



**National Strategy for Library Advocacy in Croatia  
& *I have the right to know, I have the right to a library*  
campaign**

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**Abstract**

*Commitment to the library profession in Croatia has a long tradition. Croatian Library Association (CLA) had been established in 1940. With the appointment of Public Advocacy Working Group (2004) begins systematic education in advocacy skills. During its 36th Assembly, CLA adopted its first Advocacy Strategy aimed at promoting and advocating the key strategic issues at local, national and international levels.*

*Having detected the existing shortcomings, CLA is now planning to organize and celebrate Croatian Library Day, followed by the launching of campaign entitled *I have the right to know, I have the right to a library*.*

*This paper will present the activities, methods and results of implementing the proposed advocacy strategy.*

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**Introduction**

Some documents show that already as early as 1819 there had been open discussions in Zagreb, Croatia, on the need for establishing librarianship as an independent profession<sup>1</sup>. This request for professionalization of library practices, following shortly after Martin

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<sup>1</sup> See: Živković, Daniela. *Osnutak i prve godine rada: pogled u arhivu*. // Hrvatsko knjižničarsko društvo: 1940.-2000.: spomenica. Zagreb: Hrvatsko knjižničarsko društvo, 2000. Pp. 9-16.

Schrettinger's<sup>2</sup> introduction of the term *library science* and 20 years prior to the issuing of the first scientific library journal *Serapeum* (Leipzig 1840-70), was in fact very progressive and in accord with similar requests appearing at the time throughout other countries.

Ever since, Croatian librarians have been advocating in favour of librarianship's recognition as an independent profession. Croatian librarians demand that all decisions and regulations concerning library profession be passed in cooperation with Croatian Library Association as umbrella association of 16 regional library associations and a Librarians' Club affiliating 1342 members.

Croatian Library Association (CLA) had been established in 1940, although Croatian librarians started their organized activities already in 1931 as a Section of Yugoslav Library Association, formed the same year in Zagreb. The Yugoslav Library Association became member of IFLA in 1932, and since that time Croatian librarians occasionally participated at IFLA conferences. Croatian librarian Josip Badalić participated as YLA's delegate at the 8th IFLA meeting held in Madrid and Barcelona (1935), at the 11th IFLA meeting in Bruxelles (1938), at the 12th IFLA meeting held in The Hague and Amsterdam (1939), and at the 15th IFLA meeting in Basel (1949). At the 16th IFLA meeting held in 1950 in London, the YLA delegate was again another Croatian librarian, Matko Rojnić, and at the 19th IFLA meeting in Vienna in 1953, where it had been agreed that the next IFLA meeting take place in Zagreb, one of the YLA delegates was yet another Croatian librarian, Jelka Mišić.<sup>3</sup>

From September 27 - October 1, 1954, IFLA's 20th annual meeting took place in Zagreb, where IFLA's Section of Theatre Libraries was established, with Josip Badalić as one of its members, being the first Croatian librarian to join the IFLA Sections. At the time of the Zagreb meeting, IFLA numbered 57 members from 36 countries<sup>4</sup>. Over the next years, a greater number of Croatian librarians regularly participates at IFLA meetings and as members of its expert bodies, as had been reported in their official scientific journal *Vjesnik bibliotekara Hrvatske* (VBH), issued since 1950. Among the numerous Croatian IFLA members, special mention should be given to Eva Verona, who had been awarded IFLA's *Tabula gratulatoria* prize (1977).

Since its establishment, Croatian Library Association had been organizing courses and seminars aimed at training and further professional development of Croatian librarians. Until 1976, the year when the Department of Librarianship at Zagreb Faculty of Philosophy had finally been established, following an initiative by CLA which also drafted the first study programme and proposed it to the University of Zagreb, CLA prepared candidates for professional library exams, which had been obligatory for all librarians since 1928, when professional exams had been stipulated by several laws regulating the library profession.<sup>5</sup>

In 1977, CLA got the copyright on IFLA publications for Croatia, and in 1978 it launches a new publication series entitled «Povremena izdanja» (Occasional publications) where, until March 2010, translations of 32 IFLA publications have been published. Two more translations have also been published as part of electronic publications, started in 2007.

In an effort to follow and implement the most recent professional achievements, in accord with IFLA recommendations and the initiative of prof.dr.sc. Aleksandra Horvat, CLA

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<sup>2</sup> Schrettinger, M. *Versuch eines vollständigen Lehrbuchs der Bibliothek-Wissenschaft oder Anleitung zur vollkommenen Geschäftsführung eines Bibliothekars in wissenschaftlicher Form abgefasst*. 1. H. München, 1808. From: Rojnić, Matko. *Bibliotekarstvo i nauka: teoretske suprotnosti*. // *Vjesnik bibliotekara Hrvatske* 4, 1-4(1955-57), pp 37-81.

<sup>3</sup> See: Gomerčić, Nada. *Odras međunarodnih programa IFLA-e (Međunarodne federacije bibliotekarskih društava) na razvoj bibliotekarstva u Jugoslaviji od 1927. do 1977. g. : magistarski rad*. Zagreb: vlast. nakl., 1981. Pp. 95-115.

<sup>4</sup> See: Horvat, Aleksandra. *Zagrebački sastanak IFLA-e 1954. godine*. // Hrvatsko knjižničarsko društvo: 1940.-2000.: spomenica. Zagreb: Hrvatsko knjižničarsko društvo, 2000. Pp.17-20.

<sup>5</sup> See: *Studij bibliotekarstva: u povodu petnaeste godišnjice rada Katedre za bibliotekarstvo*. Zagreb: Filozofski fakultet, Odsjek za informacijske znanosti, Katedra za bibliotekarstvo, 1992. P. 1

founded its Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression at its 30th Assembly in Zadar (1998)<sup>6</sup>, and at its 31st Assembly in Lovran (2000), CLA adopted IFLA's *Statement on Free Access to Information*<sup>7</sup>. By adopting the *Statement*, CLA and its members have accepted the responsibility of representing library users before library founders and sponsors, as well as promoting libraries as open-door institutions needed for building a society of knowledge. With the publication of a special issue of VBH on free access to information (2000) as well as by organizing annual panels on the same topic (since 2001), Croatian librarians have been introduced to the most recent documents and regulations concerning free access to information and freedom of expression, privacy and copyright, and library ethics, in order for them to take over their share of responsibility in providing necessary information and materials. The printed panel conclusions and proceedings which followed were aimed at informing library founders and sponsors about the role of libraries in modern democratic societies, as well as pointing out the need for well-directed priority funding, while informing the media on panel topics in order to enlighten the users on their constitutional and otherwise regulated rights to free access to information.

The transformation of CLA's activities, not only in terms of professionalization, but as a public advocate and non-governmental organization, had been confirmed at its 33rd Assembly held in 2002 in Daruvar Spa. On that occasion, the new Constitution and Code of Ethics had been passed, stating the basic principles of library profession, which include advocating free access to information and increased responsibility towards library users and the wider community. At the Assembly, the topic of which was *Managing the changes in Croatian libraries*, there had been mention of the need for developing public communication skills, seeking cooperation with related organizations, as well as advocating in favour of libraries among the local and state authorities. The Assembly also resulted in a *Daruvar Library Appeal*, since the local library had been located in a rather narrow and inadequate space. This *Appeal*, supported by such a large number of librarians, resulted in the reconstruction of Daruvar library premises.

The increased public advocacy on behalf of CLA has once more proved its strength and influence in 2003, when they formed a coalition with 15 other non-governmental organizations, entitled *The public has the right to know*, and which participated in drafting the *Law on the Right to Access Information*<sup>8</sup>, passed by the Croatian government at the end of the same year.

The same year CLA started with projects<sup>9</sup> directed at librarians, users and library sponsors, aimed at raising public awareness towards the recognition of libraries as information, education and culture centres within their respective local communities.

All this inspired numerous Croatian librarians to actively participate in issues of public importance, which had been rather unusual in the past, despite their high professionalism and long tradition, as well as inspiring CLA to devise educational programmes aimed at public advocacy training.

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<sup>6</sup> The authors of this text have been members of this Committee since its founding,

<sup>7</sup> See: *Statement on Free Access to Information*. Available at: <http://archive.ifla.org/faife/ifstat/hkdstat.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Available at: <http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDHKDnci/sluzbeni/307079.html>

<sup>9</sup> The first project entitled *Free Access to Information for Developing Democracy* was conducted in 2003 within a multiethnic environment, in a previously war-stricken area

## Public advocacy as common practice

The professional activities of CLA are conducted via 7 sections, 27 committees and 8 working groups, as well as via publication and web page editorials. The Advocacy Working Group, assembled and active since 2003, has been officially confirmed at the 34th CLA Assembly held in 2004 in Šibenik, whereby advocacy of libraries and librarians entered the agenda of regular professional activities.

The Group was initiated by Edita Bačić, who had been presenting and publishing articles on the importance of advocacy since 1997, and who had proposed in 2003 the programme for the Public Advocacy Workshop, included as of 2004 in the regular programme of the Training Centre for Continuing Education of Librarians<sup>10</sup>.

The main aim of this Working Group was to introduce the basic skills of advocacy to the wider circle of interested library professionals. Along with the introductory theoretical workshop entitled Public Advocacy I. which included the basics of advocacy, creating space and location for public debates, building partnerships and coalitions, developing media relations, gathering donations<sup>11</sup>, the Training Centre programme added in 2007 another workshop entitled Public Advocacy II. Wishing to introduce the participants to a more detailed account of positive advocacy practices and the drafting of individual action plans, the first part of this workshop examines the public advocacy practices: the ideas for advocating respective library types and library associations, advocacy guidelines, image building, public relations, case analysis and action plan; while the second part examines the role of library associations: presenting libraries and librarians via their programmes, building an advocacy network for libraries, media relations, official information sources, cooperation with public authorities, tracking the changes in law-making policies, selecting delegates according to the principle of “the right person in the right place”, case analysis.<sup>12</sup> With some ten workshops, held as part of different library meetings and assemblies, and with another ten workshops organized as part of the Training Centre programme over the past years, close to 1000 CLA members had a chance of getting acquainted with the basics of public advocacy and strategic planning.

The aim of this workshop is for the participants to acquire some basic insights, views and skills which would aid them in the drafting of personalized development plans and in communicating with both the internal and the external public. In 2009, several new contents have been added to the workshop in order to teach library directors and managers how to develop good leadership skills and create communication strategies which would bring their libraries in the centre of public attention. Upon completing the workshop, participants were expected to be able to influence decision-makers, gather advocacy networks, and develop team work strategies aimed at promoting and advocating interests of libraries and librarians.<sup>13</sup>

In later interviews with some workshop participants, we gathered information that the workshop helped them set up successful public advocacy activities, thus contributing to an improved status of their respective libraries. Several colleagues applied for projects which promoted their libraries and attracted additional financial support.

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<sup>10</sup> The Training Centre for Continuing Education of Librarians was established in 2002. Its founders include the National University Library in Zagreb, Department of Information Sciences at the Faculty of Philosophy Zagreb City Libraries and Croatian Library Association

<sup>11</sup> See: *Program: 2004*. Available at: [http://www.nsk.hr/cssu/program/cssu\\_2004.pdf](http://www.nsk.hr/cssu/program/cssu_2004.pdf); *Program: 2005*. Available at: [http://www.nsk.hr/cssu/program/cssu\\_2005.pdf](http://www.nsk.hr/cssu/program/cssu_2005.pdf); *Program: 2006*. Available at: [http://www.nsk.hr/cssu/program/cssu\\_2006.pdf](http://www.nsk.hr/cssu/program/cssu_2006.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> See: *Program: 2007*. Available at: [http://www.nsk.hr/cssu/program/cssu\\_2007.pdf](http://www.nsk.hr/cssu/program/cssu_2007.pdf); *Program: 2008*. Available at [http://www.nsk.hr/cssu/program/cssu\\_2008.pdf](http://www.nsk.hr/cssu/program/cssu_2008.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> See: *Program: 2009*. Available at: [http://www.nsk.hr/cssu/program/CSSU\\_2009.pdf](http://www.nsk.hr/cssu/program/CSSU_2009.pdf)

Since there is still a certain number of librarians lacking in public advocacy training, we believe that all activities related to further education of CLA members are still a priority for successful advocacy.

## **2008-2010 CLA Strategy for Library Advocacy**

With its three-years' project entitled *Information on European Union in public libraries* (2004-2007), CLA introduced a great number of librarians to the most important sources of information on EU, as well as acquainting the general public with the role of libraries in developing the European society of knowledge.

In a document entitled *Communication strategy aimed at informing the Croatian public about the European Union and preparations for EU membership*<sup>14</sup> issued by the Croatian Parliament on 27th January 2006, libraries are listed among the most important partners in Government's communication with its citizens. Croatian Government has recognized libraries as institutions whose activities influence the shaping of public opinions, and which "act as disseminators (multipliers) of information". The Government promised to invest efforts and financial means in order to stimulate the activities of its partners, and CLA wanted to use this positive incentive given to libraries. Additional initiative came from IFLA/MLAS Standing Committee members who held their regular mid term meeting in Zagreb in 2006, hosted by CLA in cooperation with the National University Library in Zagreb and Zagreb City Libraries. The meeting was also attended by Claudia Lux, President Elect (2007-2009), who on that occasion presented her programme entitled *Libraries on the Agenda*.

After two full mandates, the Advocacy Working Group concluded that the advocating activities within CLA must ensue systematically, following a well-structured strategy, with clearly defined goals and priorities set over a defined period of time. The Working Group then proposed CLA's Head Board to organize, as part of its 36th Assembly in October 2008, a special panel-discussion on the subject of advocacy in order to draft a Proposal on the Strategy for Library Advocacy in Croatia. It was proposed that the panel-discussion be attended by representatives of EU library associations<sup>15</sup>, as well as by representatives from non-EU countries<sup>16</sup>.

While drafting the general plan for the 2008-2010 Strategy for Library Advocacy, the Advocacy Working Group focused on defining the main contents to be addressed in their advocating activities over the above mentioned period, i.e. until the next Assembly elections. It was proposed that CLA focus on the following three issues:

1. The values of library profession<sup>17</sup>;
2. Free access to information and intellectual freedom;
3. Lifelong learning.

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<sup>14</sup> Available at: <http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDHKDnci/sluzbeni/126067.html>

<sup>15</sup> The guest of this panel-discussion was our colleague Silviya Stasselova, president of the Slovak Library Association, and the current IFLA/MLAS secretary

<sup>16</sup> Among the participants in this discussion were also present the president of the Montenegro Library Association and the head secretary of the Association of Information Experts – Librarians, Archivists and Museologists BAM from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

<sup>17</sup> Prof. dr. sc. Aleksandra Horvat, whom the Working Group consulted in drafting the Strategy, also holds a lecture at Training Centre entitled *The Values of Library Profession*, emphasizing the importance of professional ethics in everyday library practices.

We shall explain in short why we thought it important to direct our advocacy towards the above mentioned issues:

Ad 1. The promotion of libraries and library profession can be conducted via various activities aimed at a wider public and at the library community, but it is important that the librarians, in an attempt at successful advocacy of libraries and library profession, be acquainted with the existing achievements and the basic democratic and ethical values of library profession, combined with a strong belief in their mission. Recognizing librarianship as an independent profession requiring academic education, along with continuing specializations, as well as presenting the wider public with librarians' professional competences, knowledge and skills, is in fact the starting point for advocating the permanent values of library profession, which is particularly important in the time of strong globalization influences and fast changes of information and communication technologies. We have therefore placed the advocacy in favour of libraries and the values of library profession as our priority.

Ad 2. Free access to information in libraries, as perhaps the last non-commercial spaces within the urban landscape, seems to be essential for the survival and further development of libraries. The views that intellectual freedoms form the basis of democracy, and that providing free access to information is an important duty of library profession, are in fact the main presumptions for successful advocacy of library interests. Providing databases and adequate tools for users with special needs, digitization of valuable collections, as well as storing and presentation of digitized resources, following the constant and rapid ICT changes – all of these require enhanced library funding. It is therefore important to direct all efforts towards adequate library funding policies, since libraries are the basic and irreplaceable democratic institutions servicing people of various ages, material status, ethnic affiliations, mental and physical abilities, in an attempt at providing them with information sources needed for life, work and active civic participation at both local and national levels.

Ad 3. By offering support and participating in continuing education of librarians, as part of their lifelong learning<sup>18</sup>, we fulfill the preconditions for promoting and introducing lifelong learning to libraries. By emphasizing the advantages of libraries, whose rich collections and well-educated staff offer professional help in the process of lifelong learning for all citizens, we contribute to the recognition of libraries as central points of lifelong learning for members of local or academic communities.

When proposing the central issues to be advocated, attention was also given to the need for acting on several different levels, starting with the local and regional levels, all the way to the national and international levels.

At the local level, we should train the library staff and gather other interested parties willing to advocate library interests and lobby in favour of libraries before the local authorities.

At the regional level, as part of regional library associations, we should compile lists of public authorities to be lobbied, as well as train librarians and other interested partners for advocacy.

Decentralization and the forming of partnerships at regional and local levels often go hand in hand, stimulating one another in order to meet the needs at local and regional levels.

The national level includes tracking the changes in national law-making policies influencing, or potentially influencing, library activities and the status of library professionals,

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<sup>18</sup> More on lifelong education of Croatian librarians in: *Cjeloživotno učenje knjižničara : ishodi učenja i fleksibilnost* / editors Aleksandra Horvat, Dijana Machala. Zagreb: Nacionalna i sveučilišna knjižnica, 2009.

as well as active participation in the workings of Croatian Library Council<sup>19</sup>. It is important to form networks of library advocates at the highest level, including respective Ministries and the Croatian Parliament.

At the international level, CLA has signed agreements on cooperation with the Dutch Association of Public Libraries and the Hungarian Library Association, along with nourishing a long-established cooperation with Slovenian Library Association and other library association in the region. International colleagues are always invited to CLA meetings, and Croatian librarians are often participating at conferences abroad. CLA delegates are members of numerous IFLA Sections<sup>20</sup> and other international organizations. Over the last few years, several important international conferences<sup>21</sup> and meetings of international expert bodies<sup>22</sup> took place in Croatia. Participating in the organization of international meetings, the appointment of Croatian librarians into international bodies, as well as occasional meetings with members of international organizations in order to exchange experiences, all contribute to enhancing and widening cooperation with other library and library-related associations abroad. All of the above strengthens CLA's international reputation, while at the same time enhancing the reputation of librarians in Croatia.

A long discussion was followed by passing of the Strategy at the 36th CLA Assembly, with a note emphasizing that “the aim of this Strategy is to actively influence the shift in understanding the value of libraries within a community that wants to call itself the society of knowledge, as well as shifting the general public perception of libraries. Croatian Library Association joins the activities of international expert associations IFLA and EBLIDA in advocating in favour of libraries, and invites all interested parties to engage in achieving the proposed goals.”<sup>23</sup>

The note also mentions that “the 2008-2010 CLA Strategy for Library Advocacy is based on the Statement on free access to information and freedom of expression, dating from 2000, which states that “The right to knowledge (is) one of the basic human rights ensuring true social equality of all citizens”, and the important role of libraries in promoting EU's cultural and educational policies and the implementation of the strategies for the European

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<sup>19</sup> Croatian Library Council was founded in accordance with the Libraries Act (1997) as an expert advisory body of the Ministry of Culture of Republic of Croatia, and CLA appoints 3 delegate members. Croatian Library Association decided at its 32nd Assembly in Lovran (2000) that the 3 appointed Council delegates should be the CLA president (or 1st Vice President), Professional Board president (or vice president) and a regional association president currently carrying out the duties of CLA 2nd Vice-President.

<sup>20</sup> In 2007, CLA had 7 representatives in IFLA Standing Committees, and after the completion of the second mandate in 2009, CLA currently has 5 representatives

<sup>21</sup> LIDA (Dubrovnik, 2000-); 14th *European Conference on Reading Literacy Without Boundaries* (Zagreb, 31st July- 3rd August 2005). The conference was attended by some 400 participants from 41 countries, including Kay Raseroka, the President of IFLA; 2nd NAPLE Conference *The Role of Public Libraries in National Policies Towards the Knowledge Society* (Supetar on Brač island, 5-8 October 2005). The Conference was attended by some 100 participants from 24 countries; .BOBCATSSS 2008 (Zadar, 28-30 January 2008); IFLA Metropolitan Libraries 2010 Conference *Metropolitan Libraries: Enduring Values and Excellence* will be held in Zagreb, 16 - 21 May 2010. More than 40 participants from over 25 countries around the world will take part at the conference.

<sup>22</sup> The meeting of the EBLIDA Group for Professional Education (Zagreb, 14th October 2005); 6th Meeting of the IFLA/MLAS Standing Committee (Zagreb, 16-18 February 2006); Workshop *Libraries, Civil Society Organizations and the Struggle against Corruption*, organized by IFLA/FAIFE in cooperation with CLA and Transparency International, as part of the 6th Round Table on Free Access to Information (9 December 2006). At this occasion, CLA passed its *Statement on Libraries, Ethics and Anti-Corruption*. Available at: <http://archive.ifla.org/faife/ifstat/hkdstat2.htm>

<sup>23</sup> *Strategija zagovaranja knjižnica. //Vjesnik bibliotekara Hrvatske* 51, 1/4(2008), [245].

Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008, European Year of Creativity and Innovation 2009 and European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010.”<sup>24</sup>

### *The premise of advocacy strategy*

Apart from the most obvious premises such as advocating for democracy and emphasizing the importance of libraries in building a civil society, other premises which triggered the drafting of the Strategy for Library Advocacy in Croatia include Croatia's expected EU membership, and building a joint European research and academic network. Various social changes and expectations initiated the revision of the existing legislative and the drafting of strategic documents related to development of Croatian science, education and culture at national, university and local levels. The main reasons for initiating and drafting the new strategies lie in the strong international competition in scientific achievements and financing methods, both on the national and the European levels, directly affecting the sustainability of library profession.

The Strategy for Library Advocacy in Croatia is an open document to be successively revised and evaluated in relation to all future changes in the national and international environment, and in accord with the *Mission CLA*<sup>25</sup> document stating that:

“ The work of all officers, associates and members of the Association shall be on voluntary basis. The Association is a member of the international librarians' associations. The Association shall devote its activities to further its purpose of protection and development of the profession of librarianship. Its activities shall be:

- to promote and further the profession of librarianship and provide it with an adequate presentation in the public,
- to publish journals and other professional literature, and organize professional meetings,
- to participate in the creation of library legislation,
- to advocate the professional integrity of library professionals,
- to encourage the foundation and development of all types of libraries,
- to ensure the free flow of information and provide all citizens with free and equal acces to library materials and information,
- to advocate the right of all library users to free and equitable access to collections and information,
- to promote the general literacy,
- to promote public awareness of the need to preserve the cultural heritage and to take part in its protection.”

The Strategy will be implemented in accord with the principles stated in *CLA Code of Ethics*<sup>26</sup>:

1. “The supreme level of professional performance in conformance with related international and national professional standards to the purpose of advancing library activities.
2. Development and preservation of intellectual freedoms of individuals and protection of basic democratic principles of the wider social community.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> See: *Mission*. Available at:

[http://www.hkdrustvo.hr/en/o\\_nama/poslanje/?session\\_id=6a836ad0a84679a4d6b046672c8214fb](http://www.hkdrustvo.hr/en/o_nama/poslanje/?session_id=6a836ad0a84679a4d6b046672c8214fb)

<sup>26</sup> Code of Ethics of the Croatian Library Association. Available at:

[http://www.hkdrustvo.hr/en/eticki\\_kodeks/?session\\_id=65f04e3214be45fb8632ee2c5251f572](http://www.hkdrustvo.hr/en/eticki_kodeks/?session_id=65f04e3214be45fb8632ee2c5251f572)



3. Respect for the right to knowledge and uninhibited access to information for all.
4. Availability of different information resources for all types of library users.
5. Respect for copyright.
6. Respect for the privacy of library user.
7. Protection and promotion of national and the world's heritage.”

### *Planned activities*

The Strategy also contains a list of planned activities for the period 2008 – 2010, along with names of exponents. The following activities were to take place until the end of 2008:

1. lobbying for the new Libraries and Library Profession Act at all levels  
*Exponents:* Croatian Library Council members and members of the CLA Head Board
2. lobbying in favour of including members of the library profession in drafting of the Rule Book on public library loan fees  
*Exponents:* Croatian Library Council members, Copyright Working Group
3. preparing a list of public authorities to be lobbied in favour of libraries at national, regional and local levels  
*Exponents:* Advocacy Working Group, Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression and Government Information and Official Publications Committee, in cooperation with regional library associations
4. systematic following of state legislation influencing or potentially influencing the workings of libraries, with all recent changes published on CLA website  
*Exponents:* Law Libraries and Related Libraries Working Group, Government Information and Official Publications Committee, in cooperation with other working groups and committees
5. observing priorities when appointing Croatian representatives to IFLA Sections  
*Exponents:* CLA Head and Professional Board

Ad 1. One of permanent CLA activities includes the care for synchronizing Croatian regulations concerning libraries and library profession with the international library legislatives, as well as with UNESCO and IFLA guidelines and ISO standards. The first Croatian *Libraries Act* was passed in 1960, with numerous revisions and changes to be added later upon CLA's insistence. CLA was also involved in the drafting of the *Library Activities and Libraries Act* dating from 1973 and the *Libraries Act* from 1997<sup>27</sup>, as well as on the drafting of numerous legal acts, standards of different library types and rule books on library practices. In 2007, CLA drafted a proposal of the new Croatian Libraries and Library Activities Act.

The work on the proposal started in 2003. That year several documents have been passed, emphasizing the important role of libraries in building a society of knowledge. *The Oeiras Manifesto: The PULMAN Agenda for e-Europe* (March 2003)<sup>28</sup> had also been adopted, drawing attention to the importance of increased library funding in order to speed up their development as centres with access to digital contents. At IFLA's Berlin conference in August 2003, a resolution was passed stating that libraries are the heart of Information Societies, and inviting respective state governments to ensure free basic library services and provide equal Internet access. In December 2003, a meeting of top officials on the subject of Information Society was held in Geneva, gathering members of political authorities and representatives of

<sup>27</sup> Available at: <http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDHKDnci/sluzbeni/267274.html>

<sup>28</sup> Available at: [http://www.pulmanweb.org/documents/Oeiras\\_v2.1\\_5mar%20\\_1\\_.pdf](http://www.pulmanweb.org/documents/Oeiras_v2.1_5mar%20_1_.pdf); See: *Manifest iz Oeiras: PULMAN plan za e-Europu / s engleskog prevela G. Tuškan. // HKD Novosti 22/23(lipanj 2003), 26-28.*

numerous library associations, CLA being one of them, advocating for open Internet access for all, as an important source of information.<sup>29</sup>

The same year in Croatia, a series of acts have been passed, directly influencing the workings of some or all types of libraries. While the *Act of Primary Education*<sup>30</sup> and the *Act on Secondary Education*<sup>31</sup> initiated the founding of school libraries by stipulating that every school should have a library of its own, employing a professional librarian who should also function as professional library advisor, the *Act on Scientific Activity and Higher Education*<sup>32</sup> makes no mention of accepting the advisory status of university librarians, despite the fact that Bologna Process requires of all librarians to join the teaching staff in raising the quality of university education, and despite the fact that, apart from the basic library duties, university librarians nowadays indirectly participate in the educational process by training students and researchers in the field of information literacy. The *Act on Personal Data Protection*<sup>33</sup> refers to managers of personal data collections, thus referring also to libraries which keep user databases, data on conference participants etc., directing them towards keeping records of personal data collections and submitting these records to the Croatian Personal Data Protection Agency. By introducing the right to authors' compensation fee for library loans and by placing certain library digitization restrictions, the *Copyright and Related Rights Act*<sup>34</sup>, along with several acts of the *Electronic Media Act*<sup>35</sup> and the *Act on the Right of Access to Information*<sup>36</sup> have placed before libraries a whole series of new requirements, while at the same time urging the librarians towards acquiring new additional skills.

Year 2003 was announced as the European Year of People with Disabilities, urging Croatian Government to pass a *National Strategy of a Unique Policy for the People with Disabilities from 2003 – 2006* (16 January 2003), initiating the work on removing all architectural hindrances and introducing elements of IT support for persons with hearing and seeing difficulties in all cultural institutions. By the end of 2003, the *Building Act*<sup>37</sup> was also passed, directing libraries as public institutions to ensure easier access, mobility, stay and work on their premises to people with walking difficulties.

All these Acts triggered the revision of the existing Libraries Act, and the proposal of certain changes which would ensure equal access to information and knowledge to all Croatian citizens, as well as regulating library development in Croatia. The conclusions of the CLA meetings held throughout 2004, 2005 and 2006, and referring to the development of all types of libraries, the synchronizing of library tasks and services with the international guidelines, the Bologna Process and the new educational system, were included in the acts of the newly proposed law. CLA members viewed and discussed the new documents related to library activities: *Alexandria Manifesto on Libraries, the Information Society in Action* (2005)<sup>38</sup>, *i2010:digital libraries* (2005)<sup>39</sup>, *Recommendation on the digitisation and online accessibility of cultural material and digital preservation* (2006)<sup>40</sup>. Following a series of public debates, CLA Head Board approved the final version of the new Act, forwarding it to

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<sup>29</sup> See: A. Horvat. Sastanak na vrhu o Informacijskom društvu. // HKD Novosti 24 (November 2003), 1-2.

<sup>30</sup> Available at: <http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDHKDnci/sluzbeni/305407.html>

<sup>31</sup> Available at: <http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDHKDnci/sluzbeni/305408.html>

<sup>32</sup> Available at: <http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDHKDnci/sluzbeni/306330.html>

<sup>33</sup> Available at: <http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDHKDnci/sluzbeni/305952.html>

<sup>34</sup> Available at: [http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDHKDnci/sluzbeni/2003\\_10\\_167\\_2399.html](http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDHKDnci/sluzbeni/2003_10_167_2399.html)

<sup>35</sup> Available at: <http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDHKDnci/sluzbeni/306317.html>

<sup>36</sup> See note 8, first citation

<sup>37</sup> Available at: <http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDHKDnci/sluzbeni/307140.html>

<sup>38</sup> Available at: <http://www.ifla.org/en/publications/alexandria-manifesto-on-libraries-the-information-society-in-action>

<sup>39</sup> Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2005:0465:FIN:EN:DOC>

<sup>40</sup> Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:236:0028:0030:EN:PDF>

Croatian Library Council<sup>41</sup> which gave its support to this proposal on 27 September 2007, advising the Ministry of Culture to bring it up before the Croatian Parliament. However, at the time the Strategy of Library Advocacy was passed (October 2008), the proposed Act was still not taken into procedure. We therefore believed that our priority lies in lobbying at all levels in favour of passing the new Act, hoping that, along with advocacy of library associations, their partners and friends, the general trend of adjusting Croatian laws to EU standards would also contribute to our efforts.

The planned activities were in accord with the 2008 library development needs and priorities, as the existing legislative no longer supported the complex requirements of Information Society and the promotion of librarianship as one of the professional prerequisites in championing democracy and adjusting to the society of knowledge. Unfortunately, in spite of Croatian Library Council's approval and support of the Act proposal, Ministry of Culture did not pass it on to the Parliament, but instead, without informing the library community, supplied the Parliament with a list of proposed changes not linked in any way to the CLA proposal. Quite on the contrary, this was a step back in relation to our expectations, as well as in relation to previous legislations. By lobbying among MPs in favour of libraries, we managed to get one of the proposed changes rejected, which, had it been passed, would have excluded from the Act parts of the regulations on library staff. Namely, it was proposed that all regulations referring to library staff be excluded from the Act, with a proposed act stating the issue would be settled by a Rule Book. This would lead to the exclusion of professional titles of persons employed at a library – assistant librarian, librarian, librarian with a BA in Library Science, higher librarian and library advisor. Following MPs' objections, one of the regulation remained, stating that “Professional duties within a library, independent or as part of an institution, are conducted by assistant librarians, librarians, librarians with a BA in Library Science, higher librarians and library advisors”, but requirements and manner of acquiring the professional titles would be regulated by a Rule Book drafted by the Ministry of Culture, as recommended by the Croatian Library Council<sup>42</sup>. There were several other regulations which we strongly advocated against, but we have obviously been informed too late, and the Croatian Parliament already passed their Decision on passing the *Act on changes and revisions of the Libraries Act*.<sup>43</sup> At the moment of passing this Decision, it seemed that all our previous efforts had been in vain, CLA did not succeed in its mission, and their reactions in the media had not been loud enough or adequate. The results of this failure can to some extent still be felt, as we have still not managed to set a clear strategic plan for future directions on lobbying tactics required for the adoption of the proposed Act.

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<sup>41</sup> See note 19, first citation

<sup>42</sup> At the 11th session of the Croatian Library Council held on 28 April 2009, it was decided that the CLA Professional and Head Board urgently draft a proposal on basic characteristics of library study programmes and the accomplished competences upon completing the respective study levels (3+2), as guidelines for Croatian Library Council's drafting of a Code of professional library titles. Following a long and detailed discussion, CLA Central and Professional Board passed the following conclusions:

1. Croatian library community believes that Croatia certainly needs library studies educating generations of library professionals.
2. library professionals have been invited to actively participate in defining standards for library staff, regardless of the current library study programmes, taking into consideration the requirements of all types of libraries. Basic library study requirements have been requested, along with a list of competences to be expected upon the completion of respective study levels.

The deadline for submitting the proposals was early September 2009, and CLA Professional Board was supposed to collect and synchronize all the proposals, creating a unified proposal, to be presented to Ministry of Culture, but the final version of the proposal took a bit more time, due to some additional requirements.

<sup>43</sup> Available at: [http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDnki/sluzbeni/2009\\_06\\_69\\_1665.html](http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDnki/sluzbeni/2009_06_69_1665.html)

The situation might perhaps change in the future, as Croatian Government passed in November 2009 the *Code of Practice on consultation with the interested public in procedures of adopting laws, other regulations and act*<sup>44</sup>, which stipulates minimum standards and measures for consulting the interested citizens:

1. Timely information about the plan for enactment of laws and adoption of other regulations and act
2. Access to and clarity of the content of the consultation process
3. The time limit for the implementation of Internet and other forms of consultations
4. Feedback information about the effects of the consultations conducted
5. Harmonization of the application of standards and measures of conducting

However, as every misfortune carries in itself a trace of luck, we may say this was a good opportunity for learning from our own mistakes. Advocacy Working Group members, in cooperation with CLA president and the leadership bodies decided to change their tactics and priorities, still bearing in mind the concern for the new Act, and decided to act under the following slogan: The Act is relevant for us, it is our *lex specialis* giving us authority to practise our rights<sup>45</sup>, but it is not sufficient. We have to be loud, persistent, appearing in different media, and we have to act together.

As far as other planned activities are concerned, we started compiling the list of relevant public authorities, with systematic following of state legislations which influence or might influence library activities. Due to forming of the new CLA bodies, some of the activities planned for 2008, had to be postponed until 2009. At its 10th session held on 23 January 2009, Croatian Library Council nominated several distinguished librarians dealing with copyright as members of the Committee for drafting the *Rule book on library loan compensation*, and at the CLA session held on 29 June 2009, the Head Board appointed a committee for the drafting of the *Rule book on appointing CLA members to IFLA Sections*.

Along with conducting the activities planned for 2008, we continued with the activities scheduled for 2009:

1. organizing advocacy programmes for regional library associations' members  
*Exponents:* Advocacy Working Group in cooperation with regional associations
2. preparing and updating the list of libraries  
*Exponents:* Public and School Libraries Section and Special and Academic Libraries Section in cooperation with the National University Library Office for Librarianship and Ministry of Culture
3. preparing the list of towns and districts, schools and universities, and other high education, scientific and culture institutions lacking a library or library services of some sort  
*Exponents:* Public and School Libraries Section and Special and Academic Libraries Section in cooperation with National University Library Office for Librarianship and Ministry of Culture
4. appointing a committee for drafting a proposal on how to celebrate the Croatian Library Day  
*Exponents:* CLA Head Board
5. preparing the campaign entitled *I have the right to know, I have the right to a library*

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<sup>44</sup> Available at: [http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDHKDnci/sluzbeni/2009\\_11\\_140\\_3402.html](http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDHKDnci/sluzbeni/2009_11_140_3402.html)

<sup>45</sup> *Lex specialis derogat legi generali* – An individual law ruling out the general law, i.e. the special case is overruling the general practice.

*Exponents:* Advocacy Working Group, Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression, Public and School libraries Section and Special and Academic libraries Section

A part of our planned activities have been achieved in the initial period, library lists are being updated<sup>46</sup>, we started the activities for celebrating the Croatian Library Day, while some of the activities had to wait until the beginning of 2010.

In 2010, we planned the following:

1. gathering a network of library advocates  
*Exponents:* CLA Head Board in cooperation with CLA members
2. launching the campaign entitled *I have the right to know, I have the right to a library*  
*Exponents:* CLA Head Board in cooperation with CLA members and library friends
3. celebrating for the first time Croatian Library Day  
*Exponents:* CLA Head Board and regional associations

The date for celebrating Croatian Library Day has been proposed, which was then approved by CLA Head Board, which will forward it in turn to the 37th CLA Assembly, to be held on 30 September 2010. The proposed date is November 11, the date of passing the first Library Act from 1960. The passing of this Act is of great importance for Croatian library profession, as its rules refer to all types of libraries and have marked the legal and social basis for a more systematic work and development of all types of Croatian libraries, along with defining the key traits of Croatian library profession. In a way, it marked a new beginning, and no other date in the history of Croatian librarianship can compare.

If the CLA Assembly adopts the proposed date, the first Croatian Library Day will be celebrated on 11 November 2010 with an open lecture on the importance of the Act for the future of Croatian Librarianship, to be followed by a press conference, and all Croatian libraries will be invited to organize similar events in their local communities.

The proposal will be passed on to the Croatian Parliament, and if it be accepted, the CLA Programme Committee, to be appointed by CLA Professional Board, will prepare a complete programme for celebrating the 2011 Croatian Library Day. Special attention will be given to media presentation of the event, in libraries throughout Croatia. We believe that the celebration of Croatian Library Day will become an important activity, necessary for all further actions related to public advocacy of libraries, particularly for all campaigns and coordinated public actions.

### *Strategy exponents and potential partners*

The main exponents of the Strategy for Library Advocacy in Croatia include CLA and all regional library associations, i.e. Sections, Committees and Working Groups in charge of implementing the planned activities. Apart from the library associations, another important strategic partner is the Training Centre for Continuing Education of Librarians as the only institution offering continuing training of librarians, both in terms of public advocacy skills, and all additional skills required of successful public advocates, such as marketing and management skills, skills in providing information literacy and others. Other important partners in implementing the Strategy include the National University Library in Zagreb and Zagreb City Libraries, the two biggest libraries in Croatia employing a great number of library professionals and CLA members, and which play an important role in the development of

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<sup>46</sup> At the CLA Head Board session held on 13 November 2009, financial means have been granted for designing a special programme for compiling an address-book of libraries in Croatia

Croatian librarianship. Public libraries, along with all other types of libraries, are all welcome partners and cooperators in organizing and performing activities at the local level.

We may also seek partners among library-friendly and related institutions such as Croatian Archival Society and Croatian Museum Association with which we have shared similar interests and a long-lasting cooperation in organizing a joint annual meeting of experts entitled Seminar on Archives, Libraries and Museums<sup>47</sup> (since 1997), each Seminar followed by a publication of collected seminar papers.

We also expect to receive the public support of our respective partner organizations, in cooperation with which we launched the campaign entitled *The public has the right to know*.

### *SWOT analysis*

In an attempt at estimating our strengths for implementing the strategy and estimating the opportunities opening with the promotion of libraries, as well as listing all the threats and weaknesses that might slow down the implementation, we have conducted a brief SWOT analysis. The results of the analysis are followed by a short explanatory note.

### STRENGTHS

During 70 years of its existence, CLA achieved results establishing its reputation of an important professional association in Croatia, while at the same time earning it a reputation of an active and relevant association within the international library and information science circles. Within its ranks, CLA includes a great number of experts who proved their knowledge and skills in both professional and scientific fields, participating at numerous international meetings. Apart from the long tradition and its organized activities, CLA's great advantage, relevant for further development and achievement of Library Advocacy Strategy's goals, is the existence of the Training Centre for Continuing Education of Librarians as part of the National University Library in Zagreb, with CLA as one of its founders. CLA's rich publishing tradition, the publishing of the professional scientific journal *Vjesnik bibliotekara Hrvatske* (1950-) and professional newsletter *Novosti* (1994-), the maintenance of an interactive website <http://www.hkdrustvo.hr/en/> (1998-) with various members and friends' forums, and the organizing of regular and occasional meetings of experts, open possibilities of exerting continual influence on both the internal and external communities and the forming of a space for public discussions.

The advantages for Strategy implementation are also to be found in active participation of CLA's Head and Professional Board in advocating the celebration of Croatian Library Day as a joint annual presentation and promotion of librarianship.

### WEAKNESSES

Although public activities have been one of the oldest traits throughout CLA's development, these activities seem to be insufficiently present in the public, i.e. not present in the extent required for exerting greater influence on decision-makers and the forming of potential partnerships. Reasons behind it lie in an insufficient number of socially engaged CLA members, the lack of printed manuals for the advocacy of library interests, as well as in the lack of tradition of establishing the so-called Library Friends' Clubs. At the moment, the

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<sup>47</sup> 14th Seminar on Archives, Libraries and Museums: Possibilities for Cooperation within a Global Environment, to be held from 24-26 November 2010 in Rovinj. Available at: <http://www.osmbrozovic.hr/akm/index.html>

shortage of strategic partners seems to be a great hindrance, the removal of which should become our main focus.

## OPPORTUNITIES

The recognition of CLA as a non-governmental association, as well as its applying for projects financed by National Foundation for Civil Society Development, the state authorities, Croatian companies and other sponsors, as well as Croatia's planned joining of the European Union with possible access to EU funds, all these factors form the positive background which CLA should hold on to, especially since library advocacy forms a general trend in librarianship at the international level. Strategy implementation and joint advocacy of libraries in the times of economic crisis is a great opportunity for preserving, if not improving, the existing level of library development.

## THREATS

The economic crisis in Croatia and the cuts in the state budget, as well as the international economic crisis, often incline towards political, rather than professional interests, which certainly forms an obstacle in advocating in favour of opening new or enhanced financing of the existing libraries.

### ***I have the right to know, I have the right to a library campaign***

Along with the 2008-2010 CLA Strategy for Library Advocacy, the Advocacy Working Group presented the CLA Assembly with the text of an initiative for gathering a network of public advocates entitled *I have the right to know, I have the right to a library*<sup>48</sup>, to be found in the Appendix. Following the guidelines of IFLA and EBLIDA, CLA started in 2010 the work on creating the first public campaign entitled: *I have the right to know, I have the right to a library*, its launchdate planned for the end of 2010, and continuing throughout 2011.

Campaign's logo and visual identity will be completed by the end of May 2010, to be presented at the 37th CLA Assembly, alongside a detailed campaign programme. The invitation for gathering a network of library advocates, designed as a ready-to-print poster, will be addressed to all Croatian libraries, according to previously prepared lists, urging them to publish it on their websites, as well as print and distribute them in their local communities. In order for this invitation to reach a great number of relevant institutions, we are now preparing the lists of public authorities to be lobbied in favour of library interests, along with a list of towns and districts, schools, social, health and penitentiary institutions, as well as other institutions which should, and still have not, established a library or library services.

As part of campaign preparations, Advocacy Working Group joined CLA/FAIFE in organizing the 10th Round Table on Free Access to Information entitled *The influence of global economic crisis on libraries and free access to information*, to be held on 10 December 2010, in order to observe the extents of the economic crisis and its influence on Croatian librarianship. Among other issues, the invited speakers will present the state and tendencies in financing public, school, academic and special libraries in Croatia over the past few years.

The campaign will be launched by celebrating the Croatian Library Day and the gathering of a network of public advocates, to be continued throughout 2011, with organizing

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<sup>48</sup> The invitation was published as an appendix to the Strategy for Library Advocacy in *Vjesnik bibliotekara Hrvatske* 51, 1/4(2008), 247-248.

a discussion panel dealing with the importance of libraries for the development and maintenance of democratic societies.

At the 37th CLA Assembly, the Advocacy Working Group plans to hold a workshop on campaign implementation, as well as complete a series of flyers and advocacy guidelines to be used by librarians in similar campaigns.

The Working Group also plans to launch a forum page on CLA's website in order to stimulate systematic exchange of positive experience among CLA members, as one of possible methods of self-reflection and a source of new ideas. Thus we intend to build a database of successful individual actions within local communities.

## Conclusion

Today we are witnessing the recognition of libraries as important social institutions, the implementation of skills and norms developed within the field of librarianship into other professions, and the organizational structure of library systems used as a model by other organizations<sup>49</sup>.

We are striving to turn LIBRARIES into a *brand* enjoying the trust of its users, a brand respecting their loyalty and standing a chance of success in these ever-changing times.

The workings of a library are based on quality and permanent values, the following of constant changes of their environment, and nowadays also on a good marketing strategy. The continuing education and sensibilisation of a wider public is therefore of great importance, along with motivating librarians to a more active public effort in advocating the values of library profession, the protection of human rights and providing equal services to all library users.

The estimated long-term effects of the Strategy for Library Advocacy in Croatia and the *I have the right to know, I have the right to a library* campaign are linked to the following achievements at the national level:

- the improvement of cooperation between Croatian Library Association and its partners in advocating the passing of the legislative concerning librarianship and library-related professions,
- the recognition of librarianship as a profession requiring a degree in library studies, as well as continuing professional development, and the improvement of the status of library profession,
- the adequate funding of libraries as basic and irreplaceable democratic institutions providing sources of information needed for life, work and active civil participation at local and national levels,
- free library services for children and youth under 18,
- creation of formal and informal networks of library advocates with a wider range of interests,
- increase in the number of CLA members interested in working within library associations.

The estimated long-term effects are also linked to possible achievements at the local level:

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<sup>49</sup> Croatian archives and museums are establishing the Research and Development Department in accord with library models.



- opening new libraries in towns and districts<sup>50</sup> which should have founded new libraries by 2002, as stipulated in the *Libraries Act* (1997); in schools still lacking a library, although they should have founded one in accordance with the *Act of Primary Education*<sup>51</sup> and the *Act on Secondary Education*<sup>52</sup>, as well as in social, health and penitentiary institutions,
- recognition of libraries as central places for lifelong learning of local community members, and engaging a greater number of children and youth, adults and elderly persons in libraries' lifelong learning programmes,
- increased public support and founding of Friends of Libraries Clubs.

## APPENDIX

INVITATION TO THE MEETING OF SUPPORTERS' NETWORK  
UNDER THE SLOGAN  
I HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW, I HAVE THE RIGHT TO A LIBRARY  
passed at the 36th Assembly of the Croatian Library Association,  
2 October 2008 in Pula, Croatia:

Croatian Library Association invites all its members, all members of library profession and all library friends to join forces in raising public awareness and promoting and ensuring free access to information, lifelong learning and struggle against ignorance, informing the general public on the need of building and adequately financing libraries in all towns and districts, the need for establishing library services in all schools, high-schools, scientific and cultural institutions, as well as in all social, health and penitentiary institutions.

Croatian Library Association recounts the permanent values of libraries:

- libraries are basic and irreplaceable institutions of democracy servicing citizens of various age, economic status, ethnicity, as well as various mental and physical abilities in order to provide them with information sources necessary for their life and work, as well as equipping them for active participation on both local and national levels;
- libraries, in cooperation with community's civil associations and institutions, affect the development of public sensibility and removes prejudice against socially marginalized groups of library users, such as minority members, physically challenged and elderly, as well as organizing special programmes aimed at encouraging the above mentioned to use the library services;
- libraries are treasuries of collective memory and an invaluable source for reconstructing community's history and recognizing its identity within a highly globalized world, as well as supporting the creation, borrowing and preservation of printed, audio-visual and electronic versions of cultural heritage collections;
- libraries are the place of free flow of knowledge and culture, functioning as a counterpoint to the selective offers of mass media and educational systems, as

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<sup>50</sup> In 2006, Croatian Parliament passed the *Act on the Territories of Counties, Towns and Municipalities in the Republic of Croatia* which offers a list of all settlements, districts and towns belonging to a certain county. Available at: <http://narodne-novine.nn.hr/HKDHKDnci/sluzbeni/127788.html>

<sup>51</sup> See note 30, first citation

<sup>52</sup> See note 31, first citation

well as ensuring economic growth and social stability in the times of global competition;

- libraries aid learning by nurturing the need for consulting various information sources, as well as providing easier search, selection and evaluation of quality information;
- libraries devise programmes aimed at lifelong learning for members of all age, social and ethnic groups, following the development of information and communication technologies, and are, along with schools, the most relevant institutions in creating the preconditions for developing a society of knowledge;
- libraries ensure optimal access to official publications and information via quality processing and information services, as well as by choosing the adequate technical equipment;
- libraries support the use of electronic government services, electronic health services, electronic trade and electronic education services, offering easy and direct access to its users, as well as user training for accessing electronic sources;
- libraries are a safe place for learning, pleasure and meeting of different generations.

Croatian Library Association thus invites public authorities and local government bodies in all Croatian districts, towns and counties, Croatian Government, Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Science, Education and Sport in particular, to join their efforts in providing every child, young adult, employed and unemployed citizens and pensioners, with the easy and accessible use of quality library services.

*Translated by Iva Šrot.*