



**REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
CITY OF ZAGREB  
MAYOR**

Zagreb, February 15, 2021

**LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM THE CITY OF ZAGREB  
TO THE EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS  
SUPPORTING THE PRINCIPLES**

**1. Education, training and life-long learning  
11. Childcare and support to children**

The City of Zagreb pays special attention to children and young people since they are the foundation of the future society and with its activities aimed at the youngest members of society helps them to realize their personal potential and success thus contributing to the development and progress of the local community.

Consequently, the City of Zagreb supports the implementation of the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights that uphold safe and supportive development of children and youth, and back up the following principles:

**1. Education, training and life-long learning**

Education is the foundation of the development and progress of society, and accessible and lifelong education opens up equal opportunities for the inclusion of the individual in the development of the community in which he lives. Article 66 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia defines for each individual equal access to education according to his abilities, as well as free compulsory education.

Access to education, regardless of gender, religion or socio-economic status, is a prerequisite for minor social differences due to the fact that educated people are considered more acceptable members of society because of the capital of knowledge and developed competencies. At the same time, educated individuals create the preconditions for faster local and national economic development.

The City of Zagreb invests significant funds in the education of children and young people, which it does not consider a cost but an investment in their future, also the future of community development. Some of the most important programs are co-financing of preschool education programs, inclusion of teaching assistants for students with disabilities, care for the

education of national minority students, extended stay in primary schools, procurement of textbooks and other educational materials, co-financing of meals in Zagreb primary schools and similar.

The awarding of various types of scholarships to the City of Zagreb for pupils and students provided an additional opportunity to include an increasing number of pupils and students in the education system. In the end, this prevents poverty for a whole range of families.

Furthermore, by providing financial support to civil society stakeholders working with young people and educating them in various fields (sports, culture, STEM fields of science, etc.) as well as investing in the development of opportunities for young people, through the Zagreb Innovation Center ZICER, is the importance of education to a greater extent than basic investment in infrastructure at all levels.

## **11. Childcare and support to children**

Investing in the earliest and most vulnerable years of a child's life will have the result and will return as a long-term benefit to those same children and their families, as well as society itself.

The most important institutions (kindergartens, schools, health care institutions, social welfare institutions) with services appropriate to the needs of children and their parents, as well as their population, are accessible and developed in the City of Zagreb.

The City of Zagreb is ready to invest in the family, as evidenced by a series of measures, programs and activities aimed directly at children and families with children, such as assistance in food packages and hygiene supplies for families with three or more children, assistance in dairy food, free holidays, gift packages for Easter and St. Nicholas et al.

The City of Zagreb supports the safe growth and development of children and provides preconditions to facilitate financial care for children such as financial assistance in equipment for newborns, financial assistance for parents, free public transport tickets for pupils and students from families of lower social status, etc. by other direct and indirect measures.

Through funding programs for associations in the field of child and youth care, the City of Zagreb encourages the promotion and protection of children's rights, strengthening family capacity, reducing unacceptable forms of behavior among children and youth, organized leisure, adoption of child and youth social skills and, preventing the harmfulness of all forms of unacceptable behavior of children and youth through involvement in sports, cultural and other activities. The set priorities for the child care through programs and activities are sought to be achieved by direct funding from the city budget, but also by funding from European funds.

The City of Zagreb is firmly convinced that these principles will contribute to equal opportunities for children and young people in the European Union, thus enabling them an unencumbered and carefree childhood and youth.

Sincerely,

  
Mayor  
**Milan Bandić, B.A. in Political Science**