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PROGRAM OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA AND THE NON-GOVERNMENT – NON-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA WAS ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA AT ITS SEATING ON JANUARY 4, 2001

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
OFFICE FOR COOPERATION WITH NGOS

**PROGRAM OF COOPERATION
BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
AND THE NON-GOVERNMENT – NON-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR
IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA**

December 2000

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I. FOREWORD

Shaping Croatia into a modern nation has been greatly helped by the endeavor of civic initiatives and various associations of citizens. Consequently, in the second half of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century numerous national institutions that live up to this day were established. That was also the time when a number of foundations were instituted. It is clearly so that a part of wealthier and more educated citizens nurtured the virtue of caring for the problems in the community and of giving for the public benefit.

It is necessary to emphasize that the modern civil society developing in Croatia in the last decade recognizes a variety of volunteer, non-governmental, non-for-profit organizations such as associations, social movements, church organizations, unions, local communities, foundations, interest groups and civic initiatives.

Bearing in mind the significance of highly valuable objectives of the civic initiatives for the public benefit, the Croatian Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs launched the initiative for the making of the Program of Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the non-government – non-for-profit sector in the Republic of Croatia, whose focal point would be a human in the family, community and society.

The invitation to cooperate on the making of the Program was sent to almost 16.000 NGOs registered in the Republic of Croatia in order to join forces and create a new framework for the development of civil society in Croatia as well as to enhance democratization and modernization of the society as a whole.

This Program of cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the non-government – non-for-profit sector in the Republic of Croatia is the result of a joint effort that lasted for many months.

II. A JOINT INTRODUCTION BY ALL GROUPS WORKING ON THE PROGRAM

Government of the Republic of Croatia (hereafter: Government) accepts pluralism as the main principle in creating a society that gives its citizens a legitimate right to shape and advocate different interests and needs of its members through various forms of organizations and free associations. Non-governmental, non-for-profit sector (hereafter: Sector) is a space in which civic initiatives gather and develop social, human potential and are an integral element of the social and political system and a preferable way of democratizing the relations in the public, political and economic life of a community.

Program of cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the non-government – non-for-profit sector in the Republic of Croatia (hereafter: Program) is based on common values of modern democracy and the values of civic initiatives founded on social changes, cooperation, solidarity, social justice, transparency, personal ability and responsibility, decision making participation, consideration for personality, self-organizing, consideration for organizational diversity and continuous learning, and is aimed to creating effective mechanisms that will enhance the communication between the Government and the Sector.

He Government and the Sector have different roles and responsibilities in solving problems and developing the community in its whole. Thus they will base their relations on partnership, transparent arrangements, mutual informing and observing the Program.

The Government, aware of its own limitations when asked to meet the social needs of its citizens, calls upon non-governmental, non-for-profit organizations to participate in defining of the public needs, and by so doing carries a part of its affairs over to the Sector and up to a point provides financial means for their implementation.

These new accents in the relation of the State towards the third sector show that the administration has recognized highly valuable abilities of its citizens and their associations. Their work is not an alternative to the Government, local administration bodies and state administration units. On the contrary; continuous and distinct interest of the State for non-governmental organizations and civic associations will provide a long-term stability of the democratic order, unburden the State in some fields and reduce its expenses. Such a partner relationship will increase the idea of co-responsibility of the administration and the citizens for the development and advancement of the community and the circumstances in which we live.

With the deliberation of new legal frames in favor of the Sector, especially the Law on Associations, Law on Foundations, fiscal laws and the Law on Local Administration and Self-Government, the State will support the development of philanthropy, partner relations and the inter-sector cooperation, including also the socially responsible business sector in the condition of a decentralized decision-making and financing system.

III. PROGRAM STATUS

1. The Program has been designed on the basis of a partnership and was brought forward after extensive discussions commenced on June 26, 2000 with the representatives of the Sector in Croatia, representatives of local administration and self-government and state administrative bodies.
2. The Program represents but a general framework and a mechanism that will enable the improvement of the relations between the Government and the Sector.
3. The Program is a document that refers to cooperation between the Government and the Sector and as such is not a legally binding document. Its authority evolves from the confirmation given by the Government and the Sector during the discussions. The Program will initially refer to the state administration bodies; nevertheless, immediately after this document will have been approved, the designing of local and regional programs of cooperation on the local level will commence. Thereafter, the coordinated text of the Program the Government will forward to the Croatian Parliament.

IV. PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION

Principles of cooperation between the Government and the Sector as stated in this Program are based on:

- partnership
- transparency of Government's and Sector's activities
- independence of the Sector
- liability for the utilization of public resources
- promotion of equal opportunities for all, regardless of the race, skin color, gender, language, faith, political or other persuasion, national or social background, property, birth, education, social status or other such characteristics
- positive practice code and the improvement of the quality of action, that also includes the principle of partial or complete financing from the state or local budgets
- subsidiary principle as the foundation for the partnership between the Government and the Sector
- quality NGO action code
- promotion of non-violence and active acceptance of diversities
- building social capital

V. MODELS OD COOPERATION

Possible models of cooperation between the Government and the Sector anticipated with this program find their ground in:

- legislature – consultations with non-governmental, non-for-profit sector in the course of deliberation of new or amendments of the current laws and the inclusion of its representatives in the working groups of law movers
- consultation – during the process of designing the Government's National Program, in joint evaluation of the strategy, priorities and carriers of parts of the Program, in the evaluation of projects in which public money is invested such is the evaluation of action for environment, promotion of gender equality, equality of ethnic and religious communities, socially excluded citizens, national minorities, persons with disabilities
- evaluation of national policy in all areas (health, employment, protection of environment, social welfare, education, culture, military and security issues, Croatian interests abroad etc.)
- decentralization and cooperation for the durable development of the society
- partial or complete financing for programs and services of non-governmental, non-for-profit sector
- citizens' participation (public participation) in the process of decision making and meeting the community needs
- support and enhancement of self-organizing and volunteer action for the benefit of their community
- development of social enterprise and social capital as an important component for social development
- support for socially responsible business sector

VI. LIABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Liability of the Government of the Republic of Croatia for the purpose of this Program are as follows:

✓ **Regard for the Independence of the Sector**

To recognize and support the independence of the Sector, including its right within the law to organize campaigns, place objections and provide proposals for the government policy and questioning the policy, regardless of financial bounds that may exist, as well as the right to designate and manage its own affairs.

✓ **Financing**

To develop, in consultations with the Sector, the positive practice code and enhancement of the quality of action that would also contain the principles of transparent financing by the Government, consequently the financing by local administration units after local programs are approved.

To establish, on the basis of an earlier consultation with the Sector, fields, programs and services, which are possible to be partially transferred onto the Sector, and establish the amount of resources, needed for their implementation during the budgeting process.

To define financing models for organizations of persons with disabilities, as well as for those who permanently provide care for elderly, chronically ill and socially underprivileged persons.

To establish terms and standards that will enable individuals, organizations and civic initiatives an equal access to all models of support.

To enable self-sustainability and self-financing for Sector's programs through a supportive legislature. Therefore it is necessary to legally define the capacity and context of the non-profit acting.

To form working groups that would involve representatives of the Government, the Sector and eminent experts for the areas established by the program, who will design criteria to define and support the creation of legal frameworks for obtaining the status of those organizations that operate for the public benefit and the legal frameworks for distributing the resources and, on the basis of a tender, choose programs or projects and supervise their implementation.

To finance programs of non-governmental organizations from the state budget and local budgets, which will be made possible on three levels:

- contracts on financing the need to meet general, public needs in the society, that would last several years
- annual (or shorter-term) projects of non-governmental organizations
- smaller financial enhancements to those civic initiatives that bring new ideas and new development models or new modalities of finding solutions for the existing problems.

In the year 2001 the preparations will be made for the decentralization of the resources intended for activities of non-governmental, non-for-profit organizations, that will be approved for the best quality and most competitive programs, projects and services offered to meet public needs.

Consequently the development of foundations in Croatia will be clearly supported. The development of foundations will be achieved by giving grants to foundations, respecting the funds they have already obtained from other granters.

✓ **Development and Counseling**

To include the Sector into the process of designing and making decisions, development policy, strategy and programs, especially during the initial phase in order to establish the consequences for the society.

According to the principles of urgency, sensibility and confidentiality consult the Sector on the issues that influence the development of the society, especially when the Government proposes new roles and liabilities for the Sector or when it delivers new legislature. Such consultation should be done on a long notice and provide enough time for the response, taking into consideration the organization's need to consult its beneficiaries;

To take into consideration specific needs, interests and contributions of those who are a part of the Sector, such are women, minority groups, persons with disabilities and socially excluded citizens;

To develop, together with the Sector, the positive practice code and enhance the quality action regarding consultations, policy evaluation and implementation.

✓ **Enhancement of the Quality of Action**

Enhancement of the quality of action is defined through:

- promotion of efficient relationships by a consistent approach and good practice between the Government and the Sector;
- definition of inner system units or employees in state administration bodies who in their job description will also have the obligation to cooperate with the Sector;
- sticking with the principle of transparency of action;
- obligation to hold consultations of all state administration bodies with the representatives of the Sector in cases of deliberation of laws and/or important programs from their jurisdiction;
- analysis of the implementation of the Program, according to prior established criteria defined through the consultation;
- education of employees in state and local administration bodies so as to prepare them to be ready to transparently and responsibly establish partner relations with the

representatives of the Sector, and education of employees and volunteers in the non-governmental, non-for profit sector on the possibilities of the development of the inter-sector cooperation;

- designing supportive legal framework for the development of philanthropy, voluntary work and civil society, on the basis of which democratic, inclusive, social and solidary society will be built;
- Government's cooperation with the Sector, where the Government is to design a strategy to support the civil society in Croatia and by doing so is to compose a quality groundwork for effective mutual supplement of public non-government – non-for-profit sector in meeting the needs of the citizens;
- promotion of Program support on the local level.

VII. DUTY OF THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL – NON-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR

Liability of the non-governmental – non-for-profit sector for the purpose of this Program are as follows:

✓ Financing and Liability

To maintain high standards of management and conduct in doing the duty for the community, granters and beneficiaries, regarding the implementation of programs and projects, providing services and delivering reports;

To have a responsible approach toward positive legislature;

To promote the principle of transparency of action, and practice it when an activity of a non-governmental – non-for-profit organization is partially or completely financed by public money;

To provide transparency and the possibility to control the spending of funds with which the state or a local community entirely or partially finances programs of the non-governmental – non-for-profit sector.

✓ Development and Counseling

In cooperation with the Government support the possibility of employment in the non-for-profit sector and the development of social economy;

Provide information and consultation when appropriate for all beneficiaries, volunteers, members and supporters on the activities and policies presented to the Government or fed back to the Government;

Responsibly treat information from the Government, when obtainable.

✓ Enhancement of Quality Action

Support and develop cooperation, solidarity, social justice, transparency, personal and social responsibility, self-organizing and permanent learning;

Promote cooperative relations with the Government and other public sector organizations as well as with the organizations in the non-governmental – non-for-profit sector and the business sector;

Include, when applicable, the beneficiaries in to the development and management of the activities and/or services;

Promote equal opportunities regarding activities, employment, volunteers and service provision;

Support voluntarism and activities for the public benefit;

Supervise and analyze implementation of the Program each year together with the Government, and in accordance with the criteria established during consultations.

VIII. FURTHER ENHANCEMENT OF THE PROGRAM

1. Being an outline document, this Program is a starting point, not a conclusion. The Government and the Sector will, in their joint activity, see that its implementation and effectiveness be developed., A positive practice code and the enhancement of quality action will be prepared for the area of financing and consultations, and the strategy for the support of the development of civil society in the Republic of Croatia will be designed as a part of this process.
2. As a part of the development and enhancement process for the effectiveness of the Program, each year a meeting of Government and Sector representatives will be held in order to revise and analyze actions within the Program. Report from such meeting will be publicized and the Parliament will dully be informed of it.
3. The Government will support the spreading of the Program onto other institutions of the public sector and onto the local administration bodies, who will be called upon to adjust the program to respond to specific circumstances of given local communities in the definition of the relations with the non-governmental – non-for-profit sector.

In Zagreb, December 2000

For further information please contact:

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
Office for Cooperation with NGOs
Ulica grada Vukovara 78
10000 Zagreb
Croatia
phone: +385 1 610-6500
fax: +385 1 610-9972
E-mail: ured.za.udruge@zq.tel.hr

**LIST
OF MEMBERS IN WORKING GROUPS
FOR THE CREATION OF THE PROGRAM OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA AND THE NON-GOVERNMENT –
NON-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA**

I. NGO REPRESENTATIVES

A/ NGO Representatives

1. Martina Belić / Radmila Sučević, B.a.B.e., Zagreb
2. Sadika Zvirkić, Ženska grupa pri Odboru za ljudska prava, Karlovac
3. Zdenka Ungar, Ženska pomoć sada-SOS telefon, Zagreb
4. Vladimir Lay, Zeleni forum, Zagreb
5. Gojko Bežovan, CERANEO, Zagreb
6. Jelka Glumičić, Odbor za ljudska prava, Karlovac
7. Ljubo Manojlović / Milan Mrkalj, Srpski demokratski forum, Zagreb
8. Mladen Momčinović, Centar za građanske inicijative, Poreč
9. Aleksandra Kuratko / Zvonimir Mataga, GONG, Zagreb
10. Ivana Kabaj, "Lobi", Samobor
11. Dubravka Dujmović-Kušan, Hrvatska glazbena mladež, Zagreb
12. Vladimir Vadjon, Hrvatska paneuropska unija, Zagreb
13. Zorislav Bobuš / Jeronim Trputec, Savez organizacija invalida Hrvatske, Zagreb
14. Vesna Lendić Kasalo / Predrag Bosnar, Hrvatska zajednica tehničke kulture, Zagreb
15. Mladen Majetić, Zamir.net, Zagreb
16. Jelena Brajša / Mirjana Lovreković, Hrvatska humanitarna mreža, Zagreb
17. Irena Sertić, Udruga za zaštitu prava djece "Heureka", Zagreb
18. Gordana Forčić, SMART, Rijeka
19. Marija Raos / Danijela Babić, NIT, Zagreb
20. Alan Vojvodić / Roman Danko, EOS, Zagreb
21. Danijel Koletić, Strukovna udruga za odnose s javnošću, Zagreb
22. Branka Kaselj / Tatjana Ordanić, Centar za mir, nenasilje i ljudska prava, Osijek
23. Nives Ivelja / Vesna Jukić, Udruga "MI", Split
24. Sandra Bistričić-Koletić, Regionalni centar za potporu udrugama, Rijeka
25. Ana Žunić, GONG, Zadar
26. Milan Medić, Centar za civilne inicijative, Zagreb
27. Smiljana Rađa, Klub žena liječenih na dojci, Split
28. Karolina Pajer, Centar za mlade "San", Daruvar
29. Ana Miletić, Udruga "Luna", Dubrovnik
33. Ninoslav Šćukanec, Studentski informativni centar
34. Duško Popović, Hrvatska mreža zdravih gradova, Zagreb
35. Vinko Zidarić, Interkultura, Zagreb
36. Toni Vidan, Zelena akcija, Zagreb

B/ Representatives of non-for-profit, private institutions

34. Srđan Dvornik, Ustanova "Žalgoris" i Zaklada Heinrich Böll Stiftung
35. Nenad Maljković, Ustanova "Medius" i Junior Achievement za Hrvatsku

C/ Representatives of Religious Organizations

36. Vice John Batarelo / Boženko Lozo, Hrvatski Caritas

II. STATE ADMINISTRATION REPRESENTATIVES

- 37. Marija Boltek, Office for Cooperation with NGOs
- 38. Duška Bošnjaković, Ministry of Justice Administration, Local Government and Self-Government
- 39. Siniša Kuhar, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare

III. REPRESENTATIVES OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SELF-GOVERNMENT

- 40. Vesna Zec, Gradsko poglavarstvo Split
- 41. Višnja Fortuna, Gradsko poglavarstvo Zagreb
- 42. Iva Josipović, Županija Primorsko-goranska
- 43. Siniša Gregoran, Gradsko poglavarstvo Osijek

IV. REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN CROATIA

- 44. Zorica Benci, DFID, British Embassy in Croatia
- 45. Slavica Radošević, USAID
- 46. Nives Zenko, World Learning
- 47. Lidija Pavić / Ivana Laginja, AED
- 48. Drago Vručinić, Institut "Open Society"