

Evaluation and recommendations of the JIM follow-up in the Republic of Croatia from January 2009 to December 2009

- The European Commission adopted the EUROPE 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The Commission would like Croatian Government to take due account of the EUROPE 2020 Strategy and its broad economic and employment policy guidelines and to link it with the JIM process.
- As a general point, it would be appreciated to have explanations why certain commitments were delayed or are being reconsidered.
- It is highly desirable to have a clear examination of the social impacts of the **economic crisis** and of the social policy measures taken to address the crisis. This should be analysed in the next report.
- Even though the crisis has delayed many processes, the Commission encourages the Croatian Government to continue the **administrative capacity strengthening** and to describe in details the measures taken in the next report.
- It would be good to have an analysis of the **regional differences** as regards social inclusion and social protection. There is a need for a more comprehensive reporting on the problems as regards the access to social services in "areas of special state concern" and in isolated areas.
- Main concerns and challenges in the JIM process are the **decentralisation** and the **deinstitutionalisation** processes. There is a need to explain how the implementation of the new **Social Welfare Act** will be coordinated with ongoing activities in municipalities and counties and how administrative decentralisation and fiscal decentralisation will be made coherent with each other. The Commission notes that progress on deinstitutionalisation is very slow. A reporting on concrete progress with a particular emphasis on the Master plan for the deinstitutionalisation in the next report would be a welcome development.
- One of the main challenges is the adoption of the **Social Welfare Act** which has been substantially delayed. The Commission will closely follow progress regarding the adoption.
- The Commission would encourage Croatia to have in the next report concrete commitments and results regarding **gender equality**. Reporting on this issue should be more extensive and should be in a separate section.
- When reporting on **social dialogue**, it would be good to review in the next report its relation to the social inclusion policies and actions. Implications of the Labour Act which consolidated the Croatian Labour Law and came into force in January 2010 should also be addressed.

- As regards the **Pension Insurance Act** it will be helpful if the next report includes a concise analysis of the system of pension supplement and description how the status of the new pensioners will be improved as of the beginning of 2010. Further reporting on converting **privileged pensions** to the general pension system is also expected for the next report.
- It would be appreciated to conduct further analyses and study of impact of **work of pensioners**, while still keeping their pension benefits. Since, at the moment, there is no data available on the number of pensioners earning other income, it is impossible to monitor, verify and evaluate the effect of the regulations currently in force.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the measures in terms of how much they contribute to sustainable work of **persons with disabilities** should be explained in the next report.
- The JAP report states *"Integral indicators on the position of persons with disabilities on the labour market are still not available"*. Croatia has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which foresees specific obligations relating to statistics and data collection. It would be good to outline in the next Report how the Croatian government is progressing on this issue. It would be also good to see in the next Report that the evaluation activities related to the national disability strategy 2007-2015 follow the structure and principles of the UNCRPD, and will be used to fulfil the obligation to report to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- A clearer overview of the employment of **national minorities** in central and local government is required. A realistic assessment of the constraints which have led to limited achievements in this field and a clear and realistic action plan to overcome these difficulties should be a key feature of the next report.
- As regards **Roma national minority** and their access to pre-school and compulsory primary education, it would be useful to explain or to provide best estimates at the proportion of the Roma children in the relevant age group who do not enrol in pre-school or compulsory education and, crucially, steps being taken to reduce these numbers.
- As regards **national minorities**, the implementation report states *"Data on the structure of the employed according to the national affiliation, in particular the share of employed Roma and Serbs, will be available in 2010"*. It would be good to have these data in the next report.
- The Commission encourages Croatia to continue research on **homelessness** and to provide more concrete additional data in the next report.
- Croatia's reporting on **corruption in the health** system has been much appreciated and the Commission expects continuation on this matter in the next report. This implies concrete actions and results.

- At the time of the next report, some operations within **HRD OP, IPA Component IV** (2007-2011) will be in implementation. If available, it would be interesting to include in the follow-up report for 2010 the impact of certain activities on social policies. This could be annexed to the implementation report.