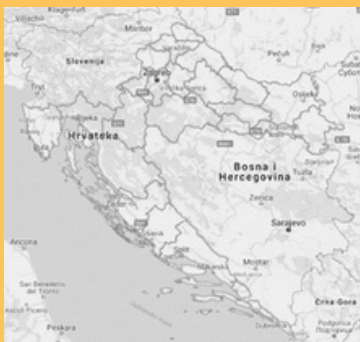


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General Information



KEY INFORMATION ABOUT THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

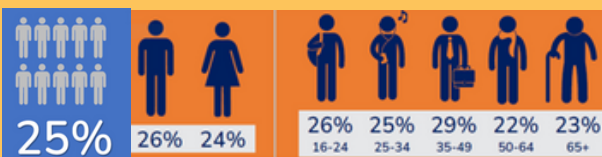
Capital: Zagreb
Official Language: Croatian
Population: 3,871,833 (as of 2021)*
Currency: Euro (EUR)
Calling Code: +385

KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS

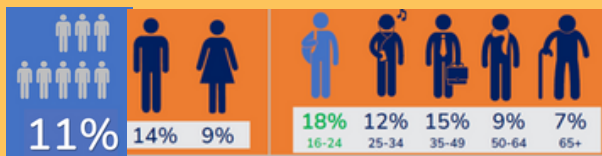
GDP per capita: US\$ 18,413.2 (as of 2022)**
Real GDP growth in 2022: 7%***
Unemployment rate in September 2023: 5.8%****

Statistics and Demographics*****

Volunteer experience at least once in a lifetime (percentage of the total population)



Volunteer experience 2020 - 2022 (percentage of the total population)



According to the level of education, volunteer experience at least once in a lifetime was reported by 40% of those with higher education, 23% with secondary education, and 15% with no formal qualifications. From 2020 to 2022, volunteer experience was reported by 17% of those with higher education, 11% with secondary education, and 8% with no formal qualifications.

The average volunteer in Croatia, a person who has been involved in volunteering at least once in their life, is equally likely to be male or female, of middle age (35 to 64 years, 28%), with secondary education (52%), employed (52%), and not a member of any civil society organisation (66%).

The average volunteer who has volunteered in the last three years is predominantly male (60%), of middle age (35-64 years, 33%), with secondary education (54%), employed (59%), and a member of a civil society organisation (56%).

Regarding the motivational reasons and factors for volunteering, volunteers mostly agree with the statements:

- that they feel better when volunteering,
- that they feel it is important to help others,
- that volunteering develops a sense of community and solidarity,
- that through volunteering, they contribute to positive social change.

DEFINITION OF VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is the voluntary investment of personal time, effort, knowledge, and skills to perform services or activities for the benefit of another person or community. These services are carried out without the expectation of monetary reward or the pursuit of any other material benefit for the volunteering performed. (Law on Volunteering)

SOCIAL CONTEXT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering in Croatia has a long tradition that can be linked to the concepts of humanism, community, and solidarity.

The general population of Croatia views volunteering positively, with over 80% of citizens agreeing that volunteering promotes a sense of care for others, solidarity, connectedness, quality of the community life, and practical experience. *****

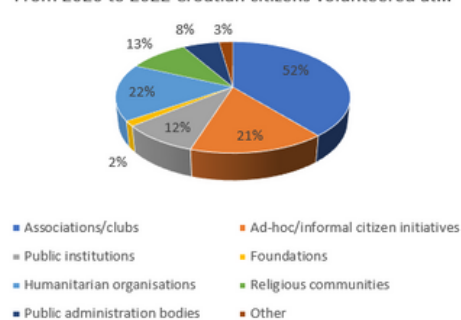
However, the public perception of volunteering in Croatia often tends to be limited to humanitarian work, overlooking the broader context that encompasses active citizen participation, contribution to democratization, social empowerment, and contribution to sustainable development.

Types of Volunteer Activities*****

In the period from 2020 to 2022, considering the three-year crisis context, just over a quarter of the citizens of Croatia who participated in the research (28%) volunteered in the field of crisis response (earthquakes, floods, pandemic), as well as in humanitarian activities (27%). Similarly, 19% volunteered in the educational sector and in sports. The lowest number of volunteers were involved in the fields of arts, media, culture, and animal rights protection (8%), activities promoting the development of democratic culture (5%), and only 2% in advocacy activities.

In June 2023, the majority of citizens who participated in the research volunteered in sports activities (24%), followed by organising humanitarian activities (21%), and crisis volunteering (earthquakes, floods, pandemic) with 20%.

From 2020 to 2022 Croatian citizens volunteered at...



Motivation for Volunteering*****

* Source: Croatian Bureau of Statistics (<https://dzs.gov.hr/en/news/results-of-the-2021-population-census-published/1270>)

** Source: World Bank (<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=HR>)

*** Source: World Bank (<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.KD.ZG?locations=HR>)

**** Source: Croatian Bureau of Statistics (<https://dzs.gov.hr/vijesti/broj-zaposlenih-u-rujnu-2023-u-odnosu-na-prethodni-mjesec-pao-za-0-6/1685>)

***** Čulum Ilić, B., Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka: General Research on Volunteering in Croatia, (2023)

Measuring the Impact of Volunteering

In Croatia, there is no systematic measurement of the impact of volunteering. In the absence of systematic measurement of the impact of volunteering, the Croatian Volunteer Development Centre, in partnership with other organisations working in the field of volunteer development in Croatia, developed a methodology and tools for measuring the impact of volunteering on personal development of individuals and socio-economic development in 2023.

Quality Standards in the Field of Volunteering

The Croatian Volunteer Development Centre has developed **quality standards for volunteer centers** in Croatia with the aim of assisting organisations acting as volunteer centers to fulfill their roles more effectively and easily, benefiting their primary beneficiaries – volunteers and volunteer involving organisations, as well as other stakeholders influenced by their work.

Quality standards for volunteer programmes in Croatia have also been developed by the Croatian Volunteer Development Centre for volunteer involving organisations seeking to develop volunteer programmes based on quality. The main goal of the Quality Standards is to ensure the quality of volunteer programmes for the improvement of volunteering.

National E-platform for Volunteering**

volonteka
e-platforma za volontiranje

The Croatian Volunteer Development Centre and regional volunteer centres have developed a national online database of volunteering opportunities to increase the visibility of volunteer involving organisations and volunteers and to enhance the availability of volunteering opportunities and the mobility of volunteers within Croatia.

Challenges to the Development of Volunteering in Croatia*

- Attracting new volunteers and ensuring their long-term engagement.
- Connecting volunteering efforts with broader civic engagement and education.
- Enhancing the capacity and human resources of volunteer organizations for quality engagement, providing education for the creation of appealing volunteer roles, and align with emerging trends in volunteerism.
- Developing and maintaining high-quality, impactful volunteer programs.
- Establishing a strategic, horizontal policy framework to underpin volunteering eco system.
- Fostering partnerships across government, business, and non-profit sectors.
- Securing investment for the research and development necessary to inform and improve volunteering strategies.



Institutional and Legal Framework for Volunteering in Croatia

The Law on Volunteering defines volunteering, principles and conditions for volunteering, rights and obligations of volunteers and organisations involving volunteers, conditions for signing volunteering contracts, the Ethical Code of Volunteering, issuing of volunteering certificates, the state award for volunteering, and means for monitoring the implementation of this law.

The Code of Ethics on Volunteering introduces a set of values and a code of conduct for volunteers, volunteer involving organisations, and beneficiaries in accordance with the principles of volunteering stated in the Volunteering Act.

The Certificate of Competencies Acquired through Volunteering is an official instrument for recognising and confirming competencies gained through volunteering. It was prepared and published by the Ministry responsible for volunteering to support volunteers in the recognition of competencies acquired through volunteering experiences.

The State Award for Volunteering is awarded by the Government of the Republic of Croatia. The procedure for awarding the prizes, categories and criteria for selection, the appearance of the award, and the awarding of prizes and acknowledgments are regulated by the Regulation on the State Award for Volunteering.



Financial Support for the Development of Volunteering in Croatia

The main national provider of continuous financial support for volunteering is the Ministry of Labor, Pension System, Family, and Social Policy. Since 2021, the Ministry has introduced two-year funding programmes for volunteer centres and the Croatian Volunteer Development Centre.

Key Stakeholders in the Development of Volunteering

- Ministry of Labor, Pension System, Family, and Social Policy
- National Board for Volunteering Development
- Office for Cooperation with NGOs of the Government of the Republic of Croatia
- National Foundation for Civil Society Development
- Council for the Civil Society Development
- Croatian Volunteer Development Centre
- Regional and local volunteer centres (4 regional and 32 local volunteer centres gathered in the national Network of volunteer centres run by CVDC)
- Volunteer involving organisations

Trends in the Development of Volunteering in Croatia*

- Increase in informal initiatives, indicating a shift towards more local, community-focused efforts.
- A trend towards short-term volunteering is beginning to emerge, with fewer individuals committing to long-term volunteer engagements, reflecting changes in lifestyle patterns and availability.
- Interest in online volunteering is growing, highlighting the increasing role of technology in facilitating remote and flexible volunteer engagements.
- Motivations for volunteering are changing, due to shifts in societal values, personal goals and life styles and working culture.
- The space for collaboration between organisations involving volunteers is diminishing, which may impact the effectiveness and influence of volunteer programmes.
- The availability of volunteer programmes and opportunities is decreasing, which could lead to a reduction in overall volunteer engagement and a gap in service provision.
- The interest of decision-makers and other key stakeholders in promoting and supporting the development of volunteering is waning, which may hinder the growth and structural support of volunteer programmes.

Research in the Field of Volunteering

In 2022 and 2023, scientific research on volunteering in collaboration with the academic community provided insights into the number of citizens engaged in volunteering, the state of volunteering in healthcare, and how young people in Croatia perceive volunteering:

- Ćulum Ilić, B., Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka: General Research on Volunteering in Croatia
- Tonković, Ž., Marčelić, S., Krolo, K., Department of Sociology, University of Zadar: Research on Volunteering and Values of Youth
- Šimunković, G., Faculty of Medicine, University of Rijeka: Research on Volunteering in Healthcare

* Source: Annual Report on the Work of Volunteer Centres for the year 2022, Croatian Volunteer Development Centre (HCRV), May 2023. (<https://www.docdroid.net/mc60ARX/izvjestaj-lvc-2022-pdf>)

** <https://volonteka.hr/zagreb-i-okolica>

*** <https://mrosp.gov.hr/UserDocsImages//dokumenti/MDOMSP%20dokumenti/Vodi%C4%8D%20za%20organizatore%20volontiranja%20i%20volontere.pdf>