

Jesuit Refugee Service

*During 2020 and 2021, devastating earthquakes affected the County of City of Zagreb, as well as Sisak-Moslavina County and parts of Zagreb and Karlovac Counties; where a large number of Croatian refugees in integration live. The experience of surviving a natural disaster covers the entire range of losses, which causes significant psychological stress to the general population, including refugees, and causes the heightened need for translators in the departments of institutions where psychological support activities are performed. Jesuit Refugee Service often assists refugees in visiting health services, noting that interpreters are not available by the system, which makes communication between doctors and patients difficult. NGO translators are available depending on project funding and cannot be a continuous support in quality refugee health care. Therefore, there is a need to provide long-term available translators to health services so that they can work well with refugee patients.*

*The aim of the proposed project is to advocate for the improvement of mental health services for refugees in integration in Croatia and the provision of adequate professional assistance with the help of interpreters in health care institutions in areas affected by earthquakes. Project activities include conducting research on the level of psychological distress of refugees and presenting the results of research to relevant stakeholders in the fields of advocacy for refugee rights, service delivery and assurance of health services in local communities.*

*Target groups are: refugees in the quake-affected areas of the four counties, who will participate in our research; stakeholders in the refugee integration process (CSOs, relevant institutions); and relevant authorities to which we will present the research and suggest methods for ensuring better health care.*

*The final beneficiaries of the project are Croatian refugees who seek access to mental health care.*