

**SECRETARIAT GENERAL**

**DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS**  
**CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES PROGRAMME**



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Strasbourg, February 2004

CBM(2004)16

**PROJET PILOTE – PILOT PROJECT**

**PARTICIPATION OF MINORITIES IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES**

*Presented by the Catholic Relief Services*



Geographical coverage: Croatia

## **SUMMARY**

The project "Participation of Minorities in Decision-Making Processes" was submitted by the Catholic Relief Services, Zagreb (Croatia).

The duration of the project will be 12 months.

The project will focus on building the capacity for effective participation of the five Councils for National Minorities in the Vikovar-Sirmium County in the decision-making processes and promote interaction between the Councils of National Minorities and local government.

The main activities foreseen are a seminar for representatives of the Councils of National Minorities and local government as well as a capacity-building workshop on, inter alia, project management, partnership skills, lobbying and advocacy.

The sum requested is 20,830 €.

**A. Identity data**

1. **Title** : Participation of Minorities in Decision-Making Processes
2. **Starting date** : May 2004
3. **Duration in months** : Twelve months
4. **Geographical coverage** : Croatia
5. **Project implementation site** : City of Vukovar, Vukovar-Sirmium County
6. **Project language** : Croatian, English
7. **Type of activities** : seminar, workshops, and capacity building technical assistance

**8. Implementing agency**

**Name:** Catholic Relief Services/Croatia (CRS)  
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**9. Bank account details of implementing agency**

**Full name of bank account** Catholic Relief Services/Croatia  
709500840-9900000-912401

**IBAN number**

**Name and address of Bank** Privredna Banka Zagreb  
Avenija Vukovar 271, Zagreb

**10. Other participating agencies**

Vukovar Institute for Peace Research and Education (VIMIO), Experts from the European Academy of Bolzano

**11. Amount requested in EURO** 20.830

**12. Financing from other sources** none

## **B. Content**

### **1. Brief summary**

This pilot project will focus on building the capacity for effective participation in decision-making processes of five Councils for National Minorities in the Vukovar-Sirmium County (Serbs, Hungarians, Ruthenians and Ukrainians, Roma and Slovaks). One seminar and a series of two workshops will be held within the target community. Through their participation in the seminar and workshops, the Councils' representatives will acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for bringing about successful co-operation with local authorities and flexible consensus-based solutions for the representation of minority interests. Local government officials will also actively be included in these formation activities.

Article 23 of the newly amended Croatian Constitutional Law on Ethnic Minorities provides the legal base for the creation of Councils for National Minorities. The text states: "In order to improve, preserve and protect the position of national minorities in the society, members of national minorities are choosing, under the conditions regulated by this Constitutional Law, their representatives who will participate in public life and local governance through councils and representatives of national minorities in the units of self-government".

According to the provisions of the law, the Council's main role is to function as a representative and consultative body of the interests of the minority group at the local government level. It is the responsibility of the Council to provide local authorities with recommendations for protecting and developing the minority linguistic and cultural peculiarities, and preserving the essential elements of its identity.

In order to enable these Councils to adequately perform their role and to strengthen their ability to interact with the local authorities, CRS and its partner, the Vukovar Institute for Peace Research and Education (VIMIO), with the support of experts from the European Academy of Bolzano, will design and deliver specifically tailored training modules for building Councils' capacities for effective representation and participation in decision-making processes.

Phase I of this pilot project consists of a two-day seminar, which will provide an extensive overview of the different approaches towards minorities and their political representation. The existing Croatian legal framework for minority participation will be examined and compared with European standards and best practices. Successful examples from countries in Southeastern Europe, which are also in transition, will be presented, and their adaptability to the local context will be examined.

In Phase II, the acquired theoretical knowledge on various models of minority participation will serve as the foundation for building the Councils' structural capacities to efficiently represent the interests of their stakeholders and to actively engage in dialogue with the local authorities on issues of minority interests. To that end, CRS and VIMIO will design and deliver two sets of capacity building trainings in strategic planning, participatory needs assessment, organizational management, and partnership skills for building capable and responsive Councils for National Minorities. These will form the basis of the two workshops that will be conducted.

Throughout the project implementation, CRS and VIMIO will regularly provide technical assistance to the five Councils for National Minorities in the target area. This will be done through monthly coordination meetings where representatives will discuss their current activities, develop working plans and prepare possible joint interventions. VIMIO and CRS will help mediate any conflict situations that might arise between the members of one Council or among different Councils of National Minorities.

The seminar and workshops will be synchronized with the project cycle and will cover the categories that have been mentioned above - minority participation in decision-making processes and capacity building. Each of these trainings will have a theoretical and conceptual

component, an experiential component, and a skills acquisition component. The design of the training and its various components will be done in such a way that it will ensure that the skills transfer is demand driven.

With the expectation that this suggested capacity building training module for minority participation in decision-making processes for Councils for National Minorities proves to be successful, as we believe it will, the replicability of this methodology and approach will be easy to expand beyond the Vukovar-Sirmium County. In addition, the positive outcome of this project will demonstrate that the effective and direct participation of minorities in the decision-making processes is the best approach for turning the values of democracy, good governance and rule of law into a way of life.

## **2. Specific objectives**

- increased level of awareness and understanding of the values and possibilities offered by minority participation in enhancing democratic processes and promotion of multi-ethnic open societies
- exposure to different legal frameworks as they pertain to minority issues and strengthened capacities of Councils of National Minorities for effective participation in decision-making and adequate representation of minority groups' interests
- increased ability for interaction of Councils of National Minorities with local government offices in the identification and prioritization of areas of intervention and minority policy development

## **3. Evaluation criteria/indicators of achievement**

### for objective 1:

- minimum thirty participants have better understanding of the values and possibilities offered by minority participation in enhancing democratic processes
- minimum thirty participants have increased their knowledge and skills regarding minority participation
- minimum thirty participants with increased level of awareness of the importance of minority participation for democratic development and promoting good governance

### for objective 2:

- minimum thirty participants have a better understanding of the Croatian and European legal frameworks for minority rights and minority participation in decision making processes
- minimum thirty participants have strengthened their negotiation/mediation skills for quality interaction with local authorities

### for objective 3:

- five Councils for National Minorities have enhanced their capacities for more effectively representing the interests of their stakeholders and interacting with local authorities
- increased quality dialogue and better co-operation between local authorities and Councils for National Minorities on addressing issues of minority interests
- # of meetings hold between Councils for National Minorities and local authorities for joint prioritization of areas of intervention on issues of minority interest
- # of recommendations made by the Councils for National Minorities for minority policy development that are accepted by the local government

#### **4. Sources of verification**

- evaluation questionnaires completed by participants at the end of each project activity
- M&E reports for the monthly co-ordination meetings (for internal use)
- mid-term evaluation meeting of the project participants
- final evaluation of the project by those who have participated in it
- interim and final report to the Council of Europe prepared by the Project Manager

#### **5. Main target group(s)**

Councils of National Minorities in the Vukovar-Sirmium County (Hungarians, Roma, Ruthenians and Ukrainians, Slovaks, Serbs), Representatives of Local Government Authorities

#### **6. Programme of activities**

**Activity #1. Seminar “The Right to Participation of National Minorities” (two day seminar to be held in June 2004). This seminar will be delivered by experts from the European Academy of Bolzano in co-operation with CRS and VIMIO.**

Each topic is introduced by a short presentation (30-45min) after which discussion and group work takes place.

1° Day Morning Session

**Introduction-** Presentation of lecturers and participants and warm-up exercise

##### **Formal recognition as a precondition**

- minorities and the role of the law: constitutional approaches towards minorities and diversity
- minorities as constituents of the State vs. recognized minorities
- recognition as a group
- obstacles to citizenship- recent changes in Central & Eastern European Laws

1° Day Afternoon Session

##### **Participation in Decision-Making**

Arrangements at the Level of the Central Government

- elections and parliamentary representation
- voting rights and the right of a citizen to stand for election
- proportionate electoral systems (thresholds) vs. “guaranteed” representation ethnicity as a basis for political parties
- participation of minorities in government, judiciary and local levels

2° Day Morning Session

##### **Arrangements at the Regional and Local Level**

- advisory and consultative bodies
- self-governance and legal and political guarantees
- non-territorial and territorial arrangements: the role of consultative bodies

2° Day Afternoon Session

##### **Constitutional and Legal Safeguards**

- Their implementation and the Effective Participation of minorities

- Concluding remarks

**Activity #2. Two Sets of Capacity-Building Workshops (three days in September 2004 and three day in December 2004). The workshops will be delivered by CRS/VIMIO.**

Each topic is introduced by a short presentation (30-45min) after which discussion and group work will take place.

Workshop #1 September 2004

- strategic planning
- action plan development
- participatory needs assessment
- project cycle development
- project management
- organizational management

Workshop #2 December 2004

- partnership skills
- lobbying skills
- advocacy skills (people centred advocacy)
- public relation skills

**C. Detailed budget estimate / plan of expenditure**

Activity	Description	Unit Costs	N° Units	Total
<b>Activity #1 Seminar</b>				
1.1	Accommodation	50	30 x 2 days	3000
1.2	Transportation	25	30	750
1.3	Trainers fees	100	2 x 2 days	400
1.4	Translation	150	1 x 2 days	300
Total				4450
<b>Activity #2 Workshop 1</b>				
2.1	Accommodation	50	30 x 3 days	4500
2.2	Transportation	25	30	750
2.3	Trainers' fees	100	2 x 3 days	600
2.4	Training materials	10	30	300
Total				6150
<b>Activity #2 Workshop 2</b>				
3.1	Accommodation	50	30 x 3 days	4500
3.2	Transportation	25	30	750
3.3	Trainers' fees	100	2 x 3 days	600
3.4	Training material	10	30	300
Total				6150
Technical Assistance	Monthly meetings	100	1 x 12 months	1200
Total				1200
<b>Salaries &amp; Wages</b>				
4.1	Salary	880	2 (15%) x 12 months	1584
4.2	Social charges	720	3 (15%) x 12 months	1296
Total				2880
<b>Grand Total</b>				<b>20830</b>