

5.2. WORKFORCE MOBILITY – I CHOOSE CROATIA

<p>Aim of the scheme</p>	<p>To strengthen business activities and increase their range in most parts of the Republic of Croatia, focusing on underdeveloped areas and especially depopulated rural areas of Slavonia, Dalmatinska Zagora, Banovina, Kordun, Lika, Gorski Kotar and the islands, and to encourage the return of active workforce from the countries of the European Economic Area, Swiss Confederation, and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Canada, New Zealand and the USA. (hereinafter: EEA and other above stated countries).</p> <p>The returnees who gained relevant work experience in numerous countries in the world represent the added value for the Croatian economy. In addition to providing opportunities for returnees to establish new business entities, this scheme would have a direct demographic effect on internal migration and the return of persons who emigrated to EEA countries and other above stated countries).</p>
<p>Target groups</p>	<p>1. Croatian citizens-returnees under the age of 60 from EEA countries and other above stated countries regardless of their education level who over the last 24 months have been employed in EEA countries and other above stated countries for at least 12 months or have been full-time students and who upon the return have entered the unemployment register and become self-employed through self-employment aid in 2023¹.</p> <p>2. Beneficiaries of the unemployment aid in 2023, registered in the area of development index I, II, III and IV, who changed their permanent residence² by moving from the area of development index VII and VIII to the area of development index I, II, III and IV, and in compliance with the Decision on categorization of local and regional self government units according to the development index. (Official Gazette, no. 132/17).</p>
<p>Duration</p>	<p>24 months</p>
<p>Amount of aid</p>	
<p>1. For persons from target group 1 - EUR 7,000</p> <p>2. For persons from target group 2 - EUR 3,500</p>	
<p>Aid payment</p>	
<p>- Upon submission of the proof that the agreement to award small amounts of aid for the purpose of self-employment has been concluded and the permanent residence has been registered in the area specified in this scheme based on internal migration or return from EEA and other above stated countries, the Agreement on fund allocation is signed and the one-off payment is made within 30 days from the day the agreement is signed with the Croatian Employment Service.</p>	
<p>Responsibilities of aid beneficiaries</p>	

¹Persons from the target group need to have temporary or permanent residence registered in EEA countries and other above stated countries for a minimum of 12 consecutive months and (if applicable) register their residence in the Republic of Croatia after 1 January, 2022 and close the agreement with the Croatian Unemployment Service on the award of small amounts of aid for the purpose of self-employment after 30 June, 2022

² Persons from the target group need to regulate their residence after 1 January, 2022 and not later than 30 days from the day the agreement to award small amounts of aid for the self-employment is signed, which needs to be signed after 30 November, 2022.

- Applicants from the target group 1 who have permanent residence in EEA countries and other above stated countries are obliged to register the change of their permanent residence after 1 January, 2022 and submit the proof of permanent residence before applying for the award of small amounts of aid for self-employment.
- Applicants from the target group 1 who have temporary residence registered in the EEA countries and other above stated countries are obliged to cancel their residence in EEA countries and other above stated countries after 1 January, 2022 and submit the proof of residence cancellation before applying for the award of small amounts of aid for self-employment .
- Applicants from the target group 1 are obliged to submit PD U1 form³ (EEA, Swiss Confederation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) or a statement (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Canada, the USA), employment contract and other documents proving that a person has 12 month work experience or has been a full-time student in EEA countries and other above stated countries.
- Applicants from the target group 2 who have permanent residence in EEA countries and other above stated countries are obliged to register the change of their permanent residence after 1 January, 2022 and submit the proof of permanent residence not later than 30 days from the day the agreement for the award of small amounts of aid for self-employment is signed.
- Conclude the agreement on the award of small amounts of aid for the purpose of self-employment in 2022 and acquire the status of the insured person in pension insurance system, with a full-time job in a business entity where he or she is self-employed for the period of at least 24 months.
- In case of termination of the agreement on the award of small amounts aid for the purpose of self-employment before the agreed period of 24 months expires the beneficiary is obliged to return the funds increased by the statutory default interest charged from the day the aid payment is made.
- If the person leaves the area specified for the award of the funds from I Choose Croatia scheme before the period of 24 months the beneficiary is obliged to return all the funds increased by the statutory default interest.

Notes

- All rights and responsibilities and the acts of the contracting parties will be regulated by the agreement on the aid award.
- Croatian citizens – returnees from EEA countries and other above stated countries need to have temporary or permanent residence registered in EEA countries and other above stated countries for at least 12 consecutive months.
- Persons from both target groups are not allowed to cancel permanent residence in the Republic of Croatia or register temporary residence in EEA countries and other above stated countries under the contractual obligations of the aid award agreement.
- Persons from both target groups may use the self-employment aid in accordance with Conditions and procedures for the use of funds in 2023.
- The date of return is defined as the date of the permanent residence registration in the Republic of Croatia or the day of residence cancellation in EEA countries and other above stated countries and not before 1 January, 2022.

Activities and documents required to be awarded I Choose Croatia aid

- Application is submitted through online application on web address www.mjere.hr . Employer must have active user account at the web portal <https://burzarada.hzz.hr/> .

³ PD U1: transferable document that proves the periods of **employment** and self-employment. It may contain data about other insurance periods in Case of unemployment (maternity and paternity leave, parental leave, sick leave etc), data on periods equally treated as employment-based insurance periods and periods of uninsured employment and self-employment. Upon request this document is provided free of charge by competent bodies.

- Application for the aid award on the basis of migration to underdeveloped or remote areas or the return from EEA countries and other above stated countries no later than 30 days from the day the Agreement on the award of small amounts of aid for self-employment is signed.
- The application is submitted according to the location of the registered office of the business entity.

Additional document for the applicants from target group 1

- PD U1 form ³ (mandatory for the returnees from EEA countries, Swiss Confederation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) or a statement (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Canada, the USA), employment contract and other documents proving that a person has 12 month work experience or has been a full-time student.