
**OMBUDSPERSON FOR GENDER EQUALITY
OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA**
RESPONDING TO POLITICAL NARRATIVES TARGETING MINORITY GROUPS
The Latvian Centre for Human Rights, 22.10.2026.



MANDATE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON FOR GENDER EQUALITY

- monitor the enforcement of the Gender Equality Act and other regulations on gender equality and report to the Croatian Parliament at least once a year
- investigate cases of infringement of the principle of gender equality and cases of discrimination against individuals or groups of individuals by public bodies, units of local or regional self-government or other bodies with public authority, by employees of such bodies or other legal or natural persons



DISCRIMINATORY GROUNDS IN THE FIELD OF GENDER EQUALITY

- gender
- marital and family status
- pregnancy and motherhood
- sexual orientation
- gender identity and expression



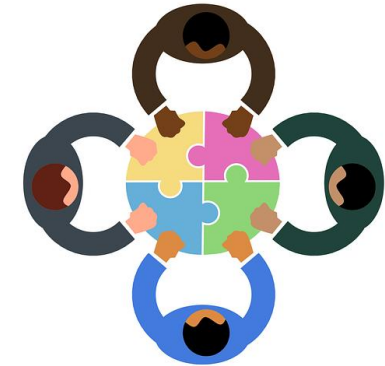
MANDATE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON FOR GENDER EQUALITY

1. receiving complaints regarding discrimination in the area of gender equality
2. providing assistance to persons who lodged a complaint of sexual discrimination when instituting legal proceedings
3. investigate individual complaints prior to the legal proceedings
4. collecting and analysing statistical data
5. conducting independent surveys



ANTI-DISCRIMINATION PROCEDURE

- receiving a complaint
- allegation analyses
 - the probability that the discrimination occurred
 - shifting the burden of proof
- request report and documentation from the alleged perpetrator
- issue warnings, recommendations and/or proposal
- request feedback information about the measures and actions taken in line with warning or/and recommendation or/and proposal received
 - request inspection by the labour inspectorate or another competent authority against non-responsive perpetrator
- case description in the Ombudsperson's annual reports



EXAMPLE 1.

STATEMENT OF A MEMBER OF CROATIAN PARLIAMENT IN A TV APPEARANCE 30.6.2021.

Comment on question about the Hungarian law banning the promotion of homosexuality to minors:

- Why should anything be promoted to minors? Why should specific propaganda be promoted to children? As I understand it, **the law bans the promotion of any kind of LGBT propaganda to children—why would we promote that to them?**
- I am announcing this here as one of my legislative initiatives—that I will draft an anti-pedophilia package proposing stronger penalties for pedophiles, and perhaps this (*LGBT propaganda*) could be part of that legislation: why should such things be promoted to children?"

FACEBOOK POST BY THE MP SOON AFTER HIS TV APPEARANCE

Podržavate li moju inicijativu da se što je moguće žurnije izglasa Antipedofilski zakon kojim će se uvesti najstrože moguće kazne za pedofile ali i zaštititi djecu od seksualnih sadržaja i LGBTQ propagande?

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30.6.2021.

Do you support my initiative to pass, as urgently as possible, an anti-pedophilia law that would introduce the strictest possible penalties for pedophiles, while also protecting children from sexual content and LGBTQ propaganda?

THE PARLIAMENTARY SESSION 1.7.2021.

- The MP in his debate on amendments to the Criminal Code announced the initiative for an anti-pedophilia law that would prohibit the imposition of any LGBTIQ propaganda on children

PUBLIC REACTION BY THE OMBUDSPERSON 2.7.2021.



- This rhetoric involves an **unacceptable link** of the crime of pedophilia—specifically the sexual exploitation of children—with the vulnerable social group.LGBTIQ population. These are matters that cannot be placed in the same context; these are two **completely incompatible matters**.
- When we speak of propaganda, we are **referring to totalitarian regimes** that were highly exclusionary. We must speak of inclusion; we have international standards to uphold. I do not know what was intended here, but **against both international and national laws** to restrict the rights and public expression of sexual and gender minorities

THE MEMBER OF CROATIAN PARLIAMENT AT A TV APPEARANCE 5.7.2021.

- That sentence has two parts, yet clearly, many people in Croatia lack basic comprehension. I stated clearly that I am calling for harsher penalties for pedophiles—especially severe ones for those entrusted with the upbringing of children; that will be part of the law. **Then I addressed the Hungarian law—since a journalist asked me about it; I didn't bring up the topic myself**—specifically, what I think about content being imposed on, or promoted to, children without parental consent. I said that I am opposed to that.
- **No one can impose religious content or any ideology on children without parental consent**—if a parent wants their children to be exposed to certain beliefs, I have no problem with that. After all, this is a free country, and anyone who watched my interview in its entirety could hear that **I stated that every human being is of equal, regardless of their religion, nationality, or sexual orientation...**

EXAMPLE 2

NOTEBOOKS DONATED BY A MAYOR TO THE 1ST GRADE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS



EXAMPLE 3

CANCEL CULTURE



EXAMPLE 4

FACEBOOK POST BY A MEMBER OF CONSERVATIVE PARTY

Facebook post of a member of the presidency of the parliamentary political party „Bridge”:

*One must resist the beast using every legitimate and morally permissible means. **This beast is LGBTIQ**; it is wholly **evil in nature and was devised by Satan**. **It must be defeated**—starting with reasoned, rational arguments, yet without shying away from the **use of force when necessary**. For the moral, social, and spiritual disorder created by this ideology cannot be overcome by pleasant words or dialogue alone; indeed, dialogue has long been dead. For some, this has now proven to be the pivotal moment of realization.*

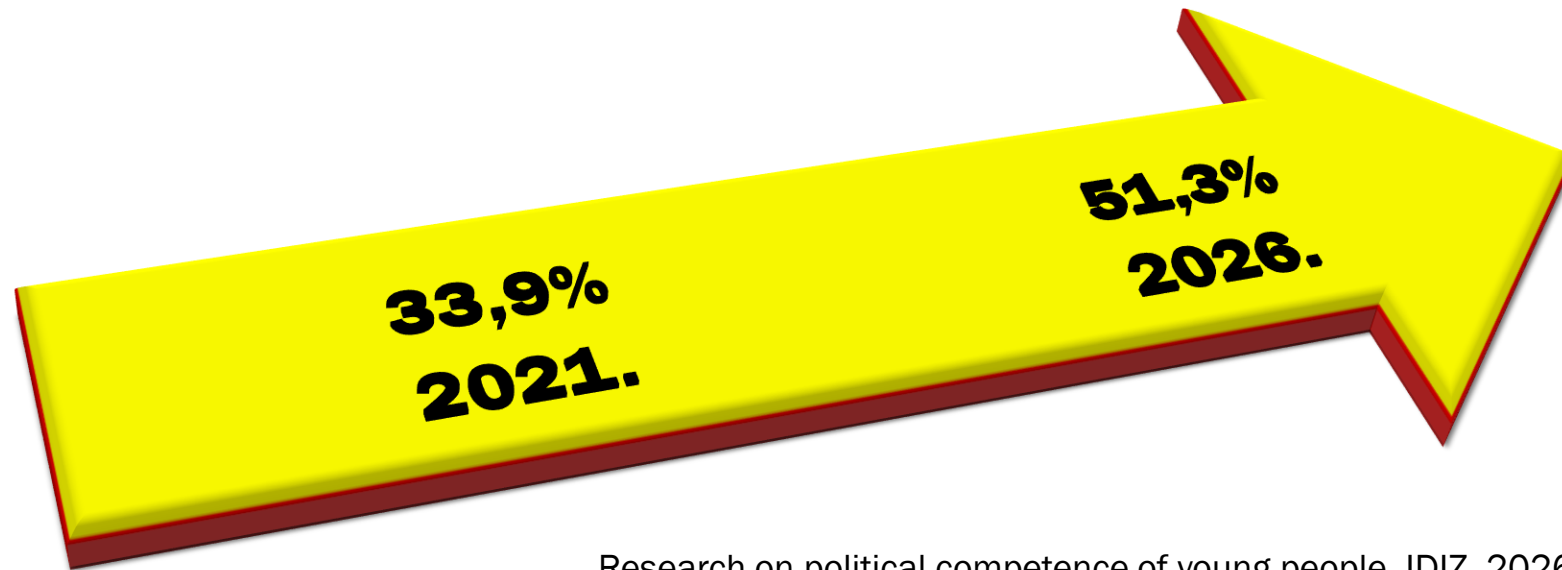
ZAMBIA CASE

- several Croatian citizens arrested in Zambia on suspicion of human trafficking
- in fact, these were couples who adopted children from the Congo and traveled through Zambia for this purpose
- information soon appeared in the media that one of the arrested people was a transgender person, a well-known activist and a member of a left-wing political party
- hearing this, a former MP informed the Zambian police about the gender identity of the person and literally traveled to Zambia with the intention of trying to get to court to testify on that fact
- the problem is that Zambia has a very restrictive laws on LGBT people and sexual relations described as "against the order of nature" carry maximum prison sentences of 14 years
- we have reported this to public prosecutor as public incitement to hatred and violence and violation of data protection
- institution and ombudswomen exposed to threats
- all the detainees were released without any charges
- still no information on indictment against the ex MP

BE MANLY MOVEMENT (MEN'S ROSARY)

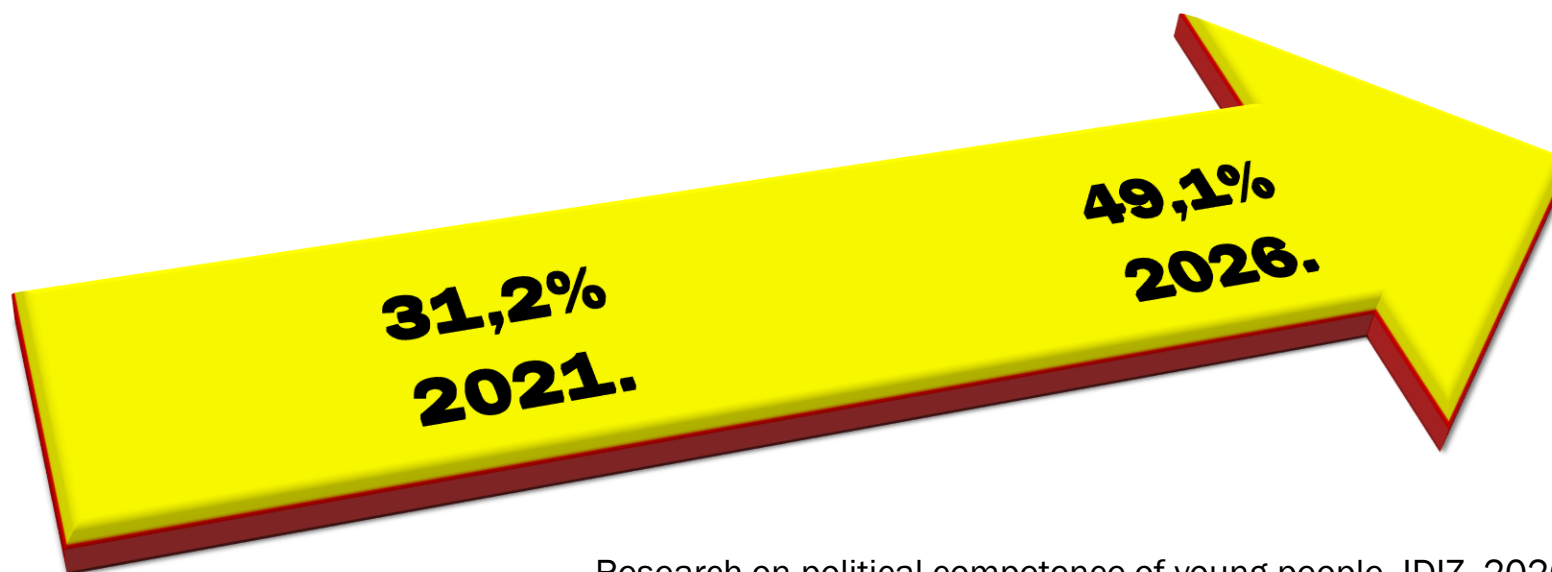
- men gathering at squares in the larger cities as a form of religious ritual
- every first Saturday in a month
- kneeling and praying for men to reaffirm as spiritual leaders and decision makers in family
- women should wear appropriate clothes and watch that they don't provoke men with their appearance
- delicate-right to assembly, right to freedom of religion, right to freedom of speech and right not to be discriminated
- public statement-in a state where gender equality is one of the highest constitutional values activities with such messages that reestablish historical inferior position of women and dominance of men is not something that should be supported

HOMOSEXUALITY IS A TYPE OF DISORDER OR DISEASE (AGREE OR FULLY AGREE)



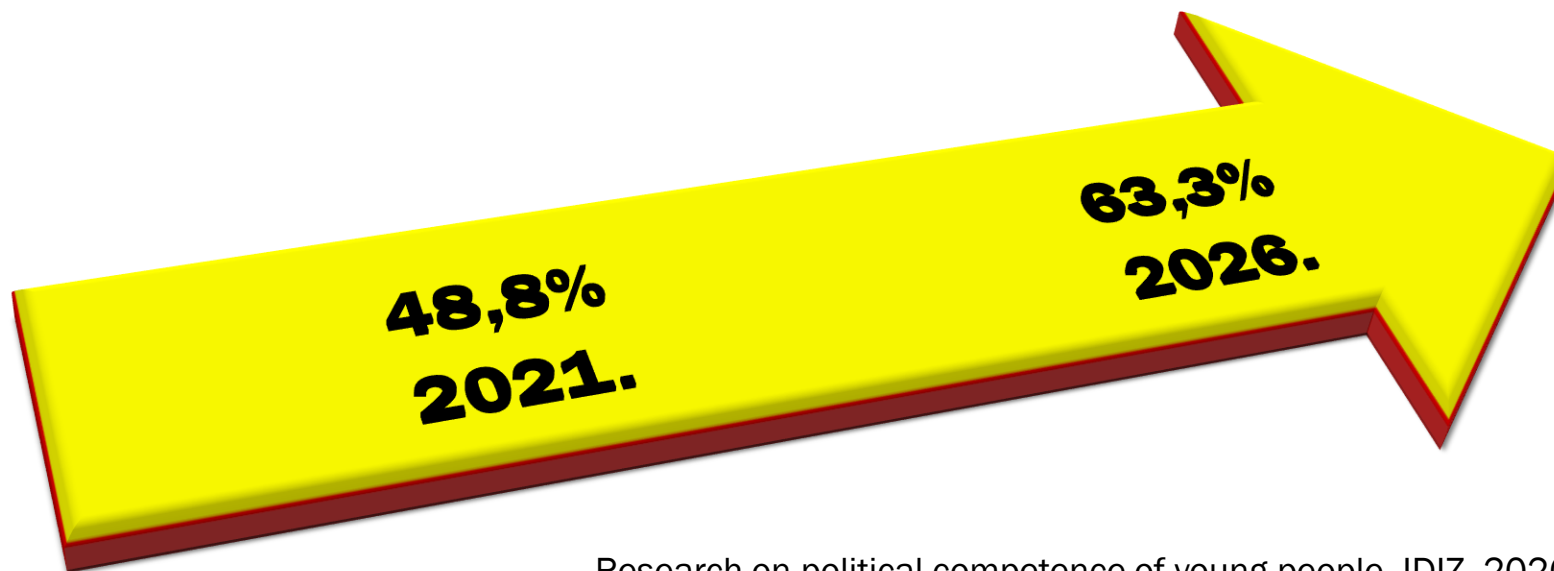
Research on political competence of young people, IDIZ, 2026.

PEOPLE OF HOMOSEXUAL ORIENTATION SHOULD BE BANNED FROM MAKING PUBLIC APPEARANCES DUE TO THEIR NEGATIVE INFLUENCE ON YOUNG PEOPLE (AGREE OR FULLY AGREE)



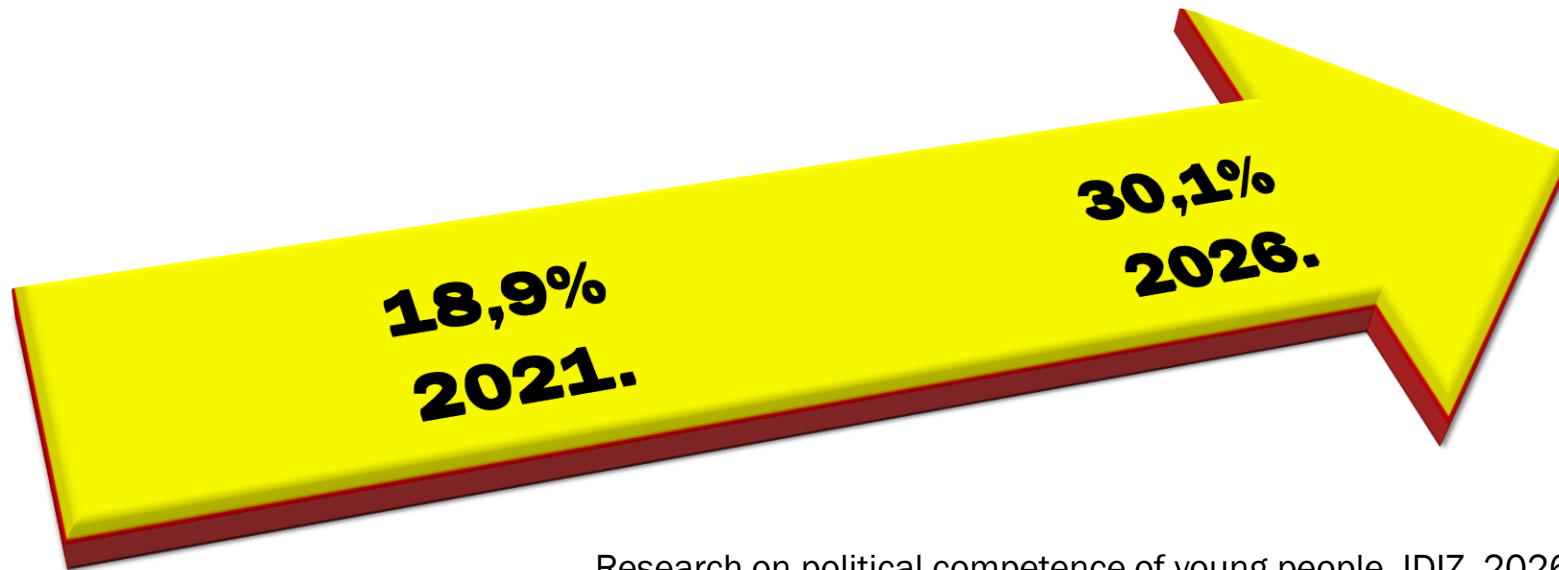
Research on political competence of young people, IDIZ, 2026.

PEOPLE OF HOMOSEXUAL ORIENTATION SHOULD NOT EXPRESS THEIR ORIENTATION IN PUBLIC (AGREE OR FULLY AGREE)



Research on political competence of young people, IDIZ, 2026.

PEOPLE OF HOMOSEXUAL ORIENTATION SHOULD BE BANNED FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN (AGREE OR FULLY AGREE)



Research on political competence of young people, IDIZ, 2026.

ANNUAL REPORTS TO THE CROATIAN PARLIAMENT

- Trend analyses
- Case descriptions
- Recommendations

Many thanks for your attention!

Kristijan Kevešević, Deputy Ombudsperson for Gender Equality

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