Integration of persons under international protection in Croatia: between bureaucracy and meaningful inclusion

Al-Nidawi, Salam Ibrahim Kadhim

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UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB

FACULTY OF POLITICAL SCIENTCE

MASTER OF EUROPEAN STUDIES

Salam Al-Nidawi

INTEGRATION OF PERSONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IN CROATIA: BETWEEN BUREAUCRACY AND MEANINGFUL INCLUSION

GRADUATE THESIS

Zagreb, 2020.

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GRADUATE THESIS

Mentor: izv. prof. dr. sc. Enes Kulenović

Student: Salam Al-Nidawi

Zagreb

September, 2020.

Authorship statement

I declare that I have written my graduate thesis*Integration of persons under international protection in Croatia: between bureaucracy and meaningful inclusion*that I submitted to my mentor izv. prof. dr. sc. Enes Kulenović for evaluation, independently and that it is entirely in my authorship. I also declare that the paper in question has not been published or used to fulfil teaching obligations at this or any other institution of higher learning, and that I did not obtain ECTS credits based on it. Furthermore, I declare that I have respected the ethical rules of scientific and academic work, particularly Articles 16-19 of the Code of Ethics of the University of Zagreb.

Salam Al-Nidawi

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1. INTRODUCTION

Humans are social beings and they have desire to belong. Even so, there is a lot of difference among people, as so many divisions. The integration of third-country nationals has become a key topic after last migrant crisis. In 2015 millions of people left their homes because of the war and other political conflicts. All host countries needed to find new solutions in order to adequately respond to the newly emergent situation and ensure sustainable integration of third-country nationals as full members of the societies.

The aim of this paper is to explain the process of integration of persons under international protection in Croatia but also to gain insight into the differences between the formal implementation of the integration process and that in practice. Although Croatia has established a legislative framework for the integration of asylum seeker and persons under international protection, in practice there are certain problems and challenges that have resulted with inconsistency of law and practice. This inconsistency significantly affects everyday life of asylum seekers and/or person under international protection.

This process as well as the side challenges explored for the purposes of this paper is presented through the following elements: reasons and factors to enter integration process, dimensions and levels of integration, state integration policy as well as main group of providers of integration. The paper will try to explain the official, bureaucracy process of integration in Croatia, but also give an insight into its problems and weaknesses as well as recommendations that will lead to meaningful inclusion. In addition, an effort will be made to explain the importance of the role of non-governmental organizations as well as the community itself in the process of integration. At the very end of this paper guidelines will be provided toward more effective and easier integration process of asylum seekers into Croatian society.

2. INTEGRATION

"Around 25 million persons born in a third country (TCNs) are currently living in the European Union (EU), representing 5% of its total population. Integrating immigrants, i.e. allowing them to participate in the host society at the same level as natives, is an active, not a passive, process that involves two parties, the host society and the immigrants, working together to build a cohesive society."[1]Integration is the process by which one becomes accepted into host society.

2.1. DEFINITION OF INTEGRATION

By the definition, among other things, integration means "incorporation as equal into society or an organization of individuals of different groups"[2]. In context of integration third-country nationals, this means utter integration of those individuals into local society as completely equal to domestic nationals. According to European Commission (EC) integration should be understood as: "a two-way process based on mutual rights and corresponding obligations of legally resident third country nationals and the host society which provides for full participation of the immigrant. This implies on the one hand that it is the responsibility of the host society to ensure that the formal rights of immigrants are in place in such a way that the individual has the possibility of participating in economic, social, cultural and civil life and on the other, that immigrants respect the fundamental norms and values of the host society and participate actively in the integration process, without having to relinquish their own identity"[3]. This means that success of integration process depends on efforts of, both, third-country nationals and the domestic nationals. Both parts have in same time rights but also obligations.

[1]Kuti, S. (2014) Integration Policeis Country Report for Croatia - Interact Researching Report 2014/13, p. 5., http://languageforwork.ecml.at/Portals/48/HtmlTagFiles/c0ea48e3-e7c2-46f0-b79b-29cbdfdbfb06.pdf,(Accessed: 5.6.2020)

[2] Merriam-Webster: Dictionary, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/integration, (Accessed: 5.6.2020)

[3]Communication From The Commission To The Council, The European Parliament,The European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions on immigration, integration and employment, COM (2003) 336 final, Brussels, 3.6.2003, p. 17., https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2003:0336:FIN:EN:PDF, (Accessed: 5.6.2020)

According to European Council of Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) but also considering definition and main core of the term, there are few main caracteristics of integration:

1. dynamic and two-way,
2. long-term and
3. multi-dimensional.

Integration process is dynamic and two-way because it places demands on both receiving societies and third-country nationals. Third-country nationals have rights to equally participate in development of local society and to become its functional part but also a right to keep their own cultural identity. At the same time they are obligate to respect social norms and rules and integrity of the other members of society. For receptive society this means readiness to accept and welcome all third-country nationals as equal members of the society and to ensure that they have access to all resources and services. Integration process is long-term because it starts from the moment that third-country nationals arrived in the country of final destination and ends when they become an active member of receiving society. Integrational process is also multi-dimensional process because a third-country national needs to be included in economic, social, cultural, civil and political life of host society.[4]

According to interview with CRC member (Annex 1) „Integration is a complex situation in which each individual is exposed to re-proving himself but at the same time proves to society that he can cope with the challenges that lie ahead.“[5] Main purpose of integration process is to establish a mutual and responsible relationship between newcomers and host society. Integration process must be carried out in a way that newcomers become a functional part of host society and to ensure that they can participate equally in the development of that society. Host society, on the other hand, must provide newcomers with an opportunity for an independent, secure and dignified life, in order to reach their full potential as active member of society. As it seems, integration is truly complex process in whose focus is a person who comes into foreign country in need of special protection and who is searching for better and safer life.

[4] According to: European Council on Refugees & Exiles (ECRE) Postion on the integration of refugees in Europe, December 2002, p. 4,https://www.ecre.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ECRE-Position-on-the-Integration-of-Refugees-in-Europe_December-2002.pdf (Accessed: 5.6.2020)

[5]Kadoić, Maja (CRC). Personal interview made with Author. 06.07.2020., Annex 1

2.2. PERSON UNDER INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

International protection is set for actions provided by international community on the basis of international law, which aims is to protect fundamental rights of a specific category of persons who lack the national protection of their own countries. According to Article 2 Qualification Directive 2011/95, international protection means the recognition by an EU State one of two statuses for a third-country national or a stateless person:

1. refugee status or

2. person eligible for subsidiary protection.[6]

Considering Article 2 a) Qualification Directive 2011/95 which is transposed in all Member States (MS) of EU, including Croatia, before a person can receive international protection, he or she must be recognised as a refugee or as a beneficiary of subsidiary protection. The third-country national or stateless person is in need for international protection when is outside their own country and it's unable to return because they would be at risk there or does not have their own country of origin.

Definition of refugee is stated in Article 2 d) and they are defined as "a third-country national who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, is outside the country of nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country, or a stateless person, who, being outside of the country of former habitual residence for the same reasons as mentioned above, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it"[7]. Same Article 2 f) defines person eligible for subsidiary protectionas "a third-country national or a stateless person who does not qualify as a refugee but in respect of whom substantial grounds have been shown for believing that the person concerned, if returned to his or her country of origin, or in the case of a stateless person, to his or her country of former habitual residence, would face a real risk of suffering serious harm

[6] According to: Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted (OJ L 337, 20.12.2011, p. 9–26) – Directive 2011/95, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32011L0095(Accessed: 5.6.2020)

[7] Ibid.

and is unable, or, owing to such risk, unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of his country".[8]

Most clear distinction between refugee and another person eligible for subsidiary protection is in the vital need for international protection because of a serious threat to their life, physical integrity or freedom in their country of origin as a result of persecution, armed conflict, violence or serious public disorder. Individuals who may not qualify as refugees under international or regional law, may in certain circumstances also require international protection, on a temporary or longer-term basis for many different reasons.

Its context of international protection it is also necessary to define and to make a distinction between asylum seekers and the person who gets asylum status. Principles and conditions for getting asylum status in Croatia are defined by Act on International and Temporary Protection (Official Gazette NN 70/15, 127/17, Further: The Act). The Act defines an applicant for international protection (asylum seeker) as a third-country national or a stateless person who expresses an intention to apply for international protection until the enforcement of the decision on the application. After being granted asylum, asylum seekers get status of asylum, i.e. a refugee or person eligible for subsidiary protection.

2.3. REASONS AND FACTORS TO ENTER INTEGRATION PROCESS

According to last UNHCR statistic information from 18 June 2020, at least 79.5 million people around the world have been forced to flee their homes. Among them are nearly 26 million refugees, around half of whom are under the age of eighteen. 68% of all refugees come from just 5 countries: Syria (6.6M), Venezuela (3.7M), Afghanistan (2.7M), South Sudan (2.2M) and Myanmar (1.1M). 45.7 million people are internally displaced people. There are also millions of stateless people, who have been denied a nationality and lack access to basic rights such as education, health care, employment and freedom of movement.[9] According to presented numbers around 1% of the world's population have fled their

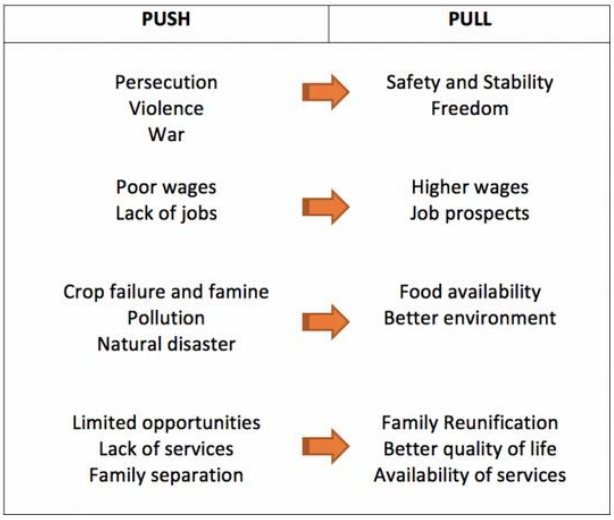
[8] Ibid.

[9] According to: UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance*, https://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html (Accessed: 18.7.2020)

homeswhich highlights importance of integration process. People migrate for many different reasons and under the influence of the action of two different groups of factors.

Migration usually happens as a result of a combination of two groups of factors: push and pull factors. Push factors are the reasons why people leave an area and they usually include lack of some goods, threats and uncertainties. Pull factors are the reasons why people move to a particular area and they represent some opportunities, source of values and safeness. Migration usually happens as a result of a combination of this push and pulls factors. For example, refugees from Syria need to migrate because of war in country of their origin (push factor) and they often choose German as their country of migration because it presents stability and freedom for them (pull factor). Interaction between factorsis presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Interaction between factors



Source: Justice for immigrants, *Root Causes of Migration*, https://justiceforimmigrants.org/what-we-are-working-on/immigration/root-causes-of-migration/, Accessed: 18.7.2020

Reasons to enter integration process can be classified as economic, social, political or environmental. Some people choose to migrate while others are forced to. Most of those who choose to voluntarily flee their homes have economic reasons for migration. Economic migrations are initiated by desire or need to move in order to reach a higher quality of life.

Economic reasons include seeking higher wages, better employment opportunities, a higher standard of living, and educational opportunities. Apart from economic factors, there are political factors that force people to move from their home country to another country. War, persecution and the absence of political rights are the predominant political factors for migration. State persecution involves the harassment, discrimination and torture of people who disagree with their government, have minority religious beliefs or ethnic backgrounds. The lack of political liberties and rights, and endemic corruption act as push factors for migrants seeking greater freedoms. Most people under international protection migrate because of political factors. Besidesthesepreviously two reasons, there are also social reasons whichcan be a powerfull factor to force someone to flee their homes. Social migrations are initiated by seeking better opportunities for themselves or their family, like sending their child to a better, safer school or finding a job that would have not only a sufficient salary but also important benefits and career growth prospects.Among other, there is also environmental causes of migration. Environmental migrationsare related to at least one of three impacts of climate change: sea-level rise, extreme weather events, and drought and water scarcity. Sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes. Beside political reasons, environmental ones are also often reasons why person seek to be placed under international protection.[10]

2.4. DIMENSIONS AND LEVELS OF INTEGRATION

Regardless of reasons and factors for which individuals must flee their homes, in order to fully integrate, after arrival they should go through different dimensions of integrations. That implies that they need to take their own place in host society in physical, social and cultural spheres. Looking from this perspective, integration process can be better understood through three dimensions of integration: legal-political, socio-economic and cultural-religious.

The legal-political dimension refers to the belonging of foreigners to the political community and the possibility of becoming its rightful member. The legal status that someone has , reflects in his daily life and behavior and consequently in integration. The ability of foreigners

[10] According to: Justice for immigrants, Root Causes of Migration, https://justiceforimmigrants.org/what-we-are-working-on/immigration/root-causes-of-migration/, Accessed: 18.7.2020

to participate in political life, the system and decision-making processes, is one of the most important factors in the integration process.“In practice, the question for alien immigrants is first of all: do they have secure residence rights? Secondly, how far do immigrants and ethnic minorities have formal political rights and duties that differ from those of natives? This also includes the question of whether newcomers may (easily or not) acquire national citizenship and thus gain access to the formal political system.”[11]This mainly refers to the possibility of foreigners to directly participate in the set up of legal framework and particular circumstances of integrations. Most countries, including Croatia, have a rule that only individuals with citizenship have a right to vote. From the perspective of foreigners, this means that they can’t fully participate in political life until they become citizens which points to a fact that the legal-political dimension of integration process will not be fulfilled in full. Therefore, if the rights from this dimension are not satisfied or realized, the other two dimensions aren’t fully achievable.

The socio-economic dimension refers to the adaptation of foreigners to the new environment and to their interaction with the local population. This dimension includes the area of workers' rights and systematic support in the social and economic spheres of life. This dimension also includes workers' rights, the right to access employment mediation institutions, the possibility of using unemployment benefits, retraining to find a job more easily and the possibility of exercising rights from the social welfare and accommodation system.[12] Except for the rights of asylum seekers, this dimension encompasses also the rights of other members of the receiving society.Their integration into the new society is not a natural process, so without the implementation of integration measures, segregation, exclusion and marginalization can occur, which can lead to endangerment of social cohesion of the local community. The tendency is to create harmonious relationships and coexistence between newcomers and the natives.

The cultural-religious dimension refers to the ability of foreigners to manifest their cultural, ethnic and religious needs. Among other things, this dimension deals with the questions of

[11]Pennix, R. (2007). Integration Processes of Migrants: Research Findings and Policy Challenges. Migracije i etničke teme, 23 (1): 7-32, p. 11.,https://hrcak.srce.hr/14467, Accessed: 13.6.2020
[12] According the to: Ibid.

whether asylum seekers are recognized and accepted, whether they are treated as other comparative groups and whether they enjoy the same or similar content.[13]"Opening workshops or cultural events to the wider public can increase the exposure of participants to personal experiences, knowledge and interaction that leads to a better understanding of different cultures, behaviors and attitudes. With the help of experts, cultural understanding events can help cushion cultural shocks, reduce fears and equip us with the competency to (re-) act appropriately. An easy and uncomplicated way to promote cultural understanding is via food. Bringing people together through cooking and sharing food is a powerful way to break down barriers and change perspectives. You can learn a lot about someone's culture by the way they cook, prepare or even share food. It also helps to relax or adopt new approaches to eating that can transfer into other aspects of life".[14]Individuals can reach integration throughout this dimension only if most of the community is engaged and open to participate.

An essential segment of the integration process concerns the actors involved in the process itself and differs at three levels of integration: personal, collective and institutional. The first, personal level, refers to accommodation, employment, education, social and cultural adaptation to a new society. The second level is collective and refers to migrant groups that can become partners in the integration policy-making process and thus be accepted as part of the community, or can be isolated from the rest of society. The third level is institutional and can be divided into two types: general public institutions in the receiving society and institutions focused on the special needs of foreigners. The general public institutions are the education system, the labor market, and the public health and political system. These are institutions that should serve all citizens equally, but sometimes do not take into account the inherent characteristics of immigrants caused by migration history, cultural and religious background, or language. Institutions focused on the special needs of foreigners are founded by foreigners themselves or by institutions working for foreigners, dealing with the domains of culture and religion. The popularity of these institutions in relation to general public

[13] According to: Ibid. And Bužinkić, E., Kranjec, J. (2013), An overview of the legal and institutional framework for the protection of aliens in Croatia, Zagreb, Center for Peace Studies, p. 50 - 51, https://www.cms.hr/system/publication/pdf/39/Pregled_pravnog_i_institucionalnog_okvira_za_za_titu_stranaca_u_Hrvatskoj.pdf

[14] Tbd, Fitch, A., Why the „Other" Should Become the „Us", January 2018, https://www.tbd.community/en/a/the-dimensions-of-refugee-integration (Accessed: 13.6.2020)

institutions is conditioned by the limitation to those persons who choose them voluntarily and who are in their favor.[15]

2.5. PROVIDERSOF INTEGRATION PROCESS

As stated previously, integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual adaptation of third-country nationals and residents of a host country. It's not only third-country nationals who need to carry the burden of integration process. Main providers of the integration process in host societiesare: government, institutions and thelocal community.

Interaction between newcomers and local community determines the direction and ultimate outcome of the integration process. "The development of an inclusive and welcoming society isa key prerequisite to the successful integration of refugees.Governments and decision-makers should provide political leadership and set the tone in the public debate on non-discrimination and equal opportunities.In particular, governments should identify and counteract the promotion of misinformation that is intended to incite fear and mistrust of refugees."[16] Therefore, the fundamental task of the government is to establish the foundations for the implementation of the integration process which makes them primarily responsibilityfor it. This means that the government needs to set up such a framework that allows refugees and other persons eligible for subsidiary protection to be aware and can easily access their rights. The first step into seting up an appropriate framework for welcoming integration environment is to develop a national integration strategy and to enact a law as a set of rules by which the government, institutions and other providers can act. Also, it's very imoportant that government through the legal framework defines a right to appeal against inadequate provision and the monitoring of the integration process on every level and for

[15] According to: Bužinkić, E., Kranjec, J. (2013), An overview of the legal and institutional framework for the protection of aliens in Croatia, p. 51, https://www.cms.hr/system/publication/pdf/39/Pregled_pravnog_i_institucionalnog_okvira_za_za_titu_stranaca_u_Hrvatskoj.pdf (Accessed: 13.6.2020)

[16]European Council on Refugees & Exiles (ECRE) Postion on the integration of refugees in Europe, December 2002, p. 4, https://www.ecre.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ECRE-Position-on-the-Integration-of-Refugees-in-Europe_December-2002.pdf (Accessed: 5.6.2020)

every provider. Such clear and transparent framework shouldbe a solid base and should ensure a successful and forehand integration process.[17]

Second types of providers areinstitutions and there are two types of institutions: general public institutions and non-governmental organizations. General public institutions are an extension of the government and they provide services such as health care, education system, social welfare, etc. These are formal institutions that are established for the functioning of the state as a whole, the main goal is to ensure law enforcement, so theyoften aren't flexible and sensitive to specific groups and needs. The second type of institution is non-governmentalorganizations which are often established to fulfill a specific mission and provide particular assistance. Those include churches, trade unions, employers' organizations, political parties, the media, and other civil society actors. Non-governmental organizations act as direct partners in the implementation of policies but also as human rights "guardians" meaning that they act as political actors. They may influence the political climate and they can significantly contribute to the reduction of exclusion, discrimination, and xenophobia.So, non-governmental institutions have a very important role in the integration process which is also emphasized by Macanović from AYS (Annex 2). She said:"on a legal level we have good integration laws in many aspects, but problem is that governmental actors and institutions are not always aware on rights of people under international protection, so without the help of volunteers, many times people wouldn't be able to realize their rights".[18]

The integration process, if we look at it from the perspective of persons with international protection, practically takes place at the local level.This means interaction between a person under international protection and a local member of society. But in order for the integration process to succeed, local policies for integration that build on active interaction between immigrants and local society should receive the highest priority. Good local polices will ensure the active involvement of all participants in the integration process, both locals and foreigners.

[17] According to: Ibid., p. 4 - 7
[18]Macanović, Anamaria (AYS). Personal interview made with Author. 12.07.2020., Annex 2

2.6. INTEGRATION POLICIES IN CROATIA

"Integration policy implies setting goals and principles and a range of measures, activities and their stakeholders who will work to include immigrants specifically refugee in a specific society."[19]The integration of newcomers from different continents and from different cultural backgrounds requires a well-designed and structured integration policy. According to respondents Kadoić from CRC (Annex 1) main problem in the integration process is insufficient coherence of integration policy and exercise of rights, and sheemphasized in the interview that: "integration policies in the Republic of Croatia are not sufficiently harmonized with the rights exercised by the target group. The law is based on fundamental rights, and social policy has not adapted those same rights at the local level. Most people under international protection are a vulnerable group of beneficiaries who are part of social policy and are most often the most vulnerable group of people due to language barriers and ignorance of the system."[20]On the other hand Knezić from RTC has highlight that: "There is a comprehensive body of knowledge, experience and evidences in managing refugee intake and supporting their rehabilitation and integration, including overcoming various obstacles, collected in the 1990's and 2000's. Even though the knowledge and experience are largely collected in the civic society sector, there was also significant institutional learning in the past. What is needed is a clear and determined will to apply what is learned, and not to repeatedly start from scratch and invent "hot water"[21].

2.6.1. History of the international protection system in Croatia

From the earliest history of mankind, the right of asylum has been a way of defending the human personality from endangerment. The term asylum comes from the Greek word asylos and means a refuge or hiding place, or a place that provides security and protection from persecution and danger in general.[22] Asylum in another country has been granted to foreigners

[19]Bužinkić, E. and Kranjec, J. (2012), Integration policies and practices in the asylum system in the Republic of Croatia: inclusion of asylum seekers and foreigners under subsidiary protection in Croatian society, Zagreb, Center for Peace Studies, p. 5., https://www.unhcr.org/hr/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2017/08/publikacija_integracijske_politike_i_prakse_u_sustavu_azila_u_republici_hrvatskoj.pdf (Accessed: 13.6.2020)

[20]Kadoić, Maja (CRC). Personal interview made with Author. 06.07.2020., Annex 1

[21] Knezić, Dragana (RCT). Personal interview made with Author. 24.07.2020., Annex 3

[22] According to: Wikipedia: Right of asylum, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right (Accessed: 5.6.2020)

from ancient until modern times. A turning point in the development of international legal protection of refugees is the Second World War. With more than a million refugees left in Europe after its completion, the International Refugee Organization (IDF) was established in 1948 as a temporary and specialized United Nations agency to regulate World War II refugee status. On 28 July 1951, the United Nations adopted the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, which entered into force on 21 April 1954. On 4 October 1967 the Protocol relating to the status of refugees entered into force and abolished the time limit for events occurring before 1951. The Convention and the Protocol are the foundation of modern international refugee legal framework and alsothe base for all relevant directives in the filed of asylum.

Although the development of the asylum institute in Croatia began in the Middle Ages, when protection was provided exclusively within the church, the modern organization of the asylum in Croatia also begins after the Second World War.The refugee protection system in Croatia began to develop in 1991 when a large number of refugees, especially from BiH, appeared in the area of Yugostavia due to the war events. In independent Croatia, the first asylum application was registered in 1997 and that was a real starting point in development of asylum system in Croatia.[23]

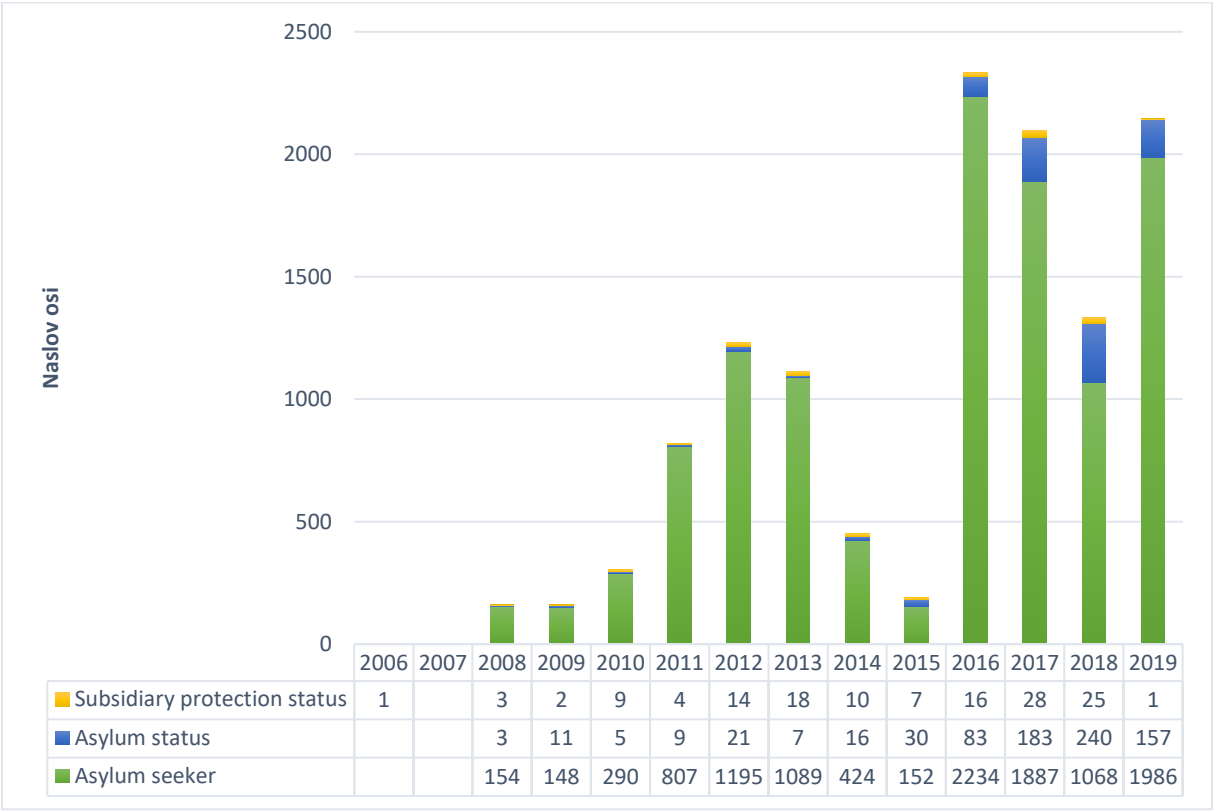
Some authors, like Lalić Novak in his analysis of the asylum system in the Republic of Croatia, divides the situation into several phases. In the first, early phase (1997-2004), asylum is just beginning to be realized. This means that asylum institute starts to develop in practice - first asylum application in Croatia in 1997.In this phase, Croatia began to align the national legal framework with European practice. Second phase (2004 – 2008) was a formative one in which entered into force first act which formally regulates the right of asylum in Croatia. The third phase (2008 – 2010) was the stabilization phase in which the original legal framework was amended and developed. In 2010 started off the last phase in which Croatian legislation has been fully harmonized.[24]According to data of the Ministry of the Interior of Croatia from 2014 until 2020 we can see the growth of submitted applications for international protection. From the collected data it can be seen that a very small number of submitted requests were

[23] Župarić-Iljić, D. (2013), The first ten years of development of the asylum system in Croatia, Zagreb, Center for Peace Studies, p. 131-146

[24]Lalić Novak, G. (2010), Development of Asylum System in Croatia, Zagreb, Društveno veleučilište u Zagrebu, p. 137

positively resolved. In most years, less than 10% of applications were granted. Exceptionally in 2015: 24.34%, in 2017: 11.18%, and in 2018: 24.81% of applications were granted with asylum or subsidiary protection. Figure 2 shows data of the number of asylum seekers and approved applications in Croatia from 2006 until 2019.

Figure 2 Data of the number of asylum seekers and approved applications in Croatia from 2006 to 2019



	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Subsidiary protection status	1		3	2	9	4	14	18	10	7	16	28	25	1
Asylum status			3	11	5	9	21	7	16	30	83	183	240	157
Asylum seeker			154	148	290	807	1195	1089	424	152	2234	1887	1068	1986

Source: Author.[25]

2.6.2. Development of Croatian Migration Policy framework

Despite a large number of refugees from neighboring countries during the 1990's, Croatia did not have a systematic refugee protection policy until the previous decade. The right for getting international protection in Croatia is first defined by the Constitution of the Republic ofCroatia (Official Gazette NN 56/90, 135/97, 08/98, 113/00, 124/00, 28/01, 41/01, 55/01,

[25]Source of Data: Ministry of Interior, Statistics: Seeker of international protection, Statistical indicators of applicants for international protection, Reports for periods 2014 – 2019 (end of the year), https://mup.gov.hr/pristup-informacijama-16/statistika-228/statistika-trazitelji-medjunarodne-zastite/283234 (Accessed: 26.6.2020)

76/10, 85/10, 05/14, further: The Constitution).According to Article 33 of Constitution right to asylum is defined as the right of a foreign citizen or stateless person to be granted asylum in Croatia unless they are persecuted for non-political crimes and/or activities which are contrary to the fundamental principles of international law. Foreigner which is lawfully present in the territory of Republic of Croatia can't be deported or extradited to another state, except when a decision made in accordance with an international treaty and law must be enforced.[26]

The first act which officially regulates the asylum institute in Croatia is The Asylum Act (Official Gazette NN 103/03, Further: The First Asylum Act) which entered into force in 2004. The First Asylum Act prescribes the basic provisions related to the procedure and qualifications for obtaining refugee status, i.e. the conditions and procedure for recognizing asylum or temporary protection, legal and implementing measures, as well as the rights and obligations for asylum seekers and asylee in Croatia.[27]The first asylum granted according to The First Asylum Act was in 2006 to an asylum seeker from Sudan.[28]Because the provisions of this act contained serious shortcomings in 2008 entered into force the new Asylum Act (Official Gazette NN 79/07, 88/10, 143/13, further: The Second Asylum Act).[29]

Current policy framework for refugee integration is based on Act on International and Temporary Protection (Official Gazette NN 70/15, 127/17, Further: The Act), Action Plan for the removal of obstacles to the exercise of particular rights in the area of integration of foreigners in the Croatian society, for the period of 2013 to 2015 (Further: Action Plan) and Migration Policy 2013 – 2015 (Official Gazette NN 27/13, Further: Migration Policy). The Act was enacted in order to harmonize Croatian legislation with EU law framework. The Act

[26] According to: Constitution of the Republic od Croatia, Official Gazette NN 56/90, 135/97, 08/98, 113/00, 124/00, 28/01, 41/01, 55/01, 76/10, 85/10, 05/14, https://www.zakon.hr/z/94/Ustav-Republike-Hrvatske (Accessed: 5.6.2020)

[27]Acccording to: Asylum Act, Official Gazette NN 103/03 – The First Asylum Act https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2003_06_103_1363.html(Accessed: 5.6.2020)

[28]According to:Bužinkić, E. and Kranjec, J. (2012), Integration policies and practices in the asylum system in the Republic of Croatia: inclusion of asylum seekers and foreigners under subsidiary protection in Croatian, Zagreb, Center for Peace Studies, p. 27, https://www.unhcr.org/hr/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2017/08/publikacija_integracijske_politike_i_prakse_u_sustavu_azila_u_republici_hrvatskoj.pdf(Accessed: 13.7.2020)

[29]Acccording to: Asylum Act, Official Gazette NN 79/07, 88/10, 143/13 – The Secound Asylum Act https://www.zakon.hr/z/314/Zakon-o-azilu(Accessed: 5.6.2020)

set up principle, conditions and procedure for granting international and temporary protection, status, rights and obligations asylum seekers, persons with asylum status, foreigners under subsidiary protection, foreigners under temporary protection as well as conditions of protection and the procedure of annulment and revocation of asylum, subsidiary and temporary protection. According to The Act, The Croatian government guarantees refugees right to residence, family reunification, accommodation, work, health care, education, freedom of religion, free legal aid, social welfare, assistance in integration into society, property ownership and acquisition of Croatian citizenship.[30] The Act entered into force in 2015 andit's still in force. According to Article 20 of The Act will be recognized by applicants who are outside the country of their nationality or habitual residence, and fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, which is why they cannot or do not want to accept the protection of that country. Accept asylum status, individualscan also be granted subsidiary protection. Subsidiary protection will be granted to an applicant who does not qualify for asylum, but there are good reasons to believe that by returning to the country of origin will face a real risk of serious injustice and is unable or unwilling to accept that country's protection.[31] The main difference between asylum and subsidiary protection is that subsidiary protection is granted for a certain period (with the possibility of extension) and does not provide the passport to which persons with asylum status are entitled.[32]

Migration Policy was adopted within the EU accession process andit also contains measures for the integration of foreigners into Croatian society. Purpose of Migration Policy is to ensure that migration movements in Croatia are in favor of economic, social and cultural development of the state and society. In this sense, all state bodies, as well as other stakeholders, are obliged to act in a timely and coordinated manner to find effective answers on the positive and negative effects of migratory movements.[33]

[30]According to: Act on International and Temporary Protection, Official Gazette NN 70/15, 127/17 - The Act, https://www.zakon.hr/z/798/Zakon-o-me%C4%91unarodnoj-i-privremenoj-za%C5%A1titi, (Accessed: 5.7.2020)
[31]According to: Ibid., Article 20 - 21
[32]According to: Župarić-Iljić, D., The first ten years of development of the asylum system in Croatia, p. 133
[33]According to: Migration Policy 2013 – 2015, Official Gazette NN 27/13 – Migration Policy, https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/full/2013_03_27_456.html, (Accessed: 13.6.2020)

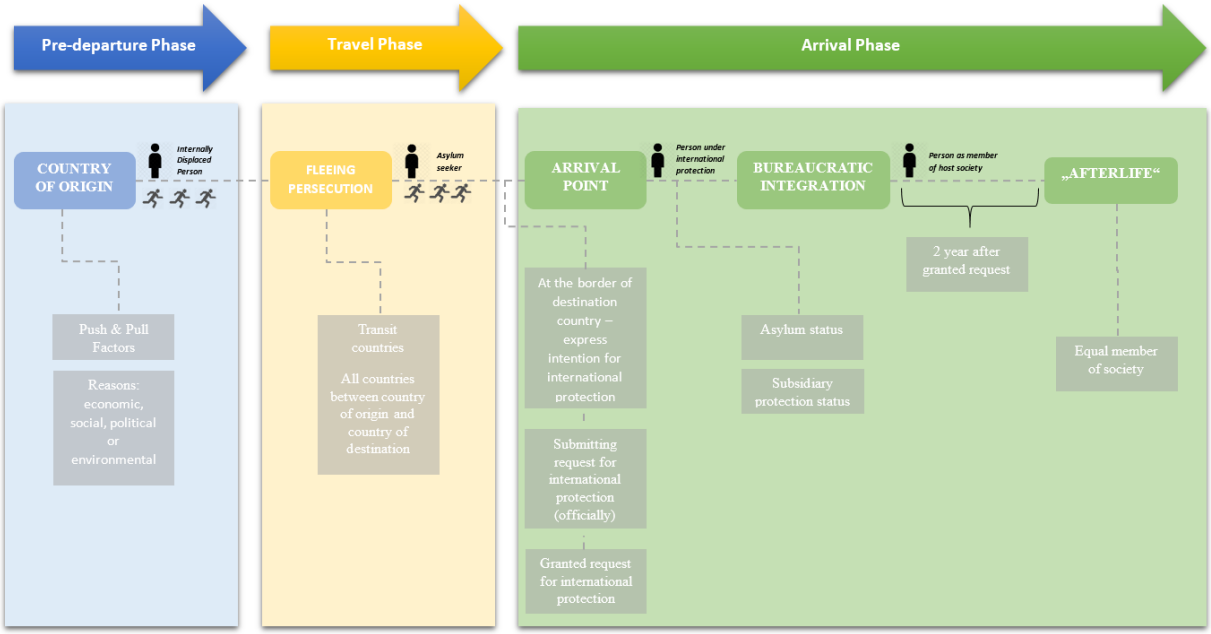
Government of the Republic of Croatia on April 4, 2013 adopted a Decision on the appointment of the chairman and members of the Standing Committee for Proven Integration of Foreigners in Croatian Society (Further: Committee). The working group of the Committee has developed an Action Plan for the removal of obstacles to the exercise of certain rights in the field of integration of foreigners for the period from 2013 to 2015. Except representatives of relevant ministries, memebers of non-governmental organizations also participated in Working Group. This plan identifies measures that will have to be implemented continuously in the field of social welfare and healthcare, accommodation and housing, language learning and education, as well in the field of employment and labor. With this act Croatian government highlight importance of raising awareness of problems of asylum seekers and persons under supsidiary protection. Measures have to be implemented not only by the government and institutions but also by the non-governmental organizations and local community.[34]

2.6.3. Bureaucracy vs meaningful inclusion

Whenan individual has to leave his or her country of origin or is a stateless person, he or she must go through certain stages to obtain asylum status. There are three main stages that such individual goes through: The pre-departure phase, Travel phase and Arrival phase which are shown in Figure 3. Pre-depature phase starts at country of origin when individuals must flee his or her country of origin because of one or more reasons and factors, some of them stated in point 2.3. "*Reasons and factors to enter integration process*". When they flee their country usually they go through several countries before they arrive into the host country in which they have the intention to ask for asylum status. This stage can be called the travel phase. At the moment when an individual enters the country of destination starts the arrival phase and this is alsothe moment whenthe integration process begins.There are few main sub-steps in the process of integration: point of arrival, official bureaucratic integration process and "afterlife".

[34]According to:Action Plan for the removal of obstacles to the exercise of particular rights in the area of integration of foreigners in the Croatian society, for the period of 2013 to 2015, p. 3, https://pravamanjina.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/arhiva/30092013/Akcijski%20plan%20za%20uklanjanje%20prepreka%20u%20ostvarivanju%20pojedinih%20prava%20u%20podru%C4%8Dju%20integracije%20stranaca%20za%20razdoblje%20od%202013%20do%202015%20godine.pdf(Accessed: 13.6.2020)

Figure 3 Stage of migration



Source: Author.

The point of arrival is a moment when asylum seekers came to the border at the destination country. Asylum seekers can express their intention for international protection upon first entering the Republic of Croatia, and if they are already in the territory of the Republic of Croatia, they express their intention in the police administration, police station or ata reception center for foreigners which is located in Zagreb, Hotel Porin and in Kutina. At this point, it is enough that asylum seeker only expresses their will and needing for international protection in Croatia. After that, the asylum seeker submits the request for international protection officially to the Reception Center for International Protection Seekers.This procedure is conducted orally, by holding interviews between asylum seekers and officialsof the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MVEP) and translators, when necessary. At that moment the process of granting international protection begins and also this is the real moment, when integration starts from point of asylum seeker. According to Article 40 of The Act, MVEP decides on the request and should make a decision no later than six months from the day of submitting a proper request. This deadline may be extended for nine months and then again for an addition three months in complicated cases. Regardless of the circumstances, the decision must be made no later than 21 months from the date of

application.[35]Such a long deadline and a fact that the government considers the beginning of integration process only when asylum status has been granted, is a significant problem because in the meantime asylum seeker is in a loophole. This also emphasized by Anamaria Macanović, an AYS member (Annex 2), who states "Waiting period after an asylum application is pretty long, sometimes more than two years, andin this long period of time there is no official (only NGO-s supported) integration activities".[36]Although asylum seekers have some rights before they are granted asylum status according to Macanović (Annex 2) "This attitude is really harming refugees and society because without good integration people cannot actively participate in society.We let them exist for a long period without any support, and then expect that they will successfully integrate in two years from when they get asylum".[37]

According to Article 52 of The Act asylum seeker has following rights:residence, freedom of movement ensuring, appropriate material conditions of acceptance (accommodation), health care, primary and secondary education, information, legal advice and free legal aid, freedom of religion, work and identification documents.[38]On the other hand, an asylum seeker is obliged to respect the Constitution, laws and other regulations in Croatia and other obligations according to the legal framework. The asylum seeker does not acquire all the rights at the same time (at point of arrival) and the deadlines are defined by The Act. In terms of recidancy, they were provided with accommodation in Zagreb in Hotel Porin. Most of asylum seekers are located there, and only some of them, usually vulnerable groups (families with children, womens and elderly), are located in Kutina.They are stayingthereuntilthe official decision are made (or more if appropriate accommodation isn't ensured). As a right to identification document asylum seekers get a card that confirms that individual is asylum seeker, but this is not an official identification card (ID). Lack of ID card means also the inability of exercising the right to work.The common practice in the employment system in Croatia requires the identity card of the person who intends to be employed. Although according to Article 61 of The Act asylum seeker acquires the right to work nine months after submitting request, whether the decision of status is made or not, in practice achiving that

[35]According to:Act on International and Temporary Protection, Official Gazette NN 70/15, 127/17 - The Act, https://www.zakon.hr/z/798/Zakon-o-me%C4%91unarodnoj-i-privremenoj-za%C5%A1titi(Accessed: 5.7.2020)
[36]Macanović, Anamaria (AYS). Personal interview made with Author. 12.07.2020., Annex 2
[37] Ibid.
[38]According to: Ibid.

right is likely to take much longer. This actually means that asylum seeker probably will not be able to achieve their right to work until a positive decision on the status of asylum seekersis made.From the perspective of health care, they are entitled only to emergency medical care and indispensable treatment for illness and serious mental disorders.Primarily medical assistance is provided by a humanitarian association “Doctors without borders” who operate in Porin, and secondary, in case of emergency, medical aid will be provided by Croatian medical system. But this isn’t uncommon, in relation to achieving other rights there are also serious lack of assistance from government and formal institutions and asylum seekers are faced with a lot of problems and difficulties. Most often, at this point, help in achieving lawful rights is provided from non-governmental institustions.

After MVEP has issued a decision granting individual the asylum or supsidary protection status, the official bureaucratic integration process begins. According to Article 64 of The Act asylee or person under subsidiary protection has following rights: residence, family reunification, accommodation, work, health care, education, freedom of religion, free legal aid, social welfare, assistance in integration into society, ownership of the real estate in accordance with the Convention and acquisition of Croatian citizenship in accordance with the regulations governing the acquisition of citizenship.[39] An asylee and a person under subsidiary protection is obliged to: respect the Constitution, laws and other regulations of the Republic of Croatia, register the residence within 15 days from the delivery of the decision on the approval of international protection, have a residence permit referred to in Article 75 of The Act and make it available to persons authorized by law and attend a course in Croatian language, history and culture.[40] Once asylum seekers are granted asylum, he or she is entitled to accommodation provieded by Government in a rented apartment for a maximum of two years according to Article 67 of The Act.[41] This should be the task of Social Welfare Centar but in practice non-governmental organizations, volunteers and friends usually help them find an appropriate accommodation. In terms of health care, after they receive status, they have free health care. Through fieldwork and conversation with persons under international protection main problems arise from lack of knowledge about health care righs, bought from a

[39]According to:Act on International and Temporary Protection, Official Gazette NN 70/15, 127/17 - The Act, https://www.zakon.hr/z/798/Zakon-o-me%C4%91unarodnoj-i-privremenoj-za%C5%A1titi(Accessed: 5.7.2020)
[40]Ibid.
[41]Ibid.

person under international protection and medical staff. Persons under international protection most often don't know which range of rights they are entitled to andmedical staff are not informed, either. As a result, they often do not receive the medical treatment they needed or charging them for an examination that should be free.Language has proven to be one of the main problems of the integration process that slows down people under international protection in exercising all rights. Language learning is the first thing that should be made possible once they are granted asylum. Not knowing language often creates obstacles when visiting hospitals and doctors, making it difficult to find a job, to communicate with various institutions (the most often official ones), to resolve the necessary paperwork and slows down social socialization.

According to Article 67 of The Act after two years person under international protection loses the right to free accommodation.[42] This means that according to legal framework official bureaucratic integration process ends and thatbegins "afterlife" as final sub-steps in the process of integration. From a person under international protection it is expected that in the previous sub-step to have learned the language, found a job and new accommodation and started to support themselves. At the point of "afterlife" for a person under international protection it is crucial to have a job so that can finance ongoing life. First and foremost, they need to find another accommodation so that they have place to stay. Most asylum seekers or persons under international protectiongravitate to Zagreb, where the accommodation is very expensive. In order to finance themselves they need a job that provides at least an average pay. Because of the language barrier and also problems with recognition of their level of education they have the biggest challenges in that field. Some individuals came without their documents including certification about the level of education. Even when they have their documents and certifications, they meet with the problem of recognition and nostrification of certifications and diplomas. Life brings all kinds of challenges that for asylum seeker or person under international protection multiply. As the main obstacle for effective integration process Knezić from RTC (Annex 3) highlights "lack of clear and evidence-based policies that demonstrate a political will to remove obstacles and facilitate equalization of opportunities for all, newcomers included, to take an active part in the community, society

[42]Ibid.

and have control over one's life."[43]. Success in this part of the integration process depends exclusively on their resourcefulness and persistence, but also on help that they can get from government, institutions and local communities. According to RTC experience and allegations from Knezić (Annex 3): "Exaggerated bureaucracy in all segments and processes related to exercising rights as a person granted international protection, both faced by refugees themselves and faced by public bodies, public officials and other actors in the integration process"[44].

Although institutions and state bodies regulate migrations, they can be criticized for reacting slowly and inadequately to important problems in societies. Therefore, meaningful inclusion is mainly provided by non-governmental organizations and the local community itselfs.

[43]Knezić, Dragana (RCT). Personal interview made with Author. 24.07.2020., Annex 3
[44] Ibid.

3. THE ROLE OF SIGNIFICANTNON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGO'S) IN INTEGRATION PROCESS IN CROATIA

Integration is extremely complex and takes place actively at the direct level between the foreigner and the locals. In this relationship, the most common obstacle other than language is ignorance and distance. On the one hand, foreigners are at a distance due to the language barrier, and on the other hand, the locals, even if they are open to integration, very often do not know how to help in this process.This gap needs to be fulfilled somehow, and this is precisely the role of non-governmental organizations (NGO's). Thus, these organizations serve as social bridges that allow asylum seekers to socially connect with the local community.[45] The needs of asylum seekers in the integration process are different, and the process takes place through different elements. So as a rule, NGO's specialize in helping foreigners in a particular area and they provide services that government and other formal institutions failed to provide. Each NGO has their own field of expertise and text bellow explains the role of most significant NGO in Croatia that are dealing with asylum seekers and persons under international protection.

3.1. CROATIAN RED CROSS ("CRC")

Croatian Red Cross (CRC) is the oldest NGO in Croatia that provides assistance to those in need and protection of fundamental human rights. They operate in various fields, so at the beginning of the refugee crisis, it was one of the first organizations to start implementing programs to help and protect asylum seekers. Among other things, CRC operates in all reception centers in Croatia, and closely cooperates with the Ministry of the Interior, governmental institutions and other NGO's. They make the first contact with asylum seekers so their role in the integration process is really significant. In an interview (Annex 1) they explained their role as"CRC in the integration of persons under international protection has played a role in the implementation of activities that will help beneficiaries in exercising their

[45] According to: Ager, A. & Strang, A. (2008) *Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework*, Journal of Refugee Studies, Volume 21, Issue 2, June 2008, p 166. – 191., https://academic.oup.com/jrs/article/21/2/166/1621262 (Accessed: 21.7.2020)

rights. Our role has a supportive character and thus we have provided assistance services in the health program, social, educational, employment and in all situations in which users could not cope on their own."[46]

In order to support the integration process ofa person under international protection CRC provide different activities which can be arranged in three main groups: assistance in right exercising, health program and learning assistance. Learning assistance refers to helping children learn a language and master school materials. One of significant project of CRC is organizing summer holidays for children (7 -15 year old) in Novi Vinodolski and New Year's packages for children.[47]According to respondents Kadoić (Annex 1), the most significant activities in the field of daily assistance in exercising asylum seeker rights are related to "writing applications and filling out official forms (enrollment of children in kindergarten, primary and secondary school, if necessary, and study, child allowance, free public transport, one-time assistance in the competent Center for Social Welfare, and we help users in employment, organize meetings with employers and suggest users who are interested in the job)"[48]. The health program is probably most demanding but also the most crucialarea of CRC action and according to Kadoić (Annex 1) it include "looking for a family doctor, gynecologist, dentist and ordering for specialist examinations, various treatments pediatrician and rehabilitations, all this is arranged by our healthcare professional, and the translator translates for the user (s)."[49]

3.2. ARE YOU SYRIUS? ("AYS")

NGO Are You Syrius? (AYS) grew out of the volunteer response to the Syrian refugee crisis in the Balkans. With only two-and-a-half paid staff and with 160 volunteers AYS is making a significant impact on refugees lives in Croatia, and refugee news around the world. In the interview conducted with Macanović (Annex 2), they stated that their main role in supporting the integration process is to „fill gaps in the system and trying to build more open society for

[46]Kadoić, Maja (CRC). Personal interview made with Author. 06.07.2020., Annex 1
[47] According to: Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.

refugees. With only two full-time employees, we are a bridge between domicile citizens and refugees, giving civil society space to act and help. All of our activities are based on people needs and we always try to develop our programs according to them.“[50].

In order to support the integration process of a person under international protection AYS provide the whole range of different activities, which are performed exclusively by volunteers (because they have only two employees). Their mainactivity is the goodwill store “Free shop” where people in need can take things and stuff they need. According to Macanović (Annex 2) shop “is like a little store where all items are free and refugees and other citizens in need can take it. But the shop is more then that, its place of solidarity where Croatian people (donators) have the opportunity to meet refugees and know more about integration process in Croatia”[51]. Besides that, they offer an educational support programs for children, language coursesand alsoassistance in daily right exercising. Educational support program, as with CRC, refers to helping children learn a language and master school materials but they also expanded that range on some non-formal activities. According to Macanović (Annex 2): “we have more then 50 volunteers that are teaching Croatian and helping with writing homework for 40 school-age children that got international protection. Beside that, we organize many extracurricular activities for children, which enables them to learn a language in non formal environment. We have good cooperation with schools trough Big brother/big sister program. Our volunteers are bridge between family and school, in cases when parents don’t speak Croatian. They are always available for teachers and together they make everything to help kid to integrate“[52]. Language learning activities are related to holding a free course for beginners by 4 Croatian teachers and also they bear part of the cost for formal language study for 15 students every semester to B1 classes which are held by *Croaticum - Centre for Croatian as a Second and Foreign Language*.[53]Although AYS is NGO, because as most activities are carried out by volunteers, this is also proof of how much each individual, or in this case “two of them”, can actually make a change that will leave a significant impact on society as a whole.

[50]Macanović, Anamaria (AYS). Personal interview made with Author. 12.07.2020., Annex 2
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] According to: Ibid.

3.3. REHABILITATION CENTER FOR STRESS AND TRAUMA ("RCT")

Rehabilitiation Center for Stress and Trauma (RTC) began operating in 1993 as a multidisciplinary program of psychosocial assistance for BOSWOFAM (Bosnian Women and Families), focused on women – refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, including a large number of victims of torture and their families. In the postwar period, the focus of activities are long-term effects of war trauma on the individuals, groups and communities, rehabilitation of torture victims and major human rights violations and support in integration into society. In addition to refugees, displaced persons, returnees, immigrants in Croatia, they started to act more recently, as users appear and asylum seekers numberbegan to grow.[54]

Knezić in interview (Annex 3) stated that in order to support integration process of person under international protection "RTC's dominant role is to provide support to the most vulnerable among refugees: torture and trauma survivors, who are civilian victims of war or face other disadvantages resulting from mental health difficulties of social marginalization. Our principle of work constitutes in the inseparability of rehabilitation, in terms of overcoming mental health issues resulting from survived traumatic experiences, from integration support, in terms of achieving inclusion and participation in relevant fields of life and gaining self-sufficiency and autonomy"[55].Furthermore, in interview (Annex 3) it's emphasized that main activities that they providing are: "psychological counselling and psychotherapy in overcoming mental health issues resulting from surviving traumatic experiences; psychosocial support in exercising granted rights and achieving inclusion in different fields of life: social welfare, healthcare, education, employment, leisure; socio-cultural orientation, in terms of educational and experiential activities aiming to help managing expectations and facilitating cultural adaptation and understanding; educational activities in acquiring various generic skills and attitudes, like language and communication competences, IT competences"[56]. As Knezić (Annex 3) stated in interview, mentioned

[54] According to: RCT: *History*https://rctzg.hr/-/povijest/ (Accessed: 13.6.2020)
[55]Knezić, Dragana (RCT). Personal interview made with Author. 24.07.2020., Annex 3
[56] Ibid.

activities “improve beneficiary’s well-being, self-efficacy and contribute to the consummation of the granted rights“[57].

RCT broadly cooperating with other NGO's and they put a lot of effort to connect the law and psychology through psychological support of victims – the (potential) witnesses of war crimes during trials, and through training and supervisory support of staff and volunteers in witnesses support offices – victims of crime. Recognizing the trauma and providing professional assistance in that area are activities and actions that distinguish them from other NGO's.

3.4. CENTER FOR PEACE STUDIES (“CPS”)

Center for Peace Studies (CPS) is an NGO that is promoting non-violence and social change through education, research and activism. CPS operates through three compatible programs: Asylum, Integration and Human Security, Peace Education and Non-violence Affirmation, and Combating Inequalities.

In order to support integration process of person under international protection,they provide different activities according to Avon (Annex 4): “language support, support in the communication with institutions, and finally cultural, sportive and social events with the final goal for both old and new members of the society to get to know eachother and foundout the richness of it. Also, the aspect of legal support is extremely important, and we provide that too”[58]. Furthermore, Avon (Annex 4) highlights that: “CPS does an important work in documenting these human rights violations, and tries to make the rights respected by interveening both legally and mediatically and politically on the issue. Second of all, CPS offers bridges and tools for people to get to know the social and political context that is new: language support, support in the communication with institutions, and finally cultural, sportive and social events with the final goal for both old and new members of the society to get to know eachother and foundout the richness of it”[59].

[57] Ibid.
[58] Avon, Maddalena (CMS). Personal interview made with Author. 21.06.2020., Annex 4
[59] Ibid.

3.5. THE JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE ("JRS")

As Prokl Predragović (Annex 5) stated in interview: "The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic humanitarian organization with a mission to accompany, serve and advocate for the rights of refugees and all other forcibly displaced persons, present in Croatia since 1993."[60]. JRS has been taking care of the needs and rights of refugees, displaced persons and other forcibly displaced persons who had to flee their place of residence before war or persecution. Since 2010, they have been paying special attention to the needs of people coming to Croatia from African or Asian countries as asylum seekers fleeing persecution and war in search of security and protection.[61]Their main activities is to provide support for education and labour market integration to people with refugee status, while also responding to current labour shortages by including refugees into the labour market.

Peculiarity of action JRS is in publishing multilingual newspaper "Paths" whose goal, according to Prokl Predragović (Annex 4), is "bringing refugees closer to the local community"[62] and they are"created by refugees for refugees and local communities where they can share their stories, current experience and hopes for the future. The motto is: Strangers yesterday, neighbours today! This project was motivated by a wish to enable asylum seekers and all persons who had been given international protection in Croatia to express their views and share their refugee and integration experience. We believe that it is possible to live together, in peace and coexistence. This campaign also served to raise awareness of the rights and needs of refugees across the local community"[63].

3.6. THE CIVIL RIGHT PROJECT SISAK ("CRP")

The Civil Rights Project Sisak (CRP) is a NGO stated in Sisak in 2003. CRP operating in the area of Sisak-Moslavina and Karlovac, and in co-operation with other NGO's in the territory

[60]Prokl Predragović, Martina (JRS). Personal interview made with Author. 13.06.2020., Annex 5
[61] According to: JRS, About us, http://www.jrs.hr/(Accessed: 24.7.2020.)
[62]Prokl Predragović, Martina (JRS). Personal interview made with Author. 13.06.2020., Annex 5
[63] Ibid.

of the whole Croatia. The goal of the organization is promotion and protection of human rights, development of political culture and local community, development of civil society, promotion of social partnership and intersectoral dialogue, development of intersectoral and sectoral cooperation, fighting against corruption, fighting against violence, poverty and for social inclusion, development of rural areas, raising awareness on ecological issues, providing humanitarian aid development and strengthening of democracy and humanism, etc.[64]

Its activities are concentrated in four core areas: education, shelter, distribution of food and non-food items, and information, counselling and legal assistance. From other NGO's they differ by providing legal aid for persons under international protections. Legal advice and assistance is expansive and often unavailable for asylum seeker and person under internationalprotection and those parts of their actions is most valuable for beneficiary.

[64] According to: CRP, Who we are?, https://www.crpsisak.hr/o-nama/about/?lang=en (Accessed: 25.07.2020.)

4. THE ROLE AND CHALLENGES OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY IN THE INTEGRATION PROCESS

"Integration is a two-way process - is a statement we often hear in discussion on integration, and as such is often defined in national policies; but do we really practice it as a two-way process? Who is being integrated and into what? How do we include social groups who are participating in society but living on the margin of it?"[65] Those are the main question stated within project "Welcomm"[66] which main goal is to provide information to people under international protection about their rights and living in host society. Furthermore, those are questions that should be considered by all participants in the integration process, especially from providers. In this part of the Thesis, it will be explored how the local community answers these questions.

4.1. ROLE AND IMPACT OF LOCAL COMMUNITY IN INTEGRATION PROCESS

"A local community is a group of interacting people sharing an environment. In human communities, intent, belief, resources, preferences, needs, risks, and a number of other conditions may be present and common, affecting the identity of the participants and their degree of cohesiveness."[67]According to definition and concept, the main determination of local community is common values around which society is created. Social values reflect how we relate to society and they are more important the smaller the local community is. In smaller local communities members are more closely connected but they are thereby more reserved to newcomers and acceptance of new cultural and social norms. They have misgivings that their values will be disrupted which is a result of fear from unknown.On the other hand, larger local communities themselves have a problem in maintaining togetherness and forming a set of common recognizable values and they are less cohesive. But all humans are social beings and have needs to belongingness i.e. to be an accepted member of a group which is the force that drives the integration process regardless all obstacles. Due to the need

[65] Welcomm, Community, p. 2, https://welcomm-europe.eu/media/COP-manifesto.pdf (Accessed: 21.7.2020)
[66]For additional information see: https://welcomm-europe.eu
[67]Definitions: Local community, https://www.definitions.net/definition/local+community(Accessed: 21.7.2020)

to belong, the role of local community and the impact it has on the integration process, is huge.

„Imigrants and refugees enrich and challenge our societies; and that society has to take that process seriously and work on it. We need to create spaces for exchange, have the capacity to understand "difficulties" no matter how hard they can be to experience and we need to act - not re-act!"[68]The role of local community is to ensure security and affiliation of each member but also access to jobs with fair pay, decent shelter, effective schools, reliable health care and in general higher quality of life. This is very well emphasized by the saying of Martin Luther King: „If a man doesn't have a job or an income, he has neither life nor liberty nor the possibility for the pursuit of happiness. He merely exists".[69]Community prevents an individual from the isolation and alienation and creates a sense of home. This impact can't be achieved in any other way – there is no state, government or institution that can provide this level of integration.

It's natural for locals to expect that foreigners embrace local norms and values. They have their own norms and values which are deeply rooted and which make them peculiar, so it is understandable that locals have urge to protect that part of social identity. Locals must actively participate in the integration process in order for inclusion to be successful. They need to put aside cultural differences, welcome those who are different and have patience when educating newcomers about domestic cultural behavior, rules and norms. On the other hand, accepting foreigners into local community can also widen local's horizons by understanding ethnical and cultural diversity. So as stated earlier, integration is two-way process, which is challenging, both, for hosts and for foreigners. „We believe in the necessity of articulating - needs of both sides (old and new citizens) for building solidarity. Through the articulation of need, personal relationships can arise and lead to the creation of mutual connection and understanding."[70]It's not only process of helping newcomers to adjust to living in Croatia, but it's also a way locals welcome and appreciate foreigners in their communities.

[68] Welcomm, Community, p. 2, https://welcomm-europe.eu/media/COP-manifesto.pdf (Accessed: 21.7.2020)
[69]Martin Luther King Jr., "*A Knock at Midnight*"
[70] Welcomm, Community, p. 3, https://welcomm-europe.eu/media/COP-manifesto.pdf (Accessed: 21.7.2020)

Likewise, for foreigners integration process is also full of obsticles. For all immigrants integrationprocess has their own challenges, but for the person under internationl protection those challenges are even more significiant. They offten didn't have chance to prepare for the new environment, both, physically and mentally, because they had suddenly flee their country of origin. Newcomers need to adopta way of social interaction, conventions and new rules of the host society. This means that they need to relearn many ways of behaving that would otherwise be natural to them which require time and effort. They are coming into a new environment and it's clear that a lot of things are going to be different. Even when people come from similar society, integration is demanding, but when they come from a society which is a totally different „world", integration requires from a person under international protection in the first place: openness, resourcefulness and desire to integrate. Thus, in combination with apositive attitude towards inclusion and with a desire for coexistence from the local's part, host society can become a new home for foreigners and a community itself will thrive.

4.2. CROATIAN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

„Fear of endangering domestic culture, the belief that immigrants cannot or do not want to integrate, and the feeling of being threatened by the perception of immigrant numbers in the national community and other similar attitudes are important assumptions of negative perceptions of immigrants. The same attitudes seem to apply to asylum seekers and refugees, with recent research in Europe and beyond showing a strong rise in Islamophobia (Crawley 2005; Finney 2005)."[71]Huge wave of refugees from third countries that hit EU borders, the terrorist attacks in Europe and the ISIS atrocities, often broadcasted online, significantly contributed to the rising levels of xenophobia. People became frightened and both social and public media start to look at imigrations in a negative tone. Negative connotationsare mostly settled in terms of reasons and backgroundswhypeople migrate. Similar attitudes also prevailed in Croatian society at the beginning of migrant crisis but over time most of public

[71] Baričević, V. and Koska, V. (2017), Domestic public attitudes and perceptions of national minorities, refugees and migrants, Zagreb, Center for Peace Studies, p.14, https://www.cms.hr/system/publication/pdf/94/Stavovi_i_percepcije_doma_e_javnosti_o_nacionalnim_manjinama__izbjeglicama_i_migrantima.pdf (Accessed: 13.7.2020)

opinion was neutral, regarding nor positive or extremely negative. According to one research, which the main goal was to show how media in Croatia transmitted the news about the "migrant wave" in period 2015 and 2016, it was found that the media report was positive about refugees. Also in the same paper autor set the conclusion that Croatian media reported on migrants subjectively but also that in the event of refugee crisis, the Croatian media, just like Croatia in general, "passed the test of humanity" and "showed that they have a big heart". The same author also highlights how Croatian citizens sympathize with people who come and go through Croatia because of the refugee experience in the Homeland War.[72] While the negative connotations expressed in the media at the beginning of the migrant crisis caused fear and reservation, on the other hand, a positive tone in media reports creates an environment of openness and direct locals to solidarity and compassion.

"Communities in Croatia are officially divided into city quartes or local/village communities, which carry out administrative matters at the lowest level. They are engaged in meeting the public needs of the community. Through local communities, the inhabitants of a certain area can influence decisions in their community. Communities are arranged in such a way that each community provides main public services like kindergarten, school, health center or doctor, grocery store, ATM, public transport and cultural and leisure activities. People in the community are also connected through various associations, clubs and interest groups who organize different events on the local level."[73] Croatian society, and thus local communities also, is traditional and quite closed from ethnically and religiously point of view. [74]Most of that rigidity arises from relatively recent war sufferings which arose from the ethnic division between Croatian, Serbian and Bosnian nationals. A lot of people lost someone in Homeland War and this result in a large part of intolerance that is passed even to younger generations. Until 2015, excluding asylum seekers from 1990, with refugee crisis, refugees and political

[72] According to: Mešanović, E. (2017), Portraying refugees and migrants in primetime TV newscasts of HTV, Nova TV and RTL, Thesis, Zagreb, Faculty of Political Science, p. 18, 42. – 43., https://repozitorij.fpzg.unizg.hr/islandora/object/fpzg%3A449/datastream/PDF/view (Accessed: 13.7.2020)

[73]Welcomm, Living in the community neighbourhood, https://welcomm-europe.eu/croatia/ (Accessed: 25.7.2020)

[74] According to: Banovac, B., Katunarić, V. and Mrakovčić, M. (2014), From War to Tolerance? Bottom-up and Top-down Approaches to (Re)building Interethnic Ties in the Areas of the Former Yugoslavia, The journal Collected Papers of the Law Faculty of the University of Rijeka, p. 461, 455-483., file:///C:/Users/videa/Downloads/Banovac_Katunaric_Mrakovcic.pdf (Accessed: 02.09.2020)

and economic migrants were not so usual for this country.[75] Therefore, prior this time, Croatian local communities didin't have practical experience in the integration process of foreigners, which of course further intensified the closedness. Due to such experience, a dominant opinion was created according to which a significant number of Croats believe that the male migrant population should have stayed and fought for their country.[76] Those types of statements are projection of generalizations and unawareness of the difficulties of the political and economic situation in the countries of origin. No matter on this closedness and reservations, when people in Croatian local communities find themselves in direct contact with migrants, they are ready to help. This is proven by numerous media articles, according to Mešanović: *"We are all people of flesh and blood, be we Christians, Muslims or Hindus, right? In fact, i think we as a christian country and people who believe in christian traditions, should be able to accept anyone.*", "*We have to let them in." People came out of war conflicts. At least the Croats went through such situations.* ", "*Croatia for pride. Thousands of people are helping, donating food, water, provide shelter. The refugees are grateful at every step.* "[77].

That members of the local community are willing to help is shown by the Civic Initiative Dugave (CID). The main accommodation facilities for refugees in Croatia are located in the Zagreb district of Dugave in the Hotel Porin. In Dugave, a small group of friends and neighbors launched a civic initiative aimed at improving real social networks within the neighborhood. There are many goals, and improving interculturalism is one of many - especially given the changes that have brought about the social dynamics of the neighborhood after a reception center (Hotel Porin) was opened in their local community, housing refugees and other migrants located. This informal group of citizens, in cooperation with the public library Dugave and other associations which have already accumulated experience with similar initiatives, introduced refugees to local community through organize presentations of countries, public discussions, culinary events, children friendly events, and during the warm part of the year trying to get families with children to the park to mingle together. Key to their

[75] Ibid.

[76] Libela, Mikulin, T., Umri muški ili si terorist, September 2015, https://www.libela.org/sa-stavom/6542-umri-muski-ili-si-terorist/ (Accessed: 10.08.2020)

[77] According to: Mešanović, E. (2017), Portraying refugees and migrants in primetime TV newscasts of HTV, Nova TV and RTL, Thesis, Zagreb, Faculty of Political Science, p. 35, 42. – 43., https://repozitorij.fpzg.unizg.hr/islandora/object/fpzg%3A449/datastream/PDF/view (Accessed: 13.7.2020)

success, they highlighted, was the willingness of the local library, branch of the City of Zagreb Public Libraries, to cooperate and provide space for the activities, workshops, discussions. It is crucial to initiate more events like this in order to achieve a better quality of coexistence in local communities between foreigners and locals. According to CRC experience which they stated in an interview (Annex 1) "our society is still quite homogeneous and integration policy does not have a clear position, asylum seekers get lost in exercising their rights and the complexity of exercising them."[78] This attitude also confirms Macanović from AYS (Annex 3) by saying: "there is not so much governmental led activities that would enable Croatian people and refugees to meet each other, do something together, debunk prejudices and make social connections that are a really important aspect of integration."[79]. Therefore, most of the existing initiatives and actions are taken for the purpose of refugee integration in Croatia is initiated by non-governmentalorganizations. That is not because of the lack of will and desire of the local population, but because locals do not know how to access to newcomers and in which segments they need assistance, and because of other obstacles in everyday communication and coexistence.

4.3. DAILY INTERACTIONSIN BETWEEN LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND PEOPLE UNDER INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

According to Knezić from RTC (Annex 3) "effective integration constitutes of inclusion of newcomers in relevant sectors and segments of life and society: education, healthcare and social welfare, employment and economy, but also cultural and political participation both on the neighborhood and community level as well as on the level of the society as a whole[80].Healthy and stable communities provide for their citizens all that they need in order to make people safe and that they have a sence of home. Easy access to well-paid jobs, healthy food, and safe places for physical activities, affordable housing and transit, good schools, healthcare and social support, etc., is by which good local communities stand out. This is important for both, locals and foreigners. Those values can be arranged in few main

[78]Kadoić, Maja (CRC). Personal interview made with Author. 06.07.2020., Annex 1
[79]Macanović, Anamaria (AYS). Personal interview made with Author. 12.07.2020., Annex 2

[80]Knezić, Dragana (RCT). Personal interview made with Author. 24.07.2020., Annex 3

elements: personal needs, housing, workplaces, retail, social civil and public place, schools and education system and health and care institutions, which are shown in Figure 4.

From the perspective of the integration process, when a person under international protection reaches satisfaction in those main areas of life, he or she will be settled in the community and it becomes their home. This also means that locals start to see them as equal parts of the community. Although the basis for integration needs to be settled from government, and institutions especially non-governmental ones, are making significant efforts to mediate in the integration, the real integration process isn't possible without the effort of those who need to be integrated. And those are both, a person under international protection, as well as locals. In the following text, I will describe daily interactions between locals and a person under international protection through mentioned elements in Croatian local communities.

Figure 4 Elements of a healthy community



Source: Despres C., Planners, Here's How to Unlock Health Equity in Your Community, Jannuary 10, 2020,https://salud-america.org/planners-heres-how-to-unlock-health-equity-in-your-community/

Personal needs

Personal needs that should be provided and available to every person are food, transportation and utilities. Every individual needs to ensure those for themselves and in Croatia, there isn't organizational support in those areas. In exceptional cases, foreigners can be provided with social assistance in the form of a really low amount of money which is not sufficant for covering basic needs. In smaller local communities usually some support in these areas provides church or other civil initivies which are ready to help those who are in need, whether domestic or foreign (donations). This type of assistance is likely to be provided by a smaller community.

Housing

The basic precondition for setting up life in a new environment is certainly living space. Croatia in general has poor housing policy. Croats often live in a multi-generational household. Also, it is common to buy your own property (often on a long-term loan), and the practice of renting apartments is underdeveloped. Croats highly value their real estate, often overestimating it, which means that apartments that are not in good condition are often extremely expensive to rent and long term rents are also rare. Landlords often set a whole range of conditions like most of them aren't pet friendly, some of them don't want to rent their space to families, or single adult man etc. These are the problems that citizens face on a daily basis when housing. From the foreigner's perception, the question of finding a suitable apartment is additionally intertwined with the prejudices of the landlord.Locals can be of great help in order to assist with finding anacceptableaccommodation or if they rent their realestates to be open to renting them to a person under international protection (put aside fears and prejudices) as well as loosen rental criteria (instead of a deposit consider the possibility of exchanging services).

Workplace

The second most important thing for integration is definitely to find a job. A stable and generous source of funding will ensure a decent life. In addition, work significantly enables social integration in a way that "forces" people to continuous interaction and helps people under international protection to socially integrate and master the language. A significant obstacle in finding a suitable job is insufficient knowledge of the Croatian language and non-recognition of diplomas and certificates, which means that they have problems with finding jobs in their own field of expertise. For example, people who in their country of origin work as a lawyer here work at restaurants or taxi drivers, but even those jobs are really difficult to get, mostly because employers are closed-minded. In this part, main impact of the community is to help and make effort in order to person under international protection find a job (recommendations, employment in small private enterprises etc.) and from the perspective of employers to have an understanding for learning and assimilating foreigners into the working environment.

Retail

People who come from different cultures often have different life habits especially when it comes to food, clothing etc. So they have a challenge to find specific goods they need. In usually retail stores they don't have all the acceptable goods and also there is again a language barrier in communication with staff. To fulfill their needs they often have to shop in specialty stores that are more expensive. In this field local stores can assimilate through the procurement and sale of specific products at decent prices without enormous margins.

Social civil and public place

In this elementit is crucial that a person under international protection understand how Croatian local comunities works. In Croatian society it is expected to respect other peoples rights and their privacy but also Croats are a nation that loves socializing and hanging out. The custom of socializing over coffee either at home or in cafes is quite common and the special thing is that this "coffee time" lasts a very long time, even sometimes turns into an evening out. Most often the call "shall we have coffee" doesn't necessarily mean drinking coffee, but just hanging out. In smaller communities, coffee is drunk in backyards, while in

larger urban areas, people hang out in cafes. In larger cities, people usually hang out in parks and public places (like Maksimir in Zagreb). This element is major one in integration. A good way to integrate is to definitely accept a coffee invitation from local members or play some sport like basketball, football or tennis table. Nurturing good neighborly relations is desirable: neighbors can borrow small items such as coffee, sugar, eggs, or they can ask each other to guarding pets in time of vacation. This is a great way to get closer to neighbors whether such socializing is initiated by locals or foreigners. Another good way to socialize is food. Croats often socialize with food and are very proud of their traditional cuisine. An invitation to a Croatian traditional dinner is a common way to show newcomers that they are welcome. Also, foreigners can also start the first step in integration by preparing some of their specialties. Most Croats will positively respond to such an invitation because for them this is a common and characteristic way of socializing.

Schools and education system

A large number of a person under international protection has fleed from their country of origin and because of that they often don't have certifications about the level of education. Croatian institutions also find it very difficult to validate their diplomas, which makes it really hard to continue their education. As in every previous element, the language barrier is most significant here because most of the formal education programs are in a Croatian language as well as entrance exams which are a condition for enrollment. At the local community level, most of the challengescome from differences between children's who go to local schools but this is also a chance for connecting and bounding because locals are more opened to families with childrens. Teachers of refugee children can make some additional effort in order to ease their trouble of fitting in and understanding the curriculum. Parents can assist newcomer parents in the process of enrolling, selecting the appropriate school, kindergarten or other educational institutions and also organize some after school social activities, both for children and parents.

Health and care institutions

As mentioned previously in this paper, the main problem is ignorance of the right to healt care by foreigners and medical staff. Also, a big obstacle is that many immigrants do not know the

health care system and how it works in Croatia. All of this triggers fear and hesitation to seek help from those in need. In these elements, huge obstacle is also the language barrier. Going to the doctor and not being able to clearly explain the symptoms and pain is certainly problematic for both the patient and the doctor. Local members of the community can help people by explaining how the system works, instructing them on how they can exercise their rights and helping them directly when needed (accompaniment to a medical examination, etc.).

5. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES

Through paper, using personal experience in everyday working with a person under international protection as well as from held interviews with NGO's members the biggest weaknesses and challenges in the integration process were highlighted.Out of the identified obstacles, guidelines for meaningful integration have imposed themselves, and they are stated below. Guidelines can be aligning in a few different domains:

Legal framework and bureaucracy

- Process of granting status should be clearer and transparent. Deadline for making a decision about international protection needs to be considerably shorter.

- Formal bureaucracy process of integration needs to start at the point of arriving not at the point of getting a decision about international protection.

- The process of granting citizenship should be simpler and also with a shorter deadline.

- State and governmental institutions need to have "peer to peer" approach, meaning they need to observe each person individually.

- State and governmental institutions need to act also in everyday activities not just in setting up the legal framework of the integration process.

Language, Health and Education

- Model of learning the Croatian language need to be developedin combination with learning certain skills that will benefit a person under international protection in future employment and integration into local society.

- Provide full and equitable access to the health system as well as health and social care.

- Develop a register of data on previous education, qualifications, skills, knowledge and jobs that they have worked in the country of origin, so that they can be more easily directed to further education, training and job search.

- Ensure a system of recognition of educational and professional qualifications for refugees who, due to the crisis and precarious situation in their countries of origin, are unable to obtain diplomas and other documents and therefore cannot prove their level of education.

Social community life

- Prepare and actively involve the local community for coexistence with people under international protection through informing them about new members, creating places for socializing, providing support, talking and getting to know each other.

- Develop clear guidelines and concrete measures for the inclusion of persons under international protection in Croatian society and provide them with fair and unhindered access to education, the labor market, social services, health care, non-formal educational and social programs of the community.

- Lobby for cooperation with important stakeholders (schools, local community, football clubs, library and others) in order to better connect new and old community members through the activities and services they provide.

- Support the initiatives of citizens and civil society in creating space for meeting, exchange and basic information on integration and inclusion in Croatian society.

6. CONCLUSION

Refugees and migrants around the world risk their lives every day in desperate attempts to find safety or a better life. In recent years, the population of "people on the move" has been growing steadily, both migrants and refugees. In such new circumstances, governments around the world had to provide a legislative framework that would allow for the effective, timely, and full integration of foreigners into host society.

The aim of this paper was to explain the process of integration of persons under international protection and to show how this process is carried out in Croatia. The paper wanted to give an overview of key providers, but also to gain insight into the differences between the official bureaucratic integration and one that happens in practice. Although Croatia has established a legislative framework for the integration of asylum seekers and persons under international protection, in practice there are certain problems and challenges that have resulted in inconsistencies in law and practice. During the preparation of this paper, the following methods were used: participant observation, semi-structured interviews and literature review.

The first part of the paper defines the concept of integration, persons under international protection, reasons and factors for entering the integration process, dimensions and levels of integration, and defines the providers of integration. As providers, we distinguish three main groups of integration providers: govermental institutions, non-governmental organizations and the local community. Also, the first part of the paper describes the official, bureaucratic process of integration in Croatia and presents its problems and weaknesses as well as recommendations that could lead to significant progress in integration.

The second part seeks to describe in more detail the role of the main groups of integration providers and showing how integration policy has developed in Croatia throughout history. Also, the legislative framework important for the development of the policy of integration of migrants in Croatia is briefly presented. Based on the legislative analysis, it can be concluded that Croatia does not lag behind other EU countries when it comes to legal acts, but the problem arises when the envisaged legal measures need to be applied in practice. In addition to the legislative framework, a number of activities need to be carried out in order to meaningful inclusion be realized. Since the integration process is two-way, activities and effort must be undertaken both in relation to foreigners and in relation to the local population.

If foreigners do not become active members of society who are educated, work and pay taxes, and who lead a happy life, they will be remaining isolated. Pope Francis well said: *"Migrants and refugees are not pawns on the chessboard of humanity. They are children, women and men who leave or who are forced to leave their homes for various reasons, who share a legitimate desire for knowing and having, but above all for being more"*[81]. That means that formal, bureaucratic integration process is not enough, but there is necessity for meaningful inclusion, one that provides sense of home and neighbourly environment, both for foreigners and locals. Furthermore, the second part describes the importance and significance of non-governmental organizations and the local community as important providers of integration for persons under international protection. The representatives of non-governmental organizations throught semi-structured interview presented the services that they offered to persons under international protection as way of facilitate their integration into community.

Community prevents an individual from the isolation and alienation and creates a sense of home. This impact can't be achieved in any other way – there is no state, government or institution that can provide this level of integration. In that sense, the role of local community and the impact it has on the integration process, is huge. Overall, for integration to be complete and successful, all service providers must work together. Government need to ensure legal framework in order to set quality base for integration, governmental institutions need to be first line of stimulating meaningful inclusion, NGO's need to ensure that all challenges that may arise in the integration process are overcome and last but not least local community need to act proactive, openly and embrace foreigners as equal members of the community. At the end of the work are set out guidelines for a more effective and easier integration process of asylum seekers in the Croatian society.

Well-integrated, independent, accepted newcomers always feel a sense of belonging to the country in which they live and the society they build. And as it well known, "a chain is only as strong as its weakest link" which is fully applicable to society as well and therefore worth: "society is strong as its weakest individuals". Only an affirmative environment, which does not discriminate but respects the values of each individual man, will ensure that we are united in our differences.

[81] Pope Francis, World Day of Migrants and Refugees (2014)

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ANNEX 1: Personal interview withCRC - Maja Kadoić

Interview led: Salam Al-Nidawi (Author)
Interviewed person: Maja Kadoić (Interviewee 1)
NGO: Croatian Red Cross (CRC)
Date: 6.7.2020

Personal interview with CRC

Author	According to your organization, how would you describe the integration process in Croatia?
Interviewee 1	The Croatian Red Cross has been included in the program of integration of persons under international protection since 2011. As an implementing partner of UNHCR, we have identified barriers that people will encounter in practice and based on this knowledge we have created a program of activities and assistance that we will conduct with beneficiaries. I implemented the integration program together with volunteers who played an important role in providing their intellectual and social services. As the number of persons granted international protection increased every year, we included more employees and volunteers in the integration program.
Author	In your opinion what are the biggest obstacles for people granted international protection to effectively integrate into Croatian society?
Interviewee 1	Integration is a complex situation in which each individual is exposed to re-proving himself but at the same time proves to society that he can cope with the challenges that lie ahead. As our society is still quite homogeneous and integration policy does not have a clear position, asylum seekers get lost in exercising their rights and the complexity of exercising them.
Author	What is your organization role in supporting/facilitating the integration process?
Interviewee 1	The Croatian Red Cross in the integration of persons under international protection has played a role in the implementation of activities that will help beneficiaries in exercising their rights. Our role has a supportive character and thus we have provided assistance services in the health program, social, educational, employment and in all situations in which users could not cope on their own. The Integration

	Department employs an Arabic translator, a health worker and two social workers who organize the dynamics of service delivery. In addition to professional staff, 6 volunteers are involved in the position of implementing intellectual services (learning assistance to children involved in the education system). Integration is a two-way process that requires the active involvement of all participants in the integration process.
Author	What kind of activities/service is your organization providing to support/facilitate the integration of persons granted international protection?
Interviewee 1	The activities we carry out with the users in the program are the most frequent assistance in exercising their rights. Due to the complexity of our administration, we often help in writing applications and filling out official forms (enrollment of children in kindergarten, primary and secondary school, if necessary, and study, child allowance, free public transport, one-time assistance in the competent Center for Social Welfare, and we help users in employment, organize meetings with employers and suggest users who are interested in the job). The health program that is the most demanding and requires organization and quick problem solving has a big role that we provide to users. From looking for a family doctor, pediatrician, gynecologist, dentist and ordering for specialist examinations, various treatments and rehabilitations, all this is arranged by our healthcare professional, and the translator translates for the user (s). We organize learning assistance for children through our trained volunteers, and in agreement with the parents we arrange the dates of instructions. Every year we organize a seven-day holiday for children (from 7-15 years of age) in Novi Vinodolski - children's summer resort of the City Society of the Red Cross Zagreb, and for the New Year we give the children of the users New Year's packages.
Author	How that activities/services are helpful; how they are related to the protection and promotion of human rights?
Interviewee 1	CRC advocates and supports the promotion of human rights by being included in the Working Group at the Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities within the Government of the Republic of Croatia. As an active member of the Working Group, we advocate for amendments to the measures in the Action Plan for the Integration of Persons Granted International Protection.

Author	What is in your opinion necessary for full integration of persons granted international protection in Croatian society?
Interviewee 1	
Author	Is there anything else that you would like to be included in my theses that are connected with the integration of persons granted international protection in Croatia?
Interviewee 1	Well, I don't know which theses you are promoting, but all civil society organizations involved in integration are trying to promote their rights, so the CRC is committed to exercising their rights and obligations.

ANNEX 2: Personal interview with AYS - Anamaria Macanović

Interview led: Salam Al-Nidawi (Author)

Interviewed person: Anamaria Macanović (Interviewee 2)

NGO: Are You Syrious (AYS)

Date: 12.7.2020

Personal interview with AYS

Author	According to your organization, how would you describe the integration process in Croatia
Interviewee 2	Integration process in Croatia is pretty hard and long. First thing that is important to mention is that state policy is seeing integration as process that starts after person gets asylum in Croatia. Waiting period after asylum application is pretty long, sometimes more than two years, an in this long period of time there is no official (only NGO-s supported) integration activities. This attitude is really harming for refugees and society because without good integration people cannot actively participate in society. We let them exist for long period without any support, and then expect that they will successfully integrate in two years from when they get asylum. When we speak about people with granted protection, on legal level we have good integration laws in many aspects, but problem that governmental actors and institutions are not always aware on rights of people under international protection, so without help of volunteers, many times people wouldn't be able to realize their rights. Also, there are not so much governmental led activities that would enable Croatian people and refugees to meet each other, do something together, debunk prejudices and make social connections that are really important aspect of integration.
Author	In your opinion what are the biggest obstacles for people granted international protection to effectively integrate into Croatian society?
Interviewee 2	First thing I would mention is that learning language is not possible for many of refugees. For years, there wasn't any course and when it started, government took more importance to reduce cost of course, then to ensure quality by making agreement with facilities that have more experience in teaching Croatian as foreign language. Additionally, many people couldn't attend last course because it was one

week in the morning and one week in the evening, so people that were working same shift at work, couldn't attend. Also, mother with young children couldn't attend the course, because there was no space suitable for children during the course. Also, state don't give much importance to people that are not familiar with Latin script and from our experience it's practically impossible to follow Croatian course if you need to learn how to write letters in the same time.

Also big obstacles are found when we speak about access to health system. People with international protection by law have right to health system in same scope with Croatian citizens with primary insurance. But problem is that, if they don't work, they don't have insurance card, but they are directly under governance of Ministry of health, who should pay all cost of health services for them. In practice, that means that doctor cannot put refugee patient in his online system (because they are not part of HZZO), but he needs to send every bill directly to Ministry of health, who would refund money. There are several problems coming from this. First, many doctors don't know about rights of people under international protection, so when they see they don't have insurance card, they say them that they don't have rights and they can't be their patients. Second, even if we explain to doctors the rights of people under international protection and whole procedure, they are afraid that Ministry will not refund, so they hesitate to take them as patients. Also, we had several cases when hospitals sent bills to refugees, because they weren't aware how system works in their case.

Also, when we speak about integration into labour market, people find several difficulties. Because of language barriers, they are often forced to work manual, low paid jobs. Also, language barrier is problem when it comes to their legal rights as workers; so many times they sign contracts that they don't understand. Another problem I would mention is that job retraining for refugees are often offering programs like cleaner, cook assistant, confectioner assistant etc. that are usually pushing people down on socio-economic scale. Also, when we talk about finding jobs, there is not enough institutionalized help with assisting people to find job. Usually NGO-s does this, but it can't be same effective as it would be with special office just for that.

When we speak about educational rights, there are many obstacles. The biggest problem we find for children older then 15, that didn't finish primary school before arrival to Croatia. Because of Croatian regulations, they cannot attend primary nor

	high school, so they are basically out of system of regular education. Also, once when children are enrolled they have right to language course of 70 hours (+ additional 70 hours if they need it). But between enrolment and starting of this course, there is big gap, sometimes even month(s) in which children don't have any Croatian classes. Another problem is that some schools don't officially enrol children until they finish this language class. It's important to mention that this 140 hours of language classes, which is maximum that child can get, is not enough for following regular lessons, so without help of volunteers, this children would struggle a lot inside educational system.
Author	What is your organization role in supporting/facilitating the integration process?
Interviewee 2	Our organisation is grassroots organisation and we are always trying to answer to people needs. We see our role in filling gaps in the system and trying to build more open society for refugees. With only two full time employees, we are bridge between domicile citizens and refugees, giving civil society space to act and help.
Author	What kind of activities/service is your organization providing to support/facilitate the integration of persons granted international protection?
Interviewee 2	We have Free shop, which is like little store where all items are free and refugees and other citizens in need can take it. But shop is more than that, its place of solidarity where Croatian people (donators) have opportunity to meet refugees and know more about integration process in Croatian. Besides that, we have educational support program for children whose families got international protection in Croatia. We have more than 50 volunteers that are teaching Croatian and helping with writing homework for 40 school-age children that got international protection. Besides that, we organize many extracurricular activities for children, which enable them to learn language in non-formal environment. We have good cooperation with schools trough Big brother/big sister program. Our volunteers are bridge between family and school, in cases when parents don't speak Croatian. They are always available for teachers and together they make everything to help kid to integrate. Also, we have volunteer based language course for refugees, led by 4 Croatian teachers. This course is for beginners, but also in cooperation with Croaticum-Centre for Croatian as a Second and Foreign Language it's possible for 15 students every semester to attend B1 classes, after which they get certified diploma. Also, we are assisting people in searching for jobs, by helping them to write CVs and

	contacting companies. Often we assist people with obstacles they find by dealing with Croatian burocracy system: finding doctors, subscription to schools, applications for social help etc.
Author	How those activities/services are helpful; how they are related to the protection and promotion of human rights?
Interviewee 2	Asylum law in Croatia is based on Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, which has roots in Universal declaration on human rights. Helping refugees to integrate and obtain their lawfully granted rights means to protect their human rights. We think its really important to support people and help them to stand on their own feet and build their future here. All of our activities are based on people needs and we always try to develop our programs according to them.
Author	What is in your opinion necessary for full integration of persons granted international protection in Croatian society?
Interviewee 1	First thing is to start integration process before that people get international protection, especially if we talk about language integration. In some other countries language courses are also available for asylum seekers and that helps much with future integration. Language integration in general is important, and language classes should be available for everyone and held by experienced language schools. Also, it would help a lot to enable people to work and get government support for first two years. Many people don't work first two years because by working they lose social money and subvention for apartment so economically it's not profitable to work. Systematically support in finding jobs is also needed, from basic education about working rights, to assisting in first contact with potential employers. In the end, I would add that we need more programs that facilitate encounters with locals and refugees, because social level of integration is really important for integration process, and often neglected.
Author	Is there anything else that you would like to be included in my theses that are connected with the integration of persons granted international protection in Croatia?
Interviewee 2	No.

ANNEX 3: Personal interview with RCT –Dragana Knezić

Interview led: Salam Al-Nidawi (Author)

Interviewed person: Dragana Knezić (Interviewee 3)

NGO: Rehabilitation center for stress and trauma (RCT)

Date: 24.7.2020

Personal interview with RCT

Author	According to your organization, how would you describe the integration process in Croatia
Interviewee 3	In RCT we conceptualize integration as a two-way process of adaptation, involving change in values, norms and behaviour for both newcomers and members the existing society; effective integration constitutes of inclusion of newcomers in relevant sectors and segments of life and society: education, healthcare and social welfare, employment and economy, but also cultural and political participation both on the neighbourhood and community level as well as on the level of the society as a whole.
Author	In your opinion what are the biggest obstacles for people granted international protection to effectively integrate into Croatian society?
Interviewee 3	The biggest obstacle is a lack of clear and evidence-based policies that demonstrate a political will to remove obstacles and facilitate equalization of opportunities for all, newcomers included, to take active part in the community, society and have control over one's life. Exaggerated bureaucracy in all segments and processes related to exercising rights as a person granted international protection, both faced by refugees themselves and faced by public bodies, public officials and other actors in the integration process.
Author	What is your organization role in supporting/facilitating the integration process?
Interviewee 3	RCT's dominant role is to provide support to the most vulnerable among refugees: torture and trauma survivors, who are civilian victims of war or face other disadvantages resulting from mental health difficulties of social marginalization. Our principle of work constitutes in inseparability of rehabilitation, in terms of overcoming mental health issues resulting from survived traumatic experiences, from

	integration support, in terms of achieving inclusion and participation in relevant fields of life and gaining self-sufficiency and autonomy.
Author	What kind of activities/service is your organization providing to support/facilitate the integration of persons granted international protection?
Interviewee 3	- psychological counselling and psychotherapy in overcoming mental health issues resulting from surviving traumatic experiences. - psychosocial support in exercising granted rights and achieving inclusion in different fields of life: social welfare, healthcare, education, employment, leisure. - socio-cultural orientation, in terms of educational and experiential activities aiming to help managing expectations and facilitating cultural adaptation and understanding. - educational activities in acquiring various generic skills and attitudes, like language and communication competences, IT competences.
Author	How those activities/services are helpful; how they are related to the protection and promotion of human rights?
Interviewee 3	Activities RCT provides and carries out are helpful in the sense that improve beneficiary's well-being, self-efficacy and contribute to consummation of the granted rights. RCT integrates advocacy in all its activities and services, striving for more effective, efficient and better-quality public services, more inclusive policies and particularly appropriate, culturally sensitive and trauma informed support and rehabilitation services for persons with post-traumatic difficulties. Our work is related with the protection and promotion of human rights as it pushes for equalization of opportunities for the disadvantaged in order for them to be able to fully exercise their rights.
Author	What is in your opinion necessary for full integration of persons granted international protection in Croatian society?
Interviewee 3	- continuous, accessible to all, quality and long-term language education - strong and active participation of local communities: local governments, local service providers, community-based organizations and initiatives in facilitating and removing obstacles to integration - timely management of expectations of newcomers, to prevent and avoid unrealistic expectations and consequent frustration - simplifying procedures on all levels and integrated approach in early integration

	(one-stop-shop approach) - encouraging and supporting cultural, social and political participation of persons granted international protection, through facilitating and funding activities of migrant organization, civic education and inviting participation in decision making (in matters relevant for that population) - early inclusion in education on all levels (children to adults) - creating and facilitation of spaces and opportunities for meaningful exchange and interaction of local population and newcomers (on the level of local community)
Author	Is there anything else that you would like to be included in my theses that are connected with the integration of persons granted international protection in Croatia?
Interviewee 3	There is a comprehensive body of knowledge, experience and evidences in managing refugee intake and supporting their rehabilitation and integration, including overcoming various obstacles, collected in the 1990's and 2000's. Even though the knowledge and experience are largely collected in civic society sector, there was also significant institutional learning in the past. What is needed is a clear and determined will to apply what is learned, and not to repeatedly start from scratch and invent "hot water".

ANNEX 4: Personal interview with CPS – MaddalenaAvon

Interview led: Salam Al-Nidawi (Author)

Interviewed person: Maddalena Avon (Interviewee 4)

NGO: Center for Peace Studies (CPS)

Date: 21.6.2020

Personal interview with CPS

Author	According to your organization, how would you describe the integration process in Croatia
Interviewee 4	We believe that the integration process in Croatia, is "on going". If we look back in time, a lot of things have seen an improvement, for example the enrolment in elementary school for children. Unfortunately, still a lot has to be done, and we believe is also a matter of political will and effort from the responsible institutions.
Author	In your opinion what are the biggest obstacles for people granted international protection to effectively integrate into Croatian society?
Interviewee 4	A lot of people believe that, once s/he get international protection, the road gets easier. Unfortunately, it doesn't. The main systemic problem is that the Action Plan, under which the institutions act in integration, involves just people who got granted protection. In practice, this mean that for all the waiting time (that can last from 6 months to almost 3 years), the person often didn't have the chance to learn the language, to get to know and enter in the job market, to practice his or her independency as s/he has been living in a reception centre for all time. Biggest obstacles we believe can be found in job market, language learning, and depending on the city where s/he is living, the socialization can be difficult.
Author	What is your organization role in supporting/facilitating the integration process?
Interviewee 4	Centre for peace studies advocate, to begin with, that the right to seek asylum is respected. Very often, refugees are denied of this fundamental right, and this is the first obstacle the people encounter once they seek for safety in Croatia - and CPS does an important work in documenting these human rights violations, and tries to make the rights respected by interveening both legally and mediatically and politically on the issue. Second of all, CPS offers bridges and tools for people to get

	to know the social and political context that is new: language support, support in the communication with institutions, and finally cultural, sportive and social events with the final goal for both old and new members of the society to get to know eachother and foundout the richness of it.
Author	What kind of activities/service is your organization providing to support/facilitate the integration of persons granted international protection?
Interviewee 4	language support, support in the communication with institutions, and finally cultural, sportive and social events with the final goal for both old and new members of the society to get to know eachother and foundout the richness of it. also the aspect of legal support is extremely important, and we provide that too.
Author	How those activities/services are helpful; how they are related to the protection and promotion of human rights?
Interviewee 4	They're direct related as they are exactly aimed at the protection and promotion of human rights, as the right to seek asylum. I believe they are helpful not just for the activities themselves, but for the approach peer-to-peer that we have: we do not act in the name of humanitarism or with a top-to-bottom approach, and we firmly believe in an equal exchange.
Author	What is in your opinion necessary for full integration of persons granted international protection in Croatian society?
Interviewee 4	Start the integration process since the first day. provide support in a not-colonialist way and with a peer-to-peer approach. Have possibility to communicate properly (translators and cultural mediators are essential for this). Avoid segregation in reception centers, implement a different model of integration that consists in a real and social exchange.
Author	Is there anything else that you would like to be included in my theses that are connected with the integration of persons granted international protection in Croatia?
Interviewee 4	/

ANNEX 5: Personal interview with JRS – Martina Prokl Predragović

Interview led: Salam Al-Nidawi (Author)
Interviewed person: Martina Prokl Predragović (Interviewee 5)
NGO: Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)
Date: 13.6.2020

Personal interview with JRS

Author	According to your organization, how would you describe the integration process in Croatia
Interviewee 5	Croatia is the EU's youngest member, and the one with the most turbulent recent history. Croatia joined the EU in 2053 but to join the passport-free Schengen area it must convince Brussels that it is able to effectively manage the bloc's external border, a particularly sensitive issue since Europe's 2055 migrant crisis. The fact is that unlike Western countries with a long history of immigration, Croatia has not had something similar, and this is what feels like the first time of facing so many different cultures and races all at once. Unfortunately, and Croatia is not the exception, fear has become a dominant response to the reality of global migrations. In the background, of course, is the growing trend of distorted nationalism, fear of identity change, and many other phenomena, so typical of Europe today. The citizens of the Republic of Croatia are on the border between xenophobic and supportive attitudes towards immigration of foreigners to Croatia: roughly equal numbers express xenophobic and friendly attitudes towards foreign immigrants. There is a noticeable change from a humanitarian rhetoric to a security-oriented rhetoric that mobilises fear to legitimize stronger control of national borders. The structure and needs of refugees in Croatia have changed considerably after the refugee crisis. the changes have also occurred in the perception of Croatia itself as a living environment - from a transit country to many users, it has become a state where some of them intend to stay.
Author	In your opinion what are the biggest obstacles for people granted international protection to effectively integrate into Croatian society?
Interviewee 5	Migration and migrant integration are among the newest major challenges for

	Croatian public administration. The central state administration is facing this challenge as well as local and regional governments and other public services whose cooperation and coordination are essential for the successful integration of migrants within the national (im)migration and demographic policy. This has been an important social phenomenon that requires everyone involved in various areas of public action to contribute to finding answers and solutions to the related challenges, such as reception, education, employment, social and health care and general inclusion into society and within the system of public administration. This social phenomenon further calls for consideration and analysis of administrative difficulties and issues of practical adaptation of public administration to new migration-related tasks, with the aim as well of designing a clear migration and integration policy.
Author	What is your organization role in supporting/facilitating the integration process? What kind of activities/service is your organization providing to support/facilitate the integration of persons granted international protection?
Interviewee 5	The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic humanitarian organization with a mission to accompany, serve and advocate for the rights of refugees and all other forcibly displaced persons, present in Croatia since 5993. Today, in partnerships, collaboration and dialogue with other religious congregations, humanitarian organizations, state institutions and with refugees themselves, encouraging co-responsibility, discernment and participative decision-making, JRS Croatia bases its work on the integration. Both in The Center for the integration of refugees „SOL“in Zagreb and in other cities, specially through collaboration on the resettlement programme. JRS team leads Child-friendly space in Reception centre for asylum seekers in Zagreb. JRS is publishing the multilingual newspaper “Paths”, created by refugees for refugees and local communities where they can share their stories, experience and hopes for the future. The motto is: Strangers yesterday, neighbours today! In the previous period, JRS Croatia conducted an educational meeting with state administration, city and county representatives, as well as people in education, health, welfare and other institutions, to prepare them for accepting the refugees. We are happy and proud to offer JRS knowledge and experience in working with refugees to Croatia and the Ministry of the Interior. In partnerships, collaboration and dialogue with other religious congregations, humanitarian organizations, state institutions and with refugees themselves, encouraging co-responsibility,

	discernment and participative decision-making, JRS Croatia bases its work on the integration. Both in The Center for the integration of refugees SOL in Zagreb and in other cities, especially through collaboration on the resettlement programme. In 2059, 98 people (20 families) arrived via the UNHCR's resettlement program to Croatia. A matter regarding their integration, planned activities and individual approach to families and individuals is the primary task of the Jesuit Refugee Service. From the beginning of 2058 to the present, JRS expanded its work in Croatia, opening the first Centre for the Integration of Refugees – SOL, which creates a space where JRS staff support and empower individuals and families who have obtained refugee status, helping them in their integration process. SOL promotes intercultural understanding and mutual learning by bringing refugees and Croatian citizens together. In addition to fostering these encounters, SOL offers practical trainings and workshops to strengthen people's skills and prepare them to overcome challenges that come with integrating in new cultural and linguistic communities, job market and schools. JRS Croatia is providing support for education and labour market integration to people with refugee status, while also responding to current labour shortages by including refugees into the labour market. The project fosters inclusiveness by striving to create an economically, demographically and socially sustainable society that responds to the needs of socially marginalised groups and build their independence and empowerment. With the intention of bringing refugees closer to the local community, JRS is also continuously publishing the multilingual newspaper "Paths", created by refugees for refugees and local communities where they can share their stories, current experience and hopes for the future. The motto is: Strangers yesterday, neighbours today! This project was motivated by a wish to enable asylum seekers and all persons who had been given international protection in Croatia to express their views and share their refugee and integration experience. We believe that it is possible to live together, in peace and coexistence. This campaign also served to raise awareness of the rights and needs of refugees across the local community.
Author	How those activities/services are helpful; how they are related to the protection and promotion of human rights?
Interviewee 5	See here: https://jrseurope.org/en/programme/social-inclusion/

Author	What is in your opinion necessary for full integration of persons granted international protection in Croatian society?
Interviewee 5	To train civil servants and develop the capacity of local and national authorities to cope with challenges related to refugees and migrants in order to establish a sustainable and long-term mechanism for preventing and combating racism. To provide assistance to local start-up initiatives and NGOs working on building solidarity between local communities and refugees and migrants. To ensure mutual learning about inter-culturalism within the local communities and local employers through sharing of best practices including interreligious and intercultural activities. To support coordination and cooperation between different stakeholders working on refugee and migrants issues from different sectors. To facilitate the development and exchange of best practices among the participating academic institutions. To provide access to education, the labor market and social services for refugees.
Author	Is there anything else that you would like to be included in my theses that are connected with the integration of persons granted international protection in Croatia?
Interviewee 5	/

ANNEX 6: Personal interview with CRP – Ivan Plavljanić

Interview led: Salam Al-Nidawi (Author)
Interviewed person: Ivan Plavljanić (Interviewee 6)
NGO: Civil Rights Project Sisak (CRP)
Date: 19.7.2020

Personal interview with CRP

Author	According to your organization, how would you describe the integration process in Croatia
Interviewee 6	CRP thinks that the integration process in Croatia is formally covered very well, which means that there are laws and regulations that cover the integration. However, the implementation of those laws and regulations is not very good.
Author	In your opinion what are the biggest obstacles for people granted international protection to effectively integrate into Croatian society?
Interviewee 6	CRP thinks that the biggest obstacles for people granted international protection (PGIP) are: - Relatively bad economic situation in Croatia, which is not attractive to PGIP for staying for longer period or permanently - Bad implementation of Laws, regulation and other plans and documents for PGIP - Lack of system for adequately learning of Croatian language, as the present system is not permanent enough, long enough, professional enough and is not individually orientated at all. - Lack of cooperation between relevant stakeholders, such as Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Social Welfare, local self-government units, NGOs, international organizations and others - Lack of systematic following and monitoring of integration processes of individuals
Author	What is your organization role in supporting/facilitating the integration process?

Interviewee 6	CRP Sisak is a NGO legal aid provider, registered with Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Interior.
Author	What kind of activities/service is your organization providing to support/facilitate the integration of persons granted international protection?
Interviewee 6	CRPs activities are: - Providing of legal aid, including legal advice, writing of all types of submissions, in court representation - Organization of workshops for PGIP in order to inform them on relevant rights and issues - Cooperation with other stakeholders on integration issues and process
Author	How those activities/services are helpful; how they are related to the protection and promotion of human rights?
Interviewee 6	Providing of legal aid is very helpful to PGIP because it directly protects rights of PGIP (for example appeals, lawsuits and complaints). Workshops are interactive and they directly promote human rights
Author	What is in your opinion necessary for full integration of persons granted international protection in Croatian society?
Interviewee 6	In CRPs opinion, it is necessary that the state, as well as PGIP have wish for integration and it is necessary to overcome the above stated main obstacles.
Author	Is there anything else that you would like to be included in my theses that are connected with the integration of persons granted international protection in Croatia?
Interviewee 6	CRP is available for further cooperation.

Title: Integration of persons under international protection in Croatia: between bureaucracy and meaningful inclusion

ABSTRACT: This paper analyses main obstacles and challenges in formal process of integration in Croatia. It also describes the role of main providers in integration process: states, institutions and local community. Certain discrepancies were found between buerocracy integration process and those in practice. Furthermore, the role of NGO's and local community in integrations process is emphasized. At the end, recommendations were given for achieving a more efficient and meaningful integration process in Croatia.

KEY WORDS:international protection, integration process, person under international protection, asylum seeker, local community, non-governmental organisation, refugee crisis