

# **Report on the Application of the Convention Against Discrimination in Education**

## ***Preschool and Primary Education***

*Which legal provisions at the state level govern the prevention of discrimination in education?*

Article 14 of the Croatian Constitution stipulates that everyone in the Republic of Croatia shall enjoy rights and freedoms regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, education, social status or other characteristics. According to the provisions of Article 64 of the Constitution, the parents are obliged to raise, support and educate their children and have the right and freedom to decide independently on the upbringing of their children. Parents are responsible for ensuring the child's right to full and harmonious development of his personality, while physically and mentally handicapped and socially neglected children shall be entitled to special care, education and welfare. Pursuant to Article 66 of the Constitution, education in Croatia is available to everyone under equal conditions, according to their abilities.

From 2006 to 2008 primary education was conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Primary Education Act and other regulations. The goal of primary education was:

- To encourage students' interest and develop independence in learning and problem solving, to promote creativity, moral awareness, aesthetic tastes and criteria, self-confidence and responsibility towards self and nature, to raise social, economic and political awareness, tolerance and the ability of cooperation, respect for human rights, achievements and aspirations;
- To teach literacy, communication, calculation, scientific and technological principles, critical observation, rational discussion, understanding the world they live in and understand the interdependence of people and nature, individuals and nations.

In 2008 the Act on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (Official Gazette 87/08) was passed and in 2009, 2010 and 2011 Amendments to the Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (Official Gazette 87/08, 86/09, 92/10, 105/10 and 90/11) were adopted.

The objectives and principles of education are laid down in Article 4 of the Act on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools. Those objectives are:

1. Provide a systematic way of teaching students, to encourage and promote their intellectual, physical, aesthetic, social, moral and spiritual development in accordance with their abilities and preferences,
2. To develop an awareness of nationality, preservation of historical and cultural heritage and national identity
3. To bring up and educate students in accordance with the general cultural and civilisational values, human rights and the rights of children, to enable them to live in a multicultural world, to respect diversity and tolerance and to actively and responsibly participate in the democratic development of the society,
4. To provide students with basic (general education) and professional competence to enable them to live and work in a changing socio-cultural context according to the requirements of market economy, modern information and communication technologies and scientific knowledge and achievements
5. To train students for lifelong learning

The principles of education in primary and secondary education are:

1. Primary education is compulsory for all students in the Republic of Croatia.
2. Education in elementary and secondary schools is based on equality of educational opportunities for all students according to their abilities.
3. Education and teaching in schools is based on high quality education and training of all those directly involved in educational activities - teachers, professors, teacher assistants, principals and other employees.
4. Activities in schools are based on the evaluation of all components of education, teaching and school self-evaluation of those directly and indirectly involved in educational activities in schools, in order to achieve the highest quality of national education and educational standards.
5. Educational and teaching activities in schools are based on the autonomy of planning and organization, and the freedom of pedagogical and methodological work under the guidelines of the Croatian National Educational Standard and in line with the national curriculum, syllabus and national educational standards.
6. The acquisition of basic education is the foundation for the vertical and horizontal mobility in the education system in Croatia.
7. Education in schools is based on decentralization in terms of increased authority and responsibilities on local and regional level.
8. Educational and teaching activities in schools are based on partnership.

In order that all children should have equal rights and opportunities for primary education, in accordance with legal regulations related to primary education before 2008 and today by the applicable law, basic education is conducted through regular and alternative programs that provide education for special needs students (students with disabilities and gifted students), students who are being treated in medical institutions, but there is also the possibility of organizing the teaching at home, for students who due to their serious mobility problems or chronic illness cannot attend classes in elementary school.

In accordance with Art. 7 of the Act on Education in Elementary and Secondary Schools and according Law on Education in the Language and Script of National Minorities and based on other regulations classes for minorities are implemented in primary schools in the language and script of national minorities by the Model A, B and C.

In accordance with Article 42 of the Act on Education in Primary and Secondary schools, primary schools are obliged to provide special assistance to students who do not know or are not familiar enough with the Croatian language. The above provision is in accordance with the provisions of Article 43 paragraphs 2 - 10 of the Act. These paragraphs specify that the school shall organize individual and collective forms of direct educational and teaching activities for students who not speak Croatian or are not familiar enough with the Croatian language in order to enable them to effectively overcome the language barrier and to compensate their insufficient knowledge in certain subjects. For such students the school may arrange preparatory or supplementary courses. Preparatory courses are designed for students with insufficient knowledge of the Croatian language and involves intensive study of the

Croatian language during a maximum of one school year, and is implemented by a separate program and organized in a school defined for such purpose by the county office or city office. While attending preparatory classes, the student can attend to a lesser extent regular classes in the school where he/she is enrolled. He/she can attend subjects in whom poor knowledge of Croatian language is not a significant barrier for attending the class.

On the other hand, supplementary classes are organized in subjects for which there is a need, and students are attending them along with attendance in regular classes.

The schools plan the amount of preparatory and supplementary teaching in accordance with real needs and the prior approval of the Ministry.

Article 58 Paragraph 3 Line 5 of the Act on Education in Primary and Secondary Education stipulates that the house rules provide for the safety and protection of socially unacceptable behaviour, discrimination, hostility and violence, and all primary schools are obliged to take care of children and their employees workers who must not be discriminated on whatever basis.

*Is primary education free and, if so, regulated by what law?*

Article 66 of the Croatian Constitution provides that compulsory education is free.

3. With what difficulties have you encountered in the implementation of free primary education for all?
4. What measures are taken to ensure the quality of education was at the equal level in all educational institutions of the same level?

To ensure the same quality of education and teaching in all primary schools in Croatia, the State Education and Teaching Standards for Elementary Education was passed (Official Gazette 63/08 and 90/10), and in 2011 the Decision on the Network of Primary and Secondary Schools and Boarding Homes for Students (Official Gazette 70/11) was enacted.

5. What do you do to improve the living conditions of teachers and their professional circumstances?

In order to improve the living conditions of teachers and provide for their professional employment in all parts of Croatia, a Decision was signed in August 2007 stipulating the terms and conditions of granting subsidized interest rates for housing loans to teachers in primary schools and secondary school temp professors from August 31 to December 31 2007. According to this Decision, the objectives of granting subsidized interest rates for housing loans are:

- Provide professional teaching staff in schools where teaching is carried out by temporary teachers;
- systematically consolidate the quality of educational and teaching work at the state level.

Priority is given to teachers of foreign languages, mathematics, physics and computer science, because the records of the ministry show that those subjects are frequently taught by temporary teachers.

In July 2008 an agreement was signed between the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports and the bank of Zadar on the basis of which those bank loans are paid to 22 applicants from elementary schools.

Professional development of teachers is realized according to the Act on Education and Teaching in Primary Schools and the provisions of the State Standards of Education and Teaching for Primary Schools and various subordinate regulations.

Article 115 of said Act stipulates that teachers, professors, teaching associates and principals have the right and the obligation of continuing professional education and to receive further training through programs approved by the Ministry. Continuing professional education and training involves individual and organized training in their original profession, in the field of pedagogy, didactics, educational psychology, teaching methods, ICT, counselling, management, educational policies and other areas relevant to an effective performance and high quality provision of educational activities in schools.

Professional training programs are conducted and organized by the Agency for Teacher Training and Education but may also be implemented by higher education institutions and entities from the civil sector. Sub-regulative provisions provide for the methods and procedure of the professional training of teachers, professors, teacher associates and principals.

In accordance with the provisions of Article 116 of said Act, teachers, professors and professional associates and principals can advance in the profession i.e. their occupation and acquire appropriate titles and be rewarded for outstanding achievements in educational and teaching activities; the rewards are subject to special regulations.

## **Secondary education**

*Is secondary education, including technical and vocational education, generally available to everyone?*

### *Enrollment in Secondary Schools*

Enrollment in secondary schools is made according to the Decision on the Elements and Criteria for the Selection of Candidates for Enrollment into Secondary Schools. Such Decision is made for each school year.

Article II. of the Decision defines that Croatian citizens, Croats from other countries, children of EU member state citizens shall enrol secondary school under equal conditions. Foreign nationals can enrol secondary schools. Article III of the Decision defines the terms of enrollment in secondary school of foreign nationals. Foreign nationals from countries outside the European Union may also enrol a secondary school and receive regular education if at least one of the following conditions is met:

1. If there is an international treaty or other interest of the state or local authorities or public institutions;
2. If such a person has a refugee status in Croatia which is confirmed by an authorized administrative body in Croatia
3. If a parent or guardian of that person is a Croatian citizen;
4. If the parent of that person has a work permit and temporary residence permit or business license in Croatia
5. If the parent of that person has been granted permanent residence in Croatia;

6. If the parent is that person's business or diplomatic representative of a foreign state in Croatia;
7. If such a person or that person's parent has or seeks asylum;
8. If such person or that person's parent, a foreigner, is under subsidiary protection or a foreigner under temporary protection

In order to avoid discrimination against students who come from foreign educational systems and to facilitate their entry into our educational system, Article V of the Decision stipulates that the right to direct admission to secondary school, with no evaluation of success in elementary school, except for programs where special abilities are reviewed, shall be granted to those candidates who have at least two of the last three grades of their previous studies in education abroad.

Apart from registration, Article VII of the Decision provides for assistance in acquiring sufficient knowledge of the Croatian language so that those students could successfully follow and master the curricula.

Candidates who are deemed not to be able to attend classes in the Croatian language, may be admitted by the school on condition that during the school year they acquire knowledge of Croatian language through preparatory or supplementary classes, or otherwise, to the degree that will enable them to follow and master teaching contents.

Special attention in enrollment in secondary schools is given to applicants with disabilities.

Students with disabilities or those students who had difficulties because the intensity and the duration of those difficulties had a significant impact on their previous primary education, and who completed the primary school in accordance with the regular curriculum adjusted to an individualized approach or according to a customized curriculum, have the right, based on Article XVI of the Decision to enrol regular secondary school programs with individualized approach (methods and teaching aids) or according to customized programs.

Students who have completed primary education under special programs or, exceptionally, under customized programs, continue their education through special education programs in secondary schools and special educational and teaching institutions or social welfare institutions licensed to conduct secondary school education programs for students with developmental problems.

Within the European Union Programme for Croatia, IPA Component IV Human Resources Development, a service contract was conducted under the title "Inclusion of students with disabilities in education for employment". The project developed elements for innovative mechanisms at national and regional level that will enable students with disabilities to have access to vocational education and the labour market. The project was directed towards the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular vocational education taking into account their specific and individual needs, with special emphasis on the assessment of vocational and social opportunities abilities of people with disabilities. Within the same contract grant funds were awarded as a grant by signing seven agreements with a total value of EUR 1,568.814,11s with the goal of increasing educational achievement of students with disabilities in accordance with their needs and labour market needs and their overall social inclusion.

Students with learning disabilities and behavioural problems whose previous primary education and achievements were influenced by one of these factors or a combination of them, and who completed their regular primary education curriculum with an individualized approach based on Article XVII of the Decision will get an additional 15 per cent of credit

points to the number of credit points established during the evaluation procedure. With credit points such established, the school ranks the candidates in the order of overall ranking. Candidates with disabilities conditioned by educational, social, economic, cultural and linguistic factors and candidates who live in conditions that could affect the success in primary school (with parents with post-traumatic stress or severe illness, with both parents unemployed, single parents or families in need of social protection) receives under Article XVIII of the Decision 10 per cent of credit points to the number of credit points established during the evaluation process. With credit points such established, the school ranks the candidates in the order of overall ranking.

The same rights of enrolment enjoy the children of Croatian war veterans living in special circumstances (parents with post-traumatic stress or severe illness with both parents unemployed, single parents or families in need of social protection, etc.).

Likewise, during enrolment in secondary education, great attention is paid to the admission of candidates under the National Programme for Roma on the basis of Article XIX of the Decision. If the enrolment candidate is a member of the Roma national minority and lives in conditions that could affect his/her achievement in elementary school, he/she will get additional 10 per cent of credit points to his/her overall performance evaluation. With credit points such established, the school ranks those candidates in the order of overall ranking.

## **STATE MATURA (SCHOOL-LEAVING EXAMINATION)**

The State Matura was introduced into the Croatian educational system by holding a test State Matura in the school year 2008./2009. State Matura is conducted pursuant to the Act on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (Official Gazette 87/08, 86/09, 92/10, 105/10, 90/11) and the Regulations on Taking State Matura Examinations (Official Gazette 127/10). Since the concept of State Matura comprises external evaluation of examinations that reviews the sophomore's knowledge under equal conditions, great care in the drafting of the Regulations on the State Matura (Official Gazette 127/10) was given to the equal status of all participants. Pursuant to Article 1 of the Regulations, the secondary education of secondary school students ends with taking the State Matura examination while secondary education for students in vocational education and artistic programs, which last at least four years, ends with the elaboration and the defence of a thesis, organized and implemented by the school.

However, the Regulation stipulates that students in vocational education and artistic programs, which last at least four years, can also take the State Matura exams if they wish to continue their education as all other candidates who have at least four years of secondary education in the Republic of Croatia before the introduction of the State Matura and candidates who completed secondary education outside of Croatia comparable to a four-year secondary education in the Republic of Croatia.

In order to secure an equal position for all candidates of the State Matura exams, Article 2 of the Regulations stipulates that State Matura exams are standardized tests that are conducted throughout the state at the same time under the same conditions and criteria for all students respectively candidates for school-leaving examinations.

Students who are studying in the language and script of national minorities must, in accordance with the agreement with minority representatives and within the compulsory part of the State Matura take the exam in the Croatian language must also take the exam in the minority language in which they receive education and as the third test within the compulsory part of the State Matura they have to choose exam in mathematics or a foreign language exam.

Also, according to Article 23 of the Regulation, students who are educated in the language and script of national minorities, take the State Matura exam in the language and script in which they are educated. Exceptionally, students who are studying in the Czech language and

script of national minorities may choose to take the State Matura either as members of a national minority or as other students.

So that students of vocational schools could be in the same position as secondary school students, Article 6 of the Regulation provides that the candidates who will take the exams as part of the mandatory part of the State Matura can take them at the basic and higher levels. The levels are prescribed in test catalogues that must be in accordance with the curricula in Croatia.

Because the students of four-year vocational schools are coached for the State Matura were they acquire competent knowledge and skills that will enable them to help to pass easier the State Matura and enrol the desired study program, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports has recommended that the vocational schools organize for interested students of final grades preparations for the State Matura exams through supplemental instructions. Related to this, the Ministry has elaborated difference programs to facilitate the organization of these preparations for schools.

In the organization of the State Matura exams, the taking of exams of candidates with disabilities was taken into consideration. Article 23 of the Regulation provides that candidates with disabilities shall take the State Matura using a customized testing technology and in accordance with the instructions issued by the National Centre for External Evaluation of Education and with the approval of the Ministry. Students with disabilities, who have mastered the program of prescribed activities, are not always able to show their achievements in the usual way. Customizing the test technology that will not jeopardize the validity of the exam or lead students in a privileged position, will remove these difficulties.

#### *To what extent is secondary education free?*

The Development Strategy of Croatia, set out in the government document entitled Strategic Framework for Development for 2006 to 2013 is in accordance with the constitutional changes which final result would be an extension of compulsory education until the first acquisition of qualifications.

Extended compulsory education would significantly reduce the proportion of working-age population without first qualification, which would result in significant improvement in their prospects for employment and, on the other hand, allow more students to access higher education.

The implementation of measures for the introduction of compulsory secondary education is supported by a significant part of the public, especially parents and teachers (even 83% of respondents are in favour of it). The Croatian Parliament adopted on June 2, 2007 the National Plan of measures for the introduction of compulsory secondary education (Official Gazette 71/07) with the following objectives:

1. Increase the enrolment rate of pupils and the rate of completion of the regular secondary education
2. Improve the quality of Croatian secondary education, while coordinating with the European educational systems and standards of the European Union member countries.
3. Provide opportunities for lifelong learning in line with the needs of modern life and economy.

In line with these objectives, the following incentives were implemented:

1. Supply of free textbooks for the schools in the school year 2007/2008, 2007/2008 was provided and 68 million Kuna spent

2. Cost of transportation for students of the first class that started in the academic year 2007/2008 for which in the first five months in 2008 50 million Kuna were spent for 22.000 students
3. Provision of free accommodation and meals at student boarding homes - from September 2007. to May 2008 - 10,500.000 HRK paid for accommodation in student dormitories for about 2000 students. Previously, the subsidy for accommodation in student dormitories was 50%, and later it was fully funded. Thanks to those incentives, over 290 students were placed in boarding homes more than compared to last school year.

Thanks to these measures, in the school year 2007/08 1 102 students enrolled in senior first grade than compared to the number of students who would enrol without these measures (obtained by comparing the enrolments in previous years).

In parallel with these measures, 55 new curricula for the acquisition of lower professional qualifications were passed. In the school year 2007/2008 some 150 new teachers were employed and some 50 professional staff (pedagogues or psychologists) and some 40 administrative workers. A vertical and horizontal progression through the educational system was made possible, i.e. the transition from lower to higher levels, and vice versa. The State Educational Standard was passed in 2008 which aims to create equal staff and material in all secondary schools.

Due to the bad economic situation in 2009 the Croatian government adopted a decision to postpone the implementation of the National Plan of measures for the introduction of compulsory secondary education until a more favourable period.

### *3. What measures are taken to ensure the quality of education was at the same level in all educational institutions of the same level?*

On the proposal of the Croatian Government, on May 16 2008 the Croatian Parliament adopted the National Educational Standard which aims to create equal conditions for personnel and material in all secondary schools. The National Educational Standard determines the optimal physical, personnel, medical, technical, ICT and other standards that serve as a guideline to ensure uniform working in educational and teaching institutions. The purpose of the educational standards is to enhance the overall activity on the basis of uniform working conditions of educational and teaching institutions by virtue of prescribed criteria. Equal conditions are a precondition for ensuring a higher quality of education and teaching. The objectives of the education and teaching policy are aimed at improving quality in all parts of the educational system at all levels. The State Matura is in this context one of the most important ways of improving the quality of education and teaching in schools. The implementation of State Matura respectively the external evaluation carries a number of advantages:

- Evaluation and assessment of school achievement by implementing the State Matura exam at the national level is more objective than the school level;
- The State Matura allows the implementation of exams under the same conditions and in the same way for all students;
- Since the criteria for conducting the State Matura is equal for all students in the Republic of Croatia, the results of the State Matura represent a fairer way to enter into the system of higher education;
- The introduction of State Matura is an incentive for teachers to teach better in elementary and secondary schools, and for students to improve their learning and raise the overall quality of education in schools;
- The creation of a central register of the State Matura with data in which each student will find his/her place according to their ability in nearly 900 academic programs, ensures



transparency with regard to student school success and his/her success at the State Matura exam;

- The results of the State Matura will allow comparability of school achievements of students with the educational standards of the European Union.

The Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (2008) identified the objectives and principles of education in schools, according to which students are educated in accordance with the general cultural and civilizational values, human rights and the rights of children they qualify for living in a multicultural world, respect for diversity and tolerance, and to actively and responsibly participate in the democratic development of the society. Pursuant to this Law the rights of students are expanded; here we would like to single out the right to participate in the student council and in the development and implementation of house rules, the right to propose improvements in the educational process and in the educational work. According to the principles of education at primary and secondary educational level, teaching and education in elementary and secondary schools is based on equality of educational opportunities for all students according to their abilities, and high-quality education and training of all direct stakeholders of educational activities: teachers, associates, principals and other employees. Within the EU Programme for Croatia, IPA Component IV - Human Resources Development, there are several on-going projects.

In the project Further development of the Croatian Qualification Framework (CQF) (service contract valued at EUR 1,468.000) activities were carried out to ensure continuous improvement of the educational system in Croatia related to the portability and recognition of competences and qualifications in accordance with the needs of the labour market at the national/EU level and to support a system of transparency and mobility and employability of Croatian citizens. The purpose of the project was to provide support for the development of the Croatian Qualifications Framework at the national level.

The Croatian Qualification Framework (CQF) is an instrument for coordinating and linking all parts of the Croatian Qualification System, which provides the foundation for transparency, access, acquisition, mobility and quality of qualifications, taking into consideration the individual and society. The process of CQF development official started in 2006 when the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports formed the relevant committee, chaired by the Minister. The basic manual, "Foundations for the Croatian Qualifications Framework", as its implies, provides a baseline for the overall development of the CQF. In accordance with the settings of this document, the key objectives of the CQF are to connect learning outcomes achieved in all educational institutions and relate them to each other in Croatia and in international exchange. In accordance with the general provisions and standards of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), CQF will set clear quality criteria for obtaining a set of competencies that are expected of students upon completion of their qualification of a certain level and volume.

The goals of the project "Strengthening the institutional framework for professional development of occupational standards, qualifications and curricula" (service contract valued at 1,799.965 EUR) is to strengthen the Croatian system of vocational education and training in providing skills and competencies required in the labour market and its alignment with the permanently changing needs of the economy.

Furthermore, the project "Development of Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training" (service contract valued at EUR 1,639.750, is in implementation; its aims are to promote the development and modernization of the vocational education and training in Croatia. Its main purpose is to support the development of a single and systematic approach to the development of quality assurance in vocational education, with emphasis on the implementation of this concept in practice, and encourage the exchange of information on quality assurance between providers of vocational education and the general public.

Furthermore, the project "Implementing the new curriculum (service contract valued at 1,065.500 USD contract and the grant in the amount of 4,300.000 EUR) will improve the system of vocational education and training in Croatia in order to increase its relevance to the labour market. The purpose of the project is to encourage the introduction of new, high-quality, curriculum and the introduction of a systematic development of an innovative culture in vocational schools - in accordance with the needs of the labour market on local and/or regional level. The project will also develop technical capacities of the Agency for Adult Vocational Education and vocational schools for a successful preparation and implementation of contract grants within the IPA IV Development of Human Resources and future projects that will be financed through the European Social Fund (ESF).

*What measures are taken to establish a system of adult education based on personal abilities and in particular the provision of basic education for adults who have not completed primary education? (Under 5)*

*5. What measures have been adopted to provide uniform access to basic education as well as the continuation of the same, and to meet the basic needs of youth and adults to learn through the elimination of illiteracy and equitable access to appropriate learning programs and skills?*

In accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations Literacy Decade the Croatian Government launched in the period from 2003 to 2012 the project "For a Literate Croatia: The Way to a Desirable Future - A Decade of Literacy in Croatia 2003 -2012" The project is under the authority of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, and stake-holders are government offices in the counties, primary schools and adult education institutions that implement licensed primary education for adults. Funds to finance the project are provided in the budget. Since the beginning of the project about 25 million HRK were secured in the budget. The project allows people older than 15 years to complete primary education and to train for simple tasks in an occupation. Currently, the project involves about 6000 participants, of which about 50% of students are older than 15 and younger than 30 years, about 40% of participants are older than 30 but younger than 50 years, and about 10% of participants older than 50 years. The project is currently implemented in 18 counties and in the City of Zagreb, and out of the total number of registered participants 70% have completed primary education and training for simple jobs. In terms of gender representation, about 70% of participants were male, and about 30% are women.

Within the European Union Programme for Croatia, IPA Component IV Human Resources Development, a service contract is in implementation whose activities are aimed at improving the adult education system in Croatia. The project "Regional network of local learning institutions" is directed to improving core competencies and other competencies of adult learners through the modernization of existing and the development of new short programmes of adult education institutions, which will enable them to actively participate in the labour market. Project activities are aimed at creating a regional network by establishing and/or continuing cooperation between adult education institutions for exchange programs and the cooperation with local partners, NGOs and other relevant partners, to cover the needs of adult learners.

Within the framework of the same grant schemes, funds were awarded in the amount of EUR 3,407.682,43 to adult education institutions with the aim of improving core competencies and other competences of those who participate in adult education that will enable them to actively participate in the labour market and to modernize existing and developing new short programmes of adult education.

## *6. Conditions of teaching staff at all levels in Croatia*

The Regulations on the advancement of teachers in the Law on Primary and Secondary Education (Official Gazette 89/95, 148/99, 20/05) establish the procedure and terms of evaluation and promotion of teachers, professors, educators, expert associates and trainers in primary and secondary schools and student homes into the position of mentors and advisors.

Teachers who have appropriate qualifications prescribed by law, the necessary pedagogical and psychological training and meet the assessment criteria established by this Regulation, can advance into the position of a teacher mentor, teacher advisor, professor mentor and professor advisor, educator mentor, educator advisor, professional staff mentor and professional staff advisor, vocational teacher mentor and vocational teacher advisor.

The elements for the evaluation of expertise and the quality of teacher work are:

- Success in working with students,
- Extracurricular professional activities,
- Professional development.

## *7. What is being done to improve the living conditions of teachers and professional staff?*

Pursuant to the Decision on conditions and manner of granting subsidized interest rates for housing loans to teachers in primary schools and temporary employed teachers in secondary schools in 2007, the Commission for the determination of eligibility for the granting of subsidized interest rates for housing loans issued a preliminary approval for 22 teachers of primary schools and 7 secondary school teachers who are eligible to receive subsidized interest rate for housing loans.

Ministry of Science, Education and Sports concluded on 23 July 2008 an Agreement on housing loans to employees in the system of primary and secondary education with OTP Bank Croatia dd Zadar, and submitted to the bank a list of 29 employees of elementary and secondary schools who are eligible for interest subsidy.

According to the report of OTP bank, twenty-three (23) employees of elementary and secondary school took the loans and the Ministry paid by way of compensation for the interest subsidy since 2008. until now worth 931,639.00 HRK.

Competent agencies conduct free professional training for all educational workers (educators, teachers, expert associates and principals). Training enables advancement in the profession by giving them higher credit points for the calculation of their wages at a certain rate of percentage. In 2011 a total of 1789 educational workers were promoted into the position of mentors and advisors.

According to Art. 38, paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 and 4 of the Collective Agreement for employees in secondary schools (Official Gazette 7/11) a more favourable work load (reduction of work load after 30, i.e. 35 years of service) is determined in the following cases:

(1) Decrease of working abilities during the service years of the employee as established by a decision of the competent authorities and under one of the following conditions:

- Age - 5 years before retirement age, or
- occupational disease, or
- work related injury.

The secondary school shall provide the employee with a more favourable work load, without reducing the salary he had before the aforementioned circumstances set in.

(2) The more favourable work load is determined by the percentage as established by the decision of the competent authority in the way that the teaching staff shall have a decreased work load proportionally to their direct work, respectively to other duties within their 40-hour working week, in that ratio, which is identical to the ratio of direct comparison of educational work and other duties. For non-teaching staff, the establishment of the overall percentage reduction in working ability refers to the structure of their duties within the 40-hour work week.

(3) The salary referred to in paragraph 1 of this article comprises basic salary and allowances.

(4) An employee who uses a more favourable work load based on paragraph 1 and 2 of this Article cannot work in overtime.

#### *8. Information related to the establishment and maintenance of private educational institutions*

Primary and secondary schools are established by a founding act passed by the founder pursuant to the provisions of the Law on Institutions and the Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (Official Gazette 87/08, 86/09, 92/10, 105/10, 90/11) .

A primary school may be established by the Republic of Croatia, local self-governments, a unit of the local (regional) self-government, and other legal or natural persons. Secondary schools may be established by the Republic of Croatia, units of local (regional) self-governments, and other legal or natural persons.

Before the establishment of a school, the founder must obtain a positive opinion from the Ministry on the justification of establishing an educational institution (Article 90, paragraph 4 of the Act on Education in Primary and Secondary School).

After obtaining a positive opinion, the founder of a school institution submits to the Ministry a request for review of compliance of the founding act with the law and encloses:

- two copies of the founding act signed by the founder and
- proof of payment of administrative fees in the amount of 200.00 HRK.

The founding act must include the provisions prescribed in Article 91 of the Act on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools.

After the Ministry issues a decision on the assessment of the founding act with the law, the interim principal submits a request to the Ministry to begin work no later than three months before the scheduled start of a school facility; the request must be accompanied by the following documents:

- interim statute
- a list of qualified persons that will conduct the program of education
- information about the space and equipment and the manner of their insurance
- evidence of compliance with technical, health and environmental requirements for conducting educational activities
- opinion of the international association or organization if the school works according to an international program or alternative school program
- evidence of compliance with conditions laid down by special regulations, if the secondary school implements a program in nautics or marine engineering and
- proof of payment of administrative fees in the amount of 3,000.00 HRK.

To carry out the procedure for determining the compliance with the conditions for a start-up of a school facility, the Ministry appoints an expert committee that will determine on site whether the school meets the prescribed conditions for the start of work and issues a decision on the commencement of work. After the Ministry issues the decision on the commencement of work, the founder submits an application for registration of the school in the court register.

An adult education institution is established by the founding act passed by the founder in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Institutions and the Adult Education Act (Official Gazette 17/07).

*9. How is education defined in other languages, religious education and religious instruction and moral education (ethics), and to what extent does it depend on parental choice?*

On January 29, 1999 the Treaty on Catholic catechism in public schools and religious education in public preschools was concluded pursuant to Article 2 of the Law on Ratification of the Agreement between the Holy See and the Croatian Republic on Cooperation in Education and Culture (Official Gazette 2/97) between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Croatian Bishops' Conference.

Based on this agreement the Catholic catechism in public elementary and secondary schools is a compulsory subject for those students who choose it. In order to select attendance in Catholic religion instruction as a compulsory subject, it is necessary to give a written statement to the school principal. For students aged under 15 the statement is given by a parent or guardian, and for students older than 15 years the statement is given by the student and parent or guardian. The teaching of the Catholic religion in public primary and secondary schools is carried out under the same conditions under which teaching is conducted for other compulsory subjects, especially with regard to the position of religious instructions within the timetable. To form a class unit respectively an educational group for teaching the Catholic religion usually it takes at least seven students.

In addition to the Catholic Church, on the basis of Article 9 Paragraph 1 Paragraph 1 of the Law on the Legal Status of Religious Communities (Official Gazette 83/02) the Croatian government and other religious communities in Croatia have signed an agreement on matters of mutual interest. Such arrangements are also a basis for the regulation of the question of religious education in schools.

During enrolment of a secondary school, students who opt not to attend religious classes, are required to attend ethics classes.

*10. How are the rights of national minorities protected in the implementation of their educational activities?*

Pursuant to Article 43 of the State Educational Standards of Secondary Education System (Official Gazette 63/08) members of national minorities have the right to education in their language and script in accordance with the Constitutional Law on National Minorities (Official Gazette 155/02) and the Law on Education in the Language and Script of National Minorities (Official Gazette 51/00).

The education of national minorities is implemented in secondary schools with instructions in the language and script they use under conditions and in the manner prescribed by the special program on the education in the language and script of national minorities.

The education of minority students is carried out based on three models of organizing and conducting classes, namely:

- Model A in which all instruction is conducted in the language and script of national minorities, with compulsory learning of Croatian according to the curriculum. Students have the right and obligation to learn additional content relevant to the minority community. This teaching model is implemented in schools with tuition in the language and script of national minorities, but it can also be implemented in institutions that teach in the Croatian, in special classes or educational groups, teaching the language and script of national minorities.
- Model B in which the teaching is bilingual. The group of subjects in natural sciences is taught in Croatian with subjects in social sciences are taught in the language of national minorities. Classes are conducted in schools that teach in Croatian, but in separate class units.
- In Model C teaching is performed in Croatian, with an additional two to five school hours designed to foster language and culture of national minorities. An additional schedule in the duration of five schools hours per week includes learning the language and literature of the national minorities, geography, history, music and visual arts.

Special forms of education (seminars, summer and winter schools, etc.) are organized for those students for whom there is no possibility of organizing regular classes by model A, B or C. The competent ministry will fund and carry out those special forms of instruction. The curriculum in the language and script of national minorities with the general part includes also topics related to particularities of national minorities referring to language, literature, history, geography, art and music.

Material conditions and working space for work and teaching are provided by the founder.

*11. What legal framework governs the educational standards in educational institutions under the jurisdiction of minorities?*

Pursuant to Article 43 of the State educational standards of secondary education system (Official Gazette 63/08) members of national minorities have the right to education in their language and script and use that right in accordance with the Constitutional Law on National Minorities (Official Gazette 155/02) and the Law on Education in the language and script of national minorities (Official Gazette, 51/00).

*12. What activities raise the level of public awareness about non-discrimination and equality of access to education for all, and in accordance with the Convention?*

Final year students of primary schools and their parents participate each year in regional meetings in which programs of secondary education are presented to students and their parents in order to assist them in the selection of continuing the education at the secondary level. Likewise, very often the secondary schools themselves organize a presentation of their programs to students of final grade of primary school.

The Department of Vocational Guidance of the Croatian Employment Service provides counselling services for students in choosing educational programs/occupations, taking into account mainly their health status and ability with academic achievement, motivation and status information on the labour market. Procedures of "early intervention" by the Employment Service in Croatia is conducted in collaboration with schools and the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports especially when regard to students with health problems, as described various times in the ETF and CEDEFOP's reports an example of good practice in

the prevention of later consequences of an inadequate choice of school (secondary school failure, early dropping out of secondary school, the need for retraining because of health the student cannot do the job for which he was educated, preventing long-term unemployment, etc.

Vocational guidance is a set of different activities that allow individuals to identify their own abilities, competencies and interests at different times of life, in order to make decisions about education, training and employment and manage their professional careers.

Expert help in making decisions about future career path for a person is one of the basic functions of the Employment Service, and its realization is carried out in accordance with international conventions.

Vocational guidance includes the implementation of following activities:

- Professional information - a process whereby individual user groups receive important information for making decisions on the selection of vocations, occupations and areas of work. Professional information may be written, oral, self-information; conducted individually and in groups.

- Professional counselling - a process based on collection of relevant information (education and work history, skills, health status, interests, motivation) with the aim to help to define further professional activities for the user. Professional counselling, which includes psychological testing and interpreting of test results is performed by a psychologist.

Vocational guidance is primarily intended for final year students of primary and secondary schools. Different forms of information (individual, group, self-information through brochures, computer program My choice, etc.) and counselling if needed, can be received by other students during their education.

The most common group of students who receive assistance by the career guidance to make decisions about continuing their education are:

- Students with disabilities
- Students with health problems
- Undecided Students
- Students who have difficulty in mastering the educational program or want to change the educational program.

Article 9 of the Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools (Official Gazette 87/08, 86/09, 92/10, 105/10, 90/11) provides for a network of schools and programs of education. The network of educational institutions comprises schools engaged in education and teaching in the area for which the network is set up, with all their facilities where training and education is implemented, areas in which a school can be established and programs that schools can implement, including special programs for students with disabilities. The network must meet the requirements of accessibility and rational organization of enrolment areas i.e. educational institutions and programs of education. Availability means the possibility of secondary education for students by using everyday transport or accommodation in a student home

In most counties in Croatia, local communities participate in co-funding of primary and secondary school student transportation on the basis of their decision on the conditions and manner of financing the costs of transportation for students, setting out the terms of co-

financing and costs of transportation, which is usually expressed as a percentage of total costs of transportation of primary and secondary school students.

### ***Higher Education***

In accordance with Article 77, paragraph 2 of the Law on Scientific Activity and Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as ZZDVO, Official Gazette 123/03, 105/04, 174/04, 02/07 - Constitutional Court Decision, 46/07, 45/09, 63/11), universities, polytechnics or colleges shall determine the procedure for registration in a way that ensures equality for all applicants regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national orientation and age.

However, despite the above-mentioned provisions of the Law, there are under-represented groups that in practice have difficulties in access to higher education for certain objective reasons difficult. For example, a very small number of people with disabilities is represented in higher education. In accordance with the National Strategy of Equal Opportunities for persons with disabilities from 2007 to 2015 a total number of people with disabilities in higher education amounts to 0.13%. Please note that this figure may vary slightly due to the fact that there is no national system for data collection in higher education.

The following measures are taken to ensure access to higher education for all:

1. The Department of Higher Education has participated in the drafting of the Guidelines relating to the grant scheme of integration of under-represented groups into the regular education system within which potential applicants can, if they meet all the requirements, receive some funding from IPA out of which they can fund activities that will contribute to an easier access to higher education to members of under-represented groups. The following under-represented groups are included within the above-mentioned grant scheme:

- Children, pupils and students with permanent disabilities
- Children, pupils and students who need only temporary help
- Children, pupils and students of the Roma minority
- Children pupils and students of other ethnic minorities.

2. Some of the activities that can be financed as part of projects to be developed within the above-mentioned grant schemes and which are provided for the purpose of social inclusion of these under-represented groups are as follows:

- Adaptation of literature and pedagogical materials,
- Further education and training of teachers, assistants and all employees who in their work come into contact with members of the above mentioned under-represented groups,
- Minor adaptations to facilitate access to educational institutions for those with certain physical impairments,
- Measures to encourage the Roma population in lifelong learning and acquiring higher qualifications after successful completion of secondary education,
- Hiring of personal assistants to help during and after classes to people with physical disabilities.

3. Pursuant to the Decision on subsidy costs for regular studies of full-time students at public universities in the Republic of Croatia in the academic year 2011/2012, which was adopted at the session of the Croatian Government 14th July 2011 the right to subsidised costs in the said academic year have regular students at public universities in the Republic of Croatia who enrol for the first time:



- The first year of university studies (undergraduate study, an integrated undergraduate and graduate study) and professional studies,
  - First or second year of university graduate studies
  - Fourth, fifth and sixth year of integrated undergraduate and graduate university studies
4. Subsidized food to all regular students
  5. Free public transport for about 50% of students in the Republic of Croatia and subsidized transportation for a further 20% of students
  6. Free health insurance for all full-time students
  7. Tax relieves for parents for each child who is a regular student
  8. Regular students in the Republic of Croatia do not pay taxes if they work through the student services
  9. Students who have parents receive special state incentives
  10. Measures to encourage employment after graduation or secondary school (the Government adopted by decision a National Plan for Employment for 2011 and 2012 for unemployed young people up to 29 years without years of service, with professions learned at the secondary school and in higher Education)
  11. Students who are also the Croatian war veterans and war invalids, and children of killed, imprisoned and missing war veterans and 100% military invalids in the first group, are eligible for direct admission to all Croatian universities and many polytechnics if they pass the enrolment threshold.
  12. Students with disabilities, from 60% to higher damages, are also entitled to direct admission to all Croatian universities and many polytechnics if they pass the enrolment threshold.
  13. The following groups are eligible to direct accommodation in student dormitories
    - Students who are also Croatian war veterans and war invalids, as well as children of killed, imprisoned and missing veterans and 100% war invalids, if the monthly income per household member does not exceed the specified means test,
    - Students with disabilities, with 50% or more physical disabilities, including students who attend post-graduate university studies.
  14. The following groups receive extra points in accommodation in dormitories:
    - Students with Disabilities (with disabilities from category 6 - 10),
    - Students, beneficiaries of allowance aid,
    - Students whose parents are both unemployed,
    - Students who per household member have an income lower than established by the means test,
    - Croatian veterans and their children if they are not eligible to direct accommodation in student dormitories,
    - For students of the Roma minority, the law does not provide for additional points or direct accommodation in the dormitory, but practice has shown that they receive in a dormitory when they ask.
  15. The right to receive a scholarship, having met certain conditions, have the following groups of students:
    - Students members of the Roma minority
    - Regular students of university and professional studies
    - Regular students of university and professional studies from families with a poor financial situation

- Regular students of university and professional studies with disabilities
- Regular students of university and professional studies who have committed themselves to work after graduation in areas of special state concern, and on the islands
- Regular students of university and professional studies, who lived in foster families or children's homes
- Regular students of university and professional studies that belong to the following groups:

- children of killed, missing and dead persons
- children of peacetime, military and civilian invalids with disabilities caused during the war
- peaceful, civilian and military veterans with disabilities caused by war.

16. An agreement on incentives for enrolment in institutions of higher education was signed in Zagreb on March 27, 2007 under which the universities, as part of their academic self-government, may allow direct entry of the following candidates to institutions of higher education, if those candidates pass the enrolment threshold:

- Students who are veterans and also war veterans
- Children of killed, imprisoned and missing veterans and children of 100 per cent war military invalids
- Students with an invalidity of 60 per cent or more

17. In accordance with the draft of the new Law on Higher Education, it is proposed that the amount of scholarship fees as defined by higher education institutions at public universities cannot be higher than 60 per cent of the average monthly net salary specified in Croatia for the previous year for by the Central Bureau of Statistics. This applies to all Croatian students who are studying in regular undergraduate and graduate programmes.

18. The aforementioned amount of fees at public universities for Croatian students, who are studying at postgraduate doctorate studies, cannot be greater than the amount of average monthly net wage in Croatia established in the previous year, according to the Central Bureau of Statistics.

Regarding the question of the establishment and maintenance of private higher education institutions, Article 49 of the Act on Science and Higher Education states that private higher education institutions (universities, polytechnics and colleges) are established by a decision of the founders in the manner prescribed by the provisions of the above law and regulations relating to the establishment of institutions. Also, counties, cities and municipalities can establish an institution of higher education by a decision of their representative body.

The level of quality in science and higher education is regulated by the Law on Quality Assurance in Research and Higher Education (hereinafter the Act, Official Gazette 45/09).

Article 1, paragraph 2 of the Act states that the provisions of this Act shall, among other things, apply to the public and private higher education institutions. The Agency for Science and Higher Education (hereinafter: the Agency) as a public institution in Croatia takes care of ensuring and enhancing quality in higher education. Some of the procedures specified in Article 2 of the Act and carried out by the Agency are:

- Initial Accreditation - the process of external quality assessment of new subjects of evaluation and/or new programs of studies to determine whether the object of evaluation meets the necessary requirements and standards in the procedure in which an accreditation

recommendation is passed for the issuance of license to higher education institutions to conduct business and/or to perform study programs

- Re-accreditation - the external evaluation of the quality of existing subjects of evaluation and/or study programs, which makes accreditation recommendations with grading and recommendations for improvement, to confirm eligibility for continuation of activities and/or execution of study programs of higher education.

Regarding the process of initial accreditation to perform a study program and the process of initial accreditation to perform activities of higher education, Articles 19 and 20 of the Act state, among other things, as follows:

- The request for authorization to perform activities of higher education shall be submitted to the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports (hereinafter: Ministry)
- The request to perform a new study program is submitted to the Ministry by private colleges, public high schools and polytechnics.
- The Ministry verifies the completeness of the application, and if so, forwards it the Agency which initiates the proceedings to determine the necessary conditions for the establishment of higher education institutions, or to carry out a new study programme.
- The agency forwards within 60 days a reasoned recommendation to the Ministry for the issuance of denial or approval for the establishment of an institution of higher education.
- Also, if it is a new program of studies, the Agency shall forward to the Ministry a reasoned accreditation recommendation to issue an authorization to perform a study program, i.e. it advises the minister to issue a license or to refuse to issue a license to carry out the proposed program of study.

Pursuant to Article 20, paragraph 10 of the Act, university curricula are established and run by the decision of the University Senate on the basis of previous estimates of the internal system unit to ensure and improve the quality of the assessment which takes into account the requirements prescribed by ordinance. The minister issues the ordinance and specifies in detail the contents of the license, the conditions for the issuance of the license to perform activities in higher education, the conditions for carrying out the program of studies and the conditions for re-accreditation of institutions of higher education.

Regarding the conditions for the selection of teaching staff, in accordance with Article 91 of the Act on Scientific Activities and Higher Education (ASAHE) teachers and staff at universities can be elected to scientific-educational, artistic, educational, associate and professional titles. In accordance with Article 93 of ASAHE a person may be selected as a teaching scientist who has been entered in the Register of scientists and who has a scientific title in the appropriate field, or who meets the requirements for the acquisition of this scientific title and conditions with regard to education, teaching and professional work as prescribed by the Rectors' Conference, if he/she has the necessary psychological and physical characteristics as well as other requirements prescribed by the statute of the university. Article 94 of ASAHE stipulates that the teaching of the subject areas that can be performed only by an artist, teachers are elected to artistic-educational titles and to the corresponding jobs. The artistic-educational titles are given to those people who have achieved artistic achievements of significance and which satisfy the conditions for appointment to the academic workplace. Art-teaching jobs are equal in everything with academic positions.

## **Education of National Minorities**

The Constitutional Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms guarantees the rights of ethnic and national communities or minorities in the most important areas of life, including non-discrimination and equality, and freedom of choice in education.

Article 11 of the Constitutional Act stipulates the rights of national minorities to education in their language and script they use. National minorities receive education in preschools, elementary and secondary schools and other schools that teach in the language and script they use.

The curriculum of education in the language and script of national minority shall contain in addition to a general part also a part which the contents are closely related to the particularity of the national minority.

The right of minority members to education in their language and script is guaranteed primarily by the Constitution, the Constitutional Law on National Minorities and the Law on Education in the language and script of national minorities.

The Republic of Croatia guarantees through the Constitutional Law on National Minorities ("national minority" - a group of Croatian citizens whose members traditionally inhabit the territory of the Republic of Croatia and whose members have ethnic, linguistic, cultural and/or religious characteristics different from other people and who want to preserve their characteristics) special rights and freedoms, in particular:

- use of their language and script in private, public and official use
- education in the language and script they use
- use of their signs and symbols
- cultural autonomy, maintaining, developing and expressing their own culture and the preservation and protection of their cultural heritage and traditions
- right to preserve their faith, establish religious communities together with other members of the same faith
- access to the media and perform media activities in the language and script they use
- self-organization and association in order to achieve common goals
- representation in representative bodies at national and local level and in administrative and judicial bodies
- participation of members of national minorities in public life and local affairs through the councils and representatives of national minorities
- right to protection from any activity which endangers or may endanger their survival, and eligibility to rights and freedoms.

The Law on Education in the language and script of national minorities guarantees rights of national minorities to education acquired by previous provisions, respectively on the basis of international treaties to which Croatia is a contracting party.

The education in the language and script of a national minority is carried out in preschool, elementary and secondary schools and in other schools. The Law on Education in the language and scripts of national minorities provides for classes in the language and script of national minorities, the establishment of schools - institutions in the language and script of national minorities, the employment of staff members of national minorities in the teaching of the national minority, printing and translation of textbooks in the language and script of national minorities, implementation of special programs for the preservation of linguistic and cultural identity.

National Minorities in Croatia chose for themselves the form of education in their language and script, or opt for a complete education in their own language and script with the obligation of learning Croatian and opt for language learning and culture i.e. fostering language and culture in the form of additional classes that consist of five national subjects (language of the minority, history, geography, music and art). Selected models in the compulsory education system.

This Act enables also the members of other nationalities to receive teaching in the language of a national minority, i.e. the law does not stipulate that the student must be a member of a national minority. Of course, the priority of enrolment and the complete teaching system is based on being a member of the national minority i.e. in the use of language and script of a national minority.

Minority languages in which classes are held in the Croatia are: Italian, Serbian, Hungarian, Czech, Ruthenian, Ukrainian, Slovak, German, Macedonian, Albanian, Slovenian, Russian. The teaching of Hebrew language and culture is held at the Jewish Primary School Lauder Hugo Kon in Zagreb by the founder of the Jewish religious community Bet Israel in Croatia.

Exceptions are members of the Roma population in Croatia, which have the status of a national minority. They receive education in the Croatian language, but the Croatian Government has launched in collaboration with the Council of Europe and Roma associations a series of programs for Roma inclusion in education and is working to preserve the language, traditions and customs of the Roma people.

In accordance with this Act, members of national minorities are educated from kindergarten to higher education in institutions in which teaching is organized only in the language and script of national minorities or in institutions where teaching is in Croatian language and script, and members of minorities receive education in separate departments.

The educational and teaching work in a school is carried out by teachers who are members of national minorities, or if needed, can be members of a different nationality, provided they have knowledge of the language and script of national minorities.

The right and obligation of students and staff members of national minorities is to learn and know Croatian language and script according to the curriculum and the constitutional provisions respecting Croatian language as the official language of Croatia.

According to the Law on education in the language and script of national minorities, members of national minorities can carry out education in their language and script, establish pre-school institutions, primary and secondary schools and colleges pursuant to methods and under conditions prescribed by relevant laws. Educational institutions may be established and education may be conducted with a smaller number of pupils/students/units as prescribed for educational institutions which carry out the program in the language and script of national minorities (another form of positive discrimination).

Institutions of higher education are implementing the program of education for educators and teachers to perform tasks of education and teaching in the language and script of national minorities.

The complete teaching and educational process is financed from the state budget and the budgets of local and regional governments.

Attending classes in the language and script of national minorities as well as the form of teaching is exclusively a matter of individual choice, and with minor children it is a matter of choice of their parents or guardians.

## **Roma**

Roma in Croatia have all the rights of national minorities. Education of the Roma population is not carried out in any of Romani variants. Roma are educated in the Croatian language, and specifics of speech and language are kept mainly in the special programs of Roma associations and particularly summer schools organized by Roma associations with support from the State budget

For this minority, we are mostly talking about positive discrimination in the organization of preschool education, enrolment in elementary and secondary schools and higher education institutions and the provision of scholarships.

The National programme for the Roma and the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005 - 2015 provides measures that contribute to the elimination of long-standing marginalization and discrimination of the Roma minority, and contribute to their integration into the regular educational system. This applies particularly to a fivefold increase of attendance of compulsory primary education of the Roma minority in the past five years, providing a pre-school program in the year before they start primary school and parental co-share in the cost of preschool education for children of the Roma minority, the provision of learning the Croatian language for Roma children who know insufficiently Croatian language or not at all, providing transportation and extended stay. In secondary education all members of the Roma minority receive scholarships, as well as Roma students in higher education with the assumption that they identify themselves as members of the Roma minority.

Members of national minorities are protected from discrimination in education also by the Anti-Discrimination Act of 2008.

The original text in Croatian:

Parents are responsible for ensuring the child's right to full and harmonious development of his/her personality, while physically and mentally handicapped and socially neglected children shall be entitled to special care, education and welfare.