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THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM PROGRAMME ENCOMPASSES GONG ELECTION RELATED ACTIVITIES AIMING AT CONTRIBUTING TO ATTAINING HIGHER DEMOCRATIC STANDARDS OF CROATIAN ELECTORAL SYSTEM THUS ENABLING TRANSPARENCY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF ALL INFORMED STAKEHOLDERS.

1 Election Monitoring

GONG regularly monitors the activities of state bodies responsible for conducting and organizing elections, the course of election campaigns, and encourages, organizes and educates citizens on how to monitor elections as non-partisan observers in order to prevent and/or to identify violations of election laws and regulations, inform the public on the course of the elections thus in turn strengthening citizens' trust in the electoral process..

In 2010, GONG successfully cooperated with the state bodies responsible for organizing the elections in Croatia during the second round of presidential elections, and extraordinary local elections.

Presidential elections 2010 (second round)

During the second round of presidential elections, as well as during the first round, GONG monitored the entire electoral procedure, focussing on:

- **monitoring the work of institutions responsible for the electoral process** (State Election Commission, Ministry of Public Administration, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integrations, Diplomatic and Consular Representations in the Republic of Croatia, Electronic Media Agency),
- **monitoring election campaign financing** (implementation of rules, respecting democratic standards, and monitoring media advertising costs)
- **monitoring media campaign with the aim of analyzing the content of messages and campaigns by presidential candidates through the “Ad Watch” project** (in cooperation with Political Marketing major students at the Faculty of Political Science).

GONG **regularly informed and educated voters and the media on the election process via its web site www.gong.hr** by publishing information and reports. For that purpose, GONG created several handbooks published on GONG web site: **A Guide through the Presidential Elections, A Guide through Voter Lists and Voting Outside the Place of Residence, A Guide for Candidates, A Guide for Election Campaign Financing, as well as various manuals for partisan and non-partisan observers.** Furthermore, with the aim of improving the election monitoring process, GONG offered free education on monitoring the elections to all presidential candidates' headquarters which only the headquarters of presidential candidate Nadan Vidošević accepted.

The presidential elections throughout Croatia was observed by **55 mobile teams** on a sample of 10% of polling stations selected by a statistical method, **11 mobile teams in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)**,

and observers in **Germany** (just in the second round), **USA and Switzerland**. GONG received reports from 758 polling stations in the first, and 710 polling stations in the second round.

GONG assessed that the elections were organized and conducted properly. The improvement in the activities of most state institutions responsible for electoral process was noted, apart from the Ministry of Public Administration which with its activities made a step backward. The electoral process was not entirely transparent due to deficiencies in regulations concerning election campaign financing, and the lack of adhering to electoral regulations during election campaigns by both the behaviour of the media and the presidential candidates.

In the run-up to the elections there were repeated concerns which have become constant in the last couple of years and pertain mostly to issues concerning up-to-dateness of voter lists abroad, implementation of regulations pertaining to election campaign financing, the responsibility of the media, etc. GONG representatives highlighted on several occasions in public appearances the need for changing and improving the existing regulations (mostly regarding the technical aspect of election conduct, updating the voter lists, campaign financing, media responsibility, informing and educating voters, harmonization of other Acts) with the aim of increasing transparency and legitimacy. GONG also emphasized the problem of stakeholders' interest arising only during the elections which almost always results in just repeating the same issues and problems for every elections. Acknowledging this problem, GONG organized a **round table discussion introduced by Ivo Josipović, the President of the Republic of Croatia**, that addressed some of the afore mentioned problems and of which you can find more details in the continuation of the Report.¹

It is, however, a general assessment by GONG that the elections were, for the most part, conducted in a democratic atmosphere that enabled the voters to exercise their voting rights, and the participants of the elections were to a great extent informed on their rights and obligations. The election campaign was focused on a series of topics, and not predominately on the powers of the Croatian President, but due to the poor regulation of media campaign and the fact that the regulatory authorities do not have at their disposal concrete sanctioning tools, the presidential campaign at moments pushed back the boundaries of good taste. The regularity of election campaign financing was, at times, difficult to monitor of which you can find more details in the continuation of this report.²

In the run-up to the elections, GONG had several meetings with the representatives of OSCE/ODIHR Mission who also observed the election process in Croatia, but on a limited scale. However, some of the objections GONG had to the implementation of the elections were entered in the OSCE/ODIHR reports.

The Final Report on the Presidential Elections by GONG was published on www.gong.hr.

Pre-term elections for the Municipal Council of Stari Mikanovci

In June 2010, pre-term elections were held for the Municipal Council of Stari Mikanovci in Vukovar-Syrmia County. GONG observed these elections by providing accreditations for two observers who were a part of a mobile team and monitored the voting process at the polling stations in the municipality. There were no significant irregularities noted.

1 In the part of the report referring to the Initiative for amendment and improvement of electoral legislation, point 6.

2 In the part of the report referring to the Initiative for amendment and improvement of electoral legislation, point 3.

Elections abroad

Ukraine: as part of the ENEMO mission in January of 2010, 20 GONG observers monitored the first round of the elections, and in February the second round of the presidential elections in Ukraine. Two persons from GONG participated in the mission as long-term observers (LTO), i.e. regional coordinators for observers.

Kosovo: as part of the ENEMO mission in December 2010, GONG sent 11 observers for the preterm presidential elections.

Kirgizstan: Ms Irena Pereša participated in the ENEMO mission for parliamentary elections of 2010, in October, as a short-term observer.

Moldavia: In November 2010, Mr Anton Finderle observed the parliamentary elections in Moldavia as a short-term observer (STO) within the OSCE/ODIHR mission.

Belarus: In December 2010, Mr Dragan Zelić participated as a short-term observer in the OSCE/ODIHR mission of observing presidential elections.

2 Initiatives for amendment and improvement of electoral legislation

GONG regularly makes comparative analysis of electoral legislation, encourages public debates, and actively advocates amendments and improvements of Croatian electoral legislation, with the aim of achieving Western European standards.

In the reporting period, GONG engaged in the following activities:

1 Cooperation with the State Election Commission (SEC)

During the second round of 2010 Croatian presidential elections, GONG actively followed up on the activities of SEC.

GONG participated in several sessions held by SEC thus becoming even more familiar with SEC's activities, and consequently sent a series of questions in writing to SEC asking for clarification of organization and implementation of elections. The cooperation between GONG and state electoral bodies at all levels was generally good, apart from some rude exceptions and lack of understanding demonstrated by certain electoral bodies.

One of the more significant problems encountered during the **presidential elections** was the process of voting outside the place of residence in the second round of the elections. SEC made an official request on several occasions to the Ministry of Public Administration to enable voting to voters who will not be at their place of residence in the second round of the elections, and who did not have the chance to register for voting outside their electorate up to 12 December. This initiative from SEC was in line with the requests GONG made against MPA regarding this issue.

In its public appearances, GONG continually emphasized the fact that SEC should have conducted a more **comprehensive campaign of informing and educating voters** to which the OSCE limited observation mission also warned.

Moreover, in order to avoid any ambiguities on the election day, and to have a comprehensive and credible reporting on the results of the **presidential elections**, GONG asked SEC to call on the media to adequately report on exit polls, i.e. to ask the media to educate the viewers on the meaning of exit polls and the results of such polls, which SEC did.

Taking into consideration the working conditions, the scope of work, the legal framework which left many issues unregulated, GONG assessed that SEC organized and conducted the presidential elections correctly and with transparency, setting higher standards, and making noticeable progress in the organization of the elections abroad. However, there are still numerous challenges that SEC has to surpass in the upcoming period which include additional engagement that would establish SEC as an independent, competent, expert body that initiates and implements an electoral reform, and raises the level of education, participation and trust by the citizens in the electoral process. SEC is expected to act proactively even when there are no elections. In this aspect, GONG will monitor SEC activities in the upcoming period.

After the elections, GONG, together with the Faculty of Political Science organized **round tables³** and encouraged public discussions on the issues raised in relation to the activities of SEC with the representatives of SEC. The predominant issues thus discussed focused on further professionalization of SEC, and on the need of making an additional effort to be more proactive.

In 2010, GONG continued monitoring the activities implemented by SEC with the aim of creating a **shadow report on the work of SEC**.

2 Voter lists

During the reporting period GONG monitored the issues regarding voter lists throughout the entire duration of presidential elections (second round) and through the announced amendments of the Act on Residence.

After the second round of the **presidential elections**, GONG performed a review of election materials from polling stations abroad whereas a number of possibly deceased persons in the voter lists was observed. However, this number does appear to be smaller than in the last elections.

For the presidential elections, GONG publicly called upon MPA to enable **the issuance of voting confirmations** between the two rounds of the elections **for voters outside their place of residence so that they would be able to vote in the second round of the elections**. However, MPA refused to do that, although it was clear from the explanation they provided that the valid provisions of the Act on Voter Lists are in content identical to those applied in the 2000 and 2005 elections, and that all that was lacking this time was a sign of good faith by MPA to enable this.

Furthermore, GONG sent **several queries to MPA on managing voter lists and data regarding the voting procedure outside the place of residence**, and questioned the actions by MPA related to some other issues as well (e.g. by sending a query regarding the IT services provider for administering voter lists).

One of the problems with the voter lists is **fictional residence** that can be resolved through amendments of the Act on Residence, which would subsequently contribute to more correct voter lists. Begin-

³ More on this topic in the continuation of the report under point 6, but also in the upcoming chapter "20 Years of Democratic Elections in RH"

ning of 2010, the Government proposed the amendments to the Act on Residence, and the Act was composed without public discussion or consultations with qualified members of the public. GONG created an analysis of the proposed amendments and sent its comments and proposals to the Croatian Parliament, the Government, political parties and other interested stakeholders.

The proposal for the **Act on the Amendments of the Act on Residence** was largely identical to the proposal given in 2005 when, due to the fierce opposition of domestic and international public including GONG, the same was withdrawn from the procedure. Furthermore, the proposal is very ambiguous and is to be adopted through an urgent procedure which could have severe consequences.

The proposal contains ambiguous and irregular procedures regarding finding, determining and proving the intent of citizens to permanently occupy a residence, per official duty of Mol or acting on the proposal made by the local and regional authorities or persons who have legal interest, which gives way for numerous possibilities of manipulating and selectively applying the Act in some local communities.

In order to have a quality Act on Residence, and clearing the records of residencies and voter lists, it is necessary to conduct a public discussion with all interested stakeholders and reach an agreement on interstate contracts regarding data exchange on Croatian citizens' places of residence in neighbouring countries.

Long-term aim would be to constitute a unique national database in order to have all data in one central database, and not, as is the case now, to have several databases (place of residence, voter lists, tax administration data, Croatian Health Institute...) more or less regularly updated.

Contract on managing voter lists

GONG has been monitoring the quality of managing voter lists for years now, and although it has repeatedly requested the MPA to show service contracts between the MPA and companies in charge of technical and IT administration of main national databases and voter lists, GONG still hasn't succeeded in gaining insight into those contracts.

MPA thus refused to deliver to GONG the copies of contracts made between MPA and company APIS IT from Zagreb which regulate the maintenance of the existing system of main databases and voter lists by claiming that the contract is protected by rights of intellectual property and is as such classified. In the proceedings at the Administrative Court, GONG claimed that the contracts between private companies and state administration bodies cannot be classified or secret because they fall under public administration activities and need to be available to public in all parts except in those pertaining to intellectual property.

The Administrative Court ruled that the MPA is obliged to provide insight into that part of the contract relating to maintenance and technical support of the existing IT system of national databases and voter lists, and into the design of the new IT system of voter lists that does not pertain to intellectual property rights.

During the reporting period, GONG had significant public appearances regarding voter lists in all leading daily newspaper, TV stations and portals.

3 Financing of election campaigns and political parties

GONG continued with its activities of advocating improvement of the Act on the Financing of Political Parties, Independent Lists and Candidates through monitoring transparency of election campaign financing in local and presidential elections of 2010, but also through the analysis of annual financial reports of political parties for year 2009, and through proposing improvements to the new Act written by the MPA.

2010 Presidential elections (second round)

During the elections, GONG and Transparency International Hrvatska (TIH) called upon all the candidates to, according to the law:

- 1 Announce the amounts they plan on spending in their campaigns as soon as possible;
- 2 Announce and deliver to SEC, at least 7 days before the elections, preliminary reports on the amounts and sources of funds collected for the election campaign costs, and to announce the name of their donors;
- 3 Announce and deliver to SEC, at least 15 days after the elections, the information on the amounts and sources of funds spent on the election campaign, as well as the height and structure of costs in the campaign.

Media, especially national TV, radio and the press are asked to, with the aim of achieving more transparency in the elections, publicly announce the advertising prices for election campaigns and the total amount paid for the promotion of each candidate, and thus play their role in achieving transparent election campaigns.

Both presidential candidates in the second round delivered their preliminary reports to SEC regarding the amount and sources of funds collected for the election campaign costs, as well as subsequent final reports. However, Mr Bandić (one of the candidates) publicly announced that he is not sure who exactly is to cover the biggest part of his campaign costs. Consequently, a significant number of Mr Bandić's donors remained unknown.

Although it is **difficult to properly monitor the transparency of election campaign financing** even with the quality legal framework, it is especially difficult when, as is case in Croatia, the legal framework is deficient and insufficiently regulated. The existing legal regulation is not sufficient for monitoring financial reports, especially with the given interpretation of that regulation from the competent institutions⁴, which thus enabled candidates to provisionally state the amounts of their income and expenditures knowing that no institutions will follow up on that. Such situation does not fit in with the proclaimed fight against corruption by all parties and candidates, and further deepens the discrepancy between words and actions of the political elite, which GONG highlighted in its presidential elections report.

GONG and TIH tried to follow the costs of advertising on TV channels and press, without calculating other expenses such as:

- Outdoor advertising, national and local radio stations advertising, local TV stations advertising, advertising in BiH, and online advertising,
- Office costs (lease, overheads, telephone, postage),
- Design costs, preparation, print and procurement of promotional materials,
- Organization of assemblies (the lease of stage, acoustics, place, performers),
- Travel expenses and accommodation,
- Work contracts, employment contracts, service contracts and student contracts,
- Costs of volunteers.

The quantity of media advertising that was monitored since the beginning of the official campaign on 19 November in 2009 up to 10 January 2010, via MEDIApuls agency recorded the quantity and duration of **videos on 4 national TV stations, ads in all daily newspaper (13) and weeklies, fortnightlies, and monthlies (49)**. It is necessary to emphasize that these were gross values of rented advertising space, i.e. **additional commercial discounts** given on the account of quantity and advance payment

4 Although the Act on the Financing of Political Parties, Independent Lists and Candidates (Official Gazette, no. 01/07), GONG received opinions from the State Audit Office and MPA which pointed to the fact that the Act is not being implemented on independent candidates on the presidential elections due to the fact that the Act on the Financing of Electoral Campaign for Presidential Elections is still in force (Official Gazette, no. 105/04). The Act on the Financing of Electoral Campaign for Presidential Elections consists of 7 articles and is completely a cosmetic in nature, and along with other deficiencies it does not prescribe any sanctions in cases of violations of the Act.

were not included. Furthermore, in the calculation of advertising values, **the donation of advertising space made by companies or other subjects was not included.** However, such advertisements and discounts should have been listed as donation in the reports. **VAT costs, if there were any,** were not included in the estimate of advertising values.

Before the second round of the elections, on 7 January 2010, GONG and TIH announced the values of media advertising for the two candidates in the second round. The values refer to the period **as of 3 January 2010⁵.**

Candidate	Total
Milan Bandić	9,589,142.60 HRK
Ivo Josipović	3,937,365.20 HRK

On 29 January 2010, GONG and TIH presented the **final estimates of advertising values** in election campaigns for all candidates. In order to obtain the total amount of real campaign costs, other previously mentioned costs should be added to the advertising costs⁶.

Candidate	Total
Milan Bandić	12,840,922.00 HRK
Ivo Josipović	6,449,953.80 HRK
Dragan Primorac	5,276,427.40 HRK
Nadan Vidošević	4,120,440.16 HRK
Andrija Hebrang	3,730,713.40 HRK
Vesna Pusić	352,519.00 HRK
Miroslav Tuđman	282,581.00 HRK
Damir Kajin	206,011.20 HRK
Vesna Škare Ožbolt	174,296.00 HRK
Boris Mikšić	140,510.00 HRK
Josip Jurčević	60,431.00 HRK
Slavko Vukšić	35,044.00 HRK

The data presented here point to a disproportion in some candidates' figures between the officially reported campaign costs and estimated advertising costs that present only a part of total campaign costs.

5 More details at: <http://www.gong.hr/news.aspx?newsID=3264&pageID=191>

6 More details at: <http://www.gong.hr/news.aspx?newsID=3335&pageID=191>

The new Act on the Financing of Political Activities and Election Campaigns

In May 2010, the Ministry of Public Administration proposed the new Act on the Financing Political Activities and Election Campaigns, and in December 2010, it proposed the improved version of the Act. Both versions of the Act were written without public discussion or consultations with the qualified members of the public. GONG made an analysis of proposed amendments and publicly published its comments and proposals which it sent to the MPA. The MPA subsequently accepted some of the proposals made by GONG.

After the last version of the Act, GONG concluded that we made a significant step forward towards achieving the international standards and better regulations of the subject in question, but that some areas remain insufficiently and quality regulated.

The positive side of the Proposal of the Act is future better regulation of election campaign financing, introduction of a wider range of sanctions for violating the Act, introducing limitations on expenditure and reducing the amount of allowed donations, as is in line with the recommendations made by the Council of Europe.

However, there are still **several issues that need better regulations:**

- 1) According to the current proposal, State Election Commission (SEC) can prescribe only administrative sanctions. In order for SEC to be able to perform an efficient and independent monitoring and pass sanctions, its scope of responsibilities needs to be broaden and more severe sanctioning of candidates during the pre-election campaign, i.e. in the run-up to the elections should be made possible.
- 2) According to the new Act on Croatian Radio-Television (CRT), CRT is not obliged to publish its advertising price list during the election campaign, which makes it harder to achieve transparency of campaign costs thus influencing the credibility of information in candidates and parties' official reports on the costs made during the campaign. Moreover, this prevents the independent monitoring of campaign costs and establishment of real equality between candidates and parties in the media coverage which subsequently brings into question the Act in force. The Act should introduce the obligation for all media to publicly announce their advertising price lists during election campaigns and the amounts they received from political parties and candidates, along with the discounts they provided.

You can find more detailed comments to the Proposal of the Act on GONG website www.gong.hr and in numerous election reports and recommendations GONG wrote in the last 10 years.

Annual Financial Reports of Political Parties

In 2010, GONG again **monitored the publication of annual financial reports of political parties**, and after the Croatian Parliament publicly announced the results of the conducted audit of these annual reports, GONG made a **short analysis of the most frequent infringements of the Act on the Financing of Political Parties, Independent Lists and Candidates encountered in business dealings of political parties.**

After publishing its analysis, GONG concluded how **progress was made in relation to 2008, but that the question remains as to whether sanctions will be imposed for parties and MPs who were in violation of those regulations.**

The initial review of the findings of the State Audit Office showed progress in relation to past evaluations made by the State Audit Office. In 2009, 8 political parties received an unconditional opinion, and 3 parties (HSL, HSU, SDSS) received (worse) conditional opinion which is much better than in 2008 when 5 parties (HNS, HSL, HSU, HDSSB, SDSS) received a conditional opinion.

In its reactions, GONG pointed out that political parties are the pillars of democracy and that their democratic and responsible activities are of utmost importance for the development of democracy in Croatia. The transparency of political parties' financing and reasonable governance of state and local funds, i.e. tax-payers money, contributes to the strengthening of the trust public places in political parties and democracy in general.

The same issue remains and it revolves around the question of whether those who violated the regulations should be held responsible for doing so. Initiating infringement procedures against such parties would lead to more transparency and would thus enable differentiation of minor infringements from irresponsible business dealings.

During 2010, GONG made an analysis of annual financial reports of political parties from 2003 to 2009 in regard to the income obtained from unknown sources and other income, and in the light of the affairs connected with dubious financing of CDU (HDZ). The analysis is available at www.gong.hr.

The worrying high amounts of income from unknown sources and other income, as well as the ratio of that type of income in the total income of political parties is most prominent with the CDU party. The amounts presented under unknown sources and other income are the ones for which the source of funding is unknown to the public.

We hereby remark that this pertains only to data which were publicly presented in annual financial reports of political parties.

The analysis of the State Audit Office Report on the financial reports of candidates from 2009 local elections

In 2010, GONG reacted to the report by the State Audit Office that reviewed financial reports of candidates from the local elections of 2009 by demanding the initiation of infringement procedures against candidates who violated the law and did not submit financial reports.

Taking into consideration that a certain number of candidates and candidates' deputies did not deliver the Final Report to the supervising election committee, the State Audit Office sent 1 280 official memos to candidates and candidates' deputies requesting the delivery of the reports. Although the obligation to deliver the reports is prescribed by law, **even after the sending of the memos, 234 candidates did not deliver the Final report, out of which 9 was elected to public office, and 124 realized the right for the compensation of costs from the election campaign in the first round of the elections, and 24 in the second round of the elections.**

Out of total 1 997 candidates, 1 763 or 88.3% delivered reports, and 234 or 11.7% of the candidates did not deliver the Final report. In a legally prescribed period (14 days from the publication of the electing results) 870 or 49.3% reports were delivered, and **outside the legally prescribed period 893 or 50.7% of the reports were delivered.** Only the candidates from the area of the City of Zagreb delivered the reports in for such legally prescribed period.

In the reporting period, GONG had significant media appearances in regard to political parties' financing and financing of election campaign in all daily newspaper and on leading TV stations and portals.

4 Referendum

During 2010, in the wake of the EU accession referendum, and with the growing number of civil initiatives for the EU referendum, GONG made and published a review of the status of legal framework for implementing referenda which included a comparative review, international recommendations, and recommendations related to the improvement of the Referendum Act.

Furthermore, GONG reacted to the decision of the Constitutional Court against the referendum on the Labour Law, the decision that was reached after the citizens demonstrated their political will by collecting more than a sufficient number of referendum signatures thus successfully overcoming the very strict legal requirements that from the start undermine any referenda initiative by citizens.

Such decision discourages any future citizens' referenda initiative, and impedes the right regulated by Article 1 of the Croatian Constitution: the people shall exercise their power through the election of representatives and through **direct decision-making**.

GONG, as an organization that monitors the functioning of public administration bodies, so far observed and pointed out to some of the circumstances that throw serious doubt on the trust citizens place in the functioning of Constitutional Court: through several cycles of elections the judges of the Constitutional Court have been elected almost overnight, without any public debate or appreciation for the opinion of experts, although the public repeatedly questioned the elected judges' professional, vocational and other integrity. The decision against the referendum, as well as political tone of statements made by the President of the Court and other judges brought the Constitutional Court dangerously close to the interests and attitudes of the ruling elite and seriously challenged its status as an independent and principal guardian of the Constitution.

5 Comments and analysis on the Proposal of the Act on the Election of European Parliament Representatives

After joining the European Union, the Republic of Croatia will for the first time be able to participate in the Elections for the European Parliament, and will thus need to have an Act regulating the election of representatives to the European Parliament.

In July 2010, GONG reacted to the Proposal of the Act which the Croatian Government sent into parliamentary procedure **as an urgent motion without the open discussion with the qualified members of the public**, and, as far as we know, competent institutions, such as State Election Commission, that gave no opportunity to members of the public to participate in the process of writing this Act.

This Act is to become a part of the unique legislative code which would thus regulate and harmonize all rules pertaining to organization and implementation of the elections, as well as their standardization, which was even advocated by Ivo Josipović, the President of the Republic of Croatia at the round table discussion organized by GONG.

6 Round table discussion on the topic of presidential elections

Following the assembly held in November of 2009 on the occasion of presidential elections of 2009/2010, GONG, together with the Faculty of Political Science, organized in March of 2010 a **round table under the topic "Presidential Elections Experiences & The Need for Uniform Election Law"**.

The analysis of the implementation of the presidential elections, and the Final Report on the Presidential Elections made by GONG, were presented at this round table discussion.

The following participants were present at this round table discussion: Prof. Ivo Josipović, PhD, the President of the Republic of Croatia; Prof. Vlatko Cvrtila, PhD, Dean of the Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb; Prof. Nenad Zakošek, Vice-president of GONG Council, and representatives of SEC, MPA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration, State Audit Office, representatives of the media (CRT, Nova TV, Novi list) and other institutions and associations active in the area of electoral procedures, as well as competent individuals with the long-standing experience in dealing with electoral procedure issues. The public and the media had the opportunity to become informed and familiarize themselves with details of the organization and implementation of the elections, election campaign financing, and media activities during the elections.

The results of this assembly were recommendations on much needed professionalization of the State Election Commission, and establishment of education system by the State Election Commission for lower level of bodies implementing the elections, the possibility of political parties appointing their own representatives into the election committees, the need for using modern IT possibilities in all institutions involved in the organization and implementation of the elections, the necessary improvements of legal framework for financing election campaigns, the need for detailed regulations of promotional activities in the elections, the necessity of updating voter lists for, so called *Diaspora*, the need to harmonize regulations concerning the protection of the electoral rights in the Act on the Election of the President of the Republic of Croatia with the relevant decision of the Constitutional Court, the benefit of additional education of members of political parties and candidates on democratic standards and protection of their rights in the election process by competent state bodies, and the purposefulness of unifying the election laws into one uniform election law. The complete summary of presentations and debates from this round table is published on GONG website (<http://www.gong.hr/news.aspx?newsID=3348&pageID=1>).

7 Project “20 Years of Democratic Elections in Croatia”

Year 2010 marks 20 years from the first parliamentary elections in Croatia. For that reason, GONG, in cooperation with the Faculty of Political Science, decided to commemorate this important milestone in the development of democracy by initiating a *20 Years of Democratic Elections in Croatia* project, and organizing a cycle of 5 public discussions on the topic of elections.

In November 2010, GONG, together with the Faculty of Political Science of the University of Zagreb, organized the first public assembly under the title “**Parliamentary Elections in Croatia**”.

The assembly represented the first in the sequence of five assemblies under the topic of elections, and besides GONG representatives, other participants of the assembly were, Stjepan Mesić, former President of the Republic of Croatia; Vladimir Šeks, Deputy Speaker of the Croatian Parliament; Ivo Škrabalo, former MP; Pavao Matičić, State Secretary of the MPA, and representatives of State Election Commission, academic community, associations and media, and other competent individuals with long-standing experience in the area of elections.

The public and the media had the opportunity to inform and familiarize themselves in more details with key issues related to the elections and history of elections in Croatia, the position occupied by the State Election Commission and actualities concerning the Act on Financing Political Activities and Election Campaigns, problems with voter lists and electoral units, as well as doubts about the position of the national minorities representatives in the Parliament.

The conclusion of the assembly was that the political and partisan scene in Croatia is still in its formation process, while the existing system encourages partyocracy and presidentialism within political parties. The progress achieved in relation to the legislative framework of financing political activities and elec-

tion campaigns was recognized, however, there are still many open issues related to the constitution of electoral units, outdated voter lists and efficiency of State Election Commission. The assembly offered a context for further assemblies on the topic of elections which are to be held in 2011.

8 Project “Protection and Exercise of Voting Rights of People with Disabilities“

From July to December 2010, GONG, with the financial support of the Ministry of the Family, Veterans' Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, implemented a project called **The Protection and Exercise of Voting Rights of People with Disabilities**. The aim of the project was to raise the level of information regarding the exercise of voting rights of people with disabilities, and all other voters unable to access the polling station due to mobility difficulties.

Within the project, GONG made an **Analysis** that gave an overview of international and domestic legal framework with which the voting rights of persons with disabilities and persons with no access to polling stations due to mobility difficulties were regulated, as well as experiences in the voting process of the aforementioned voters and problems observed in that area. The analysis also included comparative data on voting of such groups of voters in the EU countries, and two case studies (Island and Austria). Recommendations for improving the legal framework and the existing practice in relation to general harmonization of all legal regulations pertaining to the elections and referendum are also a part of the Analysis, as well as recommendations for the insertion of SEC mandatory guidelines into existing acts, i.e. guidelines that refer specifically to possibilities of amending regulations in a way that it does not substantially change the electoral system and habits of voters.

With the aim of educating and informing people with disabilities on their voting rights, GONG made within the project a **Guide through the election process for people with disabilities** containing explanations of ID verification information and change of data in voter lists, information on candidature procedure and the exercise of voting rights of people with disabilities.

The analysis with recommendations and the Guide are both available on GONG website <http://www.gong.hr/news.aspx?newsID=3459&pageID=1>. The Guide was published in three formats, as a pdf document, format for print and audio recording of the brochure, in order for blind and partially sighted people to be able to access it so as to achieve greater participation of people with disabilities in political processes.

In order for the Analysis to be presented and the voting rights issues of people with disabilities to be heard, on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities GONG held a **public assembly in the Croatian Parliament** under the sponsorship of the Speaker of the Croatian Parliament. This assembly was attended by the Speaker of the Parliament, Luka Bebić, Zrinka Vrabec Mojzeš, the Adviser to the Croatian President on Matters of Social Importance; Stjepan Adanić, State Secretary of the Ministry of Family, Veterans' Affairs, and Intergenerational Solidarity; Anka Slonjšak, Ombudsman for People with Disabilities; MPs and representatives of various institutions and associations active in the area of electoral process and/or problems of people with disabilities, as well as representatives of the media (HTV, Nova TV and others).

Within its electoral programme, GONG will continue to promote the protection of voting rights of people with disabilities and people with no access to polling stations due to mobility difficulties, and will continue advocating improvements of the legal framework in order for persons with disabilities to be better informed and educated on their voting rights so that they can exercise those rights in the next parliamentary elections.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

THE GOOD GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME INCLUDES GONG'S ACTIVITIES AIMED AT CONTRIBUTING TO ACHIEVING HIGH STANDARDS OF INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS CHARACTERIZED BY HONESTY, RESPONSIBILITY AND OPENNESS TOWARDS THE PUBLIC.

1 Freedom of Information Act

The availability of information in possession of public authorities is one of the fundamental citizens' rights, and the principle of openness is one of the fundamental principles of democratic government.

For the fifth year in a row, in 2010 GONG continued with its research on the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act. The aim of the research was to check to what extent, and with what level of quality has the aforementioned Act been implemented, and to once again point out to the need for improving the entire legislation referring to the availability of information.

The implementation of the Freedom of Information Act in 2010 by public authorities in Croatia is to a great extent still questionable and deficient. Public authorities had the opportunity to respond to relevant and precise queries of which many relate to fiscal information in business transactions, public funds expenditure, or reports. The research showed that it is still much easier to get the answers to questions which are not "sensitive" in nature than to questions which touch upon the public authorities' financial transactions.

GONG selected a sample of 188 public authority bodies, and GONG volunteers (7) on their own behalf submitted requests for information, in order to obtain a more relevant picture about the real on-field conditions. Only 11 requests were submitted by GONG as an organization, and all of them were answered in the prescribed deadline.

GONG conducted an additional research on the implementation of Article 20 of the Freedom of Information Act and of Code of Practice on Consultation with the Interested Public in Procedures of Adopting Laws by the Croatian Government (Official Gazette no. 140/09).

GONG conducted a research by monitoring the publication of the draft of the Act on websites of public authorities. The research included 94 proposals of the draft of the Act which were in the period from 7 January 2010 (35th session) to 9 September 2010 (77th session) reviewed, and in principle, adopted in sessions of Croatian Government. The results showed that only 8 proposals of the draft of the Act were published on websites, i.e. 8.5% of a total number of monitored proposals of the draft of the Act. During this research, only 3 calls for public debate were announced via websites.

Furthermore, after the Ministry of Public Administration submitted the report on the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act to the Croatian Parliament, GONG reflected on this report by handing in its Shadow report. In it, the portrayed cases included in the research were highlighted against the MPA's report which negated the existence of such cases. GONG sent its Shadow report to all parliamentary committees, and the findings of that report were even cited by some MPs during parliamentary sessions.

GONG representatives, Ms Suzana Jašić and Ms Vanja Škorić were active members of the working group for the Freedom of Information Act amendments (April-June). The working group accepted their proposal for introducing an independent Commissioner for Information and thus created both of the proposals which were presented to the public on a public discussion held in May. The Government accepted the proposal in June but without the amendment referring to the introduction of a Commissioner, to which GONG publicly responded.

On the same month, the amendments to the Croatian Constitution were adopted. At the proposal of the civil society organizations' coalition, founded at the GONG initiative, the freedom of information became a right guaranteed by the Constitution.

In September, GONG, together with Transparency International and Croatian Journalists' Association organized a round table discussion on the occasion of Freedom of Information Day. On that occasion, GONG's video clips were broadcasted on national television. Further discussion on the existing amendments proposal to the Freedom of Information Act, organized by GONG was held in the Croatian Parliament in November. The amendments proposal was evaluated as a step forward, especially due to the inclusion of civil society representatives in the writing of the proposal. However, along with other deficiencies of the proposal, there is a serious concern about the capacities and independency of the Personal Data Protection Agency which acts as an Appeal Court in this procedure. The Act was adopted in December, and GONG subsequently announced intensified monitoring of the implementation of the Act and the continuation of further research in 2011.

During the entire period, GONG actively communicated and advocated these amendments towards the Ministry of Public Administration and Croatian MPs.

During the entire year, GONG advised the citizens who contacted GONG, either by telephone or e-mail, in relation to exercising their rights of freedom of information, and followed-up on the most interesting cases.

2 Other Initiatives for Increasing Transparency in Public Authorities' Activities

The activities of state institutions need to be public and they need to serve the citizens, considering how the citizens are the ones creating the need for the existence of the aforementioned institutions which are mostly financed through taxes. Taking into account that the state institutions wouldn't exist if it were not for the citizens, GONG actively advocates all initiatives that aim at making the publicity and transparency the rule of law in Croatia.

1 Transparency of Croatian Parliament and Government's Activities

Within its scope of activities, GONG continued monitoring the transparency of public authorities' activities, especially of the Croatian Parliament and the Government.

GONG continued **monitoring the implementation of the Ordinance on the Public Work of the Croatian Parliament and its Working Bodies.**

From the beginning of this Government's mandate, GONG followed the transparency of its work with the aim of reporting to the public on the method of work and transparency achieved in making decisions, with the emphasis on timely announcements of daily agendas and materials from open and closed government sessions and the publication of all other relevant decisions. With that purpose, GONG **monitored open, closed, and telephone sessions of the Croatian Government.**

Website of the Croatian Government was regularly checked for any new announcements, news, laws, and, on several occasions decisions from Government's closed sessions were asked for, as well as clarifications of documents published on their websites.

In June 2010, GONG published its report on the transparency of the work of the Croatian Government for 2009. The second annual report by GONG points to the fact that there are no significant changes in the transparency of the work of the Croatian Government in relation to year 2008 when GONG assessed that the work of the Government was non-transparent.

The main problem is still **the method of allocating state budget reserves**, where the data points to the fact that Jadranka Kosor's Government allocated more funds from the reserves than Ivo Sanader's Government. GONG analyzed the reports on the usage of funds from the budget reserves, and established that the Government allocated various amounts to certain counties, cities and municipalities, mostly for financing unforeseen expenditure and maintaining unnecessary functions from their scope of activities. The Government for the most part allocated funds to municipalities, cities and counties with local governments composed of party members from the ruling coalition (CDU, SDSS, HSL, HSS).

In 2009, **78.3% of open sessions of Government were partly closed to the public** which is more than in 2008 when 54.8% sessions were partly closed for public. Although the Government's Ordinance does not foresee the possibility of holding telephone sessions, the Government continued with this practice in this year as well.

The Government continued with **untimely announcements of daily agendas and materials** from its open sessions, and agendas from its closed sessions are still not being made public.

2 Act on the Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Public Office

The Act on the Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Public Office is one of the fundamental tools in the fight against corruption. GONG continued monitoring the implementation of the aforementioned law by way of sessions and working bodies in charge of its implementation: Commission for Monitoring the Implementation of the Anticorruption Policy and Commission on the Prevention of Conflict of Interest. In 2010, GONG held several meetings with the representatives of competent institutions with the aim of initiating changes of the valid Act so as to remove the existing deficiencies.

3 Amendments to the Constitutions of the Republic of Croatia

In the fall of 2009, a process of negotiation started within the Government and parliamentary parties regarding the amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, but without any public discussion on that matter. This is why GONG, in cooperation with several other CSOs, encouraged and continued with organizing public discussions on the amendments to the Constitutions and gave proposals for the amendments to the Constitution. The CSOs which participated in the discussion proposed a joint set of amendments and presented them to the public, at the same time starting with the series of meetings and lobbying for their inclusion in official proposals made by political parties.

GONG's amendment on the inclusion of freedom of information in the Constitution was accepted and was thus made a part of the Constitution.

4 Chapter 23 - Shadow report

Chapter 23 on Judiciary and Fundamental Rights is referred to as “the chapter of all chapters” in the negotiations between the Republic of Croatia and European Union. Whether Croatia meets the criteria set by the European Union is to be assessed by the political decision-makers in Croatia and EU, however, GONG, in coordination with other representatives of interested public, primarily the leading protagonists of the civil society scene, decided to prepare the Shadow report concerning Chapter 23.

After the first initiative and collecting of necessary information in February 2011, the composition and publication of participative analysis was planned in order for the European Commission to be able to receive it prior to finalizing its report on the implementation of Chapter 23, which is expected beginning of March 2011.

Nevertheless, the primary goal of this analysis is to enable the voters to, before voting on the referendum, have access to information and make an informed decision on whether Croatia is ready to enter the EU, i.e. whether it fulfils not only European, but its own given standards.

5 Act on Golf Courses

Green Action, GONG and TIH continued in their joint efforts **to warn of the repercussions the Act on Golf Courses, adopted in 2010, can have**. When the amendments to the Act on Golf Courses were being made, the CSOs jointly wrote and **sent the proposal for initiating the procedure for the assessment of constitutionality of the aforementioned amendments of the Act**, by providing clarification of all the ways in which the adoption of the mentioned amendments violated the Constitution, which is why the CSOs demand immediate annulment of the aforementioned Act.

3 Enforcement of the Aarhus Convention in the Adriatic Region

The EU financed regional project “Enforcement of the Aarhus Convention in the Adriatic Region” of 20 months duration, started in 2010. The project applicant is GONG, and project partners are: **Green Istria** (Pula, Croatia), **Network for Affirmation of the Non-governmental Sector - MANS** (Podgorica, Montenegro), **Centre for Management, Development and Planning** (Doboj, Bosnia and Herzegovina), **AdriaticGreeNet** (Udine, Italy), and **European Environmental Bureau** (Brussel, Belgium).

The aim of the project is to improve the standards of implementation of the weakest pillar of the Aarhus Convention – the access to judiciary in matters of environmental protection, and access to information and public participation in decision making processes in relation to the environmental protection in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro. The project aims at developing sustainable partnership and networking of organization in the field of environment protection, and organizations in the field of democratization and transparency so as to obtain a more quality monitoring of the implementation of obligations arising from the Aarhus Convention. A more quality networking of organizations, their mutual help and cooperation was facilitated through joint web site and using the existing Adriatic GreeNet network (www.adriaticgreenet.org/aarhus/).

The main project activity is conducting a specialized educational programme for judges, lawyers, and journalists from Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro implemented through the three pillars of the Aarhus Convention, and through references to case studies and practice of the European Court of Justice and European Court of Human Rights. After the initial press conferences held in Zagreb, Sarajevo, and Podgorica in May 2010, an international tender was published based on which 27 participants

from all three countries were selected. The first seminar that focused on the first two pillars of the Aarhus Convention was held from 17 to 19 September in Vrsar, and the second seminar that dealt with the access to the judicial system, was held in Rovinj from 4 to 7 November. Soon enough, teams were formed, and assignments were handed out for the participants to concentrate on until the beginning of the third seminar which will have a simulation of trial (the so called, Moot Court format) in front of the European courts (February 2011).

The plan is to publish one publication until the end of the project featuring presentations and cases dealt with within the programme, as well as media manual. The results of the project will be presented on the final international conference on the implementation of the Aarhus Convention in Adriatic region, end of July 2011.

A significant cooperation with the Croatian Judicial Academy was established within the project, as the only national body competent for professional education of judges and state attorneys that decided to evaluate the participation of Croatian judges in the programme. Taking into consideration how there has not been any specialized legal education in the field of environment protection for quite some time now, the Judicial Academy decided that GONG is to come up with a shorter curricula on the Aarhus Convention which is to be implemented within the existing educational modules for state attorneys and judges, with the first module being planned for 2011.

4 European Class

During the implementation of the "I vote for the first time" project, teachers who participated in the project suggested that a similar workshop on the topic of the European Union could be held in order for the youngest voting population in Croatia to become additionally educated on that topic. Similar proposals and requests came from high school students who participated at the "I vote for the first time" workshops who were dissatisfied with the amount of information and the quality of information that they received, primarily from the media.

Being fully aware of the complexity of the subject of the European Union and the impact Croatian membership in the Union would have, as well as the existing educational curriculum which partly covers this topic, and in cooperation with the Information Service of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integrations we developed a workshop adjusted to high school seniors which in an interesting and interactive way explains the immediate effects the Croatian membership in the Union will have, especially the effects the membership will have on young people, their mobility, education and future employment. One of the key messages that we tried to get across through this workshop was **encouraging young people to make objective conclusions on the European Union and reduce prejudices they might have as a result of having insufficient partial information on the Croatian membership in the European Union**. The project implementation started in 2006.

In March 2010, we started with **the fourth season** of the project implementation and held **308 interactive workshops** in **85 schools** throughout Croatia **on the subject of the European Union** and on what membership in the EU means for young people. Approximately **8320 students participated in the workshops**.

Besides holding workshops, in April and May of 2010 we also conducted a **research on the attitudes and knowledge** of high school seniors on the Croatia's accession to the European Union, of which the results can be viewed on GONG website: <http://www.gong.hr/news.aspx?NewsID=3448&PageID=1>.

Moreover, considering how in the last couple of years it was becoming more and more harder to collect funds for conducting the European class workshops, GONG thought of an output strategy within this

project and conducted **7 one-day seminars for high school teachers** on the subject of EU in order to build their capacities for holding classes on the topic of EU, and encourage them to further include such topics in their curriculum. By doing this, the teachers became our partners in the project and multipliers of EU knowledge. The seminars were conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integrations, and the Agency for Mobility and Programmes of the European Union. In total, **114 high school teachers** from the entire Croatia were educated.

*! In the four seasons of implementing this project throughout Croatia, **39,220 high school seniors** participated in **1,500 workshops**.*

5 “I Think Globally, and Act Locally!” Project

In 2010, the “**I think globally, and act locally!**” project was conducted in three cities of Istria and Primorje-Gorski Kotar Counties, namely in **Opatija, Rijeka, and Pazin**. High school students from the schools in these cities willingly accepted invitations for participation, where some of them participated for already second or third time, either as participants or as group coordinators.

The aim of this project was to enable young people between 14 and 19 years of age, i.e. high school students to develop skills necessary for active participation in the decision-making processes on the local level. By this the aim is to influence the change of the negative attitude that young people generally express towards politics, and give them the opportunity to take on responsibility for implementing and financing a certain set of measures on a local level. The original idea was developed within the Instituut voor Publiek en Politiek (IPP – Dutch Centre for Political Participation) and GONG is the first organization that conducted this project in the South-Eastern Europe, i.e. in the city of Rijeka in 2006.

Action Day in Opatija, a central event of the “I think globally, act locally!” project was held on **20 April 2010**, with the participation of **56 Opatija’s high school students**. In the first half of the day, with the help of their group coordinators and volunteers, the students considered the given subject and developed their project ideas into project proposals. In the second part of the day, students prepared a presentation of their project proposals and made a decision on the best project on the session of the *ad hoc* formed City Youth Council.

They were divided into five groups (4 groups + journalists) and came up with a number of ideas, but eventually had to decide on only one which was a tough choice. In the continuation of the session, a debate was held as well as two rounds of voting, and after forming a “coalition” the best project selected was “**Volunteers on Š.P.O.R.K.O.**” of the group of students called “**Tortillas**”. The City of Opatija ensured 5000 HRK for the implementation of the winning project.

The winning project was realized on 5 June 2010, under an artistic name “**Jazz, Dance & Volleyball**” which consisted of a volleyball tournament on the sand, dance workshop of a dance troop “Flame” from Rijeka, and an evening part of the programme which included a dance performance by “Flame”, and a concert by well-known jazz musicians, **Damir Halilić Hal**, **Spartak Črnjarić**, and **Denis Razumović**.

Action Day in Rijeka, was for the **fifth time** held on **27 October 2010, in the City of Rijeka**. During Action Day, **85 of Rijeka high-school students** divided in **8 small groups** developed local projects on the topic of “**Let’s design a new product or service for Rijeka’s touristic offer**”. Along with the support and coordination by our activists and city administration’s employees, they spent the entire day drafting projects on the given subject.

For the implementation of the best students’ project, the Department for Entrepreneurship of the City of

Rijeka ensured an amount of 10,000 HRK. At the end of the Action Day, on the Youth Council session, a debate was held and two rounds of voting were conducted, and after forming a “coalition”, the project **“Rijeka’s Mystical Past”** by the students’ group **“The 9 of Us”** was selected as the best project.

The winning group planned a manifestation under their “Rijeka’s Mystical Past” project that in a new and entertaining way brings Rijeka’s past closer to its citizens and visitors. The manifestation was held on **10 December 2010, in Maritime and History Museum of the Croatian Litoral Rijeka** (former Governor’s Palace) from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. The programme featured young female musicians, students of Music School “Ivan Matetić Ronjgov” in Rijeka, who performed works composed by Croatian and world renowned authors from 19th century on violins and piano. At 4.30, 6, and 7.30 p.m. short plays performed by students which accompanied the slide-show: “Dreaming of a Lost Time” - a tea-party held at the casino of Adamić’s theatre before waking up to reality.

At the exhibition area of the Museum, the lightning, sounds and objects invoked the image of the City of Rijeka from the 19th century, including a presentation of famous people from Rijeka’s history, which was a “joint” project of students of Academy of Applied Arts in Rijeka, and Museum’s curators. In front of the Maritime and History Museum, Rijeka’s Morettos were exhibited as well as old postcards and objects provided by the Croatian Associations of Collectors. There were also some traditional refreshments offered which kept the visitors warm on that cold winter day.

Action Day in Pazin was held on 17 November 2010. On that day, **40 students** of Juraj Dobrila secondary school from Pazin were divided in 5 groups which developed project ideas on the **topic of education**. After the debate and two rounds of voting, the winners were a group **“Guido and the Seven Dwarfs”** with their project **“Think Ahead!”**.

With the mentioned project, the winning group wished to provide half-day workshops of writing CVs and motivation letters to all who are thinking about their future, with accompanying entertaining programmes. They feel that the lack of education of young people in the area of active participation in society, the lack of knowledge in writing CVs and motivational letters present a need that needs to be addressed through the aforementioned project for which the City of Pazin ensured 5 000 HRK.

6 Lost-and-Found - Guide for Citizens in Exercising Their Rights and Interests with Public Institutions

The second edition of booklet “Lost and Found – Guide for Citizens in Exercising their Rights and Interests with Public Institutions”, is intended for all citizens who wish to become more acquainted with their rights with the aim of making it easier for them to communicate with public institutions and to be able to more efficiently exercise their rights and interests. The booklet was printed in 2006 in 12,700 copies distributed during 2007 and 2008.

However, the electronic edition of the Guide is available at the website: <http://www.gong.hr/page.aspx?PageID=38> and is regularly updated, and the citizens can also download the *pdf* version.

In 23 thematic chapters are some of the most frequent questions and problems that citizens encounter in everyday life followed by instructions on whom and how to contact, as well as laws and regulations in which they can find more detailed information.

ACTIVE CITIZENS

THE ACTIVE CITIZENS PROGRAMME INCLUDES GONG'S ACTIVITIES WHICH PROMOTE ACTIVISM, AND WHICH EDUCATE AND ENCOURAGE CITIZENS AND CSOS TO ACQUIRE A MORE ACTIVE AND COOPERATIVE APPROACH.

1 GONG Award for Citizens' Activism and Democracy Development

It is often observed that Croatian citizens are passive and indifferent towards political processes, which is why the level of participation in civil initiatives and public benefit organizations is very low followed by a prevailing feeling of mistrust in institutions and politics in general. Croatian citizens are not well informed, and democratic political culture is insufficiently developed. On the other hand, the inclusion of CSOs in political processes is by no means irrelevant. In the last ten years, the CSOs became an important political factor that the decision-makers cannot ignore, and are an important co-creator in forming public opinion.

Considering how the development of a society is determined by the quantity and quality of established relations, active civil society organizations, and well informed and engaged citizens, it is crucial to find ways to encourage these processes.

In that aspect, the GONG Council came up with this Award as a way to promote civil activism, as well as civil values which have been relegated to a marginal status by most of the media, and have not yet been dealt with in a systematic way by the educational system. By awarding those who have been loud, innovative, and brave, we wanted to provide an additional space for the promotion of persons, initiatives, organizations and actions of public interest. Croatia lacks almost every kind of activism, and dwells in conformity, which is why highlighting these positive examples of civil actions is deeply needed. Let's hope this award contributes to that goal.

The public call for proposals for the allocation of GONG award resulted in nine submitted proposals.

Commission composed of: Ms Suzana Jašić, the President, Ms Vesna Kesić, Ms Sandra Pernar, Mr Berto Šalaj and Mr Neven Šantić, **decided that this year's GONG Award should be divided between Mr Srećko Sladoljev, as an example of civil courage and perseverance, and the campaign conducted by the *Pravo na grad* CSO, as an example of a well-thought out, collective action which continually finds new ways of making a difference and influencing and encouraging citizens to take action, while simultaneously gathering a large number of activists.**

The award was presented to winners on 29 May in Vrgorac.

After the award ceremony in Vrgorac, a public meeting was held on the topic of "Managing voters' lists Đ amendments to the Act on Residence, with the aim of reviewing the problem of voters' lists which escalated in Vrgorac during local elections in 2009, and in the light of announced amendments to the Act on Residence. The meeting was attended by: Mr Željko Pervan, Vice-mayor of Vrgorac, Mr Velimir Jukić, MP in BiH from CDU party, Mr Ratko Gajica, MP from SDSS party, Mr Josip Kregar, Professor at the Faculty of Law in Zagreb, Mr Nenad Zakošek, Professor at the Faculty of Political Science, Vice-president of the GONG Council, and Mr Marko Rakar, a blogger and an activist, as a moderator.

2 Project ‘Political literacy of young people in Croatia: research of political knowledge, values and attitudes of Croatian high-school seniors’

In 2010, GONG conducted a project called Political literacy of young people in Croatia: research of political knowledge, values and attitudes of Croatian high-school seniors, implemented with the support of the National Foundation for Civil Society Development.

The goals of the project were to determine the following:

- aims and content of the Politics and Economy classes (PAC) and Sociology classes in high-schools through the revision of existing research and current curriculum for the aforementioned classes;
- standards of a minimum level of political competencies that young people should acquire in high-school;
- cognitive (knowledge) and conative (values and attitudes) political competencies of students in their last year of high-school for determining end-effects of formal education;
- formulation and presentation of recommendations for “political literacy” programmes for young people, through formal school system and existing instruments (Politics and Economy, interdisciplinary curriculum of civil education, other social and humanistic science classes in elementary and secondary schools), but, also through educational offer of CSOs.

Within this project, GONG in November, together with the Faculty of Political Science organized a public assembly on the topic of “Political literacy in young people in Croatia and attitudes towards the EU”, in order to discuss the extent to which young people in Croatia are politically literate and what are their attitudes towards the European Union.

The results of GONG research demonstrated that every fifth of the last year’s senior found themselves to be either well informed or really well informed on the impact the Croatian membership in the EU will have, and only around 16 percent of students stated the formal school education as an important source of information about the upcoming referendum.

The more worrying results are those that show that 37% of high-school seniors think that CSOs work against the well-being of Croatia. Another worrying fact is that 47% of young people think that homosexuality is some kind of illness, and 40% of them feel that homosexuals should be banned from making public appearances. The results point to authoritarianism and political radicalism demonstrated by young people, where 45% of young people think that some of the present political parties should be forbidden by law, and an entire fifth of them feels that some media in Croatia should also be banned.

The results of this research point to extreme ethnocentrism since 40% of young people think that Croatians in Croatia should have more rights than other national minorities, and the same number of them thinks that Croatia should be defined in the Constitution as the national state of exclusively Croatian people.

3 Initiative for introducing Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education in Croatian education system

The initiative of CSOs advocating the introduction of democratic citizenship and human rights education in education system began in the early 2010 on the initiative of Centre for Peace Studies, Centre for Peace, Non-violence, and Human Rights from Osijek, GONG, Youth Network Croatia, accompanied by support from the Centre for Human Rights.

In July of 2010, a non-formal coordination of CSOs presented Reasons for introducing the subject “Dem-

ocratic citizenship and human rights education in the formal education system" (available at www.gong.hr) and opened a discussion and an advocacy process in which approximately 20 CSOs were included up to now, followed by the initiative of the Faculty of Political Science and Croatian Political Science Association.

Moreover, the members of the coordinating group got actively involved in the work of the National Committee for Human Rights and Democratic Citizenship and in communication with the Ministry expressed an interest to participate in the development of the aforementioned curriculum. The mentioned members were also included in a broader debate concerning the National Framework Curriculum where they stated their proposals for realizing quality integration of this area into the education system.

The basic view the coalition advocates is the implementation of democratic citizenship and human rights education into the formal education system which would as a result emphasize the need for the development and revision of the existing national programme which most definitely needs to encompass all 4 of the educational components for democratic citizenship: **political system and political literacy, human rights and human rights protection, peace and non-violent education, and learning about democratic citizenship (integrated content on intercultural society and respecting differences)**, in line with the definition of the Council of Europe, in a way that will enable all students to acquire basic knowledge and skills necessary for better understanding of society.

With the aim of creating better preconditions for the development of school and educational surrounding, and using this subject to help the process of democratization, and reduce the level of violence in society, the CSOs participating in this initiative, plan on continuing with the realization of this goal in 2011. For that purpose, a joint project was applied under the tender within the IPA programme, through which, if accepted, a pilot project of introducing this subject in schools would be realized.

4 Code of Practice on Consultation with the Interested Public in Procedures of Adopting Laws

The amended text of the Code with significantly reduced scope of obligations and inclusion of relevant civil society stakeholders in all aspects of procedures of adopting laws, was adopted on a closed Government's session in the end of 2009. **GONG in cooperation with several other CSOs made an analysis and review of the adopted amended text of the Code and sent it to institutions, condemning the way in which the Code was passed.** Furthermore, since the Code foresees the adoption of guidelines for its implementation, the CSOs asked to be included in the process. The NGO Office of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, in a written reply to the CSOs, announced the preparations of the guidelines for the implementation of the Code, as well as a broad public discussion related to that.

In first half of 2010, the Government's NGO Office organized a public debate on the topic of Guidelines, and GONG participated in the debate by giving their comments to the text. Some of these comments were adopted in the final text of the Guidelines.

During 2010, GONG monitored the implementation of the Code, which was described in the part of the report referring to the monitoring of the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

5 Advocacy Network

Beginning of 2009, GONG started implementing the Advocacy Network project. The project aimed at increasing the level of obtaining up-to-date information on legislative activities of the Croatian Parliament

and Government, as well as increasing the scope and number of advocacy activities of civil society organizations. The aim of the Advocacy Network is to contribute to the participation in shaping and monitoring public policies by civil society, improving the integrity of democratic public institutions and rule of law, and connecting CSOs through a common platform of activities. Finally, the project aims at contributing to an ever growing democratization and civil society development in Croatia.

Their interest to participate in the Advocacy Network by the end of the year was demonstrated by over **20 civil society organizations and activists**, with whom the cooperation was realized through a joint mailing list.

During 2010, daily agendas of Government and Parliament's sessions were sent to the CSOs mailing list several times a week, including announcements from closed and open sessions of Government, and announcements of sessions of the Government's Board with the instructions on how to participate in these sessions, information gathered from the Official Gazette, professional articles and media announcements.

Although the project received little financial support for 2009, GONG continued implementing it in 2010 due to its observed value in the context of strengthening CSOs in Croatia and creating conditions for improving their work.

6 Initiative to set up a fund for the support of CSOs in cases of project related insolvency

During one of the meetings organized by the Office for NGOs, representatives of GONG, Green Action and Centre for Peace Studies were informed about the idea of setting up a fund that would serve as a source of funding for CSOs' projects co-financed through the EU funds, upon which the mentioned CSOs representatives pointed out to another problem frequently experienced by CSOs – insolvency in payment waiting periods; further to this issue, in 2010, GONG made an extra effort in trying to resolve this issue.

GONG held several meetings with the Office for NGOs, National Foundation for the Development of Civil Society and Croatian Bank for Reconstruction and Development, at which GONG presented proposals of solutions. GONG is expecting that in 2011, the Foundation would be able to start its own fund, and we hope that some of the proposed solutions will be realized through that fund. Independent of that, we will continue on working to resolve this issue in the upcoming year through the cooperation with competent institutions.

7 Civil Society and the State - Cooperation in Implementing Anti-Corruption Measures

Since one of the principles and goals of the Anti-Corruption Strategy of the Republic of Croatia is to improve cooperation between civil society and competent public bodies, GONG maintained contacts with the representatives of the Ministry of Justice and OSCOC, and participated in several lectures and roundtables regarding the Anti-Corruption Strategy in the Republic of Croatia.

GONG representative participated in the work of the Coordination Group for raising awareness on the problem of corruption in Croatia which was founded within the implementation of the Anti-corruption campaign financed by the EU - *Strengthening Anti-Corruption Inter-Agency Cooperation (Awareness raising campaign)* – as a support to Croatia to strengthen the rule of law with the help of a more efficient National Anti-corruption Strategy.

The overall aim of this project is raising awareness with Croatian public on issues of corruption. Representatives of Croatian Government also participated in the work of the Coordination Group, as well as representatives of ministries and government agencies, local authorities and legal institutions, CSOs, journalists, and other respectable members of academic and social life in Croatia.

Consortium Publicis was selected for the implementation of this project via a public tender. The main project beneficiary is Ministry of Justice. The project began in March 2010, and is to finish in February 2012.

8 Friends of public media service

On the occasion of the adoption of the amendments to the Croatia Radio-Television Act, GONG analyzed and criticized the proposed, and later on adopted amendments in regard to political election campaign transparency regulation, respect for the professional journalists' principles, and the manner of ensuring financial independence and self-sustainability of this public service.

Although during the process of candidature for the new CRT Programme Council, and the new Supervisory Board, GONG did not propose any candidates, it did, however, supported the following candidates: Ms Viktorija Car, Ms Vera Robić Škarica and Mr Luka Brailo, whose candidatures were submitted owing to the interest of informal coordination of CSOs, individuals from academic community and public life in general. At the same time, through the activities of Ms Jelena Berković, as an external member of the Parliamentary Committee for Information, Informatization and Media, GONG insisted that the Committee ensures transparency of the mentioned election process, primarily by making public the CVs of all candidates.

9 Cooperation with other civil society organizations and institutions

- In 2010, GONG was involved in the **activities** conducted by “**Pravo na grad**” (**Right to the City**) and **Green Action concerning Cvjetni trg (Preradović Square)** supporting them through consultations and responding to preparatory meetings, volunteering in public actions, and by participating on public assemblies.
- In March, Ms **Sandra Pernar** participated in the evaluation of projects applied within the tender for the allocation of financial support to projects of the Government's Office for Human Rights.
- In November, Ms **Suzana Jašić** participated in the evaluation of projects submitted within the Civil Initiatives tender “Our Contribution to the Community” published by the Foundation for Partnership and Civil Society Development.
- **Ms Mirela Travar was elected to the Working Body of the Assembly of the Centre for Peace Studies, she became one of the trainers within the training platform organized by Youth Network Croatia** *Đ platFORMATrenera*, and was elected to the **Governing Body of Youth Network Croatia**.

10 Legal Aid and Consultations

Citizens can get legal advice from GONG, either by visiting GONG office in person or by telephone/fax, or e-mail. We answer citizen's queries immediately, and if their questions pertain to areas we have no exper-

tise in, we direct them either to competent state institutions (e.g. Government's Office for Human Rights, Ombudsman, etc.) or to CSOs which might be able to help them.

In this reporting period, we provided **consultations on exercising rights of access of information** to numerous institutions and organizations, as well as citizens and journalists. A large number of queries pertained to citizens' participation in the decision-making process and **presidential elections**.

10 GRIF

In 2009, a GRIF (Gong's Accounting and Finances) Department started functioning within GONG. GRIF is an additional activity of GONG that aims at acquiring funding for self-financing of GONG, but that also contributes to the development of other CSOs.

GRIF is a department specialized in giving accounting and administrative-financial services to civil society organizations. In 2010, the GRIF team consisted of two employees, and hiring of additional staff is planned for the following year.

GRIF employees currently provide services for various client organizations, and GONG is continually looking for new clients in order to achieve further growth and development of GRIF. GRIF has been very successful from the beginning, and it contributes to realizing the primary goal for which it was set up, GONG's self-financing. Moreover, GRIF helps the functioning of beneficiary organizations by providing services of managing their finances without significantly straining their budgets.

The number of beneficiary organizations in 2010 amounted to 20 (we concluded the last year with seven beneficiary organizations). In 2010, a planned income from GRIF amounted to 200,000 HRK, and real income was 250,000 HRK.

11 Additional activities

T-Mobile *INmusic* festival

On June 22 and 23 in 2010, Zagreb's lake Jarun hosted an annual music *INmusic* festival. This year, the organizers of the festival decided to expand the programme content of the festival by including CSOs, with GONG being one of them. A tent that was put up at the festival served as a presentation area for CSOs to present their programme activities. GONG was given two days for presenting its activities during which various leaflets, brochures, guides and similar materials which GONG produced in the last couple of years were handed out to visitors who were, among other things, also informed by way of those leaflets and brochures on the *Freedom of Information Act*; *Let's go to town* Đ guide through City of Zagreb's local self-government for young people; *European Class* Đ educational brochure on the European Union; *Advocacy* Đ educational brochure on public advocacy procedure, etc. GONG employees and volunteers participated in this action.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

THE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME INCLUDES EXCHANGE AND TRANSFER OF SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE WITH SIMILAR CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

1 Independent and Partner Projects

Project “Recession as a development opportunity for NGOs in the Alpe Adria countries?”

In 2010, GONG was a partner on the “Recession as a development opportunity for NGOs in the Alpe Adria countries?” project implemented by the CNVOS organization from Slovenia. Other partners in the project were: European House from Hungary; ALDE from Italy, and The World of NGOs from Austria. Project partners prepared each for their own state, the review of impacts of the economic crisis, based on a questionnaire sent to CSOs.

Based on the given information, CNVOS prepared a comparative analysis of impacts for all included states.

Furthermore, Slovenia organized a study visit to Croatia in May during which guests from Slovenia had the opportunity to visit Croatian institutions, such as the Office for NGOs, Croatian Parliament and meet with the representatives of the Council for the Development of Civil Society and CSOs, in order to get acquainted with legal framework of CSO's activities and the conditions for civil society engagement in Croatia.

Project „POTEZ“

A CSO from Montenegro, Centre for Democratic Transition (CDT) requested from GONG the cession rights to the implementation of the Lotus project in Montenegro. After they collected the funds necessary for the implementation of the project, they had a meeting with GONG in November where further manner of cooperation was agreed upon. They called the project POTEZ and arranged for the implementation with the consultations and cooperation by GONG.

2 Trainings, consultations and study visits

Study visit - ISFED

Four persons from Georgia's organization ISFED (International Society for Free Elections and Democracy), and two representatives of Georgia's office of National Democratic Institute, visited GONG in September. The basic purpose of this study visit was to familiarize them with GONG experiences related to organizational development, organization's sustainability, fundraising, but also with projects and programmes GONG implements.

Also, during this four-day visit, they visited the Croatian Parliament, the Human Rights House and talked with the aforementioned institutions' representatives.

Consultations - CDT

In December, Mr Albert Jedrejčić visited the organization from Montenegro, CDT, in order to transfer GONG experiences on financial transactions.

Consultations - Hayat and NCHR

In October and November of 2010, GONG member, Mr Mihael Rukavina consulted and educated Hayat and NCHR organizations for the election monitoring process in Jordan, within the activities conducted by the National Democratic Institute.

3 International conferences, seminars, guest visits, and GONG representations

OSCE Conference Marking the 20th Anniversary of Copenhagen Document signing - Copenhagen, Denmark

From 10th to 11th June, Ms Suzana Jašić, member of GONG Council participated at the OSCE Conference in Copenhagen dedicated to marking the 20th anniversary of Copenhagen document by which member states obliged to respect the basic principles of democracy and human rights.

The Document of Copenhagen was the cornerstone for establishing rules for respecting democratic elections and the institutionalization of international election monitoring. The document pioneered in connecting democracy, human rights and the rule of law by setting standards for the protection of minority rights.

PASSO WIDE FORUM - Brussels, Belgium

On September 6, Mr Dragan Zelić participated at the PASSO WIDE FORUM, titled "Good Governance Indicators for Sustainable development in Europe", held in Brussels, and organized by PASSO International Experts Group.

Forum for the Future of Democracy - Yerevan, Armenia

Ms Suzana Jašić participated in the forum of the Council of Europe, titled "Forum for the Future of Democracy 2010 'Perspectives 2020: Democracy in Europe - principles and challenges' " that was held in Erevan on 19 and 20 October 2010. The focus of the forum was thinking of the ways to understand democracy and its principles in current surroundings, as a part of promoting European debate on future, and as a contribution to strengthening the future activities by the Council of Europe in the area of democratization. Forum was in 2005 initiated by state leaders and governments from member countries of the Council of Europe, and it has been held annually ever since gathering approximately 400 participants from 47 member and observing states.

HDIM - Warsaw, Poland

In December, Ms Iva Knešarek participated in the *Roundtable on Availability of and Access to Effective Remedies in Electoral Disputes* organized by OSCE/ODIHR. Iva participated as a panellist, and presented a possibility of making a complaint or an objection from the point of view of Croatian electoral laws and practice.

"Lisbon Treaty" seminar - Brussels, Belgium

In December, Ms Sandra Pernar participated at the "**Lisbon Treaty**" seminar organized by CEDAG for representatives of organizations members of the platform. The reason for organizing this seminar was the fact that the Lisbon Treaty has been in force for almost a year now, and that CSOs made little progress in using the possibilities the Treaty offers, especially in the sense of using instruments of European civil initiative.

4 Cooperation with International Organizations

“Politeia“ Organization

Politeia – European organization for citizenship and democracy active in the area of (European) citizenship and gathers organizations that work together and exchange experiences in relation to active (European) citizenship, civil society and education for democracy.

Politeia was registered in Amsterdam, in March of 2008, and its founders are IPP (Instituut voor Publiek en Politiek - Amsterdam) and GONG.

In 2010, the organizations maintained active contact and exchanged information via e-mail.

ENEMO

ENEMO (European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations) is a group consisting of 19 civil society organizations from 17 countries from former Soviet Union, and Central and Eastern Europe. These organizations are leading domestic organizations in the area of election monitoring. ENEMO organizes international observing missions, and member organizations have so far observed and monitored over 110 national elections in different European states, and trained over 100,000 observers. GONG is one of the co-founding organizations of ENEMO and its member.

In 2010, GONG participated in several ENEMO observing missions in Ukraine and Kosovo.

CEDAG

CEDAG (European Council for Nonprofits) is a network of European organizations that functions as a platform for European national non-profit umbrella organizations and national organizations of general interest. At the end of 2008, GONG received an invitation to become a member of CEDAG, which at the beginning of 2009, it did.

In 2010, GONG maintained contact and received information from CEDAG via e-mail, and Ms Sandra Pernar participated at a seminar organized by CEDAG.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1 Organization's Activities

A Running the Organization

In January 2010, an annual Assembly of the organization was held on which the decision on changing the Statute was adopted with the aim of improving effectiveness of the functioning of GONG Council.

GONG Council consisted of the following members interchanging in the last year: Mr Dragan Bagić, Ms Jelena Berković, Ms Marijana Grbeša, Ms Suzana Jašić, Ms Vesna Kesić (President), Mr Zdravko Petak, Mr Hrvoje Stojić, Ms Marina Škrabalo and Mr Nenad Zakošek (Vice-president). By the end of the year, Ms Marijana Grbeša proposed to be excluded from the Council due to an increased number of other obligations, and Mr Đorđe Gardašević was co-opted by the Council as the new member.

On an operational level, the organization was run by the Executive Board composed of: Ms Sandra Pernar (Executive Director), Mr Albert Jedrejčić and Mr Dragan Zelić (Deputy Director).

The supervision of the organization's activities in 2010 was performed by the Supervisory Board composed of: Ms Jagoda Munić (Supervisory Board's President), Mr Gordan Bosanac (Vice-president) and Ms Albina Dlačić (member).

A three day meeting of GONG Council and Executive Board was held in August during which an evaluation of GONG Council was conducted and the future composition of the Council was discussed as well as further activities of the Council. Methods of GONG financing and self-financing were also discussed, and the activities plan for GONG for the upcoming period were discussed, especially in relation to the upcoming parliamentary elections.

B Personnel

GONG started 2010 with 8 people employed, but that number increased by the end of the year. In January, GONG employed an assistant for the "Aarhus Convention Implementation" project, and in April, an additional person was employed as an expert associate primarily for the Electoral System Programme. Moreover, another person was employed in November as a PR associate. Finally, GONG concluded 2010 with 11 employees.

Besides employees with fixed-term contracts, GONG occasionally engaged a number of associates for different projects (trainers, project associates, etc.).

At the end of the year, GONG conducted self-evaluation and evaluation of all employees.

C Education

- Mr Albert Jedrejčić participated in the workshop "Strategic Development of CSOs, I. Module", organized by TACSO's office in Croatia, in cooperation with the Autonomni centar - ACT and Split the Healthy City, held in March in Split.
- Mr Albert Jedrejčić participated in the Education programme on Social Entrepreneurship led by Leley

Miller from British Company *Social Enterprise London*, in March 2010, organized by National Foundation for Civil Society Development and British Council.

- During 2010, Ms Irena Pereša and Mr Dragan Zelić attended the educational programme of the Academy for Political Development
- Ms Iva Knešaurek participated in the workshop „From the idea to the Project“, organized by the IKS organization through the E-mission programme, held in July in Dugo selo.
- Mr Albert Jedrejčić participated in the education programme “Financial Management for efficient and Self-sustainable Programmes & Practical Tools and Strategies for NGOs“, organized by MANGO - Management and accounting for nongovernmental organization, held in September in Oxford.
- Ms Iva Knešaurek participated at the OSCE/ODIHR training for STO election observers, in October, in Sarajevo.
- Ms Iva Knešaurek participated in the workshop on the implementation of the European Court’s decisions, organized by the Centre for Peace Studies, held in October in Jezerčica.

D Volunteers

A large number of volunteers and members actively participated in many GONG activities, such as election monitoring, distributing materials and helping in organizing GONG public presentations. Additionally, during 2009 a volunteer was engaged for GONG programme activities, which marks a beginning of the implementation of GONG plan on creating volunteering possibilities on GONG programmes that would in return prove useful for volunteers (students or graduates freshly out of college) in the sense of acquiring experience, and for GONG in the sense of volunteers’ contribution to the work of GONG employees. In 2009:

- 18 volunteers satisfied membership requirements, and 11 of them became GONG members
- 2209 citizens are in GONG volunteers’ database & out of which 200 are continually active
- Approximately 6000 of citizens’ volunteer work was recorded.

E Fundraising

In 2010, the financial framework of GONG activities included several short-term projects (up to 6 months) and several long-term projects.

Short-term projects mostly included activities that were implemented on the local level (Project “Think Globally, Act Locally“, but also projects implemented on the national level (project “Protection and Exercise of Voting Rights of Persons with Disabilities“, and international projects). Financial support for the project “Think Globally, Act Locally“ was ensured by the cities in which the project was implemented: Opatija, Pazin and Rijeka, and for the project on a national level, from Ministry of the Family, Veterans’ Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity.

Projects we implemented in the period from 12 and more months (projects Europe in Classroom, Aarhus Convention, 20 Years of Democratic Elections, etc.) were financed by the European Union and Balkan Trust. Last year was also our second year out of a three-year grant allocated to GONG for advocacy activities by the Open Society Institute, and the first year out of a three-year grant allocated by the National Foundation for the Development of Civil Society. In previous year, GONG worked on additional fundraising and wrote a significant number of project proposals with which it applied for tenders allocating financial support to civil society organizations, primarily with the aim of ensuring funds for the implementation of ongoing EU projects. With the closing of the calendar year, the results of tenders in two lines of IPA 2008 Programme were still unknown, but we are expecting the decision on those projects at the beginning of 2011, as well as the decision on results of the IPA Youth in the Labour Market tender.

GONG representative participated in October in the preparation of Sector Analysis for the IPA Programme for 2011, organized by the Office for NGOs. As one of priority areas within the IPA programme, the support for good and transparent governance is to be allocated, and based on which we are expecting further possibilities for collecting funds from the IPA programme in the following year.

In the last couple of years, GONG was very successful in the diversification of sources for funding its activities. In every moment, activities were implemented with the financial support of at least 8 different domestic and foreign donors, thus reducing GONG's dependency on just one of the donors. However, there are still great challenges that have yet to be faced, one of them being the preparation for EU structural funds.

Further step towards the sustainability of GONG organization was made by introducing GAF Department (Gong Accounting and Finance) - with the aim of acquiring revenue for GONG self-financing, and of which we reported earlier (in relation to the programme Active Citizens). GAF Department has been very successful in its activities and contributes greatly to the aim for which it was founded, GONG self-financing.

F Meetings

GONG employees held numerous meetings with the representatives of the Government, Croatian Parliament, SEC, OSCOC, several ministries (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integrations, Ministry of Public Administration...), local authorities, political parties, media, civil society organizations, and other institutions.

Moreover, GONG was visited by numerous international organizations and the EU representatives, as well as representatives of ever growing foreign embassies in Croatia (American, Canadian, Norwegian...). In November 2010, Ms Jelena Berković participated in consultations with the European Commissioner for Enlargement, Mr Štefan Füle after the publication of the Progress Report for Croatia in 2010.

2 Cooperation with the media

In the reporting period, GONG continued developing partner relationship with the media and the press in Croatia.

GONG's activities and projects in the reporting period included **over 500 appearances in national and local media** - TV and radio stations, newspaper and Internet portals. Other than that, GONG audio and video clips on the right of access to information (a campaign implemented in September and October), were broadcasted in the national television programme, without charge.

Additionally: In order for GONG communication to become even more efficient, and for the GONG to use its resources and potential to the maximum, GONG started on the work of creating a Communication Strategy. We are currently (January 2011) conducting the analysis of internal and external communication so far, after which (February) we will start with defining communication goals (March, April) and the ways of realizing such goals. The point of this project/programme/strategy is to identify and consistently send thorough messages towards priority public (members, donors, civil society, political decision-makers ...) through well established communication channels.

In the end!

GONG special contribution

- As in the previous years, GONG participated in consultations with the representatives of the EU Delegation prior to their composing the Progress report on Croatia and contributed to the creation of that document within the area of activities GONG encompasses.
- In 2010, the Human Rights Report by the American State Department for 2009 was published in which a reference is made to GONG report on the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act, and the report on the elections.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2010.

Balance sheet	
Assets	
Financial assets	555,050
Non-financial assets	52,860
Total Assets	607,910

Consolidated Statement of Income	
Income	
Income paid in 2010. for activities in 2011.	430,000
Income from State and local budgets	215,076
Income from membership fees	1,080
Income earnings from self-finance activities	302,512
Income from citizens' donations	510
Grants and donations	2,604,572
Other income	7,103
Total income	3,560,853

Liabilities	
Duties	687,744
Own sources	-79,834
Total liabilities	607,910

Expenditure	
Costs for personnel	1,356,990
Material expences	883,207
Transfer of donations to partners	687,998
Financial expences	36,155
Other costs	32,333
Total expenditure	2,996,683

Income surplus	564,170
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GONG is a civil society organization funded by grants and donations (both domestic and foreign) for projects and activities within its mission. Funds are actively raised through application on tenders and calls, by addressing the public and GONG supporters, and via realization of its own self-financing activities.

The duration of one fiscal year is from 01/01 till 12/31. The financial report includes balance, income, expenditure and expenditure by budget lines.

Expenditure by Budget Lines			
Salaries		Other Costs	
Taxes from salaries	583,589	Honorarium	91,399
Total personnel expenses	1,356,990	Accountant services	59,040
		Office supply	22,699
		Equipment purchase and maintenance	24,143
		Rent	27,512
		Utilities	61,741
		Communications (Internet, telephone, postage)	90,900
		Audio, video and printed material	72,465
		Travel and accommodation costs	177,341
		Representation (conferences, educations, round tables, public discussion)	46,739
		Education	25,431
		Bank charges	36,155
		Evaluation and consulting	48,000
		ICT services	68,520
		Transfer of donations to partners	687,998
		Other costs	99,610
		Total other costs	1,639,693
		Total expenditures	2,996,683

SPECIAL THANKS

GONG IS A non - profit organization which depends on the support and donations from organizations, foundations and embassies. Without donor support, GONG wouldn't be able to accomplish its goals.

Financial support

up to 2.000

Aposteriori d.o.o.
Faculty of Political Science, Zagreb
MAP Consultancy d.o.o.

up to 5.000

Hypo Leasing d.o.o.
Meat-Processing Industry Brothers Pivac

up to 15.000

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration
PLAN-ART d.o.o.

up to 20.000

The City of Zagreb

up to 50.000

The City of Rijeka
Ministry of Science, Education and Sports
Royal Netherlands Embassy , Zagreb

up to 80.000

Ministry of family, War Veterans and Intergeneration Solidarity

up to 150.000

Balkan Trust for Democracy, Beograd

up to 490.000

National Foundation for Civil Society development, Zagreb

up to 600.000

Open Society Institute, Budapest

up to 1.300.000

European union

Donations in goods and services

up to 3.000 (per legal person)

Facilities and stands were provided to us, without compensation, by many local self-governments, city institutions and others. Radio air was provided to us, also without compensation, by many radio-stations. We would like to express our gratitude for the generous support and cooperation.

up to 20.000

Microsoft corporation

