



## CARDS

**Country**  
Croatia

**Implementation period**  
2003-2004

**Funding**  
EU: €4.9 million  
Croatia: €6.6 million  
World Bank: €26 million

**Results**  
Modernise and harmonise Croatia's cadastral system, including converting hard copy data into digital format, developing info systems and training of staff

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**Partners**  
Multi-donor project run by the World Bank

## Building up Croatia's real estate market

### Real Property Registration and Cadastre Project

Official records about the ownership of land and buildings are generally kept in a register called the cadastre. Croatia's old-fashioned system of land registry badly needs updating to process the backlog of submissions and improve the reliability of the information.

It takes, on average, 120 weeks to complete a registration using the current geodetic administration system. But with international and EU help, Croatia is looking to cut this time down to just five days. The World Bank is underwriting a €37.5 million project, with contributions from the CARDS programme and the Croatian government, in order to modernise the cadastral system in this western Balkan country.

The project will run for a total of six-and-a-half-years, with EU funding for the first 1.5 years. The aim of the project, which started in February 2003, is to overhaul the system, moving the physical cadastre to a market-oriented system of real estate. This will mean modernising and harmonising the land books which are presently in hard copy format and dealt with by two separate institutions. In addition, some 2000 people from local courts and administrations throughout Croatia will have to be trained to use the new computerised systems.

### Who stands to benefit?

The main beneficiary of the project will be the State Geodetic Administration which is charged with measuring and assessing land in the country. The Administration is responsible for the digitisation of data and training of staff at the cadastre offices, as well as the Ministry of Justice, which is in charge of training personnel in the central and regional Land Registry Department.

But, in the end, the Croatian economy and people will stand to benefit from a more transparent, expedient and market-oriented system of land and building registration.



### EU support

The EU component of the project will conclude at the end of 2004. At the time the project was last reviewed, in September 2003, the project had already made good headway, issuing tenders for land surveyors to speed up the on-site part of the process and – with CARDS funds – it is preparing another tender for the production of ortho-photo maps and the conversion into digital format of records held at the Zagreb court.

The finishing touches were also being put on plans to launch a public awareness campaign – aimed at building people's trust in the system – on the rights and duties surrounding land and building ownership.

### Simplified system

While the scheme is still in its early stages, once it is complete it will be the biggest change in the country's land management in over a century.

There is a huge demand for real estate in Croatia. By simplifying the system, the financial community, as well as foreign investors, will be encouraged to invest, helping the country build its economy and to bring it closer into line with EU norms.

For the two main institutions involved – the Ministries of Finance and Justice, along with the State Geodetic Administration – the overhaul is long overdue and has been well received. Though fully behind it, the Ministry of Justice has had difficulty taking on board the huge undertaking. One of the initial hurdles has been the lack of adequate English-language skills in the department.

It has now staffed the Land Registration Management Unit with personnel who will take training courses, carried out under the Dutch government's Matra programme, to help with this. Some progress has been observed at the strategic level but much still needs to be done on the ground. Courses got under way in 2003, with help from a training programme run by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), but the major programme kicks off in 2004.