

Politics & Security of Croatia

BALKAN POLITICS

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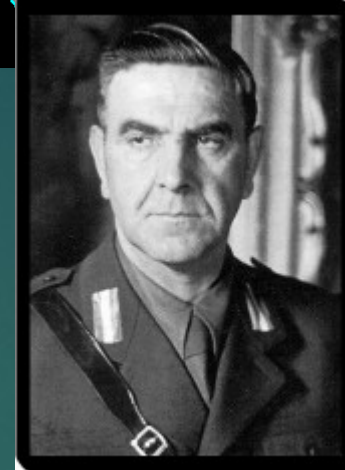
Croatian Kingdom 925-1102

- ▶ First King Tomislav
- ▶ After then Personal Union with Hungary, under Habsburg monarchy, within Yugoslavia
- ▶ Only WWI Independent state of Croatia



Ante Pavelic

- ▶ Born in BiH
- ▶ Ustaša trying to destroy the Kingdom
- ▶ 1934 assassination of King in Marseille
- ▶ NDH
- ▶ Vodja vs Poglavnik
- ▶ Za dom spremni
- ▶ Fled to Argentina, than hiding, died in Spain 1959 under the protection of Franco regime



Ante Pavelic

Croatia and NDH



current Constitution of Croatia **does not** officially recognize the Independent State of Croatia as the historical or legitimate predecessor state of the current Croatian republic. ↓

Croatia rehabilitated the **Croatian Home Guard**, whose veterans have since received state pensions.

Za dom spremni

over **30 streets named** after some 25 people connected with the NDH (Mile Budak, Franjo Nevišić, Ivan Oršanić, Branko Klarić,

Revisionism and patriotism

Annual **Bleibourg** commemoration

Revisionism Jasenovac: just a labour and punishment camp for enemies of the Croatian state. Death toll only about 1500 compared to 83 ths as stated in Jasenovac (Igor Vukic Labour Camp Jasenovac)

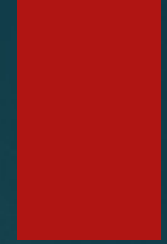
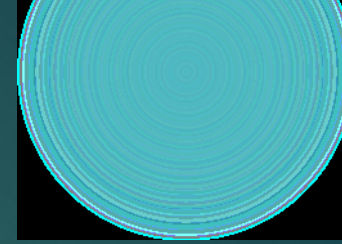
Ustasha symbols widespread visible, **crimes downplayed**

Article 325 of the Croatian criminal code

- ▶ people who “call for hatred or violence to be directed against groups... because of their racial, religious, national or ethnic affiliation” can be punished with a three-year prison sentence, while organisers of groups that spread hate can face up to six years in prison.
- ▶ people who “publicly approve of, deny or significantly belittle criminal acts of genocide, acts of aggression, crimes against humanity or war crimes” can face up to three years in prison.
- ▶ However, hardly anyone who chants ‘Za dom spremni’ or displays Ustasa insignia is prosecuted according to Article 325. Instead they are usually charged under misdemeanour legislation and fined.
- ▶ Marko Perkovic (Thompson) - concert 2017, chanted ZDS <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U1cnaSMtdS4>
- ▶ The court acquitted him, ruling that Perkovic was not inciting hatred by chanting “Ready for the home[land]” and that the slogan was an integral part of the song he was singing at the time.
- ▶ Croatia’s government-appointed Council for Dealing with Consequences of the Rule of Non-Democratic Regimes said in February this year that the authorities should allow the ‘Za dom spremni’ salute to be used “in exceptional situations” under strict conditions, such as by Croatian Defence Forces veteran
- ▶ Jasenovac i gradiška stara, Ubij Srbina,
- ▶ Baj na čavoglave <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pfUCdsLgr4Y&t=11s>

Croatian spring 1967-71

- ▶ Codification of Croatian language
- ▶ Demands for increased autonomy
- ▶ Patriotic songs
- ▶ Croatian culture
- ▶ Plans for increased representation of Croatia-related materials in the school curriculum
- ▶ Calls measures to address the overrepresentation of Serbs in key positions in Croatia
- ▶ Increased tensions between Croats and Serbs
- ▶ 1968 Student demonstrations in Belgrade
- ▶ 1972 oil crisis, IMF debt
- ▶ 1974 constitution

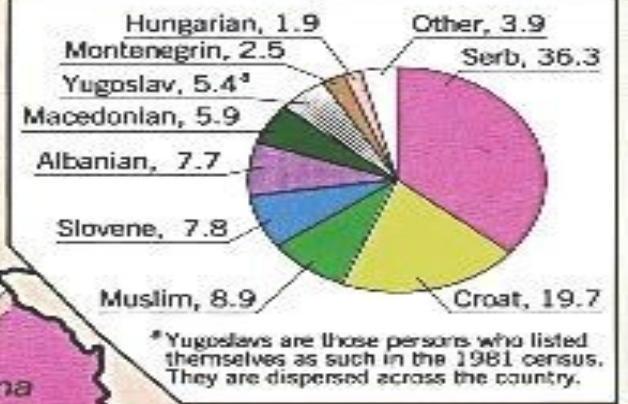


Nationalism in the 1990's in Croatia

- ▶ Serbs 12.2% but 17.7% of appointed officials in Croatia, including police, were Serbs.
- ▶ many Serbs employed in the public sector, especially the police, were fired and replaced by Croats.
- ▶ remarks, i.e. "Thank God my wife is not a Jew or a Serb",
- ▶ Milošević's media :new "Ustashe state".
- ▶ Helmut Kohl and Slobodan Milosevic in TV: accusing the two of plotting "a Fourth Reich".
- ▶ šahovnica (Croatian checkerboard)
- ▶ New constitution: define Croatia as "the national state of the Croatian nation and a state of members of other nations and minorities who are its citizens: Serbs ... who are guaranteed equality with citizens of Croatian nationality

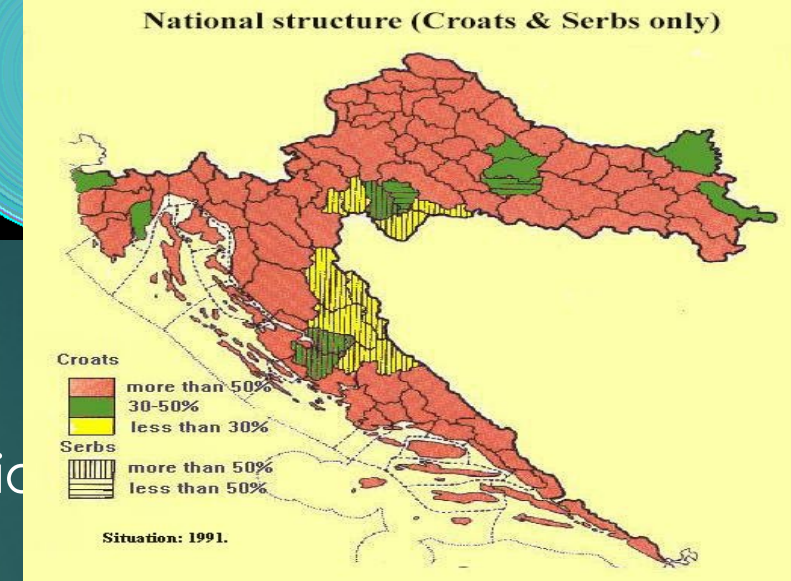
Referendum on independence

- ▶ On May 19, 1991,
- ▶ Serb local authorities called for a **boycott of the vote**, which was largely followed by Croatian Serbs
- ▶ with a turnout of 83.56% and the two referendum questions answered positively by 93.24% and 92.18% (resp.) of the total number of votes
- ▶ independence of Croatia, on the blue ballot, passed with **93.24% in favor**, 4.15% against, and 1.18% of invalid or blank votes.
- ▶ second referendum question, proposing that Croatia should remain in Yugoslavia, was declined with 5.38% votes in favor, **92.18% against** and 2.07% of invalid votes.



War in Croatia – 1991-1995

- ▶ War for independence, Homeland War, Greater Serbian aggression
- ▶ Civil war vs war between states
- ▶ Croats want to leave, Serbs want to stay
- ▶ 25. June 1991 declaration of independence
- ▶ Republika Srpska Krajina
- ▶ Operation Storm, Operation Flash 1995
- ▶ 1998 UN transitional authority for Eastern Slavonia integrated into Croatia
- ▶ Around 500 000 IDP s and 20 000 dead people
- ▶ estimates 1500 – 2500 rapes
- ▶ On May 29, 2015, the Croatian parliament passed the first law in the country that recognises rape as a war crime



Governments – between SDS (Social democratic party) and HDZ (Croatian democratic community)

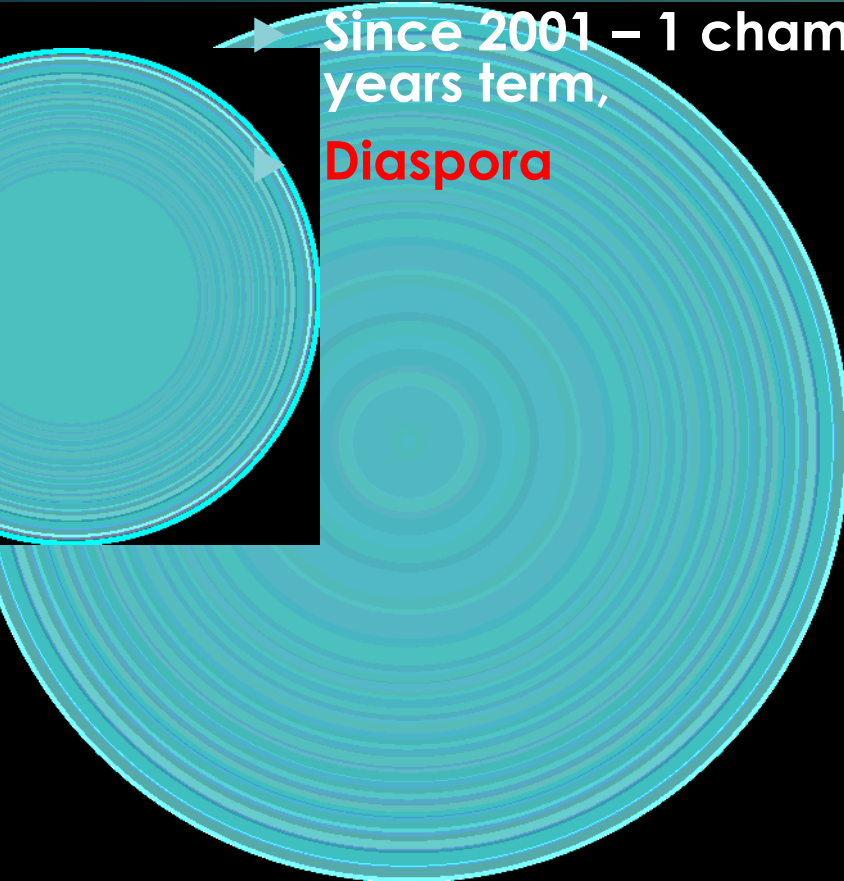
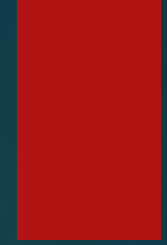
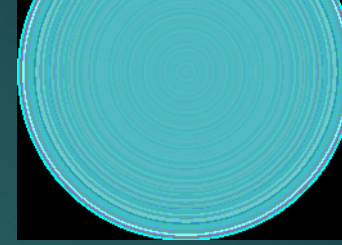
- ▶ 1995-1999 Franjo Tudjman HDZ
- ▶ 2000-2003 SDS Ivica Račan SDS
- ▶ 2003-2009 Ivo Sanader HDZ
- ▶ 2009-2011 Jadranka Kosor HDZ first and only female PM
- ▶ 2011- 2016 Milanovic SDP
- ▶ 2016 Oreskovic, Andrej Plenkovic HDZ

Parliament

- 1990-2001 two chambers: National assembly and the Regional assembly

▶ Since 2001 – 1 chamber – minimum 100 and maximum 160 MPs, 4 years term,

Diaspora



Franjo Tudjman 1995-99

- ▶ During WWI fought with partisans
- ▶ Military career
- ▶ First president of presidency of Croatia 1990
- ▶ Nationalist
- ▶ Authoritarian
- ▶ Anti-Serb
- ▶ Era of catholic revival
- ▶ ICTY prosecutor, Carla del Ponte, said in an interview that she would have indicted Tudjman had he not died in 1999
- ▶ Relativisation of history, historian



Andrej Plenkovic

- ▶ Pro-European
- ▶ Moderate



Presidents, 5 years, direct vote, 1 re-election

- ▶ 2000-2010 Stipe Mesic
- ▶ 2010-2015 Ivo Josipovic SDP
- ▶ 2015-2020 Kolinda Grabar Kitarovic HDZ
- ▶ 2020 Zoran Milanovic SDP



Kolinda Kitarovic

- ▶ **First woman president**
- ▶ Thompson - she "never heard" such songs glorifying Ustasha regime nor "seen any evidence that they exist", was "very fond" of some of his songs and that she did not see any evidence for the controversies associated to him
- ▶ **HDZ – populist, nationalist, modern conservative?**
- ▶ Same sex marriage yes except of adoption
- ▶ Not ban for abortion
- ▶ Support for green initiatives



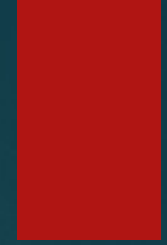
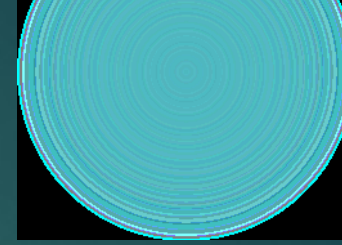
Zoran Milanovic

- ▶ SDP
- ▶ First trip to Slovenia
- ▶ Against curfew and lockdown during pandemic
- ▶ Milanović compared the lockdown in Austria to the methods employed in the era of Nazism
- ▶ retransmits Russian propaganda narratives, do not correspond to Croatia's consistent official position in support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity
- ▶ conflict with prime minister Plenković undermine unity within the EU and NATO in the face of current security threats in Europe
- ▶ suggested blocking Finnish and Swedish accession to NATO, until the electoral law in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- ▶ did not veto Finnish and Swedish NATO accession



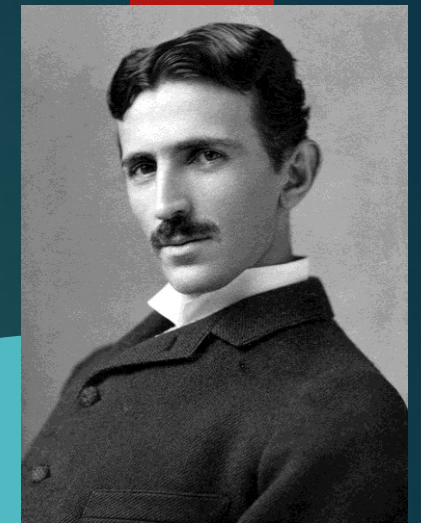
Foreign relations

- ▶ EU 2013
- ▶ NATO 2009
- ▶ Croats in BiH – right to vote
- ▶ Relations with Serbia – history matters



Croatia-Serbia relations

- ▶ War for independence, Homeland War, Greater Serbian aggression
- ▶ Smaller border disputes
- ▶ History matters
- ▶ Croatia filed a **genocide lawsuit** against Serbia at the **International Court of Justice** in 1999, and Belgrade filed a countersuit in 2010. Both lawsuits were dismissed 2015, - committed crimes, but they were not committed with genocidal intent
- ▶ Serbian minister Aleksandar Vulin was proclaimed persona non grata in Croatia
- ▶ **Earthquake 2020** in Croatia : Miloš Stojković, a member of Serb delegation which was supposed to bring the humanitarian aid to areas hit by the earthquake, came to Croatian city of Knin and announced the "return of Republic of Serbian Krajina" and removal of Croatian flag from Knin fortress
- ▶ Croatia announced in 2021 that **Nikola Tesla** be on its euro coins



Croats in BiH

- ▶ Division of BiH, greater Croatia
- ▶ All Croatian citizens can vote abroad, in diplomatic missions and consular offices of the Republic of Croatia – unique case
- ▶ Diaspora voting HDZ, securing so safe votes for HDZ
- ▶ Protecting, equal positions

ICTY and Ante Gotovina

- ▶ Ante Gotovina – primary role in Storm, 2001 indicted by ICTY, hiding, 2005 found in canary Islands, 2012 convictions overturned, released from custody, regarded as a hero
- ▶ After the generals' release, the Croatian government dispatched the governmental Bombardier Challenger 600 plane along with the Minister of Defence, Ante Kotromanović, and the Minister of Veterans' Affairs, Predrag Matic, to bring Gotovina and Markač to Croatia.

▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZxNLxHibSgs>

▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6TGE8WuVjE>



Football hooligans

- ▶ 13 May 1990 Crvena zvezda vs. Dinamo Zagreb at Maksimir stadium
- ▶ Delije vs. bad blue boys
- ▶ Is widely beleived to spark the war
- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zxD2PXJXsZQ>
- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TV4boyQUvJE>
- ▶ Hajduk Split glorifying ustasha - Maks butchers
- ▶ Josip simunic – fotbal player ZDS, disciplinary proceeding



Austria and NDH



- ▶ Bleiburg massacre - "the largest fascist gathering in Europe,,, **motion to ban the event**
- ▶ **Ban symbols that are tied to NDH** – U, chessboard coat of arms 2019
- ▶ Flag, coat of arms of Croatian defence Forces (HOS) - 2021
- ▶ The maximum fine for using the proscribed insignia is 4,000 euro, and those who repeat the offence can be fined up to 10,000 euro.

