



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
Office of the Deputy Foreign Minister  
Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinskog 7-8, 10000 Zagreb  
Phone: 01/4569-806; 01/4569-943; Fax: 01/4569-920

Open Government Partnership  
c/o Linda Frey, Executive Director  
1889 F Street NW, 2nd Floor  
Washington, DC 20006 United States

Zagreb, 14th June, 2014

Dear colleagues,

as a member of the global initiative Open Government Partnership, over the past two years the Republic of Croatia has demonstrated its eagerness to actively support and promote the principles of OGP. Significant advances have been achieved in Croatia in the fields of transparency, fight against corruption, empowering of citizens and the use of new technologies for the purpose of improving efficiency and responsibility of public authority bodies.

Allow me to name three key accomplishments that the Republic of Croatia has achieved within the OGP framework. Within the framework of implementing the 2012-2013 Action Plan, the Republic of Croatia fulfilled almost all the measures as was planned and has made, as was confirmed by the Independent Report Mechanism, significant steps towards improving transparency, openness and citizen participation. **In the area of Access to information**, the tasks of the protection of the right of access to information have been entrusted to the newly founded Office of the Information Commissioner. Apart from serving as a body of second instance in the resolution of complaints in connection with the exercise of the right of access to information, the competence of the Commissioner has been defined to include the duty of implementing the proportionality and public interest test. The Republic of Croatia has also made significant headway in the **area of public consultations**. Under the Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, a new requirement, for all public authority bodies has been created – the obligation that all draft proposals of acts and other regulations submitted into the governmental procedure have to be accompanied by reports on consultations carried out with the public. This created an increase of almost 160% from 144 consultations in 2012 and 675% increase from 48 consultations held in 2011. In the area of **IT technologies** a new government portal gov.hr has been launched, relaying on the British solutions for the gov.uk. portal, in order to provide citizens with an easy, user-friendly and centralized space for information about the Government, policies and the activities of public bodies. In addition, it will provide users, e-citizens, with their very own personalized electronic mailbox to communicate with the entire state administration system. The aim is to make such things as filing tax returns, checking spatial plans and registering births possible online via the portal. The online portal will even tap into the school directories and enable parents to track the progress of their kids at school and provide information such as passport expiry date and location of the closest polling station.

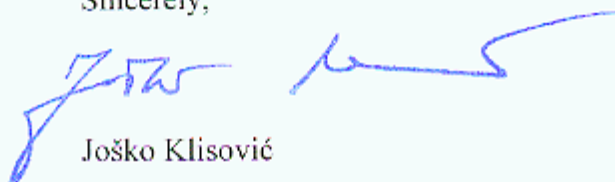
All of these accomplishments would not have been possible without the dedication of the national OGP body established as soon as Croatia joined the initiative. **The OGP Initiative Council** consists equally of representatives of the government and the civil society. The civil society in Croatia has been extremely active, equal partner in the process. Almost all activities and actions, including the process of writing of Action Plans, are taking place on the basis of the needs defined by the civil society representatives. Moreover, the membership in the Council will soon be expanded in order to reflect the new Action plan as well as to include a representative of youth and a representative of the private sector, whilst keeping the balance between the governmental and non-governmental sector intact. Having made the decision to run for the Steering Committee, the Government of the Republic of Croatia plans to allocate two more persons to the team in charge of the daily OGP tasks, so that the team would be able to respond to all tasks in timely and efficient manner. The OGP in the Republic of Croatia will continue to be led by the Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Joško Klisović and two persons in his office Ms. Ana Šimundža and Ms. Tamara Puhovski. The second part of the team is Mr. Igor Vidačak and Ms. Sandra Pernar from the Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs.

There are several ways in which we feel that Croatia could contribute to the work of the Steering Committee and provide support to the member states. **The experience of cooperation with NGOs in Croatia in all spheres of public life** has been recognized as an example of good practice in the region and beyond and can serve as an example of good practice. In addition, **active and equal partnership of the Government and NGOs demonstrated in the common work on the OGP Initiative** in Croatia can be intensively shared with other OGP member states and can help shape policies of managing the Initiative as such. Also, Croatia has a very active **regional policy** with a significant development aid program for helping the EU integration of its Southern and Eastern neighborhoods. This in particular pertains to activities in the fields of transparency, combating corruption and the active engagement of citizens, NGOs and other stakeholders. In this regard, Croatia is sharing experience and knowledge attained in its own recent EU accession process and is keen to further enrich and enhance related projects with OGP values and expertise.

Dear colleagues,

The Republic of Croatia has over last two years gone above and beyond its accomplishments set by national legislation and European accession in order to reach the level of excellence set and supported by the OGP Initiative. As a country that has greatly benefited from these reforms, Croatia is determined to provide assistance and support to any country heading in the same direction. We see our membership in the Steering Committee as an important opportunity to do so, and to help promote and strengthen the Initiative as such. It is thus my pleasure to, based on all of the arguments above, present our candidacy for the membership in the Open Government Partnership Steering Committee.

Sincerely,



Joško Klisović

Deputy Foreign Minister  
and President of the Croatian OGP Initiative Council