



CROATIA

COUNTRY PROFILE

DRIM

Danube Region
Information
Platform for
Economic
Integration of
Migrants

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SHORT INTRODUCTION

Since Croatia attained independence in 1991, over the course of the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia, state migration policies were regulated by the Act on Foreigners, until 2007 when the broader Migration Policy was adopted. The Migration Policy documents have not been in effect since 2015; the last one was adopted in 2013, in the year of Croatia's accession to the EU. Despite humanitarian assistance to more than half a million refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo, Croatian asylum legislation was enacted as late as 2004, while the first Action Plan for Removing Obstacles in Exercising Individual Rights in the Area of the Integration of Foreigners was implemented only between 2013 and 2015. Currently, the state has no action plan for integration, while a new one, targeting only refugees, is in the preparatory phase.

According to the 2011 census, Croatia has a population of 4,284,889¹ but the State Agency of Statistics reported 4,210,700² for the end of 2015. On 31 December 2014, the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) recorded 35,382 foreigners³ residing in Croatia. Out of that, 23,449 were third-country nationals (TCNs) (66%); most of them from Bosnia and Herzegovina (11,410 or 49%), Serbia (3,183 or 13.5%), Kosovo (1,945 or 8.3%) and Macedonia (1,879 or 8%). According to the UNHCR, from July 2004 to December 2014, the total number of asylum seekers in Croatia was 6,966. During that time, 275 persons were granted international protection (192 asylum statuses were granted mostly to individuals from Afghanistan, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Iraq and Ukraine, and 83 subsidiary protection statuses were granted mostly to individuals from Syria, Somalia and Afghanistan)⁴.

¹ While the MOI counted 35,490 persons as foreigners in 2011, the national census in that year counted 25,413 persons as foreigners, which again points to disparities in the data and methodology of these two instances. (http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv/censuses/census2011/results/htm/H01_01_06/h01_01_06_RH.html),

² State Agency for Statistics www.dzs.hr

³ Ministry of the Interior statistics (2015), available at: <http://www.mup.hr/main.aspx?id=172024>

⁴ Statistical data obtained upon request from UNHCR Croatia.

TABLE WITH BASIC INFORMATION

Capital: Zagreb
Official language(s): Croatian
Population (end of year 2016): 4,210,700
Foreigners as percentage of total population (end of year 2014): Under 1%
Percentage of foreigners in the labour force (2016): from 29 April to 31 December, 1,942 work permits and stays were granted under official quota rules; 352 were extended; 804 permits and stays were granted beyond quota decisions, and 1,003 permits for new employment beyond quota in all of 2016⁵. According to the Croatian Employment Agency, at the end of 2016, there were 493 persons⁶ of foreign background in the labour market.⁷
Unemployment rate (2016): 15%
Degree of urbanisation, number of cities over 100,000 inhabitants: 5 cities (Zagreb, Zadar, Split, Osijek, Rijeka)
Country's accession to the EU and the Schengen Area: EU 1 July 2013, negotiations pending for Schengen

⁵ Ministry of the Interior <http://stari.mup.hr/UserDocImages/Dokumenti/stranci/statistika/2017/Sluzba%20za%20odnose%20s%20javnošću-kvota%202016..pdf>

⁶ According to the statistics of the Croatian Employment Service – www.hzz.hr.

⁷ How statistics are managed by the Croatian Employment Agency is not clear. The Ministry of the Interior manages quota statistics. That is the highest number of foreigners employed. The Croatian Employment Agency refers to this number as the total number of foreigners employed beyond quotas, although how statistics are collected is not quite clear.

THE MIGRANT POPULATION

On 31 December 2014, the Ministry of the Interior recorded 35,382 foreigners⁸ residing in Croatia. The proportion of foreigners in the population is 0.8%; 0.2% of these are EU citizens and 0.6% non-EU⁹ citizens.

Among these, 23,449 were third-country citizens (66% of all foreigner citizens), most of them were citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina (11,410 or 49%), Serbia (3,183 or 13.5%), Kosovo (1,945 or 8.3%) and Macedonia (1,879 or 8%). From 2004 to December 2016, the total number of asylum seekers in Croatia was 7,216. Out of that, 275 (unofficially 298) persons were granted international protection. 192 persons received asylum status (most were from Afghanistan, Syria, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Iraq and Nigeria) and 83 were granted subsidiary protection status (mostly individuals from Syria, Somalia and Afghanistan).¹⁰

According to the UN DATA from 2014, there are 584,947 foreign-born persons in Croatia¹¹. According to the UNHCR's figures for the 2000-2015 period, there were 2,873 stateless persons¹², 8,107 third-country nationals with permanent residence permits¹³, 6,061 citizens of third countries with temporary residence permits¹⁴, 5,147 EEA citizens with permanent residence permits¹⁵, and 3,155 family members of citizens of EEA and Croatian citizens with permanent residence permits in Croatia.¹⁶

Most foreigners in Croatia from EU countries are nationals of Slovenia, Germany, Italy, Austria, UK, Hungary, France, Poland, Romania and the Netherlands, whereas those from non-EU countries mostly come from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia, China, Russia, USA, Ukraine, Montenegro and Australia. Data on the age, sex and educational structures of foreigners is not available publicly from Croatian institutions, yet EUROSTAT offers some statistics.¹⁷ Most asylum seekers and refugees since 2000 come from Afghanistan, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Iraq, Ukraine, Syria and Somalia¹⁸.

The areas, cities with marked concentrations of migrants/foreigners in the country are the capital city of Zagreb and the coastal town of Rijeka.

⁸ Ministry of the Interior's statistics (2015), available at: <http://www.mup.hr/main.aspx?id=172024>

⁹ EU citizens. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7113991/3-18122015-BP-EN.pdf/d682df12-8a77-46a5-aaa9-58a00a8ee73e>

¹⁰ UNHCR statistics (2014) (available at: <http://unhcr.hr/>) and Ministry of the Interior's statistics (2015), available at: <http://www.mup.hr/main.aspx?id=188055>

¹¹ UN Data (2014) available at: <http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?d=POP&f=tableCode%3A44>

¹² http://popstats.unhcr.org/en/persons_of_concern

¹³ http://stari.mup.hr/UserDocImages/Dokumenti/stranci/statistika/2017/SB_trece_zemlje_31_12_2016.pdf

¹⁴ http://stari.mup.hr/UserDocImages/Dokumenti/stranci/statistika/2017/PB_trece_zemlje_31_12_2016.pdf

¹⁵ http://stari.mup.hr/UserDocImages/Dokumenti/stranci/statistika/2017/SB_EGP_31_12_2016.pdf

¹⁶ http://stari.mup.hr/UserDocImages/Dokumenti/stranci/statistika/2017/SB_obitelji_31_12_2016.pdf

¹⁷ http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=miqr_pop1ctz&lang=en

¹⁸ Croatia has started granting international protection in 2004 when the Asylum Act was enforced.

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According to the available statistics of the Ministry of the Interior¹⁹, the following irregular flows were documented – in 2009: 1,510, in 2010: 1,916, in 2011: 3,400, in 2012: 6,839, and in 2013: 4,373. 351 cases of irregular crossings of the state border were recorded for 2014 and 2015.²⁰ The data on the age, sex and educational structure of the apprehended irregular migrants is not available.

622 foreign students were registered for temporary stay in 2016 according to the statistics as of 31 December 2016.²¹

¹⁹ IOM (2014) Assessment Report, available at: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/sar_croatia.pdf

²⁰ https://www.mup.hr/UserDocImages/PU_ZG/statistika/Izvjescje%202015.pdf

²¹ http://stari.mup.hr/UserDocImages/Dokumenti/stranci/statistika/2017/PB_trece_zemlje_31_12_2016.pdf

LABOUR MIGRANT POPULATION

According to the Croatian Employment Service, the largest number of work permits for foreigners in the period from 1994 to 2014 was granted to the citizens of the former Yugoslav republics: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and Slovenia.

Economic sectors, professions and occupations most often occupied by foreign workers (including posted or seasonal workers) are construction, ship-building, tourism and catering, culture, transportation, healthcare, science and education, the processing industry and agriculture. Each year the state extends a certain number of work permits issued in previous years, but also establishes a new quota for the employment of foreigners.

Table 1: Quota for the employment of foreigners from 2010 to 2014²²

Sector	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Construction	300	4	4	/	/
Ship Building	243	/	614	/	/
Tourism and Catering	138	228	145	105	100
Culture	64	53	53	60	31
Transportation	28	110	49	6	7
Healthcare	34	25	25	15	36
Science and Education	38	69	64	30	30
Processing Industry	33	62	34	53	15
Agriculture	50	/	/	20	20

Areas with the highest concentrations of foreign workers are as follows: Zagreb, Rijeka, and Istria (county).

²² Quota for employment per year

[1] http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2009_12_150_3663.html

[2] <http://www.propisi.hr/print.php?id=10877>

[3] http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2012_02_25_641.html

[4] <http://www.glas-slavonije.hr/185101/1/U-2013-strancima-upola-manje-dozvola-za-rad>

[5] http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeni/2014_12_151_2835.html

POLICIES AND APPROACHES TO (LABOUR) MIGRANTS

The last valid national documents that referred to migration and integration policies were the [Migration Policy of the Republic of Croatia for the Period from 2013 to 2015](#) and the [Action Plan for Removing Obstacles in Exercising Individual Rights in the Area of the Integration of Foreigners for the Period from 2013 to 2015](#). After 2015, the Government of Croatia has not created a new migration policy, claiming that such a national policy is not necessary due to the existence of the Act on International and Temporary Protection. A [New Action Plan for the Integration of Persons Granted International Protection](#) is to be adopted in the first half of 2017. The labour of migrants is regulated only through a quota system based on an annual estimation of labour needs and the number of migrants to be granted work permits and residence in relation to that.

OVERVIEW OF INFORMATION SERVICES FOR MIGRANTS

In Croatia, the information and support services and various opportunities for migrants are very limited. Most of the information service providers are NGOs and most of them provide services for refugees. [Centre for Peace Studies](#) supports integration programmes for refugees and other migrants in terms of language courses, employability and social entrepreneurship programmes, other aspects of daily integration, and free legal aid. The [Croatian Law Centre](#) and [Information Legal Centre](#) provide free legal aid (mostly for refugees). The [Impact Hub Zagreb](#) offers a space and support for the development of entrepreneurial ideas for migrants. As for public spaces and Internet rooms, one migrant-friendly space is the [net culture club m.a.m.a.](#) and the book club [Booksa](#). Croatia has two migrant civic organizations, one of which is the NGO [DAH - Association of Africans Living in Croatia](#), supporting African migrants with legal aid, socio-cultural integration and awareness-raising activities. The other one is the social enterprise [Cooperative for Intercultural Cooperation 'Taste of Home'](#) employing refugees and other migrants, and promoting a model of cooperative entrepreneurship as a model of the socio-economic emancipation of migrants and other vulnerable groups. Among governmental services, the [Croatian Employment Agency](#) offers support to registered job seekers and unemployed persons, and runs an online service for supporting employment mobility - [EURES](#). Online information can be accessed through the page of the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#) (regulations on the stay and work of foreigners), [Ministry of Labour and Pension](#) (workers' rights), [Ministry of Entrepreneurship and Crafts](#) (entrepreneurship possibilities and incentives). Most of the information is published in Croatian only. The number of online resources for migrants is limited as well. The Centre for Peace Studies has published a legal analysis titled [An Overview of Legal and Institutional Framework for Protection of Foreigners in Croatia](#), as well as the booklet [Guide through Socio-economic Rights of Refugees](#), available in Croatian, English, Arabic, Farsi, Urdu, Turkish and French.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS (STATE/INTERNATIONAL/NGO SECTOR)

- Croatian Employment Agency – EURES portal for work mobility, <https://ec.europa.eu/eures/public/hr/homepage>
- State Office for Croats Abroad, <http://www.hrvtiizvanrh.hr/en>
- Ministry of Demographics, Social Policy and Youth, <http://www.mspm.hr>
- Teachers Training Agency, <http://www.azoo.hr>
- Information Centre at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, <http://www.ffzg.unizg.hr/orijentacija/mi-smo/informativni-centar/>
- Organization for Workers' Initiative and Democratization OWD, <http://www.brid.coop>
- Child, Adolescent and Family Centre Modus of the Society for Psychological Assistance, <http://www.srcro.eu>
- Croatian Red Cross, <http://www.hck.hr/en>
- Roda – Parents in Action, <http://www.roda.hr>
- Rehabilitation Centre for Stress and Trauma, <http://rctzg.hr/-/en/>
- Croatian Law Centre, <http://www.hpc.hr>
- Legal Aid Clinique, <http://klinika.pravo.unizg.hr>
- Centre for Peace Studies, <http://www.cms.hr>
- Islamic Community of Croatia, <http://islamska-zajednica.hr>
- Tourist Board of Zagreb, <http://www.infozagreb.hr/&lang=en>
- Portal for study in Croatia, <http://studentski.hr>

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