



**Information Legal Centre
(ILC)**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2014.**

ILC is a non – profit organization registered in June 2002. ILC was created upon closure of the Legal Center of the American humanitarian organization International Rescue Committee which started operations in Slavonski Brod in 1998.

Vision

Creating a positive environment for the promotion and protection of human & civil rights and social justice, for the purpose of democratization and civil society development.

Mission

ILC Slavonski Brod is a civil society organization established for the purpose of providing legal assistance to socially vulnerable groups of the population in the exercise of their human and civil rights and for the strengthening of civil society and active citizenship in the area of our local community and the wider region.



During 2014, Information Legal Centre enabled the support for vulnerable groups of our society by providing free legal assistance through a number of projects and with the financial support of donors that will be presented below.

1. HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION

1.1. Status rights of the Roma minority



Project title: "Free legal assistance to Roma population in civil registration"

Implementation period: 1 January to 31 December 2014

Area of implementation: Brod – Posavina County, Vukovar – Srijem County, Osijek – Baranja County, Sisak – Moslavina County, Zagreb County and City of Zagreb

Donor: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The main objective of the project: *Providing assistance to the Roma population in the sustainable integration in the local community through the promotion and protection of human rights by allowing them free access to the rights in cases concerning the status issues, which will ultimately result in reducing the number of stateless persons.*

Information Legal Centre greatly contributed to the improvement of legal services and information available to the Roma community by carrying out project activities, and has also provided territorial access to the most vulnerable beneficiaries among them. The general awareness of the problems Roma minority encounter every day has been increased and legal gaps and positive regulations discrepancies and their implementation in administrative procedures were identified.

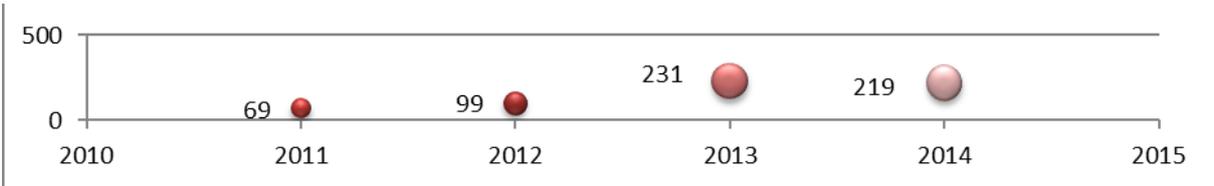
ILC has established good relationships with all relevant national and local providers of public services, and also identified shortcomings in the existing legal framework and in its implementation at the national, regional and local level.

However, offered constructive solutions have not yet fully been incorporated and the level of awareness of the civil registration problem for the Roma population still needs specific attention. There is a need to continue to advocate with relevant state bodies in order to show importance of shouldering this responsibility appropriately. There is still an implementation gap at the national, regional and local level in order to efficiently deal with the backlog of non-registered persons, persons at risk of statelessness and persons lacking documents to facilitate their access to basic rights.

During 2014, ILC has provided free legal assistance to members of the Roma national minority through field visits of two ILC's mobile teams to Roma settlements on a weekly basis, through the central information center in the ILC's office and through an open phone line.

During the reporting period, beneficiaries were provided information and legal assistance in regards to their status issues. ILC staff has actively initiated administrative proceedings on their behalf and has additionally provided legal assistance in obtaining documents from the countries of the region and in writing requests for debt write-off for health insurance to Tax Department.

Obtained documents for beneficiaries



Law on Amendments to the Foreigners Act (Official Gazette No. 74/13), which entered into force on 27 June 2013, prescribes the issuance of "special travel document" for a foreigner in the Republic of Croatia who has been granted temporary residence, permanent residence or subsidiary protection pursuant to the provisions of the Asylum Act, and who, without fault of his own, was unable to obtain a national travel document. This provision was intended to ensure fulfilment of requirements for approval of temporary / permanent residence of foreigners in the Republic of Croatia, but the Ministry of the Interior has adopted the view that this provision applies only to foreigners whose countries do not have their representative offices in the Republic of Croatia. Consequently, ten ILC's beneficiaries who are citizens of the Republic of Serbia, submitted requests for the issuance of special travel documents. One of them received a negative decision, and it is expected that the remaining applicants will also receive negative decisions.

According to the Article 54 of the Foreigners Act, the requirements for the regulation of temporary residence are, among others, possession of a valid travel document, sufficient funds for support and health insurance. Roma people are not able to meet these conditions because the majority of them live in extreme poverty. In addition, a person who is not a citizen of any country is unable to obtain a travel document, nor is a person whose diplomatic and consular offices are not equipped with adequate technical equipment for issuing travel documents. In these cases, the Ministry of the Interior approves a temporary residence to a foreigner on the basis of humanitarian grounds for a period of one year, provided that during this period foreigner obtains a valid travel document.

In the area of project implementation, ILC has detected a total of 41 persons who are either stateless, at risk of statelessness or without any identification documents.

Of the total number of ILC's beneficiaries who are de facto stateless, 22 temporary residences have been granted on humanitarian grounds for a period of one year, and two beneficiaries were approved permanent residence. Also, we have started the procedures of granting temporary residence for five beneficiaries, but the procedures are still ongoing since they do not possess valid travel documents. One beneficiary has successfully finalized the procedure of subsequent registration in the register of citizens, and for 11 beneficiaries ILC will start the procedure of subsequent registration in the register of births. Since their parents are also without regulated status in the Republic of Croatia, we expect that these procedures will be long and complicated.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Foreigners Act, it is stipulated that foreigners who are married or living in cohabitation with Croatian citizens have to meet much milder conditions (possessing valid travel document, sufficient means of support and basic health insurance) to regulate the temporary

or permanent residence in the Republic of Croatia comparing to the requirements prescribed by the previous Foreigners Act. However, in 2014, only 7 ILC's beneficiaries were granted temporary residence permit based on family reunification with EU citizens for a period of 5 years. 7 other beneficiaries have difficulties regulating their residence because they do not possess valid travel documents.

For several ILC's beneficiaries, request to approve temporary residence on grounds of family reunification with a member of the EU was refused, on which decisions ILC has filed nine appeals to the Ministry of the Interior: five appeals were withdrawn because the MoI subsequently granted temporary residence; two appeals were accepted and the cases were returned for retrial to the Police Department as the first instance body, which resulted in the approval of temporary residence in one procedure, and for the other decision we are still waiting. Two appeals were dismissed and ILC has applied for postponement of forcible removal from Croatia in these proceedings.

During 2014, permanent residence has been granted for 12 ILC's beneficiaries, and 9 beneficiaries received Croatian citizenship.

According to the Foreigners Act, Article 6 Paragraph 1, a travel document for stateless persons may be issued under the conditions described in international conventions. Also, deciding on a request for issuance of a passport for stateless persons, the Ministry of the Interior should ex officio establish applicant's statelessness, but according to our knowledge, no such action has been implemented.

According to the Article 45, paragraph 1 of the Regulations on the Status and Work of Foreigners in the Republic of Croatia, a travel document for stateless persons may be issued if a stateless person has been granted temporary or permanent residence in Croatia.

ILC was informed by the Ministry of the Interior that the Government has officially recognized status of stateless persons only to one person who had been issued a travel document for stateless persons. The process of determining the status of stateless person lasted almost two years, but unfortunately the person died shortly after receiving this status.

We also found out that the objection "of unknown nationality" stands on the residence cards of persons who have been granted temporary residence on the basis of humanitarian grounds for stateless persons, instead of "stateless" because in Croatia there is no formal procedure for the determination of statelessness and the Ministry of the Interior does not specify statelessness applicant ex officio, but the practice varies from case to case.

ILC ascertained that a total of 71 beneficiaries who have been granted temporary residence in Croatia will have difficulties. They will be prevented from regulating their residence in 2015 because they do not possess valid travel documents, nor are they able to obtain them.

In the period from January to December 2014, ILC's mobile teams conducted 152 field visits to Roma settlements, obtained 219 documents and provided 1,095 individual legal advices. 78 administrative procedures have been initiated, while 61 administrative procedures were positively resolved.

The structure of ILC's beneficiaries by age and gender						
Age	M		F		Total	
	Number of beneficiaries	%	Number of beneficiaries	%	Number of beneficiaries	%
0-4	19	2%	24	2%	43	4%
5-17	98	9%	88	8%	186	17%
18-59	348	32%	403	37%	751	69%
60 >	67	6%	48	4%	115	10%
Total:	532	49%	563	51%	1.095	100%

According to the project proposal for 2014, ILC was planning to organize five community meetings in Roma communities. However, because of great interest among the Roma population for this type of events, ILC held a total of 11 community meetings in the area of project implementation. During the community meets, beneficiaries directly obtained the necessary information, expertise, answers and solutions to their problems by all relevant participants and guests of the meetings. Topics covered at these events were status and social rights, the importance of education, health care, access to the labour market, gender equality, quality of life and reproductive health of women.

391 members of the Roma community attended community meetings, as well as local and national media which have regularly reported on these events.

The lack of accurate figures on how many people lack civil registration and documentation remains a major obstacle to designing effective measures to tackle these issues. Although it is State's responsibility to collect this data, ILC undertook the unofficial survey among Roma communities. During data collection, ILC tried to exercise optimum standards in the field of personal data protection, to the best of our knowledge. Roma National Minority Councils from Zagreb, Slavonski Brod and Darda participated actively in the survey in their respective communities and provided valuable assistance to ILC mobile teams.

ILC collected data about 215 Roma families including 885 family members in the largest Roma settlement in Slavonski Brod. Additional 168 Roma were included in the survey in Slavonski Brod, outside the Roma village. In Zagreb area 672 Roma participated in the survey, while 671 Roma participated in Darda. The survey is only partly finished and ILC will continue with data collection during the following reporting period. We expect to finish the survey in three Croatian counties (Zagreb, Brod-Posavina, Osijek-Baranja) by the end of 2015 when we will publish compiled data.

ILC's administrative procedures – examples:

ILC has successfully concluded a particularly complex procedure of subsequent registration in the register of births for the beneficiary who was born in Croatia, but has never been registered in the register of births or even in the book of citizens and has been living without identity documents over 40 years. During the war she moved to Bosnia and Herzegovina with her family and finally ended at the Immigration Centre in Sarajevo. Thanks to the successful cooperation - the Ministry of the Interior, Police Station Nova Gradiska, the State Administration Office in Brod – Posavina County and ILC, the beneficiary was finally returned to Croatia where she carried out subsequent entry in the register of births, and initiated the process of establishing the Croatian citizenship.

In other procedure, ILC initiated the procedure for determination of paternity and maternity for four minor children from Darda. The children were born in Italy, but have not been entered in the register of births, nor in the book of citizens so they did not have birth certificates. Because their father was a Croatian citizen, UNHCR has funded an extremely complicated and expensive process of DNA analysis to determine paternity / maternity of four young children, resulting in their acquisition of Croatian citizenship. However, their mother will remain stateless for now because she has no relatives who could confirm her identity or testify about her life's journey.



The impact of the project on the wider community:

- Roma minority's possibilities to access civil registration and legal aid services increased in the area of project implementation;
- Increased level of documentation and reduced number of Roma at risk of statelessness in Croatia;
- Raised awareness among Roma population and local authorities of the importance of civil registration;
- Cross-border network is further strengthened and Roma people assisted through cross border cooperation and ILC's active participation in Western Balkans Legal Assistance Network (WeBLAN);
- Strengthened capacities of relevant state service providers and better coordination between relevant authorities in advocating for Roma status issues through joint meetings organized and advocacy interventions.

Other activities:

- Participation at the final conference of the project "Good practices in the process of integrating the Roma (BPRI)" held on February 28, 2014 by the OSCE / ODIHR mission in Tirana, Albania;
- Participation at the workshop entitled "Asylum and Migration: Republic of Croatia after accession to the European Union" held on March 14, 2014, organized by UNHCR and attended by UNHCR's implementing partners and representatives of the executive authorities of the Republic of Croatia. The whole ILC's project team attended the workshop. On behalf of ILC, executive director held a presentation, in which she presented the project activities and results achieved in the previous year, with special emphasis on project funded by UNHCR and the successes that have been achieved since ILC, in its manner of implementation of the project, is unique in the Republic of Croatia;
- Participation at the Round Table "The human rights situation in 2013" organized by Human Rights House Zagreb, held on May 12, 2014, on the occasion of presenting the Annual Report on Human Rights in the Republic of Croatia;
- Participation at the Annual Conference on Asylum, Migration and Statelessness, organized by UNHCR on December 15 and 16, 2014, in Hotel Golfer, in St. Martin on Mura which was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, Ministry of Administration, Office of the Ombudsman and Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities, UNHCR's implementing partners and other civil society organizations. On behalf of ILC, executive director held a presentation, in which she presented the project activities and results achieved in the previous year

1.2. Free legal assistance

Project title: “Free legal assistance for vulnerable social groups in Brod – Posavina County “

Implementation period: 1 August to 31 December 2014

Area of implementation: Brod – Posavina County

Donor: Ministry of Justice

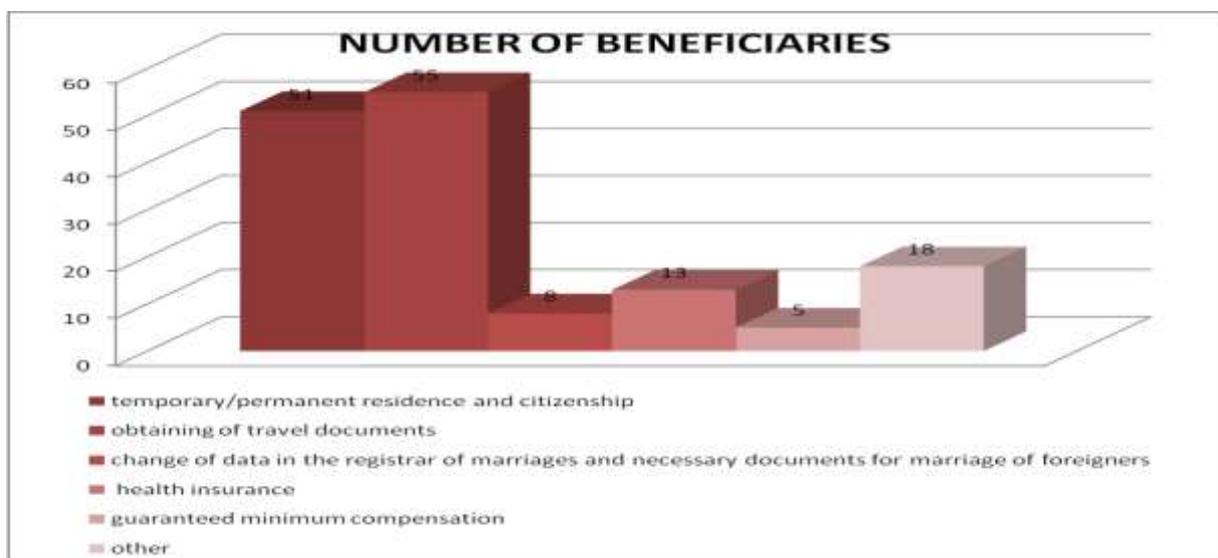
The main objective of the project is to *improve the situation of Roma and other marginalized groups in Brod – Posavina County through ensuring equal access to rights and support for the bypass of systemic obstacles in exercising their right to legal personality and in access to socio – economic rights.*

The largest part of the project were the activities related to Roma population in Brod – Posavina County because, despite the significant achievements in solving certain problems of the Roma community and inclusion of Roma in recent years, a number of inherited problems and environmental specificities of the Roma community on the one hand, and exposure to discrimination, intolerance and prejudice on the other hand, remain key obstacles to their full integration into the wider society.

In addition to primary legal aid, which was the main project activity, ILC has systematically informed the public about its activities and worked to raise awareness within the community about the precarious situation of socially marginalized groups.

The project was implemented in the City of Slavonski Brod, in the community building "Josip Rimac" near Roma settlement where we held public debates and also in the premises of ILC where we provided free legal aid to project beneficiaries.

During the project implementation, ILC's legal staff has provided 326 general legal information, 338 legal advice and has compiled 132 petitions before public authorities for beneficiaries from the area of Brod – Posavina County in regulating their status and socio – economic rights. ILC organized three public debates, funded with a portion of the financial resources of the Ministry of Justice, on topics adapted to problems that Roma people face every day.



1.3. Raising awareness among members of the Roma minority

Project title: *“Raising awareness of human rights among women members of the Roma minority in Brod – Posavina County”*

Implementation period: 1 July to 31 December 2014

Area of implementation: Brod – Posavina County

Donor: Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities, Government of Republic of Croatia

Main objective of the project: *improving the position of Roma women in the Brod – Posavina County through ensuring equal access to rights and support for bypassing the system obstacles to the exercise of the right to legal personality and in access to socio – economic rights.*

With this project, we have made women belonging to the Roma minority in Brod – Posavina County aware of their human rights in a way that their active participation in project activities strengthened the role of Roma women in the life of the community. Also, young Roma women have been made aware of the importance of the acceptance of their Roma identity which led to an increase in their self – confidence to become more proactive in taking responsibility for their own health and in school attendance.

The project was implemented in the City of Slavonski Brod, in the community building "Josip Rimac" near Roma settlement where we held public debates and also in the premises of ILC where we provided free legal aid to project beneficiaries.

During the project implementation, ILC's legal staff has provided legal advice to 150 Roma women from the area of Brod – Posavina County in regulating their status and socio – economic rights, which is 100% more than the project specified. We organized several informal meetings with Roma women in the local community building near the Roma settlement so that women can freely share their experiences and problems in order to contribute to the integration and strengthening of solidarity within the community.

Also, with a portion of the financial resources of the Office for Human Rights and National Minorities of the Croatian Government, and within a couple of projects that we have implemented through the reporting period, ILC organized three public debates on topics relating to the importance of having personal documents and registration of newborn children, birth registration, continuing education in the secondary school system, employment rights, protection of women's reproductive health and recognition of various forms of discrimination.

1.4. Easier access to rights for the Roma population of Slavonski Brod

Project title: "Easier access to rights of socially vulnerable and marginalized Roma population of Slavonski Brod "

Implementation period: 1 January to 31 December 2014

Area of implementation: City of Slavonski Brod

Donor: City of Slavonski Brod

The main objective of the project is *to empower the Roma population to use existing legal mechanisms to achieve and protect their rights which will directly influence the improvement of their quality of life in the City of Slavonski Brod.*

To achieve the above objective, ILC has organized three public debates on very important issues for the Roma national minority covered by the national programs of the RoC and that will contribute to more active participation of Roma in social and public life of our local community and get rid of the stigma of marginalized groups following them not only in our community but in the entire European Union.

The project was implemented in the City of Slavnoski Brod, in the community building "Josip Rimac" where we kept all the public debates because of the proximity of the Roma settlement, to allow a presence of a larger number of participants.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETY

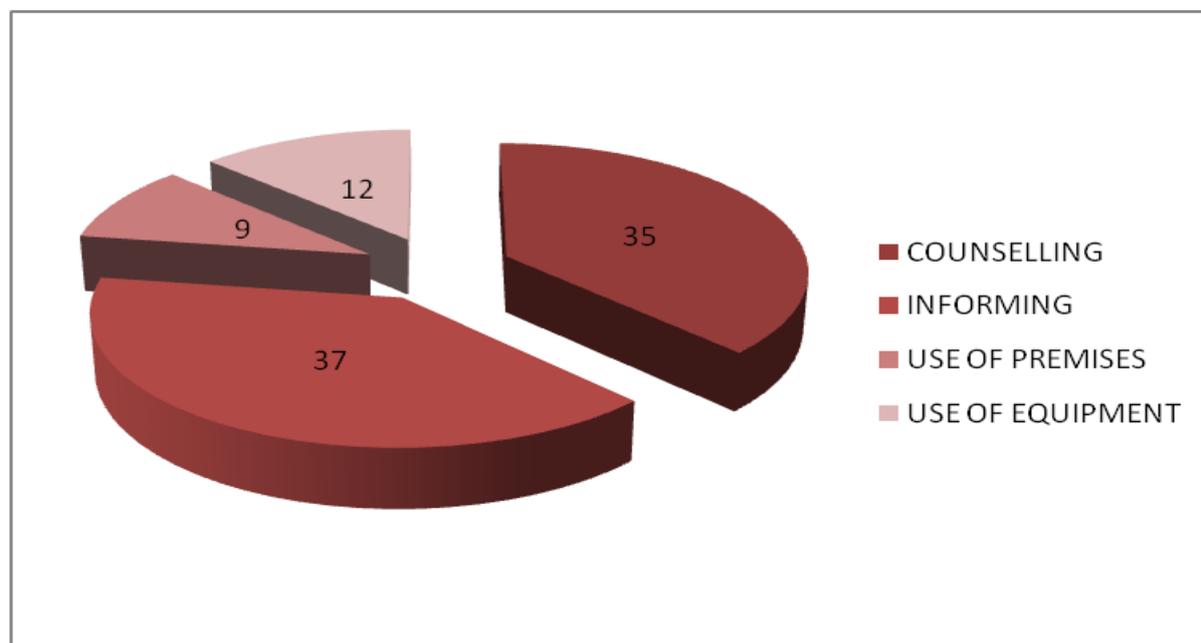
2.1.



From 1 January 2013 ILC participates in the program SALTER, one of the regional programs for the development of civil society and local communities in Croatia during the period from 2013 to 2016, funded by the National Foundation for Civil Society Development. The main objective of the program SALTER is to strengthen civil society and active citizenship through systematic and continuous support of all copartners interested in the development of local communities and democratization in Brod – Posavina, Osijek – Baranja, Vukovar – Srijem and Pozega – Slavonia Counties.

Leader of Salter is the Volunteer Center in Osijek, as the regional support center, and the program is implemented in partnership with three collaborating organizations: PRONI Centre for Social Education (Vukovar), Information Legal Centre (Slavonski Brod) and Youth Association OPPIDUM (Pleternica).

During the implementation of the program in 2014, ILC has provided 35 services of information on public tenders - calls for proposals for civil society organisations, as well as about workshops and training courses organized by the program Salter or by other organizations; carried out 37 counseling to organizations and active citizens on various topics, such as writing proposals and the process of establishing new associations, administrative and financial operations of the associations, incentives on employment across the CES; and finally, ILC has provided technical and logistical support for 21 civil society organization for which we enabled the use of ILC's premises and use of technical equipment for independent work.



The Council for Development of Civil Society in Slavonski Brod

In March 2014, ILC organized a meeting with civil society organizations and representatives of regional self government, during which ILC initiated the establishment of the Council for Development of Civil Society in Slavonski Brod which City of Slavnoski Brod accepted. On 12 June 2014, the Charter of cooperation of City of Slavonski Brod and civil society organisations was adopted at the session of the City Council.

ILC has collected 23 statements from CSOs based in Slavonski Brod on the accession to the Charter and submitted them to the City. By doing so, ILC has influenced the interconnection and participation of civil society organizations with public authorities within our local community. We plan to continue with our activities which aim to enhance the development of local civil society.

Other activities:

- participation in the education cycle "Management of volunteers" conducted by Volunteer Center Osijek through two two – day modules, which aimed to develop the abilities, skills, knowledge and attitudes of participants to develop and/or enhance volunteer programs in their organizations and in their communities.

- participation in the education cycle "Learning for Change", organized by the Volunteer Center Osijek in the period from October 2014 to January 2015 in Slavonski Brod. By attending the said education, knowledge and skills on management of non-profit organizations and the development of best management strategies and management organization were improved which contributed to increasing the capacity of the organization.

- participation at the meeting "The structures and models of support to balanced regional development of civil society in Croatia" organized by the Office for Associations of the Croatian Government and the National Foundation for Civil Society Development in Zagreb in February 2014.

- participation at the coordination meeting of the National Foundation, representatives of Regional Support Centers and county cooperating organizations which was held in Zadar in March 2014.

- participation at three partner meetings with the Regional Support Center in Osijek with the aim of monitoring the work for the current year, identifying the actions and finding solutions to the current difficulties encountered during the implementation of the program.

- participation at the presentation of call for proposals for financial supports by Foundation Slagalica in March and September 2014 in Slavonski Brod and Nova Gradiska. During the presentations, ILC has promoted different forms of support, including activities that ILC as a cooperating organization provides through program Salter to other representatives of civil society organizations, as well as representatives of local and regional government.

3. PUBLIC EVENTS

3.1. Public debates

During the reporting period, ILC organized a total of 11 public debates with carefully selected topics adjusted to our beneficiaries in order to enable easier access to relevant information related to the problems they often encounter.

DATE	LOCATION	TOPIC	GUESTS	PARTICIPANTS	DONORS
27.03.2014	DARDA	PROMOTION OF EDUCATION IN ROMA COMMUNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ivica Zavrski, Senior Legal Advisor at the Administrative Department for Education, Culture, Sport and Tehnical Culture of Osijek – Baranja County, - Dusko Kostic, President of the Association “Luna”, - Branko Djurdevic, President of the Council of Roma national minority Darda, - Ante Vukoja, Mayor of Darda, - Janos Boni, Director of elementary school Darda, - Jelena Jelenic, representative of WCAS. 	35	UNHCR
16.04.2014.	ZAGREB	STATUS AND SOCIAL RIGHTS OF ROMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natalija Kovacevic – MoI employee, Zagreb police department, - Sanja Kusic – Registrar’s office Crnomerec, - Romana Cagalj Vilic – employee of Centre for social welfare Zagreb. 	36	UNHCR
05.06.2014.	SLAVONSKI BROD	SOCIAL PROTECTION AND STATUS RIGHTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slavica Niksic – director of Center for social welfare Slavonski Brod, - Zeljko Balikic – Croatian Employment Service, - Ivan Vladisavljevic – Brod – Posavina Police Department. 	35	UNHCR CITY OF SLAVONSKI BROD
17.06.2014.	BELI MANASTIR	EXERCISING AND PROTECTION OF SOCIAL RIGHTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Predrag Stojanovic, Deputy Mayor of Beli Manastir, - Nada Sinko, Head of the office of Croatian Employment Service in Beli Manastir, - Martina Kedmenec, employee of Centre for social welfare Beli Manastir, - Dimi Fustin, director of Center for social welfare Beli Manastir. 	61	UNHCR
09.07.2014.	DARDA	SOCIAL PROTECTION AND STATUS RIGHTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nada Sinko, Head of the office of Croatian Employment Service in Beli Manastir, - Mandalena Solja – Head of Department for citizenship, status rights of foreign nationals and asylum of Osijek – Baranja Police Department, - Rudolf Mecevic – Head of administrative affairs of police station Beli Manastir, - Branko Djurdjevic – President of the Council of Roma national minority Darda. 	50	UNHCR

20.08. 2014.	ZAGREB	PROMOTING OF EDUCATION IN ROMA COMMUNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smiljan Kundert, Representative of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, - Mirko Markovic, Representative of the Office for Human Rights and National Minorities, - Alen Tahiri, Representative of the Office for Human Rights and National Minorities, - Iva Stimac, Representative of the City Department for Education, - Nura Ismailovski, member of the Council of Roma national minority in Zagreb. 	40	UNHCR
17.09. 2014.	SLAVONSKI BROD	IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION FOR ACCESSING THE LABOUR MARKET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Irena Cugura-Ceric, Director of elementary school Hugo Badalic, - Gordana Alfeldi, Croatian Employment Service, - Vedrana Palenkic, Croatian Employment Service, - Dusko Kostic, President of the Association "Luna" from Beli Manastir. 	28	UNHCR GOHRNM MINISTRY OF JUSTICE CITY OF SLAVONSKI BROD
14.10. 2014.	SLAVONSKI BROD	GENDER EQUALITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zdenka Bosnjak, President of County Commission for Gender Equality, - Marina Baric-Gacic, legal adviser at Information Legal Centre. 	14	UNHCR GOHRNM MINISTRY OF JUSTICE CITY OF SLAVONSKI BROD
22.10. 2014.	ZAGREB	ENFORCEMENT OF SOCIAL RIGHTS AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF HOUSING FOR ROMA IN ZAGREB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jasminka Lukac, Head of the City office for property affairs and property of the City of Zagreb, - Zeljko Zaninovic, Head of the Department for relations with national minorities and religious communities of the City of Zagreb, - Mirko Markovic, Representative of the Office for Human Rights and National Minorities, - Anita Grgos, Advisor of the City Office for social protection and persons with disabilities of the City of Zagreb, - Ivana Cikac, Advisor for the issue of housing at the Department of social welfare of the City of Zagreb. 	38	UNHCR
26.11. 2014.	SLAVONSKI BROD	REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH OF WOMEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zeljka Blazevac-Vlainic, Gynaecology medical specialist, - Igor Ivic-Hofman, Epidemiology medical specialist, - Marina Baric-Gacic, ILC 	24	UNHCR GOHRNM MINISTRY OF JUSTICE CITY OF SLAVONSKI BROD
28.11. 2014.	ZAGREB	IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF EMPLOYMENT OF ROMA IN ZAGREB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aleksa Djokic, Assistant Director of the Office for Human Rights and National Minorities, - Mirko Markovic, Representative of the Office for Human Rights and National Minorities, - Zeljko Zaninovic, Head of the Department for relations with national minorities and religious communities of the City of Zagreb - Marija Halic, Croatian Employment Service. 	37	UNHCR

3.2. Round table "Celebrating 60 years of adoption of the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons - status issues of Roma in Croatia: current achievements and challenges in the future"



On 5 November 2014, ILC and the Representative Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the Republic of Croatia, under the auspices of the President of the Republic of Croatia organized a round table entitled "Celebrating 60 years of adoption of the UN Convention on status of stateless persons - status issues of Roma in Croatia: current achievements and challenges in the future." The round table was organized at the headquarters of the Croatian Chamber of Commerce of Brod – Posavina County in Slavonski Brod.

The round table was organized to draw attention of state and local governments, as well as the general public, about the problems stateless persons face in everyday life.

Over 12 million people worldwide are stateless. In Europe, more than 600.000 people are not citizens of any country, of which 400.000 live in EU member states. Stateless persons are denied the opportunity to fully participate in a society because they have no access to basic civil, political, economic, cultural and social rights.

In Croatia, the number of people who have not established citizenship or who are stateless is relatively small in relation to the situation in the world. During Census of 2011, 2.886 persons declared to be stateless or of unknown citizenship. According to a very independent estimates to which UNHCR came in conjunction with individual Roma associations and projects through the provision of legal aid to Roma, about 500 Roma are not citizens of any state (stateless), and approximately 1.000 have not resolved their status, but could be at risk of statelessness. In any case, the figure of 1.500 is the lowest estimated number of Roma without regulated status in Croatia. The real number is certainly much higher.

The round table was attended by representatives of the central administration, local and regional governments, the Croatian Parliament, Office of the Ombudsman, local institutions, councils of Roma national minority and international organizations who presented current achievements, difficulties and challenges faced not only by representatives of the Roma national minority, but also by representatives of government and civil society organizations involved in resolving status issues in the Republic of Croatia.

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE ROUND TABLE

The United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons - 60 years

Status issues of Roma in Croatia: past achievements and future challenges

Slavonski Brod, November 5, 2014.

- To ensure and increase the financial means for free legal aid projects that will help the Roma people in regulating their stay in the Republic of Croatia (RC), to strengthen the network of mobile teams and to widen their field of activity to the areas populated by Roma people.
- To strengthen the cooperation of the mobile teams established by a decision of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and Roma representatives.
- To ensure the financial means from the State budget for administrative proceedings, i.e. for expenses related to regulating the temporary and/or permanent stay in cases when those expenses cannot be paid by the person himself/herself.
- To continue with the training of employees of state administration, including employees in police stations and in the police administration, related to the targets of the Government of the Republic of Croatia contained in the National Strategy of the Government of the Republic of Croatia for Roma Inclusion 2013–2020 and in the Action Plan for the period 2013–2015.
- The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the RC, in agreement with the representatives of the governments of the Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Kosovo/SCR 1244, and of the Republic of Macedonia/Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, shall urgently determine the possibility of issuing biometric passports in the RC for persons who do not have regulated residence in the RC.
- To establish and adopt a procedure for determining the statelessness status in accordance with international instruments signed by the RC (the UN Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons of 1954, and the UN Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness of 1961).
- The expenses of DNA analysis in paternity/maternity procedures are covered by the State. If there is no need for a DNA analysis, the statement of parents, the statement of witnesses, school certificates and similar evidence shall be accepted.
- To propose a simplified procedure of a subsequent entry into the birth registers (e.g. with a doctor's certificate; with a verified statement of two witnesses on the identity and with a proof of the parents' residence at the time of birth; and similar), and to ensure consistent proceedings.
- To consider the possibility of regulating temporary residence for humanitarian reasons and in cases where a person does not possess or cannot obtain a travel document.

Conclusion

Pursuant to the discussion during the Round Table and the above-mentioned recommendations, the organisers – the Legal Information Centre and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in the RC – have determined that in 2015 it will be necessary to organise a regional conference on the problems of stateless persons and of persons with unresolved status.

The aim of the conference will be to determine the results achieved at regional and international levels in the application of the Zagreb Declaration adopted in October 2011 (attached hereto), and to propose means of resolving the remaining problems stated in the Declaration.

3.4. Recording of TV show Prizma:

In July 2014, HRT reported on ILC's beneficiaries, members of the Roma national minority in the area of Slavonski Brod, Darda and Zagreb, in two broadcasts of TV show Prizma on national minorities, together with the interview on the same topic attended by Mr. Mirko Markovic, representative of the Office for Human Rights and National Minorities and Ms. Jasna Barberic, representative of UNHCR Croatia. During the broadcasts, ILC's beneficiaries presented all the difficulties and problems in daily life faced by persons who have the status problems, unregulated residence and the lack of personal documents.

Broadcasts can be viewed at:

[Prilog 1](#)

[Prilog 2](#)

A report on the round table "The status issues of Roma in Croatia: current achievements and challenges in the future" can be viewed at:

[Prizma](#)



FINANCIAL REPORT 2014

REVENUES

1. Revenues from international organisations:	469.070
2. Revenues from the state budget:	98.068
3. Revenues from the local self government:	4.000
4. Revenues from companies and other legal entities:	75.004
5. Other revenues:	31.438
TOTAL REVENUES:	677.580

EXPENDITURES

1. Expenditures for employees (salaries including taxes and contributions):	351.216
2. Official travelling:	4.132
3. Compensation for other persons who are not employees:	69.000
4. Telephone, postage:	21.572
5. Current and investment maintenance service:	10.663
6. Publicity expenditures:	1.162
7. Communal services:	4.141
8. Office rent:	36.300
9. Intellectual services:	109.311
10. Computer services:	15.600
11. Other services:	6.990
12. Office supplies:	6.476
13. Energy:	31.770
14. Insurance premium:	7.257
15. Representation expenditures:	5.066
16. Other material expenditures:	1.059
17. Amortization:	3.518
18. Banking fees and money transfer fees:	5.942
TOTAL EXPENDITURES:	691.175