed 10 projects oriented towards the prevention of violence among children and nonviolent conflict resolution and the prevention of electronic and sexual violence.

47. Recognising the importance of the problem of violence against children, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth has been issuing the call for projects of associations oriented towards the prevention of violence against and among children and youth since 2013. In 2013, 18 projects oriented towards the prevention of violence against and among children were financed in the total amount of HRK 1,500,000.00 and 19 projects oriented towards the prevention of violence against and among the youth in the total amount of HRK 1,319,692.50.

**7. Please provide information on the number of illegal child marriages in Roma communities and the measures taken by the Government to prevent their occurrence**

48. The Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities in its area of activity disposes of data relating to human trafficking victims, which includes forced marriages, which are more common in the Roma population. In 2013, of the total of 31 identified human trafficking victims, one juvenile human trafficking victim (citizen of the Republic of Macedonia) was identified, who had been sold for the purpose of forced marriage according to Roma customs.

49. Preventive measures which the Office performs according to the National Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the Period 2012–2015 include continuous campaigns for raising public awareness on different forms of exploitation of human

trafficking victims, research on the latest trends in the field of human trafficking and educational activities on human trafficking for target groups.

**8. Please provide information on the most recent amendments to the Social Welfare Act, in particular those that were expected to be made by the end of 2013, and information on the adoption of by-laws and their impact on the reform of the alternative childcare system**

50. The new Social Welfare Act, which entered into force on 1 January 2014, introduced the institute of guaranteed minimum benefit, consolidating the previous four benefits with a social component which had been regulated by separate acts and under the competence of different systems (the maintenance assistance from the social welfare system, the extended financial benefit for the unemployed, the survivor benefit for Homeland War Veterans and the survivor benefit for victims of the Second World War). Provisions which would contribute to the integration of the socially excluded persons into the society and the labour market were brought and measures stimulating the work activation of the unemployed working-age social welfare recipients were introduced.

51. The provisions enabling the establishment of quality standards for social services, conditions for the implementation of deinstitutionalisation and development of new non-institutional social welfare services, the choice and improvement of services which the beneficiaries can use in the social integration process and the establishment of a unique register of beneficiaries of social services and financial assistances, with the completion of the informatisation and system networking process, have been improved.

52. Pursuant to the Act, family centres have ceased their operation as independent institutions and continued to work as branch offices of the social welfare centre with county headquarters. They continued providing the same services to citizens, free of charge, which they provided within the previous organisational structure.

53. The Act also prescribes the establishment of centres for the provision of services in the community, which enables, according to the process of deinstitutionalisation and transformation of social welfare homes, particular homes to be transformed as non-institutional service providers. Also envisaged, among other things, is the provision of counselling services to parents with juvenile children, counselling and professional support for foster families and counselling and professional support for adopters. Also adopted was the Ordinance on the Minimum Conditions for Social Service Delivery, which is significant for the mentioned process of deinstitutionalisation and transformation of the social welfare homes.

54. Rights and social welfare services concerning children have not been reduced, and better protection and a higher base amount for single parents who are beneficiaries of the guaranteed minimum benefit have been prescribed.

**9. Please provide information on the Master Plan for Deinstitutionalization and Transformation of Social Welfare Institutions, particularly its key stages and how it is implemented. In particular, please provide further information on the conditions of centres where children with mental disabilities are institutionalized and on measures to facilitate their adoption**

55. The Ministry of Social Policy and Youth has, for the purpose of the operationalization and acceleration of the deinstitutionalisation process of the beneficiaries, based on the Plan of the Deinstitutionalization and Transformation of Welfare Homes and other Legal Persons that Perform Social Welfare Activities in the Republic of Croatia 2011–2016 (2018), (hereinafter: Plan) as the strategic document designated for the intensification of the reform processes of transformation and deinstitutionalization,

prepared the Operational Plan of the Transformation and Deinstitutionalization of Welfare Homes and other Legal Persons that Perform Social Welfare Activities in the Republic of Croatia 2014–2016 (hereinafter: Operational Plan).

56. In accordance with the Plan, the Ministry ensures financial support for the implementation of the process, is responsible for the employment of service providers, is responsible for the quality of the provided services to users, provides expert support to the team of experts and all stakeholders of the process, and, in cooperation with homes, plans the process and coordinates it.

57. The purpose of the plan is to reduce the number of beneficiaries entering the institutions and to increase the number of beneficiaries leaving them for new forms of care, particularly stimulating family reintegration (with the guarantee of one or several support services provided to the families in the local community) organised residence with a support service, which should be harmonised with the priorities of developing a network of services at the local level, taking into account at the same time of regional uniformity.

58. In the Republic of Croatia there are 95 homes and other legal persons that carry out social welfare activities (46 state homes, 24 non-state homes and 25 other legal persons) as well as 23 family homes.

59. Of the 12,375 beneficiaries in all forms of care, 2,781 children and adult persons are physically or mentally impaired, 600 children have developmental disabilities and 2,181 adult persons are disabled.

60. The goal of the plan is to reduce the total number of children with developmental disabilities in permanent or weekly placement by 40 % by 2016, primarily of children who attend elementary school, in cooperation with the Ministry competent for education.

61. The Operational Plan established the form of the transformation of the homes, the scope and dynamics of the transformation process implementation and the implementation of the deinstitutionalization of the various user groups, the number and structure of skilled workers necessary for the provision of the different education programmes and services in the institution and the local community as well as the role of individual homes in the provision and development of non-institutional services. For the definition of the forms of transforming individual homes, the legal basis is in the in new Social Welfare Act as indicated in the answer to question 8.

62. Furthermore, the Operational Plan defines the necessary financial resources for the implementation of the deinstitutionalisation and transformation process, which also includes training and supervision. In doing so, it needs to be taken into account that all deinstitutionalisation processes are coordinated and harmonised, and specific indicators for the purpose of monitoring the development of the process year after year need to be defined.

63. Within the Operational Plan, proposals have been prepared with respect to the conversion of part of the property, including proposals of organised residence (e.g. the possibility of selling or renting the buildings).

64. Progress reports in accordance with the Operational Plan have become the obligation of all social welfare homes. Such reporting will be carried out in cooperation with Social Welfare Centres with instruments for the monitoring of the processes that are an integral part of the Operational Plan.

65. One of the key factors that affects the deinstitutionalisation process is the expansion of the network of the various services, with particular emphasis on programmes for the prevention of institutionalization.

66. With the goal of preventing institutionalization, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth ensures counselling and assistance services, home assistance, psychosocial support, which includes rehabilitation aimed at stimulating the development of cognitive, functional, communicational or social skills. Such support is provided within the family of the beneficiary (expert support in the family — domiciliary care) or in the foster family or at the service provider), early intervention, assistance in the inclusion in education programmes (integration), residence and organised residence.

67. In order to achieve a more successful inclusion of children with developmental disabilities, young people and adult persons with disabilities into the community life, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth continuously encourages the development of various community-based services and financially supports a large number of programmes and projects of non-governmental organisations, thereby increasing the quality and network of community-based services. In 2012, 148 projects and 119 three-year programmes under the title “Development and Expansion of the Network of Social Services provided by Non-Governmental Organisations” were approved (48 organisations were contracted for the 2010–2013 period and 71 organisations for the 2011–2014 period). For these projects, HRK 61,428,978.79 was ensured for different services provided to children with disabilities, young people and adult persons with disabilities, which most certainly contributed to their rehabilitation and social inclusion into education, employment, cultural life, organised leisure time, sports activities and others. In the 119 three-year education programmes, 87 disability organisations or organisations working to the benefit of persons with disabilities and 32 non-governmental organisations that deal with social and humanitarian activities are involved.

68. Even in 2012, a difficult recession year, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth has found ways to increase the number of beneficiaries of these services. and has ensured for persons with the most severe types and levels of disability an additional 80 personal assistants. Now, a total of 631 personal assistance are employed (in 2011, there were 551). For children with developmental disabilities involved in the regular educational system, 147 teaching assistants were ensured (an increase of 31 compared to 2011), and 52 sign language interpreters (an increase of 20 compared to the previous year), taking into account the regional uniformity of service providers. For this purpose, a total of HRK 35,743,884.79 was spent, much more than in 2011. In addition to this, in December of 2012, immediately after the State Budget for 2013 and Regulation on the criteria for determining the beneficiaries and the method of distributing part of the gaming revenues for 2013 were adopted, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, in order to ensure the sustainability and expansion of the network of these services, announced the tender for assistance services, thereby ensuring the continuity of the provision of these services and of the financing of the service providers. The non-governmental organisations were informed of this via the Government Office for Non-Governmental Organisations, which published the public tender plan.

69. In 2013, the financial support for 129 three-year education programmes of disability associations was ensured in the amount of HRK 33,189,663.00 (of which 35 associations for the 2010–2013 period, 52 associations for the 2011–2014 period, 12 institutional supports for Alliances of disability associations and 30 projects of disability associations).

70. For the purpose of ensuring the sustainability of services in 2013, three-year programmes were ensured for 121 assistance service providers. A total of HRK 36,256,516.79 was ensured for 631 beneficiaries of personal assistance services, 52 sign language interpreters and 16 assistants for the blind. These programmes will continue in the future period. In order to ensure the expansion of the network of these services, the MSPY also ensured financial resources from EU Funds, for which public tenders will be announced in early 2014.

71. In order to ensure the services of educational assistants, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, ensured the continuation of the sustainability of this service and its expansion in the future period.

72. The development of adequate support services in the community is of exceptional significance for the successful implementation of the deinstitutionalisation policy, which must be pointed out as one of the significant areas of social planning on the state and local level.

73. The prevention of the institutionalization of children who are at risk from being removed from their family on account of inadequate parental care is carried out through the provision of counselling and/or psychosocial support services (at social welfare centres and other service providers) and through the implementation of family legal protection measures (warnings issued to parents about their mistakes and oversights in the care and upbringing of children and monitoring of their parental care).

74. Further measures that prevent the institutionalization of children is their inclusion in different forms of non-institutional services offered by social welfare homes or other service providers, such as half-day and whole-day stays.

75. In order to develop and improve foster care, in 2012 the Foster Care Act was amended (Official Gazette, number 90/11 and 78/12) and harmonised with the Social Welfare Act and, among other things, the procedure for the issuing of permits for foster care was simplified, especially for foster parents that are related to the beneficiaries, the number of hours of the obligatory training of care givers was increased, the beneficiaries of specialised foster care were defined more precisely, the number of beneficiaries who can be placed in the foster family of a single person was increased and the placement of underage pregnant beneficiaries/mothers with one or more children was enabled. Also, the proposed amendments extend the stay with foster families for young adult persons up to a year after the completion of their schooling when the beneficiaries cannot find employment.

**10. Please provide information on measures taken to reduce the consumption of alcohol among teenage children**

76. In order to reduce the consumption of alcohol among teenage population, the Croatian National Institute of Public Health carried out the following activities in 2013:

- The training programme “MOVE” that works with young people with risk behaviour. From 27 to 29 November 2013, the three-day training programme “MOVE” was held in Valbadnon. It was focused on using the “short MOtivational interVention” method with young with risk-behaviour young people, including young people with risky consumption of alcohol or alcohol dependence. “MOVE” is a preventive education programme based on intervention in counselling with risk behaviour youth that was taken over from Germany and was adjusted to the needs of Croatia. It consists of 12 modules/units, and is based on experiences from various therapy concepts and theories that are altered into short counselling interviews. The primary objective is to include young people into the programme, who would normally not use counselling and who are more suited for short meetings, which are more efficient than long counselling interviews. In 2013, in cooperation with the Office for the prevention of drug abuse of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, the Croatian National Institute of Public Health participated in the organisation and implementation of three-day seminars for participants who comes from the health system, social welfare system and non-governmental organisations (a total of 26 participants). The Ministry of Health financed the costs of the educators from the National Institute of Public Health and the County Institute of Public Health. The

participants and educators filled out an evaluation to indicate how satisfied they were with the seminar. The educators were trained as part of the 2004 CARDS project “Strengthening the Croatian Capacity to Combat Drugs Trafficking and Drugs Abuse”.

- The Croatian National Institute of Public Health and the network of public health institutes of regional governments participated in the implementation of interdepartmental national project “ZDRAV ZA 5” aimed at the prevention of alcohol dependence among youth, in cooperation with employees of the Ministry of the Interior. In order to increase the level of knowledge of schoolchildren on the harmfulness of substance abuse, the employees of the network of public health institutes carried out interactive lectures in the 8th grade of elementary schools on the subject of alcohol dependence and abuse. As part of the project, in the 2012/2013 school year, schoolchildren in the 8th grade of elementary schools were surveyed on their attitudes and risk behaviours as well as public-health and safety indicators. With an entrance poll, the schoolchildren were surveyed on their level of knowledge of the issues and their attitudes were tested, and in the exit poll, an evaluation of the process was carried out. In the continuation of the project in the 2013/2014 school year, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports was included with the Education and Teacher Training Agency. In the new project model, a training plan was prepared for expert associates of primary and secondary schools on the entire territory of the Republic of Croatia in order to empower them in raising the level of knowledge of schoolchildren on the harmfulness of alcohol dependence. Expert materials were prepared for educational lectures for schoolchildren on the subject of alcohol.
- Also, in 2013, as part of the “Zdrav za 5” project, a short educational brochure was published — “Alcohol and young people — alcohol is not cool”, intended for parents and persons who work with young people.
- During the 2012/2013 school year, lectures were held by employees of school medicine teams and the lectures comprised over 5,000 8th grade schoolchildren of elementary schools, and almost 200 lectures were held on the subject of alcohol dependence and abuse. Since the 2013/2014 school year, the coordination and implementation was taken over by the Service for the promotion of health care, the Department for the mental health and prevention of dependence of the Croatian National Institute of Public Health, together with the employees of the network of teams for mental healthcare, the prevention and out-patient treatment of dependence of the regional public health institutes. In the 2013/2014 school year, until the end of 2013, lectures on the subject of alcohol dependence and abuse comprised 39.4% of 8th grade schoolchildren of elementary schools.
- The project was financed as part of the regular work programme of the Croatian National Institute of Public Health, financed by the Ministry of Health and Croatian Institute for Health Insurance.
- The Croatian National Institute of Public Health participated in the preparation of the brochure “Let’s talk with young people on the dangers of alcohol abuse in the Campaign on the responsible consumption of alcohol”. The primary objective of the campaign was educating the public on problems concerning alcohol abuse by underage persons and raising awareness on the importance of respecting the legally defined age limit for sale of alcohol.
- They also actively participated in the “Counselling work in the health care of school children, young people and students”. In the 2012/2013 school year, there 102,538 elementary school students and 29,734 of secondary school students paid a visit to



counselling centres for children and young people at school medicine departments. Of this number, 6% of elementary school students and 13% of secondary school students came due to risk behaviour, which includes alcohol consumption.

**11. Please provide information on the inclusion of education for tolerance in school curricula in first, second and third grade. Please also provide information on measures taken to avoid separated education in the school system and to promote inclusive education for all children**

77. In accordance with the Preschool Education Act (Official Gazette, number 10/97, 107/07 and 94/13) the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports prescribes that all preschool children between the age of six months and one year before attending school are entitled to participate in the system of preschool education, and are obliged to attend the preschool education programme one year before attending school. Also, in accordance with the Primary and Secondary Schools Education Act (Official Gazette, number 87/08, 86/09, 92/10, 105/10, 90/11, 5/12, 16/12, 86/12, 126/12, and 94/13) elementary-school education is obligatory for all children, generally between the ages of six and fifteen, and for students with multiple developmental disabilities at the longest until the age of 21. Secondary-school education is not obligatory, but every child can attend a secondary school after the completion of a primary school. Furthermore, all preschool children and primary and secondary school students are entitled to be included in the educational sector in the Republic of Croatia and the right to assistance in learning Croatian.

78. Respecting the principles of inclusive education, which promote the right of every child to be included in regular education, regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic or other circumstance, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports adopted a series of Regulations such as the Ordinance on the Method of Implementing Programmes and Assessment of Knowledge of Asylum Seekers, Asylum Grantees and Foreigners under Temporary Protection and Foreigners under Subsidiary Protection for the Purpose of Accessing the Educational System of the Republic of Croatia (Official Gazette, number 89/2008), the Decision on the Croatian Language, History and Culture Programme for Asylum Seekers and Asylum Grantees (Official Gazette, number 129/09), the Decision on the Croatian Language Programme for the Preparation of Classes for Students of Primary and Secondary Schools with Insufficient Knowledge of the Croatian Language (Official Gazette, number 51/11) and the Ordinance on the Implementation of Preparatory and Supplementary Classes for Students with Insufficient Knowledge of the Croatian Language and Classes in the Mother Tongue and the Culture of the Country of Origin of Students (Official Gazette, number 15/13), which apply correspondingly to students of the first grade of elementary schools.

**(a) The introduction of inclusive education in the first grade of elementary schools and the measures undertaken**

79. The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports participates in the Joint Project of the European Union and the Council of Europe "Regional Support for Inclusive Education". The project began in January 2013 and will last for 35 months. The overall goal of the project is to improve social inclusion and social cohesion in the region by promoting inclusive education. In order to achieve the goal, the project will promote the concept of inclusive education as a reform principle that respects and allows for diversity among all schoolchildren, with a special focus on those exposed to the risk of marginalization and exclusion. Seven beneficiary countries participate in the project. Each beneficiary country is represented by seven schools (three elementary, two high schools and two vocational secondary schools). The elementary schools that participate in the project are the following: "Dr. Ivan Merz" elementary school from Zagreb; "Okučani" elementary school from

Slavonski Brod-Posavina County and the “Vladimir Nazor” Elementary School in Ploče in the Dubrovnik-Neretva County.

**(b) Schoolchildren with developmental disabilities**

80. The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports continuously improves the education system by passing acts and bylaws and by ensuring the conditions for their implementation in accordance with the requirements and needs of students with disabilities in order to create equal possibilities for their complete inclusion in community life and to raise their life quality. The legal framework of the preschool, elementary-school and secondary-school education regulates the right of every child and student with disabilities to a suitable education programme and form of education whenever this is possible in the area in which they live, ensuring the required programme and professional support as well as the spatial, pedagogical and didactic adjustment, with the acceptance of their needs, interests, abilities and possibilities, in accordance with all Croatian strategic documents and international documents of which the Republic Of Croatia is a signatory. This creates the opportunity for children/students with extensive developmental disabilities to be successfully included, with rehabilitation and expert assistance, in the education system in the area in which they live, which presumes high standards in the approach to this issue.

81. In accordance with the Preschool Education Act (Official Gazette, number 10/97, 107/07 and 94/13) and the National Pedagogical Standard for Preschool Education (Official Gazette, number 63/08 and 90/10) children are included in the education sector from preschool. The total number of children with disabilities included in children’s day-care centre and other legal persons that carry out preschool education programmes in the Republic of Croatia at the beginning of the 2012/2013 school year was 4,983 (3.52%). 4,015 children are integrated in the system, and 579 children are in special groups. 1,750 children are entitled to have their education programme co-financed, 1,171 of which are integrated in into regular groups, and 579 of which into special groups. The co-financing is carried out on the basis of delivered medical findings and opinions of the Social Welfare Centre and the decision of the Croatian Institute for Health Insurance for the leave of mothers for the care of a child in accordance with Article 50 of the Preschool Education Act. Children with disabilities can be included in regular education programmes or education programmes for preschool children with developmental disabilities that are adjusted to their developmental needs, capabilities and abilities.

82. Elementary-school and secondary education of children with disabilities is regulated by the Primary and Secondary School Education Act (Official Gazette, number 87/08, 86/09, 92/10, 105/10, 90/11, 16/12, 86/12, 126/12 and 94/13), the Pedagogical standard of primary education in the Republic of Croatia (Official Gazette, number 63/08 and 90/10), the Pedagogical standard of secondary-school education in the Republic of Croatia (Official Gazette, number 63/08 and 90/10), the Ordinance o primary education of students with developmental disabilities (Official Gazette, number 23/91), the Ordinance on secondary-school education of students with developmental disabilities and extensive developmental disabilities (Official Gazette, number 86/92), the Ordinance on the process of assessing the psychophysical state of children and students and the structure of expert committees (Official Gazette, number 55/11) and other regulations.

83. The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports monitors and ensures the right to education for 18,816 (5.61%) of students with disabilities who attend regular or specialised educational institutions. Students with disabilities, based on their determined psychophysical state and the Decision on the suitable education programme of the state administration office competent for education or city office for education, culture and sports of the City of Zagreb have the right to a suitable education programme and suitable forms of support in their education. Suitable education programmes and forms of education,

as well as suitable forms of support are implemented with expert assistance and spatial and pedagogical and didactic adjustments. Programme assistance includes the implementation of suitable education programmes and additional educational and rehabilitation programmes, which are determined as a part of the suitable education programmes for students with developmental disabilities.

84. Furthermore, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports ensures conditions for the spatial and pedagogical and didactic adjustments for students with disabilities. For the transport of student with disabilities, the co-financing of meals, procurement of didactic materials and aids required by students with disabilities (in 19 special educational institutions and 95 general elementary schools in which special class units for students with developmental disabilities have been established) HRK 22,042,000.00 have been ensured in the State Budget in 2012. In the 2012/2013 school year, transport costs for 2,631 students and 805 assistants were co-financed. The goal of the activity is to make education accessible to every student, to realise social inclusion and to increase the number of students with disabilities that are involved in primary education and society as a whole. Due to the increase of the number of students with disabilities in elementary-school education programmes, the financing costs for transport, the co-financing of nutrition and special teaching aids are systematically increasing as well.

85. Expert support for students with disabilities in the educational sector, together with the expert employees of regular and specialised preschool, elementary-school and secondary-school institutions is provided by experts of different specialities, agency consultants and learning assistants, which includes sign language interpreters/translators and personal assistants.

86. Learning assistants provide immediate assistance to a student or group of students with disabilities in tasks that require communication, sensory and motor activities of students, with movement, eating and drinking, going to the toilet, during everyday curricular and extracurricular activities on the basis of a prepared work programme adjusted to the needs of each student and instructions of the teacher, expert associates of the school or a team of experts.

87. In accordance with Article 99 of the Primary and Secondary School Education Act (Official Gazette, number 87/2008, 86/2009, 92/2010, 105/2010, 90/2011, 16/2012, 86/2012, 126/12 and 94/13) and Article 15 the National Pedagogical Standard for Elementary School Education (Official Gazette, number 63/08 and 90/10), the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports issues approvals to schools or their founders for the inclusion of learning assistants, sign language interpreters and personal assistants for the direct assistance to students with disabilities, on the basis of a submitted request with an explanation, a work programme with weekly duties, decision on about the suitable education programme of the state administration office competent for education or city office for education, culture and sports of the City of Zagreb and a statement on the ensured financial resources. The funds for learning assistance are ensured from budgets of the units of local and regional self-governments and from projects of associations that provide assistance services to adults and children with disabilities.

88. In July of 2013, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports announced, for the first time, a Public Invitation for the financial support of projects of association that provides learning assistant services to students with disabilities in the Republic of Croatia.

89. In order to achieve a high-quality and more intense social inclusion of persons with disabilities, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth continuously develops a network of community-based services. This is corroborated by the fact that even the most difficult recession year of 2012, it has found ways to increase the number of beneficiaries of such services and has ensured for persons with the most severe types and levels of disability an

additional 80 personal assistants, bringing the number to a total of 631 (551 beneficiaries in 2011). For children with developmental disabilities involved in the regular educational system it has ensured 147 learning assistants (an increase of 31 assistants compared to 2011). It has also ensured 52 sign language interpreters (an increase of 20 interpreters compared to the previous year) taking into account regional evenness of service providers. For this purpose, a total of HRK 35,743,884.79 was spent, much more than in 2011. In addition to the above, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, for the purpose of ensuring the sustainability and expansion of the network of these services in 2013, ensured these through a three-year education programme for non-governmental organisations in order to ensure the continuity of these services and the financing of service providers.

90. The Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, in cooperation with the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports and local self-government units continuously stimulates the development of learning assistant services. During 2012, this service was ensured for about 500 children with developmental disabilities, in 2013 for about 700, and in 2014 for about 900, financed from the state budget, budgets of local self-government units and by means of non-governmental organisations.

91. The Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, in cooperation with the Office for Cooperation with NGOs of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the National Foundation for Civil Society Development, has also prepared the Criteria for Awarding Institutional Grants for the Activities and Development of Disability Associations and National Unions of Disability Associations. An institutional grant is a specific form of grant allocation in which the funds are used by the Ministry, in cooperation with the National Foundation for Civil Society Development, for targeted investments in the organisational development and activities of disability associations and unions of disability associations registered in the Republic of Croatia, so as to ensure the sustainability of the activities of these associations.

92. During 2012, this service, financed from the state budget and the budgets of local self-government units, as well as through non-governmental organisations, has been provided to approximately 500 children with developmental disabilities.

93. A working group has been formed within the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, whose task is to prepare uniform criteria based on which students with disabilities can exercise their right to adequate forms of assistance in education.

**(c) Partial integration**

94. Alongside with full integration in elementary schools with a general curriculum, partial integration of students, in accordance with Article 7 of the Ordinance on Primary Education of Students with Developmental Disabilities, is also being implemented, by educational rehabilitation experts in special class units. In the school year 2012/2013, 673 (0.2%) students were included in this form of education.

95. Class units for children with organic behaviour disorders have also been organised in general-education schools, in accordance with Article 10 of the Ordinance on Primary Education of Students with Developmental Disabilities, numbering 150 (0.04%) students.

96. Class units for children with severe intellectual disability have also been organised in schools with general education programmes, in accordance with Article 12 of the Ordinance on Primary Education of Students with Developmental Disabilities, numbering 250 (0.42%) elementary-school students. A total of 1,653 students have been fully or partially integrated in special class units in elementary schools with general education programmes, which represents 0.49% of the total number of students of elementary schools with general and special education programmes for children with disabilities.

97. In the system of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, there are 19 primary-education institutions in which classes are taught according to special programmes for children with disabilities, which cover 2,254 (0.67%) students up to 21 years of age in the primary-education system. A smaller number of students are organised in class units/groups from 1st to 8th form (44.7%), while the majority of students are those with multiple disabilities aged from 7 to 21 (55.3%), who are, under Article 12, paragraph 1 of the Primary and Secondary Schools Education Act, entitled to primary education until the age of 21.

98. The majority of students in the educational groups of students with multiple disabilities aged up to 21 are from 11 to 14 years of age (N = 377), while a smaller number of them (N = 94) are from 17 to 21 years of age. The largest number of students with disabilities are included in primary education in the SUVAG Polyclinic for the Rehabilitation of Hearing and Speech in Zagreb (N = 430), while the smallest number of them is educated in the Liče Faraguna Centre in Labin (N = 17). An extended expert procedure covering 673 students divided into 103 educational groups has also been organised in elementary schools with special programmes. 286 of these students are in 1st to 8th form, while 355 students are in the educational groups from 7 to 21 years of age.

**(d) Class units**

99. The decrease in the number of students has led to a decrease in the number of class units. Class units from the 1st to the 5th form, combined class units and class units with special programmes for students with disabilities have been organised in accordance with the viability coefficient as defined by the National Pedagogical Standard of Primary Education (Official Gazette, Nos. 63/08 and 90/10) and the Ordinance on the Number of Students in Regular and Combined Class Units and Educational Groups in Elementary Schools (Official Gazette, Nos. 124/09 and 73/10).

100. The average number of students in a class unit depends on the type of programme and structure of class units pursuant to the regulations. Class units with general education programmes have 18.63 students on average. Class units from 1st to 4th form have a lower average number of students per class unit (17.06), considering that the provisions of the National Pedagogical Standard of Primary Education and the Ordinance on the Number of Students in Regular and Combined Class Units apply to all of these forms, while class units from 5th to 8th form have a larger average number of students (20.35). Apart from the indicated regulations, the lower average number of students in class units from 1st to 4th form is also a consequence of the fact that certain branch schools/units have 10 or less than 10 students (323 branch schools).

101. Class units with general education programmes which integrate students with disabilities covered by an adapted curriculum, in accordance with Article 4 of the Ordinance on Primary Education of Students with Developmental Disabilities (Official Gazette, No. 23/91), can have, in accordance with Article 3, paragraph 5 of the Ordinance on the Number of Students in Regular and Combined Class Units and Educational Groups (Official Gazette, Nos. 74/99 and 142/09), a maximum of three students with disabilities covered by an adapted curriculum. These units are to be organised in the following way: a unit with one student with disabilities can have a maximum of 26 students, a unit with two students with disabilities can have a maximum of 23 students and a unit with three students with disabilities can have a maximum of 20 students. If a student with disabilities has a personal assistant or learning assistant, the number of students is not to be decreased.

102. The number of students in class units and educational groups covered by special curricula is prescribed in Article 4 of the Ordinance on the Number of Students in Regular and Combined Class Units and Educational Groups. A regular class unit in which teaching is carried out according to a special curriculum for students with disabilities (in general-

education elementary schools and special educational institutions) can have no more than seven students with vision and/or hearing impairment, vocal disorders, speech and language impairment, motor disorders or organic behaviour disorders, and/or students with behaviour disorders placed in correctional institutions, as well as no more than nine students with reduced intellectual abilities and three to five students with autism, significantly reduced intellectual abilities and combined and multiple disabilities.

103. Class units in elementary schools with general and special programmes for children with disabilities are organised according to regulations. In class units in which classes are conducted in accordance with Art. 7 of the Ordinance on children with developmental disabilities the number of students is 5.98 on average, whereas in class units where classes are conducted in accordance with Art. 10 the number is 5.17 students on average, and in class units where classes are conducted in accordance with Art. 12 the number is 5.48 students on average.

104. It should be pointed out that the average number of students in educational groups in institutions with special programmes is somewhat lower (4.46) than the average number of students in all class units with special programmes. Namely, in the class units in these institutions there are 4.61 students on average in 1st to 8th form and seven students on average in the educational groups covered by extended expert procedure. Classes for children in prolonged treatment are organised in 12 medical institutions for approximately 868 students per day in 73 units.

105. There were 18,821 class units in elementary schools in the school year 2012/2013. The majority were regular class units (N = 16,693), while combined class units were considerably smaller in number (N = 2,128). Class units in medical institutions (N = 73) have been counted among combined class units, although in some of them non-combined classes are periodically held as well, which depends on the number of children who are in treatment at a given time. The largest number of combined class units is in the Virovitica-Podravina County (22.88%), while the smallest number of them is in the City of Zagreb (7.57%).

**(e) Financing transport, nutrition and didactic tools for students with developmental disabilities**

106. In accordance with the Decision on the Criteria for the Financing of Increased Transportation Costs and Special Teaching Tools and Aids and the Co-Financing of Nutrition of Students with Developmental Disabilities in Primary-Education Programmes, the transport of students with disabilities is provided regardless of the distance and means of transport of the assistant, in cases in which an assistant is required due to the type and level of disability and in accordance with a decision on the adequate type of education. In addition, special teaching tools and aids are also financed and student nutrition is co-financed. The goal of this activity is to make education accessible to every student, achieve social inclusion and take action for the benefit of students with disabilities, that is, increase the number of students with disabilities involved in primary education and the society as a whole. Students with developmental disabilities attend classes in special primary-education institutions or are integrated in regular class units, or attend classes in general-education schools in special class units according to a special curriculum.

107. Because of the increase of the number of students with disabilities included in primary-education programmes, the costs of transport and special educational aids, as well as the co-financing of nutrition, have been systematically increasing. In 2012, HRK 22,042,000.00 have been provided from the state budget for the transport of children with disabilities, co-financing of nutrition and procurement of didactic tools and aids (in 19 special educational institutions and 95 elementary schools with general education programmes in which special class units for students with developmental disabilities have

been organised). In the school year 2012/2013, the costs of transportation of 2,631 students and 805 of their assistants were co-financed.

**(f) Education of members of the Roma national minority**

108. In accordance with the objective of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015 Action Plan and the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Strategy of Roma Inclusion for the period from 2013 to 2015, and with the aim of improving access to high-quality education, including the education and care provided in infancy, but also primary, secondary and tertiary education, with particular emphasis on eliminating potential segregation in schools; preventing early termination of schooling and enabling an easy transition from school to employment, in the last six years, the number of children who are members of the Roma national minority included in primary education programmes has increased and continues to rise. In the school year 2010/2011, there were 4,723 such students (2,409 male and 2,314 female), in the school year 2011/2012 there were 4,882 such students (2,449 male and 2,433 female), while at the beginning of school year 2012/2013 there were 5,173 such students (2,612 male and 2,561 female). At the end of school year 2012/2013, there were 5,311 such students (2,671 male and 2,640 female), while at the beginning of school year 2013/2014 there were 5,470 such students (2,769 male and 2,701 female).

109. Since the beginning of school year 2010/2011, data has been collected on the number of Roma students who have been offered special assistance in the learning of the Croatian language, in accordance with Article 43 of the Primary and Secondary Schools Education Act. In that year, assistance has been offered in nine counties to 555 students (289 male and 266 female) out of a total of 4,723 (2,409 male, 2,314 female), which was the number of Roma students enrolled in elementary school that year. In the school year 2011/2012, special assistance in the learning of Croatian language was provided in seven counties to 700 students from the 1st to the 8th form, out of the total number of 4,822 students. At the beginning of the school year 2012/2013, special assistance in the learning of the Croatian language has been provided to a total of 681 students (345 male and 336 female) in six counties, while at the beginning of school year 2013/2014, special assistance in the learning of the Croatian language was provided to 511 students (251 male and 260 female) in seven counties.

110. At the end of school year 2011/2012, extended stay was organised in 11 counties for 362 students (165 male and 197 female). At the end of school year 2012/2013, extended stay was provided in eight counties for 362 students (190 male and 172 female), while at the beginning of school year 2013/2014, extended stay was provided for 548 students (293 male and 255 female) in seven counties.

111. Roma assistants are employed in the majority of schools, there are 26 of them (15 male and 11 female) and their work is financed from the state budget in the net amount of HRK 3500.00 per month during all the 12 months, alongside with other benefits provided for school employees. Among other tasks, Roma assistants are required to cooperate with teachers in helping the students with homework during extended stay and with mastering the learning material.

**12. Please provide information on the implementation of the right of the child to rest and leisure, and to engage in play and recreational activities, particularly in institutional settings**

112. The Ministry of Social Policy and Youth is reporting in accordance with Art. 87 of the Social Welfare Act (Official Gazette, No. 157/13), which prescribes that accommodation as a social service can include the services of residence, nutrition, care, healthcare, social work, psychosocial rehabilitation, physical therapy, work therapy, work

activities, active leisure, education, depending on the determined needs and preferences of the beneficiary.

113. Art. 86 of the Act prescribes the services of stay for children without adequate parental care, which, among other services, also include the service of the organisation of the beneficiary's leisure.

114. Art. 70 of the Ordinance on Minimum Conditions for Social Service Delivery (Official Gazette, No. 157/13) prescribes that the service of education for children without adequate parental care — beneficiaries of accommodation, accommodation in the family unit, stay and organised residence includes, among other things, the services of organisation of various activities (sports, musical, artistic) in the home, encouraging children to become involved in and attend recreational activities according to their preferences and capabilities, organisation of attendance of cultural and artistic events outside of the institution (cinema, theatre, swimming pools, sports courts) and the organisation of excursions.

115. Furthermore, Art 93 of the Ordinance prescribes that the education of children with behavioural problems in all forms of accommodation, stay and organised residence includes, among other things, the development of interests and creativity, as well as advising and encouraging the children for involvement in leisure activities according to their age, interests and capabilities, developing their ability to create and engage in play through first-hand experience and sensation, visual-art, musical and sports activities, organisation of healthy living in nature, visiting sports events and cultural programmes.

116. In relation to beneficiaries who are children with developmental disabilities, Article 119 of the Ordinance states that education includes, among other things, the development of creative activities based on interest (development of interest for engaging in activities, stimulation of initiative and creativity, involvement in leisure activities).

117. Social welfare homes are obliged to implement the previously mentioned regulations which prescribe these services in their statute and other general acts, which serves as the basis for the adoption of the annual work plan of an institution, as well as the work plan for each beneficiary.

118. The report on the implementation of an institution's annual work plan presents a wide range of leisure activities carried out in homes or outside them, as well as structured spending of the beneficiaries' free time (including summer and winter vacations in the Republic of Croatia and abroad), according to their abilities and preferences. A significant part of the activities is realised with the support of donators and volunteers involved in the work of the institutions, as well as of local communities in whose area the homes operate.

119. Thus, according to data for 2012 on 14 homes for children without appropriate parental care, it is evident that the children have participated in approximately 108 events, 90 leisure activities in the institutions and 120 activities outside of them, along with summer and winter vacations.

120. Furthermore, within the social welfare development project and as part of the extensive reform processes, the former Ministry of Health and Social Welfare has prepared quality standards for social services, with the aim of defining the framework for the provision of more professional services to the beneficiaries, as well as attaining a more effective evaluation of the quality of these services.

121. Thus, one of the quality indicators for Standard no. 5: Decision Making and Self-Determination, is the provision according to which each beneficiary is empowered and supported in bringing well-informed decisions regarding the possibilities provided for him according to his needs, interests and capabilities.



122. Among the quality indicators of Standard no. 18 (Additional Standards for Care Outside One's Family — Children and Young People up to 21 Years of Age), under the title "Development and Education of Children and Young People", is the need that for encouraging and supporting the child/young person to participate in games/leisure activities according to their age and inclinations, encouraging them to express themselves creatively and, for children whose care plan requires various services (educational, health, cultural, recreational) important for their growth and development, ensuring the availability of such services and the required experts.

123. Social welfare homes are obliged to implement these standards, while the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth provides professional assistance in their implementation, as well monitoring of it.

124. The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports reports that, based on Articles 56 and 59 of the National Pedagogical Standard of Secondary Education (Official Gazette, Nos. 63/08 and 90/10), school dormitories offer optional (leisure) activities, provided for in their annual work plan and programme, in the premises intended for leisure activities and with the consent of parents.

125. The Ministry of Justice reports that the prisoners, i.e. juveniles undergoing corrective training in a closed-type correctional institution (hereinafter: "juveniles") spend their free time in common rooms. Penitentiaries, prisons and correctional institutions provide areas and equipment for a purposeful use of free time, as well as organise different types of activities for the fulfilment of the physical, spiritual and cultural needs of juveniles. The leisure activities of prisoners and juveniles are organised within visual-art, technical, musical, literary, drama, journalistic, IT and similar workshops, debate clubs, exercise halls etc. The content of organised leisure activities is determined in the programme of activities. According to the capacities of penitentiaries, prisons and correctional institutions, prisoners or juveniles are provided with an opportunity to organise their own free time (hobbies) at their own expense, provided that this does not undermine safety and order or disturb other prisoners. The establishment of prisoner or juvenile committees is possible for the purpose of organised participation in the proposing of the ways of using free time through different activities, for the fulfilment of physical, spiritual and cultural needs. Penal institutions equip their libraries with a sufficient number of books from different fields, whereas, if they do not have a library, the lending of books from local libraries is organised. Prisoners and juveniles can obtain books, newspapers and magazines at their own expense. According to the capacities of a specific penal institution, conditions for physical training, sports and recreation are provided and various sports and recreational competitions, lectures and artistic events are organised on occasion. Listening to the radio and watching television are organised according to the institution's rules. Once a year, penitentiaries, prisons and correctional institutions organise the exhibition and sale of works created in the inmates' free time, with the consent of prisoners or juveniles who are their authors.

126. As regards the right to rest, prisoners and juveniles who work, along with the right to remuneration and a sick-benefit, are also entitled to rest during work for 30 minutes, a weekly rest period (the weekend) and a vacation in the duration from 18 to 30 working days.

**13. Please provide information on progress concerning awareness-raising among the population on the trafficking of Croatian girls for sexual purposes**

127. The Ministry of the Interior, General Police Directorate, Criminal Police Directorate reports that an increase in the number of identified juvenile human trafficking victims was recorded during 2013. Out of a total of 16 victims, 13 victims, all female, were sexually abused, while three cases of work exploitation of children were also recorded. The Organised Crime Department of this Directorate has improved the method of identification

of human trafficking victims, as well as invested additional efforts in educating police officers and all relevant bodies which participate in the procedure of identification, which has resulted in an increase in the number of identified juvenile human trafficking victims. In all cases of identification of human trafficking victims, with respect to juvenile victims as well, apart from the rights the victims have under the Criminal Procedure Act, in accordance with the National Programme for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, they were also provided with assistance and protection. With respect to the preventive measures of the police related to raising awareness of the issue of trafficking and sexual exploitation of children, the General Police Directorate has carried out activities as part the “Two Little Girls” campaign, with the aim of prevention of trafficking in women and girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation, started in 2013 by the Centre for Education, Counselling and Research — CECR, in cooperation with the Embassy of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Gender Equality Ombudsperson and the Croatian Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities. The “Two Little Girls” campaign is aimed at the sensitisation and awareness-raising regarding the risk to which potential human trafficking victims are exposed, as well as at education for the purpose of recognizing potentially perilous situations and strengthening prevention and safety.

128. So far, 13 European countries have joined the campaign. In Croatia, as of the official start of the campaign, on 17 September 2013 in Zagreb, the Ministry of the Interior has conducted seven activities on four locations: four thereof were held in Zagreb, while the remaining three were held in Šibenik, Krapina and the Bajakovo—Batrovci border crossing.

129. In the context of the campaign, the CECR and the Ministry of the Interior organised the following manifestations and activities:

- A *public discussion* was held at the Faculty of Political Sciences, gathering guest lecturers from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ministry of the Interior, and the “Rosa” Centre for Women Victims of War;
- *Campaign promotions* in the multimedia screening room of the X. gimnazija Ivan Supek, where female students in the 4<sup>th</sup> form were shown a short film entitled “Two Girls”, with ensuing discussions concerning human trafficking;
- *The promotion of the “Two Girls” film* also took place at the Residence of the Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland;
- At the Bajakovo — Batrovci border crossing, the *European Day Against Human Trafficking* was marked in form of the “Two Girl” campaign: passing travellers were sensitised and informed on the topic of human trafficking;
- A *workshop* was held in the Krapina Secondary School, intended for teachers and associates in primary and secondary schools;
- In Šibenik, following the education of the students in final forms of the secondary vocational school, the students *handed prepared packages* in the centre, informing and sensitizing their fellow citizens about the dangers of human trafficking;
- In Zagreb, a number of *educational activities* were held at the Dobriša Cesarić Elementary School, intended for students but also thematic sensitising of the citizens.

130. The said precautionary programmes were designed specifically with the population of the 13-17 age group in mind.

**14. Please provide information about the criteria for deportation of asylum-seeking or refugee children**

131. The Ministry of the Interior, the General Police Directorate, the Criminal Police Directorate reports that the conditions for deportation (forced migration) are provided for in Article 116 of the Foreigners Act. In general, it is possible to deport foreigners who failed to leave the European Economic Area within a time period determined in the decision on return. Nevertheless, foreigners who verbalise a wish for asylum, asylum-seekers (potential refugees) as well as asylum grantees, may not be deported. The prohibition to deport is specified in Article 118 of the Foreigners Act. However, once the request for asylum is rejected following a prescribed procedure (dismissed asylum-seekers) and the foreigner fails to leave the European Economic Area within the time period set in the decision on return, the foreigner may be deported.

132. There are special regulations in force concerning deportation of children under age (Article 100, Article 118(3) and Article 132 of the Foreigners Act, and the Protocol on the Treatment of Children Separated from Their Parents — Foreign Citizens).

**15. Please provide explanations as to the reasons for not providing the Committee with information on the implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography**

133. An interdepartmental working group has been established within the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, for purposes of preparing the Initial Report concerning the “Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography” (hereinafter “Protocol”). A comprehensive report is yet to be finalised and, upon its completion, with no further delay delivered to the Committee.

134. Even though the Report concerning the Protocol is not completed, many activities have been carried out for its implementation.

135. In 2011, the Republic of Croatia ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, having come into effect on 1 January 2012. The new 2011 Criminal Code implemented the substantive legal provisions of the said Conventions in full by creating a better and more efficient legal framework for tackling all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation of children. What is more, in November 2010, the Council of Europe kick-started an initiative for official start of the campaign aimed at preventing sexual abuse, entitled “One out of Five”, advising Member States to carry out national campaigns against child sexual abuse and encourage the signing, ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. Consequently, an Action Plan was developed and implemented for the implementation of the Campaign in the Republic of Croatia for the period between February and December 2011. The purpose of the Campaign was to improve children protection against sexual violence, with two basic strategic goals defined, namely promoting the signing, ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe Conventions on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. The Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, i.e. the then Ministry of Family, Veterans’ Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, had the role of coordinating campaign activities on the national level, with the following national-level authorities in the campaign implementation: the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Social Policy and Youth (the then Ministry of Health and Social Welfare), Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, as well as the Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities. Family centres, social welfare centres and local and regional self-government units conducted campaign-related activities at the local level, in cooperation with other local-level stakeholders, including non-governmental

organisations. One of the ways in which the campaign activities were implemented was via a call for projects developed by children-related associations, for the purpose of grant financing from the funds available in the framework of the State Budget for 2011. In total, the financing was approved for 7 projects aimed at preventing sexual exploitation and abuse of children and protecting children against the danger of sexual exploitation and abuse when using the technology, the Internet or other means of distance communication.

136. In addition, the Republic of Croatia welcomed the regional seminar on the topic of “Stopping sexual violence against children — the ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse”, which was held in Zagreb on 27th and 28th of October 2011.

## **Part II**

### **(a) New bills and laws, and their respective regulations**

137. From the scope of activities of the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, the Foster Care Act (Official Gazette, Nos. 90/11 and 78/12) entered into force in August 2011. It regulates the prerequisites for the foster family, the methods for carrying out and termination of foster care and other issues related to foster care. The 2012 amendments harmonized the Foster Care Act with the Social Welfare Act and, among other, the process of issuing a foster care permit was simplified, especially for kinship foster caregivers, the workload of the mandatory training for the foster families (education) was increased, the users of specialized foster care were determined more precisely, the number of users that can be accommodated in single person foster families was increased and accommodation was made feasible for underage pregnant women/mothers with one or more children. Also, the proposed amendments prolong the accommodation for young adults in foster families for up to a year after the completion of schooling in cases where the user cannot find a job. Furthermore, the Act on the Amendments of the Children’s Allowance Act that entered into force in January 2013 allowed for the payment of child support without creating and submitting a new decision, based on the decision from the previously conducted procedure for cases where there were no changes in the allowance amount. The Act on Nannies entered into force in April 2013 as a completely new legislative proposal in the Croatian legislation, and it makes possible the registration of the activity of a nanny, as well as the employment of a determined number of women that choose to work as nannies. Until now, there has been no legal regulation related to this activity and due to the reported needs of the society, the necessity of the legal regulation of this sector is imposed in order to provide a professional and high-quality nanny service for parents and children, enable business activities for nannies in accordance with the law, and at the same time introduce order in the area outside institutional children care, within the framework of carrying out nanny activities. Furthermore, the Maternal and Paternal Benefits Act was adjusted in 2013 in accordance with the assumed liabilities of the Republic of Croatia and the harmonization with the Council Directive 2010/18/EU of 8 March 2010 on the implementation of the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave. Additionally, the existing legal decision on the duration of leave for adopters has been improved so that all adopters are equal regardless of the age of the adopted children. The new Social Welfare Act entered into force in January 2014, and it regulates the provisions related to monetary payments, social services, status-law arrangements and other areas of social welfare. It is important to point out the amendments that enable the transformation of institutions into centres for the provision of services in a community, as well as the increase of the number of services that they can provide with the aim of preventing institutionalization and reducing the number of accommodated users. Social services and social welfare institutions regulated by the new Social Welfare Act ensure the legal basis and framework for the operational

implementation of the Plan for Transformation and Deinstitutionalization of Social Welfare Institutions. The new Family Act, adopted on 6 June 2014, defines the institute and the contents of parental care in accordance with the Council of Europe Draft recommendation on the rights and legal status of children and parental responsibilities (2011), and by using modern comparative European systems, brings a wider range of measures for the protection of the rights and benefits of children and regulates the adoption field in a high-quality way. The Family Act does not regulate in normative terms the part of the Act referring to interim support. It is envisaged that interim support will be regulated with the Interim Support Act concurrently with the adoption of the Family Act.

138. In 2014 the Act on the Croatian Sign Language and Other Communication Systems for Deaf and Deaf-blind Persons in the Republic of Croatia was adopted. This Act will prescribe the rights of deaf and deaf-blind persons to use and exchange information and receive education using the Croatian sign language and other communication systems adequate for their individual needs, with the aim of equalizing access possibilities to the social, economic and cultural environment and enabling an indiscriminate accomplishment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Act will define the Croatian sign language, the adapted Croatian sign language and other communication systems for deaf and blind-deaf persons.

139. Deaf, deaf-blind and other persons with communication difficulties will have the right to choose the communication method adequate for their needs. The right to a professional communication mediator will be ensured, as well as the right to an educated professional with appropriate skills, knowledge and abilities in using the Croatian sign language and other communication systems for deaf and deaf-blind persons.

140. The Act will prescribe that the users have the right to the service of a professional communication mediator in the communication system of their own choosing, and the conditions for the use of a communication mediator will be prescribed by the Ordinance.

141. In 2014 the Draft Proposal of the Act on a Single Expert Evaluation Body was adopted. This Act will regulate the activities and duties of the expert evaluation body in the framework of a single expert evaluation body. By founding a single body, expert evaluation will be conducted in a single place and based on a single document. This will lead to shorter administrative procedures, reduced expert evaluation costs and it will make it easier for the users to exercise their rights in various systems.

142. In accordance with the Draft Proposal of the Act, a single expert evaluation body will act as a structural unit of the Institute for Evaluation, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons that will act on a national level with branch offices on a regional and local level. That is, the Act on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons (Official Gazette No. 157/13) founded the Institute for Evaluation, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons that will, among other, conduct first and second instance expert evaluation for exercising rights from the fields of social welfare, pension insurance, maternal and paternal benefits, education, vocational rehabilitation and employment of disabled persons, protection of military and civilian war victims and other fields in which particular rights are exercised on the basis of expert evaluation, i.e. based on the findings and opinions of the expert evaluation body, as well as other activities related to expert evaluation in accordance with a special regulation.

143. From the scope of activities of the Ministry of Labour and Pension System and based on the Labour Act, in 2011 the Ordinance for Carrying out Activities Related to Employment was adopted and it contains, among other, provisions on juvenile work forms, with special care paid to protecting juveniles from economic exploitation and jobs harmful for the health and development of children. The Ordinance regulates, among other, the mediation for part-time work of regular students and the conditions to be met for regular

students to be able to work part-time, and in the event that these provisions are breached, an administrative measure has been prescribed, prohibiting such work for children.

144. From the scope of activities of the Ministry of Justice, the Act on Free Legal Aid entered into force in January 2014, prescribing the grant of legal aid to foreign children and the provision of legal aid to children that parents and other liable support persons are obliged to support, in accordance with the provisions of the Act, in procedures before the competent authorities in order to exercise the rights of the child to support regardless of the financial income of the family. In accordance with the Criminal Procedure Act (Official Gazette, Nos. 152/08, 76/09, 80/11, 121/11 final version, 91/12 — Decision by the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia, 143/12, 56/13 and 145/13) the child, as well as every victim of a criminal offence, has the right to an efficient psychological and professional assistance and the aid of a body, organisation or institution that helps the victims of criminal offence in accordance with the law, the right to participate in criminal proceedings as the injured party, the right to a notification from the state attorney regarding the undertaken activities due to her/his report and the right to the submission of an appeal to a higher ranked state attorney. According to the Juvenile Courts Act (Official Gazette, Nos. 84/11, 143/12 and 148/13) and according to the Criminal Procedure Act, the questioning of a child victim in the capacity of a witness is always carried out by the investigating judge with the help of an expert (expert assistant outside the legal professions — a social pedagogue, social worker or psychologist) with the judge or parties not present in the room with the child, using an audio-video device operated by a professional assistant. The new 2011 Criminal Code fully implemented substantive law provisions of the Lanzarote Convention on the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by creating a better and more efficient legal framework to combat all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse of children. At the same time, a provision of the Act specifies a child as a person under the age of 18, respecting the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. With the aim of achieving a stronger criminal-law protection of children, the Criminal Act contains a series of criminal offences that prescribe, as a qualifying form, a criminal offence committed towards a child as a particularly vulnerable social group. The new Act raises the age limit of legal sexual intercourse from 14 to 15 years of age. At the same time, in order to protect children as potential victims of criminal offences as effectively as possible, the court now has the option to impose penalties, safety measures or special obligations to the perpetrator, all with the aim of removing the circumstances that allow for or stimulate the perpetration of another criminal act, and these could be imposed for life. The Act on Legal Consequences of Conviction, Criminal Offences Record and Rehabilitation from 2012 and the Ordinance on Criminal Offences Record from 2013 prescribe the submission of criminal offences records data related to the registry of sexual offences against children, started in Croatia on 1 January 2013. Data on persons non-appealably convicted for the criminal offences of sexual abuse and exploitation of children can on request be delivered by a special certificate to courts, public authorities and institutions in procedures protecting the rights and interests of children as well as in procedures entrusting certain jobs and tasks in working with children. Regarding the employment or performance of activities which presume regular contacts with children, the employer can, in agreement with the person whose data are being requested, request the issuing of a special certificate. Rehabilitation for those who commit acts of sexual abuse and exploitation upon children starts after a time period twice as long as that for all other criminal offences. Criminal offences record data are delivered to other EU Member States electronically by using a criminal offences record database linked to the European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS), and to non-member states in accordance with the provisions of international agreements.

145. In order to avoid secondary victimization of the child during police procedures, MUP has, between 2011 and 2013, provided the space and equipment for 15 rooms

intended for conversations with children in police departments, and for 45 such rooms in police stations throughout the country. These rooms are equipped in such a way to be visually acceptable for children, i.e. so that a child does not have the feeling that it is situated in an official room, which is why all elements that would point to that are removed, e.g. personal computers, office furniture etc. The rooms resemble a child's room, with a children's desk, a toy box, a playing surface on the ground and a few toys, for the child to relax and tell the police officer what had happened. The police investigation states no special limitations regarding the duration of the interviews with children or the duration of their stay on official premises, but the general recommendation is to keep it as short as possible, and children should not be kept on official premises after the purpose of their arrival is fulfilled. During the investigation, specialized police officers will carry out the interview with the child, unless if that is not possible due to real circumstances. Specialized police officers for young people are officials educated to work with the youngest age group in the cases where children and juvenile persons are perpetrators of criminal acts or in cases when criminal acts have been committed against them. These police officers have an affinity for working with children and youth, have a high education, mostly in social sciences (M.Sc. criminologist, social pedagogue, pedagogue, psychologist, social worker, lawyer etc.) and have completed a specialist course for jobs including juvenile persons. This course lasts for 6 weeks and, among other subjects, participants are taught about interview methods and techniques resulting in as little secondary victimization of children as possible. The interviews are carried out in the presence of the parents, guardians, caregivers, a person carrying out the upbringing of the child or, in the events where a parent, guardian, caregiver or other person carrying out the upbringing of the child is the perpetrator of the criminal offence against the child, an expert person of the Social Welfare Centre.

146. Article 292 of the Criminal Procedure Act (Official Gazette Nos. 152/08, 76/09, 80/11, 121/11, 91/12, 143/12, 56/13, 145/13) states that a child under the age of 14 acting as a witness has to be questioned by the investigating judge. The questioning is carried out with the help of a psychologist, pedagogue or other expert person but without the judge and parties present in the room with the child. An audio-video device is used, operated by an expert assistant, and unless this is against the interests of the procedure or the child, a parent or guardian is present during the questioning. The parties can ask the child-witness questions via an expert person, provided that the investigating judge permits it. The questioning will be recorded with an audio-video device, and the tape will be sealed and added to the record. The child can be questioned again only in exceptional cases, in the same way as the first time. The identical questioning method can be applied for the questioning of children between the ages of 14 and 18, based on the circumstances of the case.

147. Article 39 of the Media Act (Official Gazette Nos. 59/04, 84/11 and 81/13) prohibits the public presentation and advertising of publications with a front page containing pornographic content, except in specified shops. A publication with pornographic contents must have a visible warning that it contains pornography, as well as a warning that the distribution of the publication to juvenile persons is prohibited.

148. Article 26 of the Electronic Media Act (Official Gazette Nos. 153/09, 84/11 and 94/13) prohibits the publication of newspaper supplements with particularly immoral and pornographic contents or contents that encourage, promote or glorify violence and crime in any way. The broadcasting of audiovisual or radio programmes that can seriously disrupt the physical, mental or moral development of juvenile persons is prohibited, especially of those that include pornography or reasonless violence. It is prohibited to broadcast audiovisual or radio programmes likely to disrupt the physical, mental or moral development of juveniles, except in cases when the TV or radio publishing company ensures, by selecting such an airtime or by any other technical measure, that juveniles in the

broadcast area will generally not see or hear such programmes. If these programmes are broadcast unencoded, the publisher is obliged to ensure that they are preceded by an audio warning or that they can be recognized by visual symbols during their entire duration.

149. From the scope of activities of the Ministry of Health a new Compulsory Health Insurance Act entered into force on 1 July 2013, as well as a few amendments to the Health Care Act, but there have been no changes to the part regarding the health care of children.

150. A new Act on Compulsory Health Insurance and Health Care for Foreigners in the Republic of Croatia has been adopted and it also entered into force on 1 July 2013. The Act regulates foreigner categories for which the Republic of Croatia ensures the funds for health care from its state budget, and it is prescribed that a juvenile foreigner found in the Republic of Croatia without parental care or the care of another adult accountable for his well-being has the same scope of rights to health care as a person insured from compulsory health insurance.

**Primary and Secondary Schools Education Act (Official Gazette, Nos. 87/2008, 86/2009, 92/2010, 105/2010-correction, 90/2011, 16/2012, 86/2012, 126/2012 and 94/2013).**

151. From the scope of activities of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, amendments to the Education in Primary and Secondary Schools Act 2011–2013 were adopted. The said Act organized the issues regarding the education of children of EU citizens, refugees, asylum seekers, foreigners under subsidiary protection and foreigners under temporary protection. Also, in accordance with Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and European Council of 16 December 2009 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals, children staying illegally in the Republic of Croatia are allowed to join the primary school educational system.

152. Related to the realisation of rights to free textbooks, two ordinances have been adopted: the Ordinance on Conditions, Manner and Method of Realising the Rights to Free Textbooks for Croatian Homeland War Veterans and the Members of their Families and the Ordinance on Conditions, Manner and Method of Realising the Rights to Free Textbooks for Military and Civilian War Invalids.

**(b) New institutions and their mandates, and institutional reforms**

153. One of the most important strategic goals of the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth in the field of developing community services for families is the deinstitutionalization and transformation of social welfare institutions, carried out in accordance with the Plan for Deinstitutionalization and Transformation of Social Welfare Institutions and Other Legal Entities Performing Social Welfare Activities in the Republic of Croatia 2011–2016 (2018). The Ministry of Social Policy is currently in the final stage of drafting the Operational Plan of Transformation and Deinstitutionalization of Social Welfare Institutions and Other Legal Persons Performing Social Welfare Activities in the Republic of Croatia 2014–2016. Additionally, the mentioned Social Welfare Act ensures presumptions of law for the transformation of institutions into centres for the provision of services in the community, and the Twinning IPA project “Support to the Social Welfare System in the Process of Further Deinstitutionalization of Social Services” contains a component aimed at creating social plans and a component aimed at providing support for further deinstitutionalization.

154. Also, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth is in the process of realizing the concept of a “One Stop Shop”, as the central location for the administration of a large number of different benefits as part of the existing network of state administration offices. The One Stop Shop would take over the administration and management control of all



monetary payments currently under the authority of social welfare centres, the Croatian Institute for Health Insurance, the Croatian Pension Insurance Institute, the Croatian Employment Service and county-level state administration offices. The realization of the One Stop Shop would reduce the administration and costs, speed up the processes and establish control on the recognition of various benefits from various systems.

**(c) Recently introduced policies, programmes and action plans and their scope and financing**

155. In February 2011, the Government of the Republic of Croatia issued the new National Strategy of Protection against Family Violence, for the period 2011–2016. The response to question no. 5 in Part I contains details on this Strategy.

156. The new National Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings for the Period 2012–2015 was adopted in February 2012. This document includes all areas contained in the previous national documents dealing with the subject of trafficking prevention, and special attention was paid to the further strengthening of cooperation in criminal proceedings in human trafficking cases between the State Attorney's Office of the Republic of Croatia and the Ministry of the Interior, to the improvement of human trafficking victims identification methods and to ensuring the best interests of human trafficking victims.

157. In March 2014, the Government of the Republic of Croatia adopted the text of the Strategy for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion of the Republic of Croatia (2014–2020). The Strategy is based on ensuring the conditions for achievement of the three main goals: fight against poverty and social exclusion and reducing inequality in the society; preventing the formation of a new category of the poor, as well as reducing the number of poor and socially excluded persons; establishing a coordinated system of support for groups threatened by the risk of poverty and social exclusion.

158. The strategic areas contain several main strategic activities and the methods of their implementation, to be elaborated in more detail within the three-year implementation programme on the national level, which will require the preparation of corresponding documents on the regional and local levels.

159. At this moment, the key point in the development of policies for children in the Republic of Croatia is the new National Strategy for the Rights of Children in the Republic of Croatia 2014–2020, which is in its final stage of preparation. Starting from the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2012–2015) (CM 2011/171) and the EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child, the Strategy focuses on four strategic goals: (1) Improving the system and providing child-friendly services, (2) Eliminating all forms of violence against children, (3) Ensuring the rights of children in vulnerable situations, (4) Ensuring active participation of children. Based on the analysis of achievements and difficulties, the priorities, the specific goals, and the related measures and designated competent authorities have been defined for each strategic goal. It has been envisaged for the three-year action plan for the implementation of the Strategy, which would define activities and their implementation deadlines, to be prepared after the adoption of the Strategy. The adoption of the National Programme for Youth for the Period 2014–2017 is in progress. The goal of this National Programme is to improve the operation of state administration bodies and public institutions that, within their scope of work and competences, contribute to fulfilling the needs of the youth and to raising their quality of life with the purpose of their optimum social integration.

160. The implementation of the majority of measures from the national strategies and programmes are planned to be financed from the state budget, from the positions of bodies designated as competent for particular measures, as well as from the budgets of local and regional self-government units.

161. In the field of health care, the following national strategic documents have been adopted: National Health Care Strategy 2012–2020, Strategic Development Plan for Public Health 2013–2015, Strategic Development Plan for End-of-life Care in the Republic of Croatia for the Period 2014–2016, National Strategy of Mental Health Protection 2011–2016 and National Strategy for the Prevention of Harmful Use of Alcohol and Alcohol-use Disorders 2011–2016. The above documents pay special attention to preschool health care and preventive educational measures for school children and higher-education students, mental health protection and the improvement of hospital treatment of children. The Croatian National Programme for HIV/AIDS Prevention 2011–2015 was issued, whose main goal is to maintain the low HIV infection and AIDS incidence rates in the Republic of Croatia and to prevent the propagation of HIV among adolescents through educational activities for adolescent groups and the reduction of risky behaviour. The Children and Youth Suicide Prevention Programme 2011–2013 was also adopted, laying emphasis on the prevention and reduction of the risk of suicidal behaviour through a series of specific primary, secondary and tertiary prevention measures. Also issued was the Action Plan for the Strengthening of Tobacco Control for the Period 2013–2016, which stresses the goal of preventing the onset of smoking, especially in children and youth, and enabling the youth to resist the temptation and make the correct decisions with regard to (non-)smoking. The financing of the implementation of measures from the above documents is ensured through specific frameworks of the state budget on the position of the Ministry of Health, as well as through the contracting system implemented by the Croatian Institute for Health Insurance.

162. In order to facilitate the course of transformation and deinstitutionalisation of social welfare homes, and with the aim of further improvement and promotion of foster care for children, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth has implemented two IPA projects in the recent period: “Improving Foster Care for Children and Youth in the Republic of Croatia” and “Enhancing the Capacities of Experts on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Children and Youth Placed in Homes for Children and Youth with Behavioural Disorders”. The Ministry is still carrying out the project “Support to the Social Welfare System in the Process of Further Deinstitutionalisation of Social Services” which includes a component aimed at the preparation of social plans and a component aimed at the support to the deinstitutionalisation process.

163. Furthermore, every year the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth finances projects of associations aimed at the achievement of strategic goals. Thus, for the target group of children, the projects being financed are aimed at the prevention of violence against and among children, the prevention of all form of addiction and the promotion and protection of children’s rights. Also financed are the projects for the provision of services of the teaching assistant for children with developmental difficulties, programmes developing community-based social services and operating programmes for the counselling centre and shelter for women and children victims of family violence.

164. The Ministry of Social Policy and Youth is a partner to UNICEF in the programme entitled “Early Childhood Development”. The preparation for the signing of the Agreement between the Ministry and UNICEF for the provision of support to the project “Early Diagnosis and Early Intervention for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders” is in progress. Also, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth is conducting the national “No Hate Speech Online” campaign with the official video “Dislajkam mržnju” (“I dislike hatred”), thus joining the Council of Europe online campaign “No Hate Speech Movement”. For the purpose of developing the policy for children, in the recent period the Republic of Croatia launched the Council of Europe pan-European awareness raising campaign against the corporal punishment of children called “Raise your hand against smacking!”. In October 2011, the Republic of Croatia hosted the regional conference “Stopping Sexual Violence against Children — ratifying and implementing the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual

Abuse” in the framework of the Council of Europe “One in Five” campaign aiming to stop sexual abuse of children, and commenced the implementation of the national campaign in this field. Furthermore, in cooperation with the State Attorney’s Office of the Republic of Croatia, the Association for Out-of-Court Settlement and Mediation in Criminal Proceedings and the UNICEF Office for Croatia, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth performed a one-year education course “Application of Out-of-court Settlement in Pre-trial Criminal Proceedings against Juveniles and Young Adults”.

**(d) Recent ratifications of human rights instruments**

165. In 2011, the Republic of Croatia ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, which entered into force on 1 January 2012 with respect to the Republic of Croatia.

166. In the field of child protection, on 5 December 2013, the Republic of Croatia joined the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption of 29 May 1993. By accessing this Convention, the Republic of Croatia has joined a large number of contracting states of this Convention, whose objects are to establish safeguards to ensure that intercountry adoptions take place in the best interest of the child, to establish a system of co-operation amongst contracting states to ensure that those safeguards are respected and thereby prevent the abduction, the sale of, or traffic in children and to secure the recognition in contracting states of adoptions made in accordance with the Convention. With respect to the Republic of Croatia, the Convention entered into force on 1 April 2014, and duties of the Central Authority for the Republic of Croatia imposed by the concerned Convention are discharged by the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth as the authority competent for social welfare matters.

167. Furthermore, in April 2014, the European Union approved the Convention of 23 November 2007 on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance, whose object is to ensure the effective recovery of child support and other forms of family maintenance. The Republic of Croatia, as a full member of the European Union, also participated in the process of approval of this Convention. The Convention enters into force on 1 August 2014.

168. On 27 December 2013, the Republic of Croatia signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure. Also, pursuant to the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Croatia to initiate the procedure for joining the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence of 20 December 2012, on 22 January 2013 the Republic of Croatia signed the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, becoming the 27th signatory of this Convention.

## **Part III**

### **Data, statistics and other information, if available**

**1. Please provide data for the past three years on the budgets allocated for the children at the national and local levels (in absolute terms and as a percentage of the national budget and of GDP) in the fields of education, health, social services and child protection**

169. Unfortunately, we are currently not able to present your esteemed Committee with a response to the question at hand since the Republic of Croatia has no “child budget” allocated as such. The Ministry of Finance data regarding the funds and share in the GDP for the said areas are provided in the response to the second question in Part I.

**2. Please provide statistical data for the past three years on the conviction rates for violation of a child's rights to preservation of identity in the media**

170. According to the reports from The Ministry of the Interior, the General Police Directorate, the Criminal Police Directorate, the new Criminal Code (OG 124/11, 144/12) has been in effect in the Republic of Croatia as of 1 January 2013, where the provisions of Article 178 "Violation of Children's Privacy" replaced and amended the text of Article 201 "Exposure of Personal or Family Conditions", which, in the then valid Criminal Code (OG 110/97, 27/98, 50/00, 129/00, 51/01, 111/03, 105/04, 84/05, 71/06, 110/07, 152/08, 57/11, 143/12), was included under the Chapter "Criminal Offences Against Honour and Reputation".

171. Considering that the criminal offence referred to in Article 178 of the new Criminal Code does not primarily and solely concern the protection of honour and reputation of children, but is aimed at protecting the privacy and, thus, well-being and development of the child, the following is inserted under the Chapter "Criminal Offences Against Marriage, Family and Youth": (1) The person to take away something from the personal or family life of a child, to publish a photograph of a child or reveal the child's identity in a way contrary to the regulations, thereby upsetting the child, causing his or her peers or other persons to ridicule him or her, or in any way endangering the well-being of a child, shall be punished by imprisonment of up to a year. (2) The person to commit the offence specified in paragraph 1 of this Article by means of media, i.e. the newspapers, radio, television, computer system or network, or at a public gathering, or in any other way making it accessible to a great number of people, shall be punished by imprisonment of up to 2 years. (3) The person to commit the offence referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article acting as an official or while performing a professional duty, shall be punished by imprisonment of up to 3 years.

172. Paragraph 1 makes a criminal offence to publish a child's photograph or reveal the identity of a child in a way that would be deemed contrary to the regulations, primarily referring to the Media Act, where — among other things — the concept of "media" is defined. According to the mentioned Act, the media are defined to include the newspapers and other print media, radio and television programmes, press agency programmes, electronic publications, teletext and other forms of daily and periodic publications of editorial programme contents in form of text, voice, sound or image. With the said definition in mind, the publishing of a child's photograph or revealing of a child's identity in the media has been instituted as a criminal offence.

173. Furthermore, if the criminal offence is committed using the press, radio, television, computer system or network, at a public gathering or in some other way making it accessible to a great number of people, it is considered a qualifying criminal offence as per paragraph 2, whereas the offence referred to in paragraph 3 is considered a qualifying offence if the offence specified under paragraphs 1 and 2 has been committed by an official person or while performing a professional duty.

174. In keeping with the above mentioned and with respect to the numerical indicators of criminal offences committed against the privacy of children in the media, the Ministry of the Interior does not have a single case recorded of criminal offence committed as referred to in Article 178(1) of the Criminal Code in 2013, while there were 11 criminal offences recorded as described in Article 178(2) of the Criminal Code, committed via the "Facebook" social network. It is important to note that the said criminal offences were not committed in the form of editorial contents.

175. As far as the numerical indicators for 2011 and 2012 are concerned, when the mentioned criminal offence of "exposure of personal or family conditions" was in effect as per Article 201 of the then valid Criminal Code (which, in turn, necessitated that the

criminal proceedings be brought by means of a private charge), the Ministry of the Interior does not have a single case recorded relating to the violation of the privacy of a child in the media, whose qualifying form was detailed under paragraphs 3 and 4.

176. The Ministry of Justice informs that the subject at hand is regulated in the new Criminal Code (Official Gazette, No. 125/11 and 144/12) under Article 178(2) ("Violation of Children's Privacy"). Based on the records of the Ministry of Justice, there has been no final and binding verdicts in actions brought on account of the offences as specified in the mentioned article of the CC/11. There is one instance recorded of case brought before the Municipal Criminal Court in Zagreb, but it was closed with a rejection by means of a private action.

**3. Please provide statistical data for the past three years on the number of acts of violence among children in social care institutions which have been reported, investigated and acted upon**

177. The Ministry of Social Policy and Youth is in charge of managing the official Social Welfare Centres statistical data concerning cases of domestic and peer violence, where the statistics concerning the phenomenon of peer violence is not managed separately for beneficiaries placed in children's homes.

178. The Ministry of Social Policy and Youth requested and processed the data from homes for children deprived of adequate parental care as well as homes for children with behavioural disorders with respect to the occurrence of physical violence in homes in 2013.

179. The data concern two forms of violence — serious acts of physical violence and serious physical abuse among the beneficiaries.

180. The data concerned is provided in tables that follow.

Table 2

**An overview of frequency of serious acts of physical violence among the beneficiaries and of serious acts of physical abuse among the beneficiaries in children's and correctional homes in 2013**

	<i>Serious physical violence among the beneficiaries</i>	<i>Serious physical abuse among the beneficiaries/repeated violent acts</i>
Children's homes	102	3
Correctional homes	164	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>4</b>

Table 3

**An overview of frequency of serious acts of physical violence among the beneficiaries and of frequency of serious acts of physical abuse among the beneficiaries in children's homes in 2013**

<i>Children's home — name</i>	<i>Serious physical violence among the beneficiaries</i>	<i>Serious physical abuse among the beneficiaries/repeated violent acts</i>
"Maslina" Dubrovnik	—	
"Svitanje" Koprivnica	6	2
I. B. Mažuranić Lovran	—	
Children's Home Pula	4	
"Izvor" Selce	28	

<i>Children's home — name</i>	<i>Serious physical violence among the beneficiaries</i>	<i>Serious physical abuse among the beneficiaries/repeated violent acts</i>
Slavonski Brod	–	
“Sveta Ana” Vinkovci	12	
“Vladimir Nazor” Karlovac	–	
“Lipik” Lipik	–	
“Braća Mažuranić” Novi Vinodolski	1	
“Klasje” Osijek	9	
“Maestral” Split	33	
“Vrbina” Sisak	–	
Home for Children Zagreb	9	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>3</b>

Table 4

**An overview of frequency of serious acts of physical violence among the beneficiaries and of frequency of serious acts of physical abuse among the beneficiaries in correctional homes in 2013**

<i>Correctional home name</i>	<i>Serious physical violence among the beneficiaries</i>	<i>Serious physical abuse among the beneficiaries/repeated violent acts</i>
Correctional Home Ivanec	26	
Correctional Home Bedekovčina	39	
Correctional Home for Children and Youth Karlovac	6	1
Correctional Home for Children and Youth Osijek	7	
Correctional Home for Children and Youth Split	23	
Correctional Home for Children and Youth Zagreb	1	
Correctional Home Mali Lošinj	10	
Correctional Home for Children and Youth Pula	20	
Correctional Home for Children and Youth Rijeka	0	
Correctional Home for Children and Youth Cres	1	
Correctional Home for Children and Youth Zadar	31	
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>1</b>

**4. Please provide, if available, statistical data, disaggregated by sex, age, geographic location and socioeconomic background, on the number of children living in foster care and in institutional care**

181. Based on the statistical data derived from the data provided by the social welfare centres, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth delivers the following data:

Table 5

**An overview of number of children and youth in foster care and in social welfare institutions for the 2010–2013 period**

	<i>Number of children and youth in foster care</i>	<i>Number of children and youth in social welfare institutions</i>
2010	2001	4,014
2011	2059	2,922
2012	2100	2,844
2013	2306	2,504

*Source of information:* Annual statistical reports on the application of rights concerning social welfare, legal protection of children, youth, marriage, family and persons deprived of (working) capacity, as well as protection of persons with physical or mental disabilities in the Republic of Croatia in 2010.

182. With respect to the statistical data the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth develops based on data provided by the social welfare institutions and other legal persons providing social welfare activities with no institutions founded, the following data is developed regarding the homes and the beneficiaries of homes for children deprived of adequate parental care and children with behavioural problems. It is important to note that the age- and sex-related data pertain to beneficiaries of all services (both institutional and non-institutional).

**Data about the beneficiaries of homes for children deprived of adequate parental care as well as children with behavioural problem, by age and sex**

*Source of information:* Annual statistical reports concerning homes and social welfare beneficiaries in the Republic of Croatia in 2011, in 2012, and in 2013; Annual statistical report concerning other legal persons performing social welfare activities with no founding of institutions and social welfare beneficiaries in the Republic of Croatia in 2011, in 2012, and in 2013; [www.mspm.hr](http://www.mspm.hr)

Table 6

**An overview of the number of children and youth placed in state social welfare institutions for children deprived of adequate parental care, by age and sex, for the 2011–2013 period**

*As at 31 December 2013*

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Age</i>								<i>Total</i>
	<i>Until the age of 1</i>	<i>Over 1 to 3</i>	<i>Over 3 to 7</i>	<i>Over 7 to 14</i>	<i>Over 14 to 16</i>	<i>Over 16 to 18</i>	<i>Over 18 to 21</i>	<i>Over 21</i>	
Male	20	25	45	194	82	45	40	1	452
Female	20	19	24	152	78	75	45	2	415
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>867</b>

*As at 31 December 2012*

As at 31 December 2013

Male	14	19	41	173	83	72	37	4	443
Female	12	16	28	133	75	71	44	5	384
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>827</b>

As at 31 December 2011

Male	13	27	41	160	90	76	36	2	445
Female	13	19	36	126	76	75	35	–	380
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>825</b>

Table 7

**An overview of the number of children and youth placed in non-state social welfare institutions for children deprived of adequate parental care, by age and sex, for the 2011–2013 period**

As at 31 December 2013

Sex	Age								Total
	Until the age of 1	Over 1 to 3	Over 3 to 7	Over 7 to 14	Over 14 to 16	Over 16 to 18	Over 18 to 21	Over 21	
Male	0	7	21	58	15	23	0	0	124
Female	1	4	15	42	16	21	6	0	105
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>229</b>

As at 31 December 2012

Male	2	8	22	58	9	13	3	–	115
Female	–	3	12	48	9	14	7	–	93
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>208</b>

As at 31 December 2011

Male	1	7	18	55	6	5	8	–	100
Female	–	6	14	30	12	18	12	–	92
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>192</b>

Table 8

**An overview of the number of children and youth in the care of other legal persons performing social welfare activities for children deprived of adequate parental care, by age and sex, for the 2011–2013 period**

As at 31 December 2013

Sex	Age								Total
	Until the age of 1	Over 1 to 3	Over 3 to 7	Over 7 to 14	Over 14 to 16	Over 16 to 18	Over 18 to 21	Over 21	
Male	2	3	10	39	9	20	15	1	99
Female	4	13	9	44	25	16	6	3	120



As at 31 December 2013

<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>219</b>
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As at 31 December 2012

Male	3	4	4	24	22	16	12	1	86
Female	9	6	11	38	26	12	5	3	110
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>196</b>

As at 31 December 2011

Male	4	10	6	24	16	16	10	2	88
Female	4	7	8	49	25	23	8	4	128
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>216</b>

Table 9

**An overview of the number of children and youth placed in state social welfare institutions for children and youth with behavioural problems, by age and sex, for the 2011–2013 period**

As at 31 December 2013

Sex	Age								Total
	Until the age of 1	Over 1 to 3	Over 3 to 7	Over 7 to 14	Over 14 to 16	Over 16 to 18	Over 18 to 21	Over 21	
Male	53	131	168	120	145	36	1	654	53
Female	30	80	87	56	58	10	3	324	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>83</b>

As at 31 December 2012

Male	43	130	148	168	158	47	3	697	43
Female	28	84	66	65	46	7	–	296	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>993</b>	<b>71</b>

As at 31 December 2011

Male	57	125	138	129	161	77	–	687	57
Female	51	78	61	46	46	3	–	285	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>972</b>	<b>108</b>

Table 10

**Data regarding state homes offering accommodation services for children deprived of adequate parental care, as at 31 December 2013, by counties**

County	Number of beneficiaries			
	Total	Permanent or weekly placement	Organized housing service	Other non institutional services
1. Bjelovar-Bilogora	–	–	–	–

County	Number of beneficiaries			
	Total	Permanent or weekly placement	Organized housing service	Other non institutional services
2. Brod-Posavina	48	22	13	3 Half-day stay(s) 7 Consultation(s) with beneficiaries 3 Consultation(s) with parents
3. Dubrovnik-Neretva	27	26	0	1 Half-day stay(s)
4. Istria	52	29	5	13 Half-day stay(s) 5 Consultation(s) with parents
5. Karlovac	116	42	0	34 Half-day stay(s) 40 Consultation(s) with beneficiaries
6. Koprivnica-Križevci	131	6	0	16 Half-day stay(s) 66 Consultation(s) with ext. beneficiaries 20 Post-treatment 23 Consultation(s) with parents
7. Krapina-Zagorje	—	—	—	—
8. Lika-Senj	—	—	—	—
9. Međimurje	—	—	—	—
10. Osijek-Baranja	124	53	0	53 Half-day stay(s) 9 Consultation(s) with parents 9 Consultation(s) with beneficiaries
11. Požega-Slavonia	50	32	1	8 Half-day stay(s) 4 Consultation(s) with beneficiaries 5 Consultation(s) with parents
12. Primorje-Gorski Kotar	232	73	18	48 Half-day stay(s) 49 Consultation(s) with beneficiaries 12 Consultation(s) with ext. beneficiaries 32 Consultation(s) with parents
13. Sisak-Moslavina	28	27	0	1 Half-day stay(s)
14. Split-Dalmatia	129	78	5	34 Half-day stay(s) 12 Consultation(s) with parents
15. Varaždin	—	—	—	—
16. Virovitica-Podravina	—	—	—	—
17. Vukovar-Syrmia	77	33	0	15 Half-day stay(s) 16 Consultation(s) with ext. beneficiaries 13 Consultation(s) with parents
18. Zadar	—	—	—	—
19. Zagreb County	78	25	0	3 Half-day stay(s) 28 Consultation(s) with beneficiaries 22 Consultation(s) with parents
20. Šibenik-Knin	—	—	—	—
21. City Of Zagreb	277	133	33	13 Half-day stay(s) 52 Consultation(s) with beneficiaries 42 Consultation(s) with parents 4 Consultation(s) with beneficiaries
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,369</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>715</b>

Table 11  
**Data regarding state homes offering accommodation services to children with behavioural problems, as at 31 December 2013, by counties**

County	Number of beneficiaries			
	Total	Permanent or weekly placement	Organized housing services	Other noninstitutional services
1. Bjelovar-Bilogora	–	–	–	–
2. Brod-Posavina	–	–	–	–
3. Dubrovnik-Neretva	–	–	–	–
4. Istria	54	26	–	4 Stay(s) 24 PET (Prolonged Expert Treatment) at school
5. Karlovac	46	31	1	14 Stay(s)
6. Koprivnica-Križevci	–	–	–	–
7. Krapina-Zagorje	29	29	–	–
8. Lika-Senj	–	–	–	–
9. Međimurje	–	–	–	–
10. Osijek-Baranja	56	37	0	12 Half-day stay(s) 7 PET at school
11. Požega-Slavonia	–	–	–	–
12. Primorje-Gorski Kotar	188	83	0	32 Stay(s) 73 PET at school
13. Sisak-Moslavina	–	–	–	–
14. Split-Dalmatia	102	24	–	7 Stay(s) 71 PET at school
15. Varaždin	46	46	–	–
16. Virovitica-Podravina	–	–	–	–
17. Vukovar-Syrmia	–	–	–	–
18. Zadar	89	15	1	25 Stay(s) 48 PET at school
19. Zagreb County	–	–	–	–
20. Šibenik-Knin	–	–	–	–
21. City of Zagreb	389	48	15	45 Stay(s) 281 PET at school
<b>Total</b>	<b>999</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>643</b>

*Source of information:* Draft of the Operational plan of transformation and deinstitutionalization of social welfare institutions and other legal persons performing social welfare activities in the Republic of Croatia 2014–2016.

Table 12  
**Numerical indicators concerning children and youth placed in foster care, by the county, for the 2011–2013 period**

County/City of Zagreb	31. 12. 2011	31. 12. 2012	31. 12. 2013
Zagreb	215	214	224
Krapina-Zagorje	31	31	29

<i>County/City of Zagreb</i>	<i>31. 12. 2011</i>	<i>31. 12. 2012</i>	<i>31. 12. 2013</i>
Sisak-Moslavina	85	85	85
Karlovac	78	70	72
Varaždin	284	284	284
Koprivnica-Križevci	144	156	158
Bjelovar-Bilogora	106	106	104
Primorje-Gorski Kotar	43	43	78
Lika-Senj	10	9	9
Virovitica-Podravina	39	39	39
Požega-Slavonia	6	6	6
Brod-Posavina	63	85	79
Zadar	46	49	55
Osijek-Baranja	233	233	233
Šibenik-Knin	21	21	20
Vukovar-Syrmia	103	120	130
Split-Dalmatia	173	184	195
Istria	61	61	60
Dubrovnik-Neretva	10	10	10
Međimurje	133	133	133
City of Zagreb	219	228	241
Republic of Croatia Total	2,103	2,167	2,244

*Source of information:* Central Registry of Foster Parents, as per Article 55 of the Foster Care Act (OG, No. 90/11 and 78/12), managed by the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth.

## 5. Please provide data on the backlog of cases in juvenile justice as well as in family procedures

183. The Ministry of Justice keeps records about court proceedings also for juvenile cases. The data in the Table 13 pertain to juvenile criminal cases for the last three years.

Table 13

**Numerical indicators for juvenile criminal cases pending at the beginning of the period, filed, closed, delegated as per Art. 10 and pending at the end of the period 2011–2013**

<i>Juvenile criminal cases in the RoC</i>	<i>2011/01–2011/12</i>				
	<i>PE</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>Art. 10</i>	<i>PE</i>
Municipal courts	662	1,290	1,423		529
County courts	23	71	58		36
<b>Total</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>1,361</b>	<b>1,481</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>565</b>
	<i>2012/01–2012/12</i>				
Municipal courts	529	610	872	1	266
County courts	36	34	67		3
<b>Total</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>644</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>269</b>

<i>Juvenile criminal cases in the RoC</i>	<i>2011/01–2011/12</i>				
	<i>PE</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>Art. 10</i>	<i>PE</i>
	<i>2013/01–2013/12</i>				
Municipal courts	266	795	742	1	318
County courts	3	30	25		8
<b>Total</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>767</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>326</b>

PB: pending at the beginning of the period; F: filed; C: closed; Art. 10: delegated as per Art. 10;  
PE: pending at the end of the period.

184. Regarding the proceedings in cases of family and legal protection, there are no clearly defined criteria in the context of the question and the Ministry of Justice is not able to provide said information in a way that would enable an unambiguous interpretation because of the case type code book from the eFiles the courts use. For example, family cases include civil proceedings (divorces, decisions regarding guardianship), litigation proceedings (decisions regarding who the child is to live with, restraining orders for the child, removals of a child, kidnapping etc.), as well as criminal proceedings (procedures concerning the failure to regular payments of the child support), which cannot be identified or separated from other criminal cases.

**6. Please provide data, disaggregated by age, gender, geographic location, socioeconomic background and type of disability, covering the past three years on the number of children with disabilities:**

- (a) **Attending regular schools**
- (b) **Attending special schools**
- (c) **Not attending school**

185. According to the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, the total number of children with disabilities attending day-care centres or making use of services of other legal persons performing preschool education activities in the Republic of Croatia at the beginning of the 2012/2013 period amounted to 4,983 (3.52 %). There are 4,015 children integrated into the system and 579 children in special groups. A total of 1,750 children have the right to the co-financing of their educational programme, out of which 1,171 children have been integrated into regular groups, while 579 were put into special groups. The co-financing is conducted based on the delivered assessments of the social welfare centre and the decisions of the Croatian Health Insurance Fund regarding maternity leave in accordance with Article 50 of the Preschool Education Act. Children with disabilities may be included in regular programmes and programmes for preschool children with developmental disabilities, as developed following the developmental needs of those children as well as their possibilities and abilities.

186. The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports is working on securing 18,816 (5.61 %) students with disabilities in regular or special educational institutions their right to education. Students with disabilities are granted right to adequate programmes and forms of education-oriented support on account of the psychophysical condition established as well as a decision regarding the adequate educational programme, made by the competent state administration office in charge of education or the City Office for Education, Culture and Sports in the City of Zagreb.

187. In the Republic of Croatia, there are 19 special educational institutions and 95 elementary schools with a general-education programme that have special class units organised for students with developmental disabilities. For the said institutions, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports ensures conditions be met as required for spatial as well as pedagogic and didactic adjustments to the needs of students with disabilities as well as adjustments required for transport of students with disabilities, co-financing for satisfying dietary needs, supply of didactic materials and aids needed by students with disabilities.

188. Apart from complete integration into elementary schools with regular teaching curricula, students may be partially integrated in accordance with the Article 7 of the “Ordinance on Primary Education of Students with Developmental Disabilities”, in form of a special class unit by an expert in educational and rehabilitation matters. In the 2012/2013 school year, a total of 673 male and female students (0.2 %) were involved in the said form of education.

189. Furthermore, special class units have been organised in regular schools for children with organic behaviour disorders as per Article 10 of the “Ordinance on Primary Education of Students with Developmental Disabilities”, in which 150 (0.04 %) male and female students were included.

190. In elementary schools following general-education curricula, there are special class units organised for children with severe mental disorders in keeping with Article 12 of the “Ordinance on Primary Education of Students with Developmental Disabilities”, in which a total of 250 elementary school male and female students (0.42 %) were included. In total, 1,653 male and female students (i.e. 0.49 % of the total number of students in elementary schools with general-education and special programmes designed for children with disabilities) were partially or fully involved in special class units in elementary schools following general education curricula.

191. In the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports system, there are 19 primary school institutions where teaching is carried out following special programmes for children with disabilities, involving 2,254 (0.67 %) students of in the primary education system aged to 21. There are fewer students in class units/groups in the 8-form programme (44.7 %) but more students with multiple disabilities aged from 7 to 21 (55.3 %) who, under Article 12(1) of the Education Act, have the right to elementary education up to 21 years of age.

192. In educational groups for students with multiple disabilities up to 21 years of age, the majority of these students were aged 11 to 14 (N=377), while the fewest (N=94) were aged from 17 to 21. Most of the students with disabilities were taking part in primary school education within the SUVAG polyclinic for rehabilitation of listening and speech disorders in Zagreb (N=430), while the fewest attend the Liče Faraguna Centre in Labin (N=17). In elementary schools with special programmes, there is the so-called “prolonged expert treatment” (“PET”) instituted, encompassing 673 students in 103 educational groups. Out of that number, a total of 286 students are in the 8-form programme, whereas 355 students are involved in educational groups for the 7-21 age group.

193. The Ministry of Social Policy and Youth reported that the primary and secondary education programmes for social welfare institutions (homes), as instituted by the Republic of Croatia, were being conducted with respect to the conditions prescribed by the minister competent for education.

194. In state-founded social welfare institutions, there were 21 children in permanent or weekly stay on account of the type and level of their disability who were not part of any form of education in 2011, that is, 18 children in 2012 and 16 children in 2013.

**(d) Confined to cage beds in institutions**

195. Cage beds are used neither in social welfare institutions, nor in health care institutions in the RoC.

**7. Please provide statistical data for the last three years on the conviction rates for non-payment of child maintenance**

196. The Ministry of Justice is not able to provide the required data as it is not possible to derive an adequate response to the posed question from the statistical data it has at its disposal.

**8. Please provide the Committee with an update of any data in the report which may have been superseded by more recent data collected or affected by new developments****9. In addition, the State party may list areas affecting children that it considers to be of priority with regard to the implementation of the Convention**

197. The High-Level Conference on the implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2012–2015 “Growing with Children’s Rights”, took place in Dubrovnik on 27th and 28th March 2014 and was organized by the Council of Europe and the Croatian Government — Ministry of Social Policy and Youth. The conference gathered over 250 participants from relevant institutions of the 40 Member States and international organizations and provided a platform for prolific and constructive discussion on the Mid-term review of current Strategy on the Rights of the Child. Topics covered included Enforcing Children’s Rights, Emerging challenges in protecting children’s rights in Europe, Reinforcing children’s rights in law, Juvenile justice, Children’s rights to child-friendly services, Preventing and combating sexual violence against children, Violence against girls and young women under 18, Promoting the rights of children in alternative care, Child participation: generating change. The conference has secured the participation of children and young people within “living library concept”, among whom were young adults in care and young people with disabilities. Conference resulted in focused conclusions, which are of particular value for the process of preparation of the new Council of Europe’s Strategy for the Rights of the Child for the period 2016–19.

198. From 9th April to 9th May 2014, the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth held a public hearing on the proposed draft of the National Strategy for Children’s Rights in the Republic of Croatia. As a part of the public consultation a series of workshops and thematic sessions was organized in order to ensure the active participation of children. Workshops with children included four themes: (1) The active participation of children, (2) Sport, culture and other leisure activities, (3) Health and (4) Alternative care. A survey was conducted on children’s rights among children and adults — professional workers and teachers. Children from elementary school and SOS Children’s Village Lekenik participated in the event.