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SELECT PROVISIONS OF THE  
LAW ON SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CITIZENS' ASSOCIATIONS  
*Unofficial Translation*<sup>1</sup>

**Article 2.**

Citizens associate freely and of their own free will in order to pursue political, cultural, educational, artistic, scientific, medicinal, recreational, technical, humanitarian and other activities.

Working people and citizens unite into social organizations in order to pursue activities of a wider social interest, whereas they unite into citizens' associations in order to satisfy their individual and common needs.

Under exceptional circumstances, organizations created for political purposes may be established as social organizations or as citizens' associations.

**Article 3.**

Any working person or citizen may, under equal conditions prescribed by the Statutes, become a member of a social organization or a citizens' association. Members of social organizations and citizens' associations with political aims must be citizens of the SFRY<sup>2</sup>.

**Article 4.**

The following persons cannot be founders of social organizations or citizens' associations:

1. Persons under safety measures including a prohibition against social appearances, while said prohibition is in duration;
2. Persons convicted of criminal acts against the fundamental political system or safety of the SFRY;
3. Persons convicted of criminal acts against public and private property or against personal dignity and morality;
4. Persons unconditionally convicted of other crimes and sentenced to serve a term in a penitentiary amounting to at least three years.

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<sup>1</sup> Translated by Alexandra Chwalowsky

<sup>2</sup> The former Yugoslavia

The prohibition for persons referred to in clauses 2, 3, and 4 of the present Article lasts ten years starting from the day of imposition of the punishment being served or pardoned.

**Article 5.**

Social organizations and citizens' associations are run by their members directly and via delegates in the governing bodies defined by the Statutes.

. . .

**Article 10.**

If a social organization or citizens' association is entrusted with exercising certain public authority, by law or else by a decision of the administrative body in charge, the said social organization or citizens' association must ensure a regular and unhindered performance of said tasks related to the exercise of public authority.

**Article 11.**

Social organizations, their unions and other forms of alliance are entered into the register of social organizations, whereas citizens' associations, their unions and other forms of alliance are entered into the register of citizens' associations.

The subjects entered into the register of social organizations and the register of citizens' associations are: establishment, operations and activities, name and seat of the organization or the association, names of persons authorized to act as representatives, governing bodies, and cessation of the social organization or the citizens' association and their unions and other forms of alliance.

. . .

**Article 14.**

A social organization shall be established by at least ten competent citizens.

. . .

**Article 16.**

Means for establishing and commencing operations of a social organization are ensured by the founders.

**Article 17.**

A social organization must have its Statutes. The Statutes are passed by the highest governing body of the social organization in question.

. . .

**Article 19.**

Social organizations may acquire means or certain rights over means, and use those means for the achievement of their goals, in compliance with the Statutes and the law.

Social organizations raise means from membership subscriptions, grants by the administrative bodies in charge, contributions and donations, income resulting from games of chance, income resulting from assets and rights, compensation from implementing the agreed-upon program, and income resulting from the performance of economic or other activities, as well as income originating from other sources.

**Article 20.**

Social organizations and citizens' associations may perform economic and other activities, in compliance with specific regulations.

**Article 21.**

A citizens' association shall be established by at least ten competent citizens.

**Article 22.**

A citizens' association must have Statutes. The Statutes are passed by the highest governing body of the citizens' association in question.

**Article 23.**

In order to achieve their common goals, citizens' associations may become associated into unions and other forms of alliance.

Citizens' associations, their unions and other forms of alliance have the property of a civic corporation which they acquire on the day of being entered into the register of citizens' associations.

**Article 24.**

Citizens' associations raise funds from membership subscription contributions and donations, and from other sources, in compliance with the law.

**Article 25.**

Unless otherwise specified by the law, in the case of cessation of a citizens' association, its real estate is taken over by the municipality on whose territory it was located, whereas other assets are taken over by the administrative body in charge of keeping the register into which said association was entered.

**Article 26.**

Financial and commercial activities of a citizens' association are controlled by the administrative body in charge of public income affairs, in co-operation with the body in charge of registration.

## IV. REGISTRATION OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CITIZENS' ASSOCIATIONS

### 1. Registration of Social Organizations

#### Article 27.

The register of social organizations is kept by:

the municipal administrative body in charge of the general management of affairs for social organizations active on the municipality's territory; the city's administrative body in charge of the general management of affairs for social organizations active on the territory of one or more municipalities constituting part of the city;

The Republic administrative body in charge of the general management of affairs for social organizations active on the territory of several municipalities of which at least one is outside a given city's jurisdiction or else on the entire Republic's territory.

. . .

#### Article 32.

A social organization whose statutes or program include activities prohibited by the Constitution or the Penal Code shall not be entered into the register of social organizations.

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### 2. Registration of Citizens' Associations

#### Article 35.

The register of citizens' associations is kept by the administrative bodies referred to in Article 27 of the present law, depending upon the area of activity of the citizens' association.

## V. CESSATION OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CITIZENS' ASSOCIATIONS

#### Article 42.

Social organizations and citizens' associations cease to exist:

1. By the decision of the administrative body in charge of the social organization or citizens' association;
2. If it is established that the social organization or citizens' association has ceased to act, or else if twice the time required by the Statutes for holding a session has passed without the convening of a session;

3. If the number of members of a social organization or citizens' association decreases below the number required for its establishment;
4. If they act contrary to the statutory provisions, or if they do not fulfill the tasks for which they have been established;
5. If the activity of a social organization or citizens association has been prohibited.

The facts from paragraph 1 of the present Article are established by the body in charge of registration.

**Article 43.**

The activity of social organizations or of citizens' associations shall be prohibited by the verdict of the District Court with jurisdiction over the seat of the social organization or citizens' association, if said activities are contrary to the Constitution or the Penal Code.

The proceedings for prohibiting the activity of a social organization or citizens' association are initiated upon the initiative of the body in charge of registration, or the district attorney with jurisdiction.

**Article 44.**

Upon proposal by the body in charge of registration or the district attorney, the court shall hold a trial within three days of receipt.

Parties summoned to the trial shall be as follows: a representative of the body in charge of registration or the district attorney, and the person authorized for representing the social organization or the citizens' association in question.

**Article 45.**

In the course of proceedings on the prohibition of operations by a social organization or a citizens' association, the court may hold a trial and reach a verdict even if the duly summoned parties do not attend the debate, of which the parties shall be explicitly warned in the subpoena.

**Article 46.**

Following the proposal for prohibiting operation by a social organization or a citizens' association, the court shall pass its verdict on the prohibition of operation or else decline the proposal of the body in charge of registration or the district attorney in charge.

**Article 47.**

If the court reaches a verdict prohibiting operation by the social organization or the citizens' association, in the accompanying explanation it must state the activities of the said social organization or citizens' association that are prohibited by the Constitution or the Penal Code.

As part of the verdict prohibiting operation by a social organization or a citizens'

association, the court shall order the dissolution of said social organization or citizens' association, and take measures relating to their assets, in compliance with the law.

The Court may, taking into account all of the circumstances surrounding the case, determine other measures necessary for implementing the verdict on prohibition of operations by a social organization or a citizens' association, such as sealing off the offices, closing accounts, or dispossessing the means utilized to perform the prohibited activity.

The Court shall decide whether the dispossessed means are to be destroyed, sold, or else turned over to another body or organization.

**Article 49.**

Against the verdict passed by the District Court prohibiting the operation of a social organization or a citizens' association, the parties may appeal directly to the Supreme Court of Croatia within eight days of receipt of the verdict.

**Article 50.**

The valid verdict prohibiting the operation of a social organization or a citizens' association shall be published in the "Official Gazette".

**Article 51.**

During proceedings related to the prohibition of operations by a social organization or a citizens' association, provisions of the Penal Code are duly applied, unless otherwise specified by the present law.

**VI. ASSOCIATIONS OF FOREIGNERS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

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**Article 54.**

Foreigners residing in Croatia may, under the conditions and in compliance with the procedure defined by the Law on the Movement and Residence of Foreigners, establish associations in view of pursuing cultural, scientific, technical and other activities.

Foreigners' associations are established on the basis of approval by the Republic's administrative body in charge of internal affairs.

Foreigners' associations are entered into a register kept by the Republic's administrative body in charge of internal affairs.

The head of the Republic's administrative body in charge of internal affairs shall prescribe the forms and the manner of keeping the register of foreigners' associations.

. . .

**Article 56.**

International organizations and their bodies may have a seat on the territory of Croatia if they obtain approval by the parliamentary body in charge and if their activity is in compliance with the Constitution and the international agreements signed by Croatia, and not aimed at threatening peace or international co-operation.

**VII. CONTROL OVER THE LAWFULNESS OF OPERATIONS**

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**Article 58.**

Control over the lawfulness of operations of social organizations and citizens' associations is performed by the body in charge of registration and the administrative body under whose sphere of action the activities of the social organization or the citizens' association fall, in accordance with the purposes and goals of their establishment.



