

An assessment of maternity home users and benefits of the welfare system for maternity home users by the members of the Croatian Parliament

Summary

This paper explores how members of the Croatian Parliament perceive the political power of maternity home users in Croatia, expressed as Parliament members' views on the voting strength of maternity home users, propensity to mobilize and propensity to approach public officials for help. Additionally, it explores the benefit amounts of the welfare system they consider appropriate for users upon exiting maternity home (specifically the guaranteed minimum benefit and assistance of housing settlement costs). Ultimately, the paper investigates whether there is a correlation between the Parliament members' perceptions of the political power of maternity home users and the benefits of the welfare system proposed by the members.

The results of a survey suggest that members of Parliament believe that maternity home users are reluctant to mobilize and approach public officials for help, while members neither agree nor disagree with the statement that the share of maternity home users in the total voting strength of Croatia is insignificant.

Members of the Parliament proposed a guaranteed minimum benefit and amount of assistance in the settling of housing costs that are significantly higher than amounts actually achievable in similar situations under Croatian law. Also, the results show that members of the Parliament who express a greater degree of agreement with the statement that maternity home users are not likely to mobilize are proposing a lower guaranteed minimum benefit and a lower amount of assistance in

the settling of housing costs. However, no correlation was found between Parliament members' perceptions of the maternity home users' voting strength and the amounts of welfare benefits proposed by Parliament members. There was also no correlation found between the members' perceptions of the maternity home users' tendency to approach public officials for help and the amounts of welfare benefits proposed by Parliament members.

Key words: *Members of the Croatian Parliament, maternity homes, political power, guaranteed minimum benefit, assistance in settling of housing costs.*