



## Migration Profile

### CROATIA

#### A. Executive Summary

The Republic of Croatia is located in Central Europe and is marked by a broad geographic diversity: mountainous regions, the Pannonian plain, the Adriatic coast, and 1,185 islands and islets.<sup>i</sup> The country has been a member of the European Union since 2013.<sup>ii</sup> On January 1, 2023 it also joined the Schengen area and the Eurozone,<sup>iii</sup> launching throughout 2022 information and educational campaigns to get its citizens ready for the introduction of the new currency.<sup>iv</sup>

Regarding immigration, in 2021 the main countries of origin were Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Germany, and Slovenia.<sup>v</sup> The Balkan route has a high rate of irregular crossings, and human trafficking also poses a big concern. Internally, Zagreb County has received the highest positive net migration;<sup>vi</sup> in fact, few employment opportunities and lack of social services are considered the key push factors for rural-to-urban migration.<sup>vii</sup> Likewise, many Croatians migrate abroad because of economic reasons.<sup>viii</sup> In 2021, their main destination countries were Germany, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Austria, and Kosovo.<sup>ix</sup>

Croatia also hosts refugees and asylum seekers from Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Iran.<sup>x</sup> Due to the humanitarian crisis resulting from the war in Ukraine, the country has adopted the EU Directive on temporary protection of Ukrainian refugees, allowing them to access services with no need of a residence or work permit.<sup>xi</sup>

In 2022, the service sector represented 74.7% of Croatia's GDP.<sup>xii</sup> The tourism industry has also been growing and helping the local economy to recover after the Covid-19 pandemic.<sup>xiii</sup> Moreover, Croatia is experiencing an economic transformation, a digitalisation transition to renewable energies, and enhancing its transport and environmental infrastructures.<sup>xiv</sup> Its exports in 2021 were mainly to Italy, Germany, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Hungary.<sup>xv</sup> However, the country's low productivity remains a concern for its convergence towards average EU income levels.<sup>xvi</sup>

In 2021, its GDP was US\$ 68,955,083,280,<sup>xvii</sup> experiencing an annual growth rate of 13.1% compared to the previous year's.<sup>xviii</sup> Foreign Direct Investment net inflows amounted to 6.5% of its GDP.<sup>xix</sup> Regarding the inflation rate, it was 2.6%, compared with 0.2% in the previous year.<sup>xx</sup>

#### B. Country Profile

##### I. Basic Information

Croatia is a Central European and Mediterranean country located between the Danube and the Adriatic Sea. It shares borders with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Serbia, and Montenegro.<sup>xxi</sup> It is divided into 3 regions (Pannonia, with abundant water; the central highlands, with extensive forests; and the Adriatic coast) and 21 counties.<sup>xxii</sup> Croatia covers an area of 56,594 sq. kms, and in 2021 its population was 3,888,529.<sup>xxiii</sup>

Its capital city is Zagreb that has 769,944 inhabitants.<sup>xxiv</sup> Croatian is the official language, Italian is the co-official one, and there is also a large percentage of people knowing English.<sup>xxv</sup> Catholics account for 78.97%, Orthodox 3.32%, Muslims 1.32%, and other Christian Churches 4.83%, while those with no declared religious affiliation are 6.43%.<sup>xxvi</sup> As far as ethnic distribution, Croats are 91.63% of the population, Serbians make up 3.2%, and there are other national minorities (more than 20). The third largest group are Bosniacs (0.62%), followed by Roma, Italians, Albanians, Hungarians, Slovenians, Czechs, Macedonians, Montenegrins, and Slovaks.<sup>xxvii</sup>

## II. International and Internal Migration

In 2021, 35,912 immigrants were registered in Croatia. 72.7% of them were male, whereas only 27.3% were female. Almost half of the immigrant population was aged between 20 and 39 years old. In 2020, 22.4% of them came from Bosnia and Herzegovina,<sup>xxviii</sup> followed by Serbians (9.29%), Germans (6.81%), and Slovenians (4.10%).<sup>xxix</sup>

Croatia was part of Yugoslavia until 1991 and became an independent country at the beginning of the Balkan wars. The state signed the Schengen Treaty in 1995, but remained outside the Schengen Area due to its limited technical adjustments, and maintained border controls accordingly. However, last June 2021 Croatia implemented an Independent Monitoring Mechanism providing human rights monitoring of border-related operations concerning asylum seekers. The Council of the European Union, thus, confirmed Croatia's compliance with all the necessary conditions requested and joined the Schengen zone on January 1, 2023.<sup>xxx</sup>

Initially, Croatia was not involved in the migration crisis outbreak. Refugees and migrants went through Serbia and then Hungary to reach the Schengen Area. Nonetheless, in 2015 the Hungarian government decided to close the border and adopted strict measures (installing barbed-wire fences, positioning the army along the border, and arresting those who entered the country illegally).<sup>xxxi</sup> This new resolution diverted the migratory flow towards Croatia, where, overnight, the country had to face the arrival of an overwhelming number of people, a situation that still persists to this day.<sup>xxxii</sup>

In 2015, for the first time in its short history, Croatia witnessed a substantial flow of refugees from other continents, with several thousand people each day crossing the border between Croatia and Serbia. In the winter of 2015 and early 2016, this situation gradually changed, and the number of non-Syrian refugees moving from Croatia to neighbouring Serbia began to increase.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

The Balkan route was officially closed in March 2016. According to UNHCR, in 2018, between 90,000 and 100,000 people tried to reach the European Union via the Balkans.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Many families made their way to the border of Croatia in order to reach the European Union, fleeing war and violence in their home countries, especially Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Syria.<sup>xxxv</sup>

As of 2021, the Western Balkan route was the second most common path for illegal border crossings (61,735 individuals).<sup>xxxvi</sup> Traffickers promptly offered their help and services to all those who were trapped in the Croatian peninsula after the border closure, and they also targeted, albeit in smaller numbers, those who continued to arrive. Thousands of people from Syria, Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan used the Balkan route across the border between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and then entered the European Union.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

Inter-settlement migration is quite frequent in Croatia. In 2021, Zagreb county recorded the highest positive net migration. Split-Dalmatia and Primorje-Gorski Kotar counties ranked second and third for internal migration flows.<sup>xxxviii</sup> As a matter of fact, people living in rural zones feel unhappy about social services locally provided, such as kindergartens or infant nurseries, and a narrow array of career choices limits the few employment opportunities. These push factors have definitely contributed to increased rural-to-urban migrations in Croatia.<sup>xxxix</sup>

### **III. Emigration and Skilled Migration**

In 2021, 40,424 people moved out of Croatia.<sup>xl</sup> Emigration has been characterised by a higher percentage of women (52.33%) than men (47.67%).<sup>xli</sup> In 2021, the top destination countries were Germany (32.06%), Bosnia and Herzegovina (16.21%), Serbia (9.80%), Austria (8.40%), and Kosovo (4.15%).<sup>xlii</sup> The most significant number of people who migrated abroad were aged between 20 and 39 years old.<sup>xliii</sup>

Croatia's entry into the European Union marked a turning point in this phenomenon. In 2012, the main destinations were Serbia (31%) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (25%),<sup>xliv</sup> which were characterised by return migration, mainly motivated by regional political and ethnic issues. Following Croatia's access to the European Union and the opening of the labour market of EU Member States to Croatian citizens, Germany and Austria have also become preferred destinations for Croatian migrants.<sup>xlv</sup>

Currently, the main push factors are the decline in living standards, fall of overall employment rates, and difficulty to find a permanent job in the profession. In addition to this, there is a general dissatisfaction with the country and the perception of an uncertain future in Croatia.<sup>xlvi</sup> Furthermore, Germany has lifted restrictions on the free movement of labour and provided services geared to Croatian citizens.<sup>xlvii</sup> Over time, the provisions governing Croatian graduates, trainees and seasonal workers have been relaxed so that now they can work in Germany without a work permit.<sup>xlviii</sup>

Some migrants are trained in the health sector and are looking for new prospects in Germany, where there is a shortage of health workers, and job opportunities for them.<sup>xlix</sup> A similar

situation is happening in Austria, which has lately become an appealing destination for many Croatians.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, regarding remittances, in 2021 they amounted to 5,044,681.50,<sup>i</sup> representing 7.3% of Croatia's GDP.<sup>iii</sup> There is a close relationship between foreign remittances and economic growth in Croatia, as remittances usually increase demand through higher personal consumption and individual investments by recipients of foreign remittances.<sup>liii</sup>

#### **IV. Forced Migrants (Internally Displaced Persons, Asylum Seekers, Refugees, and Climate Displaced Persons)**

In 2022 16,415 refugees and 1077 asylum seekers were registered in Croatia.<sup>liv</sup> They were mainly from Ukraine (93.73%), Syria 3.36%, Iraq (0.72%), Afghanistan (0.59%), and Iran (0.25%).<sup>lv</sup> 1,044 of them received protection under the UNHCR mandate,<sup>lvi</sup> mostly coming from Burundi, Turkey, Iraq, and Afghanistan.<sup>lvii</sup>

The arrival of people from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Iran increased in 2015, triggering the migration crisis in the Mediterranean.<sup>lviii</sup> These people were fleeing from wars taking place in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan,<sup>lix</sup> as well as political and social instability as in the case of Burundi.<sup>lxi</sup> Their goal was to reach Europe looking for a place of refuge. Consequently, the Western Balkan route started to become a common transit path for people trying to reach Western and Northern Europe, thus creating real dilemmas in some countries, like Hungary and Serbia, that immediately implemented measures to curb the arrival of refugees.<sup>lxii</sup> This resolution, since 16 September 2015, redirected the refugee route towards Croatia, where an official corridor was created to handle the arrival of these people into the country,<sup>lxiii</sup> and brought about an increase in the number of asylum seekers in Croatia.<sup>lxiv</sup> In this context and based on the Dublin Convention establishing which state is responsible for examining asylum applications,<sup>lxv</sup> Croatia's policy regarding access for asylum seekers also changed, becoming much stricter, and is still in effect today.<sup>lxvi</sup>

The year 2022 also saw the outbreak of war in Ukraine, which has led to a major humanitarian emergency as thousands of people have been forced to seek refuge in other countries.<sup>lxvii</sup> As a result, Croatia has officially adopted the EU Directive on temporary protection of Ukrainian refugees, allowing them to enter Croatia and obtain certain benefits with no need to apply for asylum, including access to services (education, health, and accommodation), and work with no need to obtain a residence and work permit, or a work registration certificate.<sup>lxviii</sup>

Moreover, in order to meet the basic needs of asylum seekers arriving in Croatia, two reception centres were open in Zagreb and Kutina, with a capacity of 700 places.<sup>lxix</sup> <sup>lxx</sup>

Croatia recognises refugee status and thus grants rights to this specific group, such as access to essential services (housing, employment, health, and education), legal residence, freedom of religion, free legal assistance, and right to family reunification, contribution to integration into society, property right, and the right to obtain Croatian citizenship.<sup>lxxi</sup>

However, in recent years it has been reported that the local border police has carried out violent push-backs and abuse of irregular migrants trying to enter the country.<sup>lxxii</sup> The Court of Human Rights has also ruled that there are significant shortcomings and a lack of

investigation pursued by Croatian authorities to protect refugees and migrants' human rights.<sup>lxxiii lxxiv</sup>

Furthermore, one of the main obstacles that refugees and migrants encounter in the country is the lack of language fluency, which makes it difficult for them to fully integrate into the Croatian society.<sup>lxxv lxxvi</sup>

Finally, in 2020 Croatia had the highest number of disaster-related displacements (41,630).<sup>lxxvii</sup> In March 2020, a 5.4 magnitude earthquake struck Zagreb, causing 1,600 new displacements. Months later, the country suffered another 6.4 earthquake hitting the southeast area of Zagreb, affecting 10,000 houses that were declared uninhabitable and displacing an estimated 40,000 people for an extended period of time.<sup>lxxviii</sup>

## **V. Victims of Human Trafficking**

Croatia is Tier 2 in the U.S. Trafficking in Persons Report, since it does not meet the minimum standards for eliminating human trafficking despite making significant efforts to do so. Traffickers exploit Croatian, Bosnian, and Romanian women, as well as some Afghan, Filipino, Nepali, Pakistani, Taiwanese, and Thai men in forced labour in the Croatian agricultural sector. Men are also forced into begging and criminality, including theft and fraud. Traffickers have been increasingly using social media to recruit children for sex trafficking. Undocumented migrants and asylum seekers from Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and neighbouring countries travelling or being smuggled through Croatia are also vulnerable to trafficking. Individuals experiencing homelessness, children on social welfare systems, and people with mental and physical disabilities are particularly vulnerable to trafficking.<sup>lxxix</sup>

In 2021, law enforcement investigated 7 cases with 17 suspects. Prosecutors indicted four defendants, and Courts convicted 2 labour traffickers and 1 sex trafficker. The government conducted proactive investigations of commercial sex establishments and cooperated with the State Labour Inspectorate to jointly review 132 employers in the agriculture, construction, hospitality, and service industries. The government also held institutional training programs on various trafficking issues at the Police Academy, Police College, Judicial Academy, and the Border Police Directorate. In 2021 it identified 19 victims (6 subject to sex trafficking, 5 to forced labour, 7 to forced criminality, and 1 to all three types of exploitation). There were 4 women, 5 men, 5 girls, and 5 boys involved, and 4 of them were originally from Nepal. A multi-disciplinary national referral mechanism provided standard operating procedures for identifying and referring victims to social services.<sup>lxxx</sup>

The state provided shelter, medical and legal assistance, psycho-social support, rehabilitation and integration services to victims. During the pandemic, they also supplied personal protective equipment and Covid-19 tests. In 2021 6 adults and 10 children received assistance. In 2020, the government also financially supported 2 NGO-run shelters. The Centre for Missing and Exploited Children offered educational and psycho-social services to child trafficking victims. Courts were provided with legal and psychological assistance and logistic support. The state continued implementing the 2018-2021 national action plan. It carried out awareness campaigns targeting public transport workers, restaurant and bar staff, port and

airport employees, the general public, students, and the Roma community. An NGO-run hotline received 678 calls leading to 6 investigations, despite only working from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.<sup>lxxxix</sup>

In 2021 there were considerable delays in court proceedings contributing to a backlog of criminal cases. The government did not report any investigations or convictions of government officials complicit in trafficking crimes. In addition, local authorities reported difficulties in encouraging victims to cooperate with investigations due to fear of retaliation, stigma, re-traumatization, or logistical challenges.

## **VI. National Legal Framework**

The 1990 Croatian Constitution, with amendments made in 2013, guarantees the members of all national minorities the freedom of expression of their nationality, as well as the freedom to speak and write their language, and cultural autonomy.<sup>lxxxii</sup> The Law on Citizenship No. 130/11, last amended in October 2019, establishes as criteria for its acquisition by descent, birth on the territory, and through the naturalisation process.<sup>lxxxiii</sup>

The conditions for granting residency and work permits in Croatia are stipulated in the Law on Foreigners No. 130/11, 74/13, 69/17, and 46/18.<sup>lxxxiv</sup> However, the Aliens Act 133/2020 repealed the Law on Foreigners. Other provisions regulating the rights of migrants in the country are the Law on Mandatory Health Insurance and Health Care for Foreigners 80/2013, amended by 26/2021, and Law on Free Legal Aid from 2019.<sup>lxxxv</sup>

The following norms regulate the visa regime in Croatia: EC Directive no. 539/2001, Law on Foreign Nationals no. 74/13, Directive on the Visa System no. 54/12, 38/13, Regulation on Visas no. 7/13, 5/18. In 2014, the Government of Croatia enacted EU Regulation No 565/2014, applying a much simpler process to control people at the country's borders.

Croatia has ratified the 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1967 New York Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees.<sup>lxxxvi</sup> As the number of asylum seekers increased after entering the European Union, in June 2015 Croatia adopted the Act on International and Temporary Protection No. 1328, amended by 127/2017, which repealed the 2003 Asylum Act.

The Croatian Criminal Code prosecutes any sex and labour trafficking. Article 106 prescribes prison sentences for sex trafficking crimes matching those applied to severe crimes, like rape.<sup>lxxxvii</sup>

Croatia has signed and ratified the 1969 International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination and the 2000 Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.<sup>lxxxviii</sup>

## **VII. Main Actors**

*The State*

The Ministry of Internal Affairs is the main state body responsible for police affairs and the work done by criminal police, as well as border police and special forces.<sup>lxxxix</sup> It oversees administrative affairs related to the personal status of citizens, citizenships, foreigners, immigration and asylum.<sup>xc</sup> The Ministry also handles other procedures such as temporary residence in Croatia, permanent residence applications, Croatian visas, citizenships, and the issuance of ID cards, passports and work permits.<sup>xc1</sup>

The Ministry of the Interior is responsible for processing asylum claims and deciding whether somebody can be granted protection in Croatia.<sup>xcii</sup> In addition, it looks after the accommodation of refugees and asylum seekers.<sup>xciii</sup>

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Affairs work on strengthening international security and cooperation, international economic relations, multilateral economic structures, and international humanitarian aid.<sup>xciv</sup> They also protect the rights and interests of Croatian citizens living or residing outside of Croatia and promote their ties with the homeland.<sup>xcv</sup>

The National Police, under the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior, have primary responsibility for domestic security. Police assign officers for trafficking cases in all jurisdictions.<sup>xcvi</sup> Law enforcement personnel under the Ministry of Interior conduct proactive investigations of commercial sex establishments and cooperate with the State Labour Inspectorate to jointly inspect employers in the agriculture, construction, hospitality, and service industries.<sup>xcvii</sup>

### *International Organisations*

UNHCR closely monitors the government compliance with international refugee law standards and provides legal expertise regarding the Croatian asylum framework.<sup>xcviii</sup> The UN agency is also active in raising awareness on refugee issues and cooperates with NGOs, academic institutions, media, and the private sector.<sup>xcix</sup>

UNHCR provides individual counselling through professional counselling agencies. Based on challenges reported by refugees and asylum seekers through the counselling process, UNHCR brings forth these issues to the attention of authorities and advocates to seek solutions regarding refugee-related matters.<sup>c</sup>

As for migrant children, UNICEF improves the quality of foster care, recruiting new foster families for these children and supporting foster families.<sup>ci</sup> Thanks to this program, UNICEF helps children in and from Ukraine, Syria, Burkina Faso, Yemen, Bangladesh, and other countries experiencing severe crises by providing life-saving support, protection, education, health care and nutrition.<sup>cii</sup>

In Croatia, IOM supports migration management through various activities and projects.<sup>ciii</sup> This organisation provides technical support for the integration of third-country nationals, the voluntary return and reintegration program, the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence against migrants and strengthening support to victims.<sup>civ</sup>

### *NGOs and Other Organisations*

Since 2003, the Croatian Red Cross has developed a psychosocial care and protection programme for asylum seekers in the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers, in collaboration and support of the Ministry of Interior and UNHCR. The care and protection programme provides psychosocial, educational, and humanitarian assistance to asylum seekers during their stay in the reception centres. It offers them workshops in line with their interests, age, and culture.<sup>cv cvi</sup>

The agency “Doctors of the World” in Croatia has implemented two projects aimed at asylum seekers. The first one focuses on disease prevention, psychological support, health access and assistance, and the second one aims at empowering women and children to combat sexual and gender-based violence.<sup>cvii cviii</sup>

The Danish Refugee organisation assists refugees and internally displaced persons by providing emergency assistance, advocating for refugees' rights and strengthening their hopes for a better future. They also offer direct assistance to people seeking refuge along their journey, enabling them to learn about their condition and report human rights violations that migrants and refugees are subject to while crossing borders.<sup>cix cx</sup>

The Centre for Peace Studies pursues the integration of beneficiaries of international protection through three compatible programmes: asylum, integration and human security, education for peace and affirmation of non-violence, and the fight against inequality.<sup>cxii</sup> For this aim, they have published different brochures providing information on accommodation, education, free legal aid, and social assistance, in different languages in order to reach a large section of the population.<sup>cxiii</sup>

The Centre for Missing and Abused Children, an organisation that protects children from sexual abuse and exploitation,<sup>cxiii</sup> has published some brochures for unaccompanied minors in different languages (Croatian, English, Arabic, and Farsi).<sup>cxiv</sup>

The “No Name Kitchen” agency is active in the area of the Balkan and Mediterranean routes providing humanitarian aid and political action on behalf of those who experience significant difficulties along their journey and violent expulsions. Its services include medical assistance, food, clothing distribution, legal support, and reports on abuses occurring at the borders.<sup>cxv</sup>

“Are you Syrious?” is an NGO also devoted to helping refugees. They run a free store for refugees and other disadvantaged people, and an integration centre offering different workshops for the refugee population.<sup>cxvi</sup>

### *The Catholic Church*

The Croatian Bishops' Conference Commission “Justitia et Pax” has been promoting legitimate peace and advocating for the return of refugees and respect of their property.<sup>cxvii</sup>

Since summer 2022, expulsions of migrants entering from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia have started to be carried out, obliging them to leave the European Economic Area within seven days. This ordinance has produced a lot of congestion because of the large number of migrants at the train stations of Zagreb, Rijeka, and Buzet. In Rijeka, the archdiocese, provided with municipal permission, set up a transit point with a sanitary facility, a storage room for

supplies, and a tent for sleeping accommodation. Because of lack of space in public transportation areas, migrants stay at this transit point for a few nights. In the second half of 2022, there were up to 300 migrants present daily at the Rijeka transit point, and at the beginning of 2023 there were still up to 100 of them on a daily basis. The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) provides staff to coordinate activities, and Caritas of the Rijeka archdiocese is also involved with its volunteers.<sup>cxviii</sup>

In addition, the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) has been providing education, legal assistance, and psychological support to migrants and forcibly displaced persons in the Ježevo detention centre. With the support of UNICEF, it offers a child-friendly space in the reception centre for asylum seekers in Zagreb, ensuring for children a safe place to stay.<sup>cxix</sup> Education programs include Croatian and English language courses, vocational training and different workshops aimed at empowering these vulnerable people in order to enter the job market. JRS has also implemented other projects to promote integration and sustainable livelihoods, like intercultural encounters, strengthening the capacity of Catholic parishes to integrate refugees, visiting high schools and faculties with refugees who share their stories. In these programs JRS cooperates with several Croatian municipalities. Croatian JRS is also active internationally, as a partner of EUAA (European Union Agency for Asylum) and ICMC (International Catholic Migration Commission) in the Resettlement Support Centre in Istanbul, by relocating refugees arriving from Turkey to the EU member countries. Also, from 2021 to 2024 JRS has been enacting in various South-East Europe countries a project of integration assistance, sponsored by the Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Thanks to JRS involvement, in 2022 many migrants were accommodated at the Rijeka train station. It also assisted on-site and made its staff, volunteers, and material resources available to the refugee population.<sup>cxx</sup>

Caritas has been assisting forcibly displaced people since 1990, providing shelter, clothing, food, and medicine in the country.<sup>cxxi</sup> Caritas' extensive work includes humanitarian aid in emergencies and advocacy service for vulnerable people in collaboration with other Croatian Bishops' Conference offices and diocesan institutions.<sup>cxvii</sup> Caritas has also given humanitarian assistance to people affected by the 2020 earthquake by providing safe accommodation, food and clothing. During 2022 and 2023, Caritas sent several trailers with relief supplies to Ukraine, and to Turkey after the February 2023 earthquake.<sup>cxviii</sup> In 2022, with the support of CRS (Catholic Relief Services), Caritas launched a project of assistance to Ukrainian refugees in several dioceses (Dubrovnik, Đakovo-Osijek, Krk, Rijeka, Varaždin, and Zagreb). The project is aimed at integration activities, improving living conditions and psychosocial support.

Caritas and JRS cooperates in supporting asylum seekers and increasing their integration process in Croatia. To this end, they organise language classes for asylum seekers in Porin.<sup>cxviii</sup>

The International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) has supported the Croatian government in resettling 100 refugees who were living in Turkey.<sup>cxv</sup> ICMC staff also provided cultural orientation to these refugees before they left Turkey and worked with Croatian

government officials on an interactive programme to enhance the integration of the resettled refugees. The cultural orientation activity was implemented with the help of the Croatian Jesuit Refugee Service. It introduced the refugees to Croatian culture while providing them with information about services, opportunities, and responsibilities.<sup>cxxvi</sup>

To support the resettlement logistics and management, ICMC has assisted Croatian government officials by providing inter-agency services and coordinating medical check ups, paying special attention to vulnerable refugees such as children and unaccompanied minors.<sup>cxxvii</sup>

Finally, the Order of Malta has also provided humanitarian aid to the victims of the 2020 Croatian earthquake, especially for those who lost their homes during the coldest time of the year.<sup>cxxviii</sup> To achieve this result, it cooperated with Caritas Croatia to build thermally well-insulated wooden houses for those families who requested them.<sup>cxxix</sup>

**February 2023**

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