

## **Response of the Croatian Authorities regarding the Letter of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation**

### **1. Has your country been affected by forced displacement?**

**Please provide figures, the underlying reasons for forced displacement, the nationalities of those forcibly displaced and the approximate length of displacement.**

**Please explain how your Government's national strategy and /or reception policy on water and sanitation take account of the needs of forcibly displaced persons.**

Croatia was affected by forced displacement. During 2017. Croatia received 1887 seekers for international protection.

The underlying reasons for forced displacement is armed conflict, persecution, terrorism, human rights violation and abuses, violence, economic grounds and the combination of these factors.

Listed below is number of asylum seekers by top ten nationalities:

<b>NUMBER OD ASYLUM SEKKERS DURING 2017 TOP TEN NATIONALITIES</b>	
AFGHANISTAN	617
PAKISTAN	255
SYRIA	215
TURKEY	193
ALGERIA	100
IRAN	92
IRAQ	56
BANGLADESH	44
MOROCCO	43
LIBYA	38
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1653</b>

Croatian reception policy on water and sanitation take account the needs of forcibly displaced persons. In Croatia all applicants for asylum are placed in Reception centres for asylum seekers where they have all material reception conditions secured, including access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

Approximate length of staying in Croatia is 3 months, only during 2017. 77 % of asylum seekers left our territory before the adoption of a decision regarding their request.

### **2. What concrete measures has your Government taken to ensure that, during emergency situations, forcibly displaced persons have access to sufficient, safe,**

## **accessible and acceptable water and sanitation services in a non-discriminatory way?**

During emergency situations, Ministry of the Interior secures access to sufficient, safe, accessible and acceptable water and sanitation services in a non-discriminatory way, by respecting their right to privacy, separating men and women sanitation services and securing physically accessible sufficient number of sanitation services.

Access to resources is not conditioned by gender.

## **3. How do these measures take into account the special needs of children (often separated and unaccompanied), pregnant women, girls, persons with disabilities, chronically ill persons and older persons?**

During the refugee crisis in regards to the protection of unaccompanied children and other vulnerable groups all actions of professional services and volunteers were carried out in the best interest of children and vulnerable groups. When accommodating unaccompanied child or providing accommodation to asylum seekers in a social welfare institution or other adequate accommodation in accordance with the laws of the Republic of Croatia, as well as while come upon vulnerable groups in the territory of the Republic of Croatia, the basic condition, in particular the hygiene care of children, young and vulnerable groups and access to its infrastructure (water and sanitation) are secured as well as to Croatian citizens.

Unaccompanied children are placed in state child care institutions, which take into account the special needs of children and are equipped with adequate and accessible sanitation services.

The guardian appointed by the Center for Social Welfare takes care of the child's best interests and represents the child throughout the asylum procedure.

Pregnant women, girls, persons with disabilities, chronically ill persons and older persons placed in Reception centres have secured access to accommodation, food, health, education and other specific services required (medical, rehabilitation, etc).

## **4. How does your Government ensure that local and regional authorities provide emergency access to water and sanitation to forcibly displaced persons in line with international human rights law?**

Croatian Government, especially Ministry of the Interior cooperates with local and regional authorities, in providing emergency access to water and sanitation to forcibly displaced persons in line with international human rights law.

During emergency situations, Ministry of the Interior cooperates with Ministry of Defense and State Office for Protection and Rescue. Croatia has good practise and experience from 2015 year of Europe migration crisis in ensuring emergency access to water and sanitation to forcibly displaced persons when 555.700 refugees passed through our territory. In 2015 and 2016 alone, more than 2.5 million people applied for asylum in the EU. During the migration crisis Croatian Government cooperated with many national and international organizations and NGO's in providing emergency access to water and sanitation.

For example, during the crisis local authorities in Zagreb had secured accomodation for 2600 asylum seekers with basic aid such as food, blankets, and medical care.

Temporary camps were set up in Slavonski Brod, Opatovac, Čepin and Beli Manastir with cooperation from regional authorities.

**5. Please identify and share examples of challenges your Government has faced in ensuring the human rights to water and sanitation by forcibly displaced persons during emergency situations.**

During emergency situations, Croatian Government in cooperation with Ministry of Defense has secured camps with access to water and sanitation and all other necessary resources to forcibly displaced persons with numerous volunteers working in the camps to provide aid, comfort and informations.

**6. In situations of forced displacement across borders, what are the water and sanitation service standards that your Government applies to refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in a vulnerable situation while *en route*, at borders and at reception?**

**If they are subject to different treatment from the citizens or between themselves, please provide details of the national legal and policy frameworks that sustain your Government's position.**

While *en route*, at borders and at reception, Croatian Government in cooperation with Croatian Red Cross and other NGO's dealing with the protection of human rights applies sufficient, safe, accessible and acceptable water and sanitation services standards to refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in a vulnerable situation.

Forcibly displaced persons have the same treatment as the citizens of Croatia regarding the water and sanitation service standards.

**7. How has the arrival of forcibly displaced persons affected the current provision of water and sanitation services to local communities/host communities (as applicable)?**

The arrival of forcibly displaced persons did not affect the current provision of water and sanitation services to local communities/host communities.