

ZAGREB DECLARATION, 27 October 2011

We, the participants of the Conference on the Provision of Civil Status Documentation and Registration in South Eastern Europe (Zagreb, 26–27 October 2011), taking into account fundamental human rights obligations and relevant international instruments on statelessness, as well as aspirations towards European integration, propose and recommend to consider the following principles:

I. At the local level:

1. Remove all obstacles to the documentation and registration needs, particularly of vulnerable persons. This may include legal reforms, adequate residency and documentation requirements, the waiving of fees, facilitated birth and subsequent registration and the issuance of identity cards.
2. Establish a national coordination mechanism (e.g., MoU) amongst the various stakeholders for which a focal point should be designated.
3. Strengthen relevant municipal services, in particular that of civil registration and social welfare centres, to identify and address registration and documentation issues.
4. Carry out concrete efforts to identify and assist all persons at risk of statelessness, especially those who need to be registered and who lack documentation.
5. Conduct activities in co-ordination with civil society and use mobile teams for outreach and registration.
6. Develop awareness campaigns to sensitize on the need to be registered at birth and explaining the procedures.
7. Actively involve Roma and other minority groups throughout the entire process.
8. Promote universal birth registration, in specific cases by simplifying evidentiary requirements in administrative and judicial procedures necessary to complete registration.

II. At the regional level:

Enhance co-operation at the regional level. To this end, examine the role, structure and methods of the Sarajevo Process Working Group on Civil Documentation in order to further a regional initiative to:

1. Identify and address the regional aspects of the provision of civil documentation, registration and the risk of statelessness and develop benchmarks to assess progress.

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2. Conduct awareness raising activities amongst potential target groups and stakeholders.
3. Ensure co-operation and exchange of information among stakeholders including responsible authorities and civil society representatives.
4. Establish adequate, accelerated and facilitated procedures to assist civil documentation and registration.
5. Encourage the reciprocal recognition of documents.
6. Further develop co-operation with relevant institutions outside the region to overcome issues related to identification and documentation of persons originating from the region.
7. Follow up during the March 2012 meeting of the Roma Decade in Skopje.