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Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Country programme document

Croatia

Summary

The country programme document (CPD) for the Republic of Croatia is presented to the Executive Board for discussion and approval at the present session, on a no-objection basis. The CPD is funded by other resources only and includes a proposed aggregate indicative budget of \$18,710,000 in other resources, subject to the availability of specific-purpose contributions, for the period 2023 to 2027.

* E/ICEF/2022/22.



Programme rationale

1. The Republic of Croatia is a high-income country with a gross domestic product (GDP), in 2020, of \$57.2 billion.¹ The economy, which experienced positive growth before the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, has been affected by COVID-19 since 2020. However, the economy began to recover in 2021. In real terms, growth in GDP in the third quarter of 2021 was 25.9 percentage points higher than in the same quarter of 2019.²

2. Croatia is a transit country and, to a lesser extent, a destination for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. During the last quarter of 2015, more than 500,000 migrants passed through Croatia. Although they were provided with information on aspects of integration in the country, only 152 sought international protection there.³ The number of migrants crossing the borders towards Europe from Afghanistan, the Syrian Arab Republic and other countries declined from 2016 to 2020 then significantly increased, from 1,932 applicants for international protection in 2020⁴ to 3,039 applicants in 2021.⁵ In 2022, the crisis in Ukraine has caused millions of people to flee to other parts of Europe, including Croatia, which requires integrated cross-sectoral and cross-border cooperation.

3. The Government of Croatia has developed a set of child well-being indicators to monitor the implementation of policies,⁶ which needs further operationalization. Croatia generally lacks the human and financial resources for monitoring and evaluating its progress towards the fulfilment of child rights. Disaggregated data are limited, hindering the identification of the most vulnerable children and the development of evidence-based policies and budgets in support of the child rights.

4. About 23 per cent of the Croatian population is at risk of poverty or social exclusion, compared with the European Union average of 20.7 per cent.⁷ About 16.8 per cent of children are at risk of poverty.⁸ The risk is higher for children with disabilities, children in households with a sole caregiver, and Roma children in central and northern Croatia, and the Slavonia region. Children with disabilities and developmental delays, children deprived of adequate parental care and exposed to violence, children living in remote rural areas, and children of migrants and national ethnic minorities are at a greater risk of being left behind, as they often face barriers in accessing education, employment, housing and health care.⁹

5. The national strategy for combating poverty and social exclusion has shown progress, through reforms of the social benefits scheme and an expansion of the social

¹ World Bank, World Development Indicators, Croatia Country Profile.

² Croatian Bureau of Statistics, <https://podaci.dzs.hr/2021/en/10543>.

³ Ministry of Interior, Statistics on international protection seekers, https://mup.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/Publikacije/2016/medjunarodna_zastita_2015.pdf.

⁴ Ministry of Interior, https://mup.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/statistika/2021/Medjunarodna_zastita/Medjunarodna_zastita_4kvartal2020.pdf.

⁵ Ministry of Interior, https://mup.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/statistika/2021/Medjunarodna_zastita/Statisticki-pokazatelj-irazitelja-medjunarodne-zastite-do-31-12-2021.pdf.

⁶ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), "Child Welfare indicators, Document proposal" (Indikatori dobrobiti djece, Prijedlog dokumenta), 2017, www.unicef.org/croatia/izvjesca/indikatori-dobrobiti-djece.

⁷ Eurostat, People at risk of poverty or social exclusion, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tipslc10/default/table?lang=en>.

⁸ Eurostat, <https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/submitViewTableAction.do>.

⁹ Ombudsperson for Children, "Report on the work of the Ombudsperson for Children for 2018" (Izvješće o radu pravobraniteljice za djecu za 2018), 2019, <https://dijete.hr/hr/izvjesca/izvjesca-o-radu-pravobraniteljica-za-djecu/#>.

protection system, including those within the Child Guarantee programme. However, average per capita spending on social protection in Croatia is low: only one third of that of the European Union. To reach the most vulnerable populations, the country needs to sharpen its criteria and means for equity and evidence-based targeting, improve efficiency and strengthen coordination between central and local administrations.¹⁰

6. Croatia has made significant progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The infant mortality rate declined from 13 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 4.2 in 2018, slightly above the European Union average of 3.5.¹¹ Croatia was ranked twenty-fourth globally against international standards for access to justice for children.¹² However, despite progress, inequality in access to basic services remains a concern.

7. Access to integrated early childhood interventions (ECI) for children with disabilities, or those at risk of developmental delays, is an issue. About 10.5 per cent of children under the age of 5 are eligible for ECI services; however, just one in eight of these receives them.¹³ Parents and caregivers have little awareness of ECI and may fear the stigma attached to ECI services, which affects the demand. Families living in poverty and remote rural areas, and families belonging to ethnic minorities, are most affected.

8. Croatia lacks reliable data on nutrition indicators, which hinders the assessment of the situation. Figures on childhood obesity and the number of overweight children are among the few data available; about 33 per cent of girls and 37 per cent of boys aged 8 to 9 years are overweight and obese.¹⁴ Underlying factors include poor diets, unhealthy feeding practices and insufficient capacities of health service providers to counsel parents and caregivers on age-appropriate, complementary feeding practices. The rate of exclusive breastfeeding is generally low and not monitored consistently.

9. The Government of Croatia has increased investments in early childhood education (ECE) since 2018, but enrolment figures remain below European Union targets. Some 79.4 per cent of children aged 3 to 6 years attend ECE, with a higher percentage in urban and more developed areas. More than two thirds of Roma children aged 3 to 6 years do not attend ECE.¹⁵ Children with disabilities, migrant children, children living in poverty and of unemployed parents are less likely to be enrolled in ECE.¹⁶ Insufficient kindergarten facilities and a lack of ECE teachers are barriers to increasing enrolment; responsibilities for ECE financing and legislation are separated between the local authorities and the Ministry of Science and Education. Parents have limited knowledge of the benefits of early learning, and social norms fuel the acceptability of children kept home if their parents are unemployed.

¹⁰ World Bank Group, *Country Partnership Framework for the Republic of Croatia for the period FY19-FY24*, 2019.

¹¹ Eurostat, Infant mortality rate, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00027/default/table?lang=en>.

¹² Child Rights International Network, "Rights, Remedies and Representation: Global Report on Access to Justice for Children", 2016.

¹³ UNICEF, "Early childhood intervention - analysis of the situation in the Republic of Croatia" (Rana intervencija u djetinjstvu - analiza stanja u Republici Hrvatskoj), 2020.

¹⁴ Croatian Institute of Public Health, *Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative, Croatia 2018/2019 (CroCOSI)*, 2021, <https://www.hzjz.hr/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/CroCOSI-publikacija-2021-ENGLISKI-WEB-pages.pdf>.

¹⁵ Kunac and others, "Roma Inclusion in the Croatian Society: a Baseline Data Study", European Union, Government of the Republic of Croatia, Centre for Peace Studies, ECORYS, 2018.

¹⁶ UNICEF, "How to get a kindergarten for everyone? Ways of financing the system of early and preschool education" (Kako do vrtića za sve - Mogućnosti financiranja sustava ranog i predškolskog odgoja i obrazovanja) 2020.

10. Croatia has achieved a 100 per cent participation rate in compulsory education and gender parity.¹⁷ However, 39 per cent of Roma children (especially girls) are not completing lower secondary education.¹⁸ Children with disabilities and children from Roma communities are hampered from finishing school because of discrimination and the segregated nature of services they are offered. Specialized programmes to support retention and other educational pathways are needed, with policies to promote inclusive access and mechanisms to track absenteeism and school dropout.

11. The World Economic Forum ranks the quality of education in Croatia at 71 for primary schools and 112 for higher education and training, among 137 countries.¹⁹ The 2018 results of the Programme for International Student Assessment show that, at age 15, girls are underperforming in mathematics and boys are underperforming in reading.²⁰

12. Some 9.1 per cent of adolescents aged 15 to 19 are not in education, employment or training, according to Eurostat.²¹ Barriers to education and employment increased during COVID-19. They included an inadequate capacity of teachers and an education curriculum that does not build skills relevant and transferable to the labour market. Croatia ranks nineteenth on the European Union's digital economy and society 2021 index.²² Over 40 per cent of adolescents aged 14 to 18 said that the pandemic had a detrimental effect on their mental health.²³ There is a need to strengthen ways for adolescents to engage in civic issues and to ensure the meaningful participation of vulnerable groups.

13. In its 2014 report, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended addressing bottlenecks to deinstitutionalization; these include a lack of family support services for children with disabilities and the social acceptance of institutional care. Despite progress, 36.5 per cent of children who are deprived of adequate parental care live in formal residential care. Of that number, 24 per cent are children with disabilities, 16 per cent are under the age of 7 years, and 16 per cent have behavioural problems.²⁴

14. The number of children whose parents are supported by family outreach workers rose from 5,477 in 2015²⁵ to 6,774 in 2020.²⁶ Parenting programmes for highly vulnerable parents improved their childcare skills, while new tools for case-management and the capacity-building of front-line workers enhanced the assistance available for vulnerable families and foster carers.²⁷ Yet, the number of children

¹⁷ Eurostat, Students' participation.

¹⁸ Potočnik and others, Roma inclusion in the Croatian society: education and employment, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities of the Republic of Croatia, 2020.

¹⁹ World Economic Forum, Global Competitiveness Report 2017–2018.

²⁰ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, PISA 2018 results.

²¹ Eurostat, Young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex, age and labour status (NEET rates), https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-datasets/-/edat_ifse_20.

²² European Commission, Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) 2021 Croatia, 2021.

²³ Institute for Social Research in Zagreb, National monitoring of effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the earthquake, 2021.

²⁴ Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, Administrative data, 2021, <https://mrosp.gov.hr/strategije-planovi-programi-izvjesca-statistika/4165>.

²⁵ Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, Administrative data, 2015, pp. 56 and 64, <https://mrosp.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/MDOMSP%20dokumenti/Godi%C5%A1nje%20statisticko%20izvjesce%20o%20primijenjenim%20pravima%20socijalne%20skrbi%20%20u%20RH%20u%202015.%20godini-2.pdf>.

²⁶ Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, Administrative data, 2020, p.66, <https://mrosp.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/Socijalna%20politika/Odluke/Godisnje%20statisticko%20izvjesce%20u%20RH%20za%202020.%20godinu.PDF>.

²⁷ Child Frontiers, "Evaluation of the Family-Based Care Component within the Croatia Country Programme (2017–2020)", 2020.

whose personal rights are violated increased from 8,769 in 2018²⁸ to 9,130 in 2020.²⁹ Online violence and abuse are emerging risks, particularly for girls.³⁰ Implementation of legislation intended to prevent violence, and services provided to children affected by violence, are limited by the lack of specialized services, unavailability in certain counties, insufficient social workforce and intersectoral cooperation, and sociocultural norms that normalize violence.

15. Croatia is exposed to natural hazards that can hamper children's progress and lead to humanitarian crises. The 2020 earthquakes in Zagreb and central Croatia incurred costly damage to infrastructure, interrupted services, and led to several casualties. A survey revealed that more than one third of children exposed to the earthquakes were negatively affected, with higher stress levels among girls.³¹ Hydro-meteorological hazards, such as rising sea levels, prolonged droughts and a scarcity of potable water, are likely to become more severe with climate change.

16. The country programme is informed by evaluations, research,³² gender programme reviews and stakeholder consultations that identified priorities and lessons learned from the previous programming cycle and the response to COVID-19. These include the need to:

- (a) improve integration and cross-sectoral programming to support synergies in advocacy, social and behaviour change strategies and fundraising efforts
- (b) increase the role of UNICEF as a convener through alliances and partnerships with traditional and non-traditional stakeholders
- (c) further a systemic approach to the collection of disaggregated data and evidence-generation for sharper targeting of vulnerable boys and girls
- (d) ensure a risk-informed programme that strengthens national capacities for risk reduction, climate action and emergency preparedness and response.

17. UNICEF has a comparative advantage in its policy advocacy leadership on child rights and its mandate to provide technical assistance and innovative solutions to address child rights violations, and to monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The new country programme will address identified priority issues through three components:

- (a) early childhood development
- (b) adolescents and youth
- (c) social inclusion, protection and child rights' monitoring.

Programme priorities and partnerships

18. The overarching goal of the UNICEF Country Programme of Cooperation 2023–2027 with the Government of Croatia is to provide improved opportunities and support for more children and adolescents – particularly those who are marginalized

²⁸ Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, Administrative data, 2018, p. 62, <https://mrosp.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/dokumenti/MDOMSP%20dokumenti/Godisnje%20statisticko%20izvjesce%20u%20Republici%20Hrvatskoj%20u%202018.%20godini.pdf>.

²⁹ Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, Administrative data, 2020, p. 64.

³⁰ Ministry of Interior, Statistical overview, 2017, p. 70, [https://mup.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/statistika/2018/Ozujak/Statisticki%20pregled_2016WEB%20\(3\).pdf](https://mup.gov.hr/UserDocsImages/statistika/2018/Ozujak/Statisticki%20pregled_2016WEB%20(3).pdf).

³¹ Jokić Begić and others, "How are we doing? Life in Croatia in the time of COVID: Preliminary results of the research project" (*Kako smo? Život u Hrvatskoj u doba korone. Preliminarni rezultati istraživačkog projekta. fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu*), 2020.

³² UNICEF, "The Impact of the Business Sector on Children's Rights in Croatia", July 2019.

and at risk of being left behind – so that they may develop their full potential, live in safer and more inclusive environments, and realize their rights.

19. The country programme contributes directly to the Croatian National Development Strategy (2030), as well as numerous strategies listed on page 10. The programme supports Croatia in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and contributes to UNICEF regional and global priorities. It supports the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 and the Gender Action Plan, 2022–2025.

20. Given the nature of the Ukrainian refugee crisis and continuing migration flows, the programme will support the Government of Croatia and partners in strengthening their preparedness and capacity to respond promptly to the needs of refugee and migrant children and affected host communities. To help achieve this, UNICEF will promote a tailored, cross-sectoral integration of humanitarian-development nexus programming within national systems.

21. The programme employs an intersectoral approach focused on two windows of opportunity in child development: early childhood (the first decade) and adolescence and youth (the second decade). The third pillar, focusing on social inclusion, protection and the monitoring of child rights, cuts across the life cycle. Strategies addressing the barriers to the realization of child rights are

- (a) partnership and collaboration with the public and private sectors
- (b) enhanced data-collection to ensure disaggregation, evidence-generation, research and evaluation
- (c) advocacy and communication
- (d) innovative ways of strengthening systems focused on “leaving no one behind”
- (e) communication for social and behaviour change
- (f) gender-transformative programming
- (g) risk-informed programming.

22. Although United Nations organizations in Croatia do not work under a Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, UNICEF is recognized as a credible convener with a strong track record of bringing together United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to:

- (a) further policy advocacy on child rights
- (b) promote South-South and triangular cooperation (a way to collaborate and share knowledge, skills, know-how, and good practices)
- (c) advance climate and environment action
- (d) mobilize and leverage resources towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

23. The office raises resources for its response in Croatia and emergencies abroad, but its greater contribution lies in its ability to forge and leverage strategic and institutional partnerships at national and subnational levels, in both the public and private sectors and with media, civil society, academia and children and adolescents themselves. UNICEF leverages crucial channels within the European Union to secure sustainable funding for children and break the cycle of poverty in the Member States. It works closely with the private sector and financial and multilateral institutions to deliver results for children and strengthen institutions that support the most vulnerable. The business sector and media remain allies in promoting positive gender roles and addressing harmful stereotypes of children and adolescents.

Early childhood development (first decade)

24. This component ensures that children, particularly the most vulnerable, benefit from timely and integrated early childhood development services. These children include those from Roma communities, those living in poverty, with developmental delays and disabilities, or those living in remote areas. Services which could benefit them include ECI, education, nutrition, and the encouragement of nurturing care and positive parenting. This component also contributes to good-quality maternal health care and nutrition services for children in all settings and to age-appropriate responses within the health sector to gender-based violence. It will strengthen integrated policy frameworks and national and subnational systems that deliver these services.

25. Building on lessons from the testing of the Child Guarantee programme and on the findings of a review and evaluation, UNICEF will provide policy advice and technical assistance to the Government in scaling up access to good-quality and inclusive ECIs and education, and to expanding service coverage for the most vulnerable.

26. UNICEF will strengthen national capacities to generate quality, disaggregated data and analysis on ECI and support the Government in developing an ECI Management Information System. UNICEF will use the analysis to inform advocacy and the development of integrated policies and programmes targeting the most vulnerable children.

27. UNICEF will support professional development programmes that build the capacities of health, education and social sector personnel to provide inclusive and gender-responsive teaching, to ensure the early detection of disabilities and developmental delays in young children, making referrals and integrating interventions. UNICEF will support various institutions to promote nurturing care practices that are gender-equitable, empower parents and caregivers and deepen their knowledge about ECIs and education, immunization, nutrition and positive parenting. This will include improving access to evidence-based and gender-responsive information on early childhood development (ECD) services.

28. UNICEF will collaborate with ministries (health, education and social welfare), the private sector and civil society organizations to increase investment in good-quality ECD services, particularly for the most vulnerable children and those living in remote areas. UNICEF will advocate with the private sector to incorporate family-friendly policies and practices, including those that enforce the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes.

Adolescents and youth (second decade)

29. This programme component seeks to promote the meaningful participation of adolescents in issues that concern them and ensure they benefit from equitable access to education and training; formal and non-formal. Programme activities will be particularly welcoming of adolescents with disabilities and those living in precarious situations.

30. The programme will support strengthening the education system to improve learning outcomes and skills development. Key priorities are:

- (a) supporting adolescents to remain in school
- (b) increasing alternative learning opportunities for out-of-school children
- (c) ensuring that teaching is good quality, inclusive and gender-responsive and a smoother transition from school to the labour market.

Adolescent girls, adolescents with disabilities and those from Roma and other ethnic minorities are a particular focus.

31. UNICEF will advocate for a better data system to identify and track adolescents at risk of school dropout and those who are not in education, employment or training. UNICEF will work with the Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA) to provide school retention and re-entry opportunities for adolescents. UNICEF will also support the professional development of pre- and in-service teachers to ensure safe and inclusive learning environments in schools, with an emphasis on mental health.

32. UNICEF will partner with the Central State Office of Demography and Youth, line ministries, the ETTA, and public, private and civil sectors to support efforts to improve adolescents' access to training, including on digital literacy and social entrepreneurship. This work will target disadvantaged adolescents, particularly girls, enabling them to transition from school to the labour market. UNICEF will engage the private sector in scaling up innovative solutions to build entrepreneurship skills among adolescents and promote online safety.

33. UNICEF will expand partnerships with youth organizations, local governments and the private sector to strengthen and institutionalize platforms for adolescent participation, civic engagement and media literacy, thus encouraging more adolescents, especially the most disadvantaged, to participate in social change and influencing decision-making in matters affecting their lives.

Social inclusion, protection and child rights monitoring

34. This programme component seeks to ensure children and adolescents live in safer environments where they are increasingly protected from violence and adversities; have access to good-quality services, practices and policies; and benefit from contributions from public and private partners. The focus is on the most vulnerable children and adolescents: those in alternative care, those from Roma and migrant communities, those with disabilities, those with behavioural problems and those living in poverty.

35. The country programme will strengthen child protection legislative and normative frameworks, with a specific focus on family-based alternative care and preventing violence against children. This includes strengthening national capacities to develop and reform social policies and budgets that are evidence-based, child-sensitive and gender-transformative, and increasing investments in integrated, specialized family- and community-based services. UNICEF will strengthen national capacities to generate and use high-quality, disaggregated data and analysis for policy and programme development and for monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

36. UNICEF will partner with the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy; the Ministry of Justice and Public Administration; and the Ministry of the Interior to support the child protection system and promote positive social norms to prevent and respond to abuse, exploitation and violence, including gender-based violence. Efforts will include strengthening the social welfare workforce and empowering children, adolescents, parents and caregivers to adopt positive parenting and care practices and increase help-seeking behaviours.

37. UNICEF will engage with media, academia, professional associations and the Agency for Electronic Media of the Republic of Croatia to raise awareness and promote ethical media practices when reporting on child rights' violations. UNICEF will mobilize business-sector alliances to support programmes to prevent offline and online violence against children.

38. UNICEF will strengthen the capacities of ombudspersons to implement targeted outreach activities and enhance the monitoring of child rights' violations. In cooperation with ombudspersons, civil society organizations and academia, UNICEF will monitor child rights and will advocate for the implementation of recommendations from the

- (a) Committee on the Rights of the Child
- (b) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- (c) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

UNICEF will also work to ensure that the most marginalized children and families have access to justice where rights are violated.

39. Work on improving programme effectiveness will include:

- (a) planning, monitoring and evaluation
- (b) communications, advocacy and partnerships, including with businesses
- (c) mainstreaming gender equality
- (d) risk-responsive and disability-inclusive programming across sectors
- (e) governance and management systems.

Summary budget table

| <i>Programme component</i> | <i>(In thousands of United States dollars)</i> | | |
|--|--|------------------------|---------------|
| | <i>Regular resources</i> | <i>Other resources</i> | <i>Total</i> |
| Early childhood development (first decade) | 0 000 | 5 560 | 5 560 |
| Adolescents and young people (second decade) | 0 000 | 5 450 | 5 450 |
| Social inclusion, protection and child rights monitoring | 0 000 | 5 030 | 5 030 |
| Programme effectiveness | 0 000 | 2 670 | 2 670 |
| Total | 0 000 | 18 710 | 18 710 |

Programme and risk management

40. This document summarizes UNICEF contributions to national plans and serves as the primary unit of accountability to the Executive Board for results and resources assigned to the programme at the country level. The accountability of managers at country, regional and headquarters levels concerning country programmes is set out in the organization's programme and operations' policies and procedures. In implementing the programme, UNICEF will continue to operate under the overall coordination of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs. Annual programme reviews co-chaired by the ministry and UNICEF will monitor progress to verify achievements, analyse constraints and identify actions to improve programme effectiveness.

41. The programme will contribute to fulfilling child rights and the Sustainable Development Goals. UNICEF will strengthen the capacity of implementing partners in areas such as

- (a) a harmonized approach to cash transfers framework
- (b) results-based management, monitoring and evaluation
- (c) child safeguarding and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

42. UNICEF will use the enterprise governance risk and compliance tool to identify threats to the achievement of results, ensuring periodic management reviews to adjust any necessary mitigating measures. UNICEF will ensure effective emergency preparedness and response, in line with the Core Commitments to Children in Humanitarian Action, by analysing contextual risks to children and by using the emergency preparedness platform. In consultation with the Government and the United Nations country team, UNICEF will participate in joint contingency planning and coordination in emergencies.

43. While UNICEF has successfully mobilized additional resources in recent years, the economic repercussions of COVID-19 could constrain the resources available for the country programme. UNICEF will aim to diversify funding and take advantage of opportunities to collaborate with, and leverage funding from the private sector, multilateral organizations, international financing institutions and global programme partnerships.

44. Programme fundraising efforts will engage the private sector, including corporate businesses, foundations, philanthropic organizations and individuals, European Union-based financing channels and international financial institutions. UNICEF Croatia Country Office is self-financed; it foresees a gradual increase in resource mobilization during the implementation of the programme and will focus on leveraging financing through broad partnerships. UNICEF will work closely with the line ministries to raise additional resources for programmes and bridge financial gaps. UNICEF will continue its collaboration with other country offices and will export good practices from Croatia to support child well-being across the world.

Monitoring, learning and evaluation

45. UNICEF will monitor the achievement of results against indicators in the integrated results and resources framework, sector workplans and the integrated monitoring, evaluation and research plan. UNICEF will use partner reports and field monitoring to collect data, leveraging the country's solid level of institutional capacity.

46. Internal reviews of annual management plans will consider the effectiveness of governance and management systems, the stewardship of financial resources and the management of human resources. Annual reviews with national counterparts and implementing partners will assess progress towards targets; examine programmatic, operational and financial risks; and define appropriate course corrections or control and mitigation measures.

47. In cooperation with line ministries, the Croatian Bureau of Statistics, the parliament and ombudspersons, the World Bank and other United Nations and international organizations, UNICEF will work on strengthening national monitoring and evaluation capacities, sectoral management information systems and the use of analysis for evidence-based policy advocacy. UNICEF will work with partners to develop feedback and compliance mechanisms to foster the greater participation of vulnerable populations in programming.

48. Evaluations will seek to confirm the relevance, sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency of programmes and will be implemented in line with the costed evaluation plan. Evaluation processes will apply gender equality and equity lenses and examine principles of stakeholder participation and the human rights-based approach. Planned evaluations will generate evidence for learning, informing the programme and shifting it strategically if needed.

Annex

Results and resources framework

Croatia – UNICEF country programme of cooperation, 2023–2027

| |
|---|
| <p>Convention on the Rights of the Child: Articles 1–42</p> <p>National priorities: related Sustainable Development Goals: 1–6, 8, 10, 13, 16–17: National Development Strategy for the Republic of Croatia until 2030, National Recovery and Resilience Plan 2021–2026, National Plan for Roma Inclusion 2021–2027, National Plan for Development of Social Services 2021–2027, National Plan for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2021–2027, National Plan for Child Rights 2022–2026, draft National Action Plan for Child Guarantee 2021–2030, draft National Programme for Breastfeeding Protection and Promotion 2021–2025, draft National Plan for Education Sector Development 2021–2027, draft National Youth Programme 2022–2024 and European Union Strategy on the Rights of the Child and the European Child Guarantee (2020).</p> |
| <p>United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework outcomes involving UNICEF: Not applicable (no United Nations Resident Coordinator system in Croatia since 2013)</p> |
| <p>Related UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 Goal Areas: 1, 2, 3 and 5</p> |

| <i>UNICEF outcomes</i> | <i>Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)</i> | <i>Means of verification</i> | <i>Indicative country programme outputs</i> | <i>Major partners, partnership frameworks</i> | <i>Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)</i> | | |
|--|--|---|---|--|--|-----------|--------------|
| | | | | | <i>RR</i> | <i>OR</i> | <i>Total</i> |
| 1. By 2027, children aged 0–10 years, particularly the most vulnerable and those living in remote areas, are utilizing and benefiting from timely and integrated early childhood intervention (ECI), education and nutrition services and nurturing care and | <p>Children 3 years of age to primary-school age in pre-primary education</p> <p>B: 79.4% (2019) (79.1% boys; 79.7% girls) T: 90% (2027) (90% boys; 90% girls)</p> <p>Percentage of Roma children aged 3–6 years in pre-primary education</p> <p>B: 23% (2018) T: 54% (2027)</p> <p>Number of children (0–7 years) included in early intervention services</p> | <p>Eurostat data</p> <p>National Plan for Roma Inclusion</p> <p>Administrative data, annual statistical reports</p> | 1.1 By 2027, national and subnational authorities have evidence and adequate capacities to improve the regulatory and policy framework; and the private sector will be supporting family-friendly business policies and practices related to nurturing care, positive parenting and timely and integrated ECI, education and nutrition services, particularly for the most vulnerable and those living in remote areas. | Ministry of Science and Education (MoSE); Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy (MoLPSFSP); Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA); Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities; Public ombudsperson, and ombudspersons for children, people with disabilities and | | 5 560 | 5 560 |

| UNICEF outcomes | Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T) | Means of verification | Indicative country programme outputs | Major partners, partnership frameworks | Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars) | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|-------|-------|
| | | | | | RR | OR | Total |
| positive parenting practices. | provided by the social sector B: 1 056 (700 boys; 356 girls) (2020) T: 1 450 (2027) | Administrative data Croatia Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (CroCOSI) study Croatian Public Health Institute | 1.2 By 2027, national and subnational stakeholders across sectors and disciplines have increased capacities to deliver high-quality and timely integrated ECI, education and nutrition services; and nurturing care, early gender socialization and positive parenting programmes, particularly for the most vulnerable and those living in remote areas. 1.3 By 2027, caregivers and the health, education and social welfare workforces and communities have enhanced awareness, understanding and commitment to demand integrated, gender-responsive and community-based ECI, education and nutrition services, and nurturing care and positive parenting programmes, provided by accredited bodies. | gender equality; civil society organizations; academia; regional and local authorities; service providers; professional chambers; media; business sector | | | |
| | Implementation of policy actions or programmes for the prevention of overweight and obesity in children B: No (2021) T: Yes (2027) | | | | | | |
| | Percentage of overweight children (8–9 years) B: 35% (37% boys; 33.1% girls) (2019) T: 30% (30% boys; 30% girls) (2027) | | | | | | |
| | Percentage of children vaccinated with 3 doses of diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus (DPT)/pentavalent vaccine (against DPT, hepatitis B and Hib) B: 94% (2019) T: at least 95% (2027) | | | | | | |
| 2. By 2027, adolescents, including those with disabilities and those living in precarious situations, are resilient, and engaged on issues of concern to | Low-achieving 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science Reading: B: 21.6% (28.2% boys; 15% girls) (2018) T: below 15% (2027) Mathematics: | Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) study baselines (2018, 2022 and 2025); national target: 2030 | 2.1 By 2027, the Government has strengthened capacity for evidence-based policy implementation for the engagement and meaningful participation of adolescents, and for improving the quality of learning. | Ministry of Finance; MoSE; MoLPSFSP; Ministry of Tourism; Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development; Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MFEA); Ministry of Agriculture; Central State Office of | | 5 450 | 5 450 |

| <i>UNICEF outcomes</i> | <i>Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)</i> | <i>Means of verification</i> | <i>Indicative country programme outputs</i> | <i>Major partners, partnership frameworks</i> | <i>Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)</i> | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|-----------|--------------|
| | | | | | <i>RR</i> | <i>OR</i> | <i>Total</i> |
| them, and benefit from formal and non-formal education that is equitable and inclusive. | B: 31.2% (30.4% boys; 31.9% girls) (2018) T: below 15% (2027) Science: B: 25.4% (26.8% boys; 24% girls) (2018) T: below 15% (2027) | | 2.2 By 2027, adolescents, including those at risk and challenged by various forms of disadvantage and gender-specific barriers, have access to opportunities for meaningful participation, engagement, employment and learning through schools, local governments, businesses, public institutions and civil society organizations. | Demography and Youth; Croatian Bureau of Statistics (CBS); Agency for Mobility and European Union Programmes; ETTA; Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education; Agency for Science and Higher Education; Ombudsperson for Children; Croatian Chamber of Commerce; Croatian Employers' Association; local and regional self-government; academia; Faculty of Political Science of Zagreb University; Institute for Social Research in Zagreb; CSOs working with and for young people; World Youth Alliance Croatia; Croatian Banking Association; human rights committees of multi-stakeholder platforms; Advisory Board on Child Rights and Corporate Social Responsibility; business sector; information, communication and technology companies; World Bank Group; European Commission; European Parliament | | | |
| | Proportion of youth (15–19 years) not in education, employment or training (NEET) B: 9.1% (8.6% boys; 9.6% girls) (2020) T: 6.3% (6.3% boys; 6.3% girls) (2027) | Eurostat NEET; National Recovery and Resilience Plan for Croatia 2021–2026; draft National Youth Programme 2022–2024 | 2.3 By 2027, adolescents, especially those at risk and challenged by various forms of disadvantage and gender-specific barriers, have increased awareness, commitment, capacities and twenty-first-century skills to operate as active citizens; to take and implement informed decisions regarding their lives; and to transition from education to the labour market. | | | | |
| | Percentage of Roma (19–25 years) who completed 4 or 5 years of upper secondary education B: 4.4% (2020) T: 10% (2027) | National Plan for Roma Inclusion 2021–2027 | | | | | |

| <i>UNICEF outcomes</i> | <i>Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)</i> | <i>Means of verification</i> | <i>Indicative country programme outputs</i> | <i>Major partners, partnership frameworks</i> | <i>Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)</i> | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|-----------|--------------|
| | | | | | <i>RR</i> | <i>OR</i> | <i>Total</i> |
| 3. By 2027, children and adolescents, especially the most vulnerable, live in safer environments where they are increasingly protected from violence and adversities and benefit from high-quality, evidence-based and gender-responsive services, practices, policies and contributions from public and private sectors. | Rate of children in residential care (per 100 000) B: 180 (2020) T: 152 (2026) | Administrative and Government data | 3.1 By 2027, child protection systems are strengthened to provide high-quality, agile, gender-responsive and integrated services (including family-based care) and specialized interventions, especially for the most vulnerable families and children. 3.2 By 2027 national and local authorities, institutions, service providers and the business sector have increased capacities to legislate, plan and contribute more resources towards fulfilling child rights and to deliver child-sensitive and gender-responsive services, practices and policies for the most marginalized children and families. 3.3 By 2027, national and subnational institutions have strengthened capacities to generate and/or utilize quality data, disaggregated by sex, age and disability, for purposes of child rights monitoring, evidence-based policy and programme development, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. | MFEA; MoLPSFSP; Ministry of Health; Ministry of the Interior; MoSE; World Bank Group; Office of Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities; public ombudsperson and ombudspersons for children, persons with disabilities and gender equality; CBS; CSOs; academia; regional and local authorities; service providers; professional chambers; media; business sector; The Children's Council | | 5 030 | 5 030 |
| | Children (0–17 years) living in residential care B: 1260 (2020) (boys: 752; girls: 508; children with disabilities: 307) T: 1 060 (2026) (boys: 610, girls: 450; children with disabilities: 250) | | | | | | |
| | Children in family-based care as a percentage of children in all forms of formal alternative care B: 63.5% (2020) T: 70% (2026) | Eurostat Survey on Income and Living Conditions, (SILC) | | | | | |
| | Children (0–17 years) at risk of poverty (according to national monetary poverty lines) B: 16.8% (2020) (boys: 17.3%; girls: 16.3%) T: 14.8% (2026) (boys: 14.8%; girls: 14.8%) | | | | | | |
| At-risk-of-poverty rate, by poverty threshold and household type | Eurostat SILC | | | | | | |

| <i>UNICEF outcomes</i> | <i>Key progress indicators, baselines (B) and targets (T)</i> | <i>Means of verification</i> | <i>Indicative country programme outputs</i> | <i>Major partners, partnership frameworks</i> | <i>Indicative resources by country programme outcome: regular resources (RR), other resources (OR) (In thousands of United States dollars)</i> | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|---|--|---------------|---------------|
| | | | | | <i>RR</i> | <i>OR</i> | <i>Total</i> |
| | <p>Two adults with three or more dependent children: B: 23.1% (2020) T: 20.5% (2026)</p> <p>Single person with dependent children: B: 30.5% (2020) T: 28% (2026)</p> | | | | | | |
| | <p>Level of integration of measurable commitments on child rights in national planning documents</p> <p>B: Score 2 (2021) T: Score 3.5 (2027)</p> | <p>Government data/information</p> | | | | | |
| | <p>Number of businesses engaged by UNICEF to integrate respect for child rights into policies and practices</p> <p>B: 20 (2021) T: 50 (2027)</p> | <p>Company information available in sustainability reports and on websites</p> | | | | | |
| 4. Enhanced programme effectiveness | Standard and additional performance indicators | UNICEF Results Assessment Module; InSight reports | Programme coordination, external relations, planning and monitoring, communication, advocacy and partnerships, cross-sectoral approaches, evaluations | | 2 670 | 2 670 | |
| Total resources | | | | | 0 | 18 710 | 18 710 |