

RESPONSE BY REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Questionnaire on

Anti-Muslim hatred/ “Islamophobia” and the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief

1. Muslims within the state

According to the 2011 census, 1.47% percent (62.977) of the population is Muslim. Islamic community in Croatia is the only registered religious community in the Record of Religious Communities of the Republic of Croatia in accordance with the Law on the Legal Position of Religious Communities (LLPRC).

According to the Directorate for Immigration, Citizenship and Administrative Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Croatia, most asylum seekers and persons who have been granted international protection in Croatia, as well as temporary and permanent residents, including long-term residents are Muslims.

2. The Right to Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion or Belief

- a) Yes. The Republic of Croatia recognizes the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief of all persons regardless of one's race, ethnicity, gender, language, nationality, religion or belief. Article 14 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia (CRC) stipulates that everyone in the Republic of Croatia has rights and freedoms, regardless of his/her race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, education, social status or other characteristics. Article 40 of the Constitution stipulates that freedom of conscience and religion and free public expression of religion or other belief are guaranteed, while Article 41 of the Constitution stipulates that all religious communities are equal before the law and separated from the state. Religious communities are free, in accordance with the law, to publicly perform religious rites, establish schools, colleges, other institutes, social and charitable institutions and manage them, and in their activities they enjoy the protection and assistance of the state. In accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, freedoms and rights of individuals may only be restricted by law in order to protect the freedom and rights of other people and the legal order, public morals and health.

The Criminal Code prescribes in Article 127 the criminal offense of Violation of the Freedom of Thought and Expression, for which, with the imprisonment of up to one year, shall be punished anyone who denies or restricts freedom of speech or public expression, freedom of the press or other media or the free establishment of a media institution, or restrict the freedom of reporting, who unlawfully prevents the printing, sale or distribution of books, magazines, newspapers or other printed matter, or the production and

broadcasting of radio and television programs, news agency programs or the publication of other media content.

Article 130 of the Criminal Code prescribes the criminal offense of Violation of the Freedom of Religion, for which, with the imprisonment of up to one year shall be punished anyone who denies or restricts freedom of conscience and religion, public expression of religion or other belief, who denies to a religious community acting in accordance with the law the right to equality with other religious communities in the Republic of Croatia or denies or restricts its public performance of religious rites, establishment of schools, colleges, institutes, social or charitable institutions and managing them.

The Anti-Discrimination Law exempts from prohibition, inter alia, positive actions based on law with the aim to improve the status of religious minorities such as the Islamic community in Croatia.

Two international treaties; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which guarantees, inter alia, the freedom of religion (Article 18), and the European Convention also regulate the legal status of religious communities in the Republic of Croatia for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which also guarantees the freedom of religion (Article 9).

- b)** Republic of Croatia does not restrict the rights of Muslim (or any other group) to manifest their freedom of religion or belief. In general, according to Article 16 of the CRC, law may only restrict freedoms and rights in order to protect the freedoms and rights of others, the legal order, and public morals and health. According to Article 3 LLPRC in promoting religion and its other activities, a religious community shall not spread intolerance and prejudice against other religious communities and their believers or against any other citizen, and shall not hinder other religious communities or citizens, not having any religious beliefs, in freely professing their religion or any other convictions.
- i. Worship or assembly in connection with a religion or belief in public or in private, alone or in community with others is guaranteed.
 - ii. Writing, issuing and disseminating publications offline and online material related to rites, customs and teaching of Islam is guaranteed.
 - iii. Observance of practices related to the religious slaughter of animals in accordance with applicable law is allowed, importing of halal meat or observing dietary requirements mandated by religious beliefs is guaranteed.
 - iv. The constitutional guarantee of freedom to manifest one's religion implies free display of religious symbols by both religious communities and individuals, at school and work as well as in public and in identity documents.

- v. No, the Republic of Croatia does not restrict the right of Muslims to establish and register religious organisations, charities or humanitarian institutions. The Law on the Legal Status of Religious Communities (hereinafter: the Act) stipulates that, within the meaning of that Act, a church or religious community with a different name (hereinafter: religious community) is a community of natural persons exercising freedom of religion by equal public performance of religious rites and other manifestations of their religion entered in the Register of Religious Communities in the Republic of Croatia.

Religious communities independently and freely determine their internal organization, governing bodies, their hierarchy and competencies; bodies and persons representing the religious community and its organizational forms; the content and manner of manifestation of faith; maintaining ties with its headquarters and other religious communities; association with other religious communities and other issues of its activities in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia. In promoting religion and other activities, the religious community must not spread intolerance and prejudice towards other religious communities and their believers or other citizens. A religious community in promoting religion and other activities, must not impede other religious communities or citizens without a religious belief in the free public expression of religion or other belief in the promotion of religion and other activities. A religious community may not act with the content and manner of performing religious rites and other manifestations of religion that are contrary to the legal order, public morals or to the detriment of life and health or other rights and freedoms of its believers and other citizens.

Pursuant to the Act, the Ministry of Justice and Administration keeps the Register of Religious Communities in the Republic of Croatia. In addition to religious communities, their organizational forms requested by the religious community and communities of religious communities may be entered in the Register, under the conditions and in the manner prescribed by this Act for the registration of existing religious communities. Religious communities, their organizational forms and communities of religious communities are non-profit legal entities.

A religious community called the Islamic Community in Croatia was entered in the above-mentioned Register, and its organizational forms for which registration is requested, were entered in the Register as well. The Act stipulates that this Act does not prevent or restrict the establishment and operation of associations with or without legal personality established by natural persons for the purpose of exercising their religious beliefs and freedom of religion, and that these associations do not have the status of religious communities and cannot acquire and exercise the rights that religious communities have under the provisions of this Act or other laws.

The Act on Associations regulates, inter alia, establishment, legal status, operation, registration, financing, property, liability, status changes, supervision, cessation of existence of associations with the status of a legal entity, unless otherwise

provided by a special law. An association within the meaning of the said Act is any form of free and voluntary association of several natural or legal persons who, in order to protect their benefits or advocate for the protection of human rights and freedoms, environmental and nature protection and sustainable development, and for humanitarian, social, cultural, educational, scientific, sports, health, technical, informational, professional or other beliefs and goals that are not in conflict with the Constitution and the law, and without the intention of gaining profit or other economically assessable benefits, are subject to rules governing the structure and operation of this form of association.

Associations are entered in the Register of Associations of the Republic of Croatia at the counties, i.e. the City of Zagreb, according to the seat of the association. Therefore, in accordance with the Constitution, regulations governing the establishment and registration of religious organizations, charitable or humanitarian organizations in the Republic of Croatia apply equally to all citizens of the Republic of Croatia, regardless of their religious affiliation, including persons of the Islamic faith.

- vi. According to Article 2 of the LLPRC religious communities shall autonomously and freely establish their internal organization, management authorities (the hierarchy and competence thereof; the authorities and persons who represent a religious community and its organizational forms); the content and the manner of professing religion; the type of connection with central church authorities and other religious communities; the relationships with other religious communities; and such other issues relating to their activity, in conformity with the CRC.
- vii. Article 63 of the Constitution stipulates that parents shall bear responsibility for the upbringing, welfare, and education of their children, and shall have the right and freedom to make independent decisions concerning the upbringing of their children. Further, Republic of Croatia is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Article 13 paragraph 2 LLPRC empowers parents of students who are under 15 years, and students who are 15 and their parents, with signed joint statement to claim elective religious education of their denominations in public schools, in conformity with the special law and existing a common interest Agreement with the government of the Republic of Croatia (The Islamic Community in Croatia and the government of the Republic of Croatia signed a common interest agreement in 2003).
- viii. No, the Republic of Croatia does not restrict the right of Muslims to observe holidays or days of rest in accordance with the Islamic faith.

According to Article 3 of Holidays, Memorial Days and Non-Working Days Act, citizens of the Republic of Croatia who celebrate some different religious holidays have the right not to work on those dates (Muslims on the days of Ramadan Bayram and Kurban Bayram).

- ix. According to Article 2 of the LLPRC religious communities shall freely establish the type of connection with central church authorities and other religious communities; the relationships with other religious communities; and such other issues relating to their activity, in conformity with the CRC.
- x. There are no restrictions on freedom of movement either within the country and across borders including for purposes of learning and pilgrimage in accordance with the law.

c) According to Article 6 Agreement on common interest between Islamic community in Croatia and Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Islamic community in Croatia has the right to build mosques and mosque buildings, and to enlarge or renovate existing ones in subject to the conditions specified by law. The Islamic community in Croatia decides on the need to build a mosque building or masjid and chooses the location in agreement and in accordance with the decisions of the competent authorities of the Republic of Croatia.

e) Confessional religious instruction is reintroduced into Croatian public schools and kindergartens since 1991. The Agreement on common interest between Islamic community in Croatia and Government of the Republic of Croatia empower the community to provide elective instruction in its own confession in public schools and kindergartens in conformity with the applicable law.

Article 67 of the CRC provides that, subject to the conditions specified by law, the foundation of private schools and learning institutions shall be permitted. Article 11 of the LLPRC allows religious communities to found schools and institutions of higher learning, including religious schools and institutions, up to the highest level.

The Islamic community in Croatia established a madrasa in Zagreb, transforming it into an accredited gymnasium (Islamic secondary school (gymnasium) Dr. Ahmed Smajlovic). Article 15 Agreement on common interest between Islamic community in Croatia and Government of the Republic of Croatia stipulates that the community's accredited schools are entitled to financial support as provided for by Republic of Croatia legislation. Furthermore, the Ministry of science and education recognizes the diploma conferred by the Islamic community in Croatia founded secondary school.

3. Equality and Non-Discrimination

a) The Ministry of Justice and Administration, in accordance with the obligations arising from the Anti-Discrimination Act and the Protocol on the Conduct of Hate Crimes Cases, collects and consolidates data from the competent courts on cases in which those courts act.

In both cases (and in terms of discrimination and hate crimes), one of the grounds on which the data is segregated is also religion (belief). We do not separate the data further within that basis (hence what religion is in question), so we are not able to provide those data.

b) Article 125 of the Criminal Code prescribes the criminal offense of the Violation of Equality, which shall be punished by imprisonment for up to three years anyone who on the basis of difference in race, ethnicity, color, sex, language, religion, political or other belief, national or social origin, property, birth, education, social status, marital or family status, age, health condition, disability, genetic inheritance, expression of gender identity, sexual orientation or other characteristics denies, restricts or conditions another the right to acquire goods or receive services, the right to the pursuit of an activity, the right to employment and promotion, or who, on the basis of that distinction, grants to another privileges or benefits in respect of those rights, as well as who persecutes individuals or organizations for their commitment to equality.

Article 87 (21) of the Criminal Code defines a hate crime as a criminal offense committed on the grounds of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, language, disability, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity of another person. Such conduct will be taken as an aggravating circumstance if the Criminal Code does not explicitly prescribe a more severe punishment.

The commission of criminal offenses with a motive of hatred is prescribed by the Criminal Code as a qualifying circumstance in certain criminal offenses, and in connection with this a more severe sanction is imposed, as for example, in the criminal offense of bodily injury (Article 117 of the Criminal Code), serious bodily injury (Article 118 of the Criminal Code), especially serious bodily injury (Article 119 of the Criminal Code), aggravated murder (Article 111 of the Criminal Code), threat (Article 139 of the Criminal Code), etc. In other cases the circumstance that the crime was committed out of hatred should be taken as aggravating circumstance when sentencing.

The provisions of the Criminal Code relating to the criminal offense of Terrorism (Article 97 of the Criminal Code) and related criminal offenses are in line with the requirements of Directive (EU) 2017/541 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on combating terrorism and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA and amending Council Decision 2005/671/JHA. The criminal offenses in question are prescribed in the Criminal Code as *delicta communia*, from which it is clear that the perpetrator of these criminal offenses can be anyone (regardless of religious or ethnic affiliation).

The National Anti-discrimination Plan 2017-2022, and accompanying Anti-discrimination Action Plan 2017-2019 contains specific measures regarding prevention and fight against hate crime and hate speech, improvement of the system of data collection, organization of round tables and campaigns, monitoring of the implementation of the Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online, publication of annual data on cases of hate crime and records of support provided to hate crime victims. The Interdepartmental Hate Crimes Monitoring Working Group is active, which was established for the exchange of information among competent bodies and for planning efficient prevention and fight against hate crime.

c) In accordance with the Act on International and Temporary Protection, asylum seekers are entitled to health care, which includes emergency medical assistance, and necessary treatment of illnesses and serious mental disorders. With respect to education, minor asylum seekers are entitled to elementary and secondary education under the same conditions as Croatian citizens. With regard to employment, asylum seekers acquire the right to work after 9 months from the day

of lodging an application. In addition, asylum seekers are entitled to the provision of appropriate material reception conditions, which includes accommodation in the Reception Centre, food and clothing provided in kind, remuneration of the cost of public transport for the purpose of the procedure for the approval of international protection, and financial assistance.

Persons who have been granted international protection are entitled to health care pursuant to the regulations governing health insurance and health care of foreigners in the Republic of Croatia. As regards education, they are entitled to elementary, secondary and higher education under the same conditions as Croatian citizens. With regard to employment, they are entitled to work without a residence permit or a work registration certificate. As regards accommodation, this category of persons are entitled to free of charge accommodation if they do not possess financial resources or things of significant value for the period of two years. After the end of this period, they are entitled to accommodation pursuant to the regulations governing the domain of social welfare of Croatian citizens. As already explained, there were no cases of discrimination against Muslims. According to the Croatian Constitution, all individuals are equal regardless of their religion or belief.

d) No. Applicants for international protection or citizenship are treated equally (see also answers under b) and c).

e) See answer under d). Furthermore, asylum is granted to all asylum seekers who are outside the country of their nationality or habitual residence and have a well-founded fear of persecution owing to their race, religion, political opinion, nationality or affiliation to a certain social group such as LGBT persons and others.

The procedure of recognising the personal circumstances of applicants is conducted continuously by specially trained police officers, employees of the Ministry of the Interior and other competent bodies, from the moment of the expression of intention to apply for international protection until the decision on the application is served. In exercising all the rights, the needs of asylum seekers who require special procedural and/or reception guarantees are taken into consideration.

f) Please refer to answer 3.a)

g) Condemnation of hate speech in public space and social networks and strengthening prevention activities (through public campaigns, media literacy) is clearly emphasized in the Government's programme for 2020-2024. Hate speech is covered by Article 325 of the Croatian Criminal Code - criminal act of public incitement to hatred or violence. All individuals, including politicians, could be charged for that criminal act.

In 2018, in marking the International Human Rights Day and the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the public meeting on "Hate Speech in a Public Space" was held with a focus on hate speech in political space. Speakers from the Croatian Parliament, the Council for National Minorities and the Faculty of Law of the University of Zagreb gave a presentation at the public gathering. Also, recommendations for the suppression of hate speech in political space were presented to the members of the Parliament.

h) All cases of hate crimes or hate speech committed on the Internet or social networks and reported to the police are subjected to criminal investigation but there is no special legislation in place for hate crimes or hate speech against Muslims.

Electronic Media Act in Article 12. Paragraph 2. prescribes following: In audio and/or audiovisual services it shall be prohibited to promote, favor the promotion of and spreading of hatred or discrimination based on race or ethnic affiliation or color, language, religion, political or other belief national or social origin, property, trade union membership, education, social status, marital or family status, age, health condition, disability, genetic heritage, native identity, expression or sexual orientation, as well as anti- Semitism and xenophobia, ideas of the fascist, nationalist, communist and other totalitarian regimes.

i) Article 325 of the Criminal Code prescribes the criminal offense of Public Incitement to Violence and Hatred, for which a sentence of up to three years' imprisonment shall be imposed on anyone who, through the press, radio, television, computer system or network, at a public gathering or otherwise, publicly incites or makes available to the public leaflets, pictures or other materials calling for violence or hatred against a group of people or a member of a group because of their racial, religious, national or ethnic origin, language, origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, sexual identity, disability or any other characteristics. An attempt to commit this criminal offense is also punishable. Whoever organizes or leads a group of three or more persons to commit this offense shall be punished by imprisonment for a term between six months and five years. Whoever participates in such an association shall be punished by imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year. Whoever publicly approves, denies or significantly diminishes the crime of genocide, crime of aggression, crime against humanity or war crime, directed against a group of people or a member of a group because of their racial, religious, national or ethnic origin, origin or color, in a manner appropriate to incite violence or hatred against such a group or members of that group, shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years. An attempt to commit such an offense shall be punishable. Regarding hate crime, we refer to answer 3.b).

The Criminal Code also prescribes the criminal offense of violation of equality, which provides for a prison sentence of up to three years for anyone who persecutes individuals or organizations for their commitment to the equality of people. However, there is no special legislation for Muslims.

j) There is no special strategy for violent extremism. The Croatian National Strategy for the Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism addresses the issues of extremism but there is no definition of violent extremism. The National Strategy for the Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism is based on human rights law.

k) i. There is a special mechanism for recording hate crimes called Track Record. That mechanism allows the police and the public prosecutor to follow each case from the first report to the police to a final court decision. However, this mechanism is not related to anti-Muslim hate crimes only, it is established for all hate crimes. Regarding the statistics, there has been no rise in

hate crimes against Muslims. We have approximately one or two hate crimes against Muslims a year.

Moreover, there is an effective mechanism for monitoring and well-established cooperation between governmental bodies in monitoring and data collection on hate crime in general. Government's Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities has been designated as the central body in the Republic of Croatia for collecting, compiling and publishing data on hate crimes, and cooperating with civil society organizations and international organizations working in this field, such as OSCE and its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

ii. Please refer to answer 3.a)

iii. Criminal Procedure Act, as one of the principles of criminal procedure, prohibits discrimination on a number of grounds such as race, ethnicity, language, religion, political or other belief, national or social origin.

Introducing the institute of individual victim assessment in accordance with Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA, the criminal procedure law of the Republic of Croatia has ensured individual access of the competent bodies, especially towards the victims of hate crimes. The aim of the individual victim assessment is to determine whether there is a risk of secondary and repeated victimization and the risk of intimidation and retaliation during criminal proceedings. If such a risk exists, what specific measures should be applied (special way of questioning, use of communication technologies to avoid visual contact with perpetrator and other measures prescribed by law). In Croatia, the central body for coordination of development of victim and witness support system is the Service for Victim and Witness Support within the Ministry of Justice and Public Administration.

The Service Provides information and support to victims and witnesses, such as: information about the rights in written form (informative letter) sent to victims and witnesses that are summoned over the mutual international legal assistance (Croatian citizens who are summoned to testify abroad and foreign witnesses summoned to testify in Croatia). It provides information and psychological support over the phone, it refers victims and witnesses to other relevant services; it provides logistical support, transportation, police escort and protection, hotel accommodation as well as all the necessary information and support to victims and witnesses in war crime cases. Also, the mentioned Service provides information to victims about the release of the offender from the prison and provides compensation to victims according the Crime Victims Compensation Act.

Victim and Witness Support Offices operate at the 7 courts (County courts in Zagreb, Osijek, Sisak, Vukovar, Zadar, Split i Rijeka). They provide emotional support, practical information and information about rights to victims and witnesses of all types of crimes. They provide support

also at Municipal and Misdemeanor (minor offence) courts. At all courts, they provide support from the investigation phase until the end of court procedure.

Regarding the financial support to Civil Society Organisation, financial support and monitoring of the work of the National Call Centre for Victims of Crime NPC - 116 006, is organized in cooperation of Ministry of Justice and Public Administration and its Victim and Witness Support Service (relating to the Commission Decision 2007/116/EC, on reserving the national numbering range beginning with '116' for harmonized numbers for harmonized services of social value). It is a toll-free number which provides emotional support, information about the rights of victims of crimes and misdemeanors, practical information to victims, witnesses and their family members, referral to relevant civil society organizations and institutions, assistance in completing the request form for compensation. The service is available in both, English and Croatian.

Furthermore, financial support is provided to NGO's victim support network "Network of support and cooperation for victims and witnesses of crimes", which provides support to victims and witnesses of crimes and misdemeanors. Organizations involved in the Network provide information on rights, emotional support, psychological and legal counseling and, as a person of trust, provide escort to competent courts and other relevant institutions.

iv. No particular security is provided for Muslim schools. There was only one case of spraying graffiti on a mosque and no other cases of attacks on Muslim places of worship.

4. State practices to promote tolerance and understanding, including with private and public actors

a) The Government's Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities and the Judicial Academy carried out set of "Hate Crimes and Hate Speech" workshops for members of judiciary, police, prosecuting authorities and civil society organizations. The workshops included European Court's case law regarding hate crimes. First sets of workshops were carried out in 2018 for 24 attendees. In 2019, a second round of workshops were carried out for 109 participants. These workshops are also scheduled to be held during 2021.

Moreover, in order to increase knowledge and raise the awareness of police officers in the field of discrimination and various forms of racism and respect of fundamental human rights, the Police Academy, which is the only institution responsible for police education on all levels in the Republic of Croatia, has been continuously organizing police education on various levels since 2006. More specifically, these issues have been incorporated in the regular programmes of the Police College, Police School "Josip Jovic" which implements the Adult Education Program for the Profession of Police Officer, and in various specialized seminars, courses and trainings. Throughout the year, additional activities and trainings are carried out in the form of workshops or participation of Police Academy experts in trainings or study visits, which are not continuous, but are certainly present on an annual basis, and their intensity depends on various projects of civil society organizations or other ministries.

b) In accordance with the principles of neutrality of the Croatian Constitution towards religion or belief and separation of religious communities and the state with proclaimed selective cooperation (Article 41 CRC), the Government of the Republic of Croatia is fostering interfaith and intersocial dialogue in order to promote peace and stability. The existing model „separation with cooperatin“ contributes on the field of providing education on diversity, tolerance and interreligious dialogue. Religious communities in Croatia are organized in World Conference Religions for Peace, which part is also the Islamic community in Croatia.

In the Program of the Government of the Republic of Croatia for the period from 2020 to 2024, one of the priority areas is the protection of the rights of national minorities. Among other rights, members of national minorities are guaranteed the right to conscience and religion and the free public expression of religion or other conditions. This is further strengthened through Operational Program for National Minorities, successfully implemented in 2017-2020, while a new one for the period 2021-2027 is being finalized.

The Government of the Republic of Croatia has concluded 6 agreements on issues of common interest with religious communities related to national minorities (Serbian Orthodox Church in Croatia, Islamic Community in Croatia, Bulgarian Orthodox Church in Croatia, Macedonian Orthodox Church in Croatia, Coordination of Jewish Communities in Croatia and Jewish religious community "Bet Israel" in Croatia). Financial resources provided to religious communities are regularly provided from the state budget.

Part of the Government's Program is also aimed at improving the activities of associations of national minorities by improving the legislative framework and by providing financial resources to minority associations in order to protect and promote cultural, national, linguistic and religious identity of persons belonging to national minorities. Associations of national minorities within their programs and projects of financial support for the maintenance of religious facilities of national minorities, and through joint cooperation with minority religious communities participate in the celebration of religious holidays and carry out other activities aimed at strengthening interreligious dialogue and religious tolerance.

Significant funds are annually allocated from the state budget through the Government Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities for the financing of the association of national minorities, with a tendency of constant growth. Thus, in 2015, HRK 17,398,000.00 was allocated to roof associations of national minorities, in 2016 HRK 14,435,000.00; in 2017 HRK 22,805,000.00; in 2018 HRK 40,500,000.00 and in 2019 HRK 55,000,000.00.

Finally, the Ministry of the Interior is strongly engaged in the integration process into Croatian society of persons who have been granted international protection. As a good example of the development and construction of an inclusive society, we would like to highlight successful cooperation with the Islamic community through the project "New Neighbours - Inclusion of Persons with Granted Protection in Croatian Society⁴⁴, between the Ministry of the Interior and the Centre for the Culture of Dialogue (CKD), which was financed by EU funds. The aim of the project is to improve living conditions and raise the quality of life of refugees and foreigners under subsidiary protection as well as their family members who live in Croatia. The vast majority of recognized refugees and foreigners under subsidiary protection in Croatia are Muslims. Throughout the project, it is planned to raise awareness and public information about specificities of this vulnerable group by working closely with local communities and media

representatives. By implementing comprehensive inclusion activities in cooperation with the Islamic community in a local environment, the Ministry of the Interior enables further economic, social and multicultural development of Croatian society.

c) Tackling extremism: The State identifies all individuals or groups that are at risk of radicalization and prepares preventive measures accordingly.

d) According to Article 19 LLPRC registered religious communities, such as the Islamic community in Croatia, may perform the activity of public communication in accordance with special regulations. Further, such religious communities have the right of access to the means of public communication owned by the Republic of Croatia in accordance with the agreement they conclude with legal entities performing the activity of public communication.

There is a regulation (agreement) signed in 2005, between the Croatian public broadcasting company (HRT) and religious communities (including the Islamic community in Croatia) on the preparation and broadcasting of programs and transmittance, which ensures media exposure to the communities, including promotion of equal and non-discriminatory access to Croatian public broadcasting service.”

e) Violation of Article 12. Paragraph 2. Electronic Media Act is also punishable under Article 325 of the Criminal Code.