



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

STATEMENT

**WORKING SESSION 14-15
ROMA/SINTI AND, IN PARTICULAR, EARLY EDUCATION FOR
ROMA AND SINTI CHILDREN**

Warsaw, 7 October 2009

The Republic of Croatia fully aligns itself with the EU statement but in our national capacity we would like to make the following statement.

The Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and Constitutional Law on the Rights of national minorities represent the legal basis for regulating the rights and protection of national minorities and guarantees equality to members of all national minorities in Croatia.

Croatian Government considers national minorities as an asset and sees in their protection and promotion the way to build tolerance and understanding as the basis for developing democratic values and social pluralism.

Regarding today's topic I would like to emphasize that Croatia adopted a wide range of programmes and policies aimed at improve the living condition of the Roma national minority. Numerous efforts have been invested to improve the education of the Roma, ranging from pre-school to university education as well as adult education.

The results of implementation of the National Programme for the Roma and the Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015, are visible in yearly increase of the number of Roma children in pre-school and high school facilities and especially in primary schools where the number of Roma children has tripled in last five years.

At the moment there is 20 Roma students at the University level and scholarship have been granted for 11 students who requested it.

To conclude, let me reiterate that the Government of the Republic of Croatia will continue to work closely with the representatives of the Roma national minorities and as a result we see that a better education for Roma children will lead to the full integration of Roma national minority into our society.