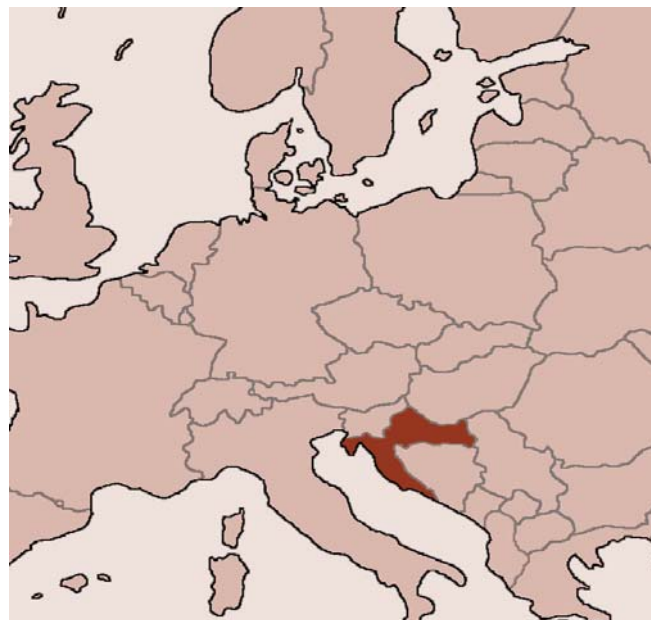


Croatia

Introduction

Since the 19th century, Croatia has had comprehensive experience under different constitutional constructions and territorial demarcations with migration, asylum and displacement. To be emphasized are the overseas migration in the 19th century, the increasing migration in the direction of the northern and western European states in the early 20th century, the subsequent inclusion in the system of the European recruitment migration in the second half of the 20th century as well as the various migration and refugee flows connected to the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s. Croatia can be equally described as a land of emigration, immigration, transit, and remigration as well as a country of both origin and destination for asylum seekers and displaced persons.

In comparison with the past, at times, turbulent migrations, current migration activities represent themselves in absolute and relative numbers as rather insignificant. To



Background Information¹

Capital: Zagreb

Official language: Croatian in Latin script

Area: 56,594 km²

Population (mid 2011): 4,403,000

Population density: 77.8 inhabitants/km²

Natural population growth rate (2011): -2.2%

Foreign population: 0.59%

Working population (2011): 1,724,000, of which 1,492,000 are employed and 232,000 are unemployed

Unemployment rate (November 2012): 17.3%

Religions (2011): Catholic 86.3%; Orthodox 4.4%; Muslim 1.5%; Atheist 3.8%; other 1.5%; not specified 2.7%

understand the development until today and the current migration phenomena as well as to perhaps predict future developments, three different migratory phenomena must be differentiated between: *First* to be mentioned are those migration movements that stand in connection with the former Yugoslavia and the then recruitment of labor migrants to the western and northern European states², out of which transnational migration patterns³ have developed to a lesser extent.⁴ *Secondly*, the asylum seeker flows during the Yugoslav Wars in the 1990s and their long term consequences developed their own dynamic.⁵ *Thirdly* new migration patterns have emerged whose extent is currently still minor and which are less to be understood as stemming from Croatia's history but stand in connection with the global developments of migration and politics. The fact that Croatia is in line to receive full EU membership on 1 July 2013 is the clearest sign of this Europeanization and globalization.

Public opinion in Croatia about these migration movements is consistently ambivalent. The Croatian citizens who have left the country at various time periods and are to be found all over the world today are looked upon with pride and nostalgia. One places, hesitantly but increasingly, blame on himself for the displacement of people, in particular the Serbian population from Krajina and Eastern Slavonia, and looks with ambivalence at those Croatians

who did not migrate yet live, however, outside the current state borders, particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In the context of EU-membership, there is hope of a continuing convergence with the European partner countries, though Croatsians are also concerned about their own identity.

The Historical Development of Migration

Emigration in the 19th and early 20th Century

In the 19th and 20th century, Southeast Europe, and with it also Croatia, developed from a region of immigration to a region with a definite emigration surplus. With this, Croatia joined the European immigration overseas. According to estimates, between 1880 and 1914 alone about 300,000 people from the kingdoms of Croatia and Slavonia, 90,000 people from Dalmatia and 30,000 people from Istria emigrated.⁶ In the 1920s, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and later Germany emerged as important countries of destination and increasingly replaced overseas destinations.⁷ Until 1940, some regions had established a clear tradition of migration, above all Sava-Banate (Savska banovina) and the coastal region of Primorska (Primorska banovina), "in which there was practically no more households which someone had not already emigrated from to overseas."⁸

Emigration after the Founding of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

The tradition of primarily economically motivated emigration experienced a crucial turning point through the events of the Second World War. For one, increasingly more people migrated decidedly due to political reasons, and secondly, migration movements were then more strictly politically observed, assessed and instrumentalized. The state founding of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia⁹ (of the so-called "second Yugoslavia", a federation of six countries and two autonomous provinces) changed the situation for current and potential migrants. The Croatian migration numbers cannot be precisely reconstructed. Nejašmić noted 250,000 emigrants for the time between 1940 and 1948 alone, and added the number of those Italians, Germans, Czechs, Hungarians and Polish who also left the country.¹⁰ The new Yugoslavian state first considered the emigrants to be traitors to the Yugoslavian cause.¹¹ In the 1960s, the baby boom generation first pushed their way into the job market and as economic reforms led to the redundancy of workers in 1964, public authorities began to hesitantly cooperate with foreign employers. Parallel to this, the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and with it the Yugoslavian government set aside their ideological doubts about migration and Yugoslavia became the only socialist country, which was an official part of recruitment migration.¹² In 1965 the first recruitment treaty with Austria came into force. Treaties with France (1966), Sweden (1967), the Federal Republic of Germany (1968), and Luxemburg (1969) as well as with Australia, Belgium

Table 1: Number of Yugoslavian labor migrants in the most important countries of destination at the end of 1973

Country of destination	Number ¹	Percentage of all persons classified as „temporarily employed abroad“ by the Yugoslavian Census at the end of 1973
Federal Republic of Germany	469,000	50.1%
Austria	197,000	19.9%
France	54,000	5.5%
Switzerland	28,000	2.8%
Sweden	25,000	2.5%
Benelux states	14,000	1.4%
Other European states	16,000	1.6%
Countries overseas	160,000	16.2%

¹ These numbers are drawn from Yugoslavian statistics and are estimates. In the destination countries, the number of Yugoslavian labor migrants is on average about 15 percent higher because all persons with a Yugoslavian passport were counted. However, because of different ways to capture the number of immigrants, the statistics of the different countries of destinations can hardly be compared.

Source: Baučić (1973), p. 62

and the Netherlands (1970) followed. Although Switzerland did not sign a special recruitment treaty with Yugoslavia, it became an important country of destination as well. From 1970 on, the recruitment came successively to an end. In countries of destination recruitment bans were put in place and in 1973 Yugoslavia itself passed the law to protect those workers employed abroad, which limited the placement of workers to the unemployed and to selected occupational categories. The result of the short period of recruitment is documented in Table 1, where it can be observed, as in all other figures of Croatian migration in the times of Yugoslavia, that the Yugoslavian census differentiated between emigrants and "people temporarily employed abroad". But, because at the time of the census it was impossible to be able to decide whether the concerned people would return again to Croatia or not, it behooved every person who counted to make the decision. Tendentially the so-called labor migrants who had gone to northern and western Europe were classified predominantly as being employed abroad, while those who emigrated overseas were regarded as permanently absent. Due to this fact, the reliability of the data is always questionable.¹³

The number of people that permanently left Croatia between 1948 and 1991 is estimated to be about 370,000. It must be remarked, however, that in this time period 151,800 people from other parts of Yugoslavia immigrated, so the emigration was compensated for to some extent.¹⁴

Migration during the Yugoslav Wars

Had it not come to a crisis in Yugoslavia at the end of the 1980s which led to the Slavic wars of dissolution, the calming of the migration movements would probably have started in the 1980s. However, a long unknown refugee and migration dynamic in the whole of Europe set in with the Yugoslav Wars (10-day war in Slovenia 1991, Croatian war 1991-1995, Bosnian war 1992-1995 and the Kosovo war 1999). In the period from 1991 to 1997, about 950,000 of the 4.5 million people living in Croatia migrated at least once or were displaced at least once.¹⁵ According to further estimations, which dramatically vary from one other, this number includes 550,000 Croatians, or Croatian citizens and 400,000 Serbians. In addition to these numbers, there were about 400,000 refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina who found refuge in Croatia.¹⁶ The central territories of the conflict in Croatia were the so-called Republic of Serbian Krajina and East Slavonia. It was here in these regions that

the Serbians first conquered territory and displaced the Croats living there. In 1995 the regions were re-conquered, Serbians were displaced and the Croatian government encouraged Croats to settle there. The internationally demanded return of the displaced Serbians to these regions was extraordinarily difficult and is until today not yet at an end, despite clearly improved framework conditions and beginning cooperation between Serbia and Croatia. By 2000, of the total 350,000 Serbians who fled Croatia, less than 100,000 returned; in 2010 the number was over 130,000.¹⁷

Effects of the Years of War

A central result of the war years is the sharply decreased share of the Serbian population in Croatia. The population census in 1991 reported 581,663 Serbians (12.16%), this number sank to 186,633 (4.36%) by 2011. The Serbian population in Croatia mainly consists of older people. It can be assumed from this that the Serbian population in Croatia will become even smaller in the future. Asylum, displacement and probable return shaped the 1990s, making a determination of the balance of regular migration impossible. On the emigration side of the balance sheet are the displaced Serbs, people who left Croatia in the case of accelerated family reunification¹⁸ and those who turned their backs to the country due to the poor economic situation in the war years.¹⁹ On the immigration side are the refugees and immigrants from Bosnia-Herzegovina, people who moved into independent Croatia in the setting of a supported re-migration (e.g. descendants of Croatian labor migrants whose 'return' was fostered with an academic scholarship) and labor migrants who returned to Croatia as they entered retirement. With the death of the Croatian President, Franjo Tuđman, in 1999 and the following liberalization of the country, a renewed change in the migration situation occurred, which will be dealt with in the following sections.

The Current Development of Migration

Two aspects should be emphasized concerning the current migration movements. *Firstly*, Croatia has again developed into a country with a negative migration balance, with more emigration than immigration. *Secondly*, Croatian citizens or those of Croatian descent dominate among those immigrating. Of the 8,534 immigrants in 2011, 4,720 had Croatian citizenship (55.3%). As is to be expected, the share of emigrants of Croatian citizenship was still higher at 75% (9,518 of 12,699 people), whereby 31.7% moved to Bosnia-Herzegovina and 26% to Serbia.

Migration Policies

Croatian migration policies were for a long time part of an encompassing policy, in Croatia partly so named diaspora policy. In Croatia, the concept of the diaspora encompasses a history of displacement from the home country (displacement of Croats in this reading was led by the Serbian dominated socialist-authoritarian regime), a collective myth about

Table 2: Emigration from the territory of present-day Croatia, 1880-1991

Time period	Number of emigrants ¹	
	Total number	Average per year
1880-1900	90,000	4,500
1900-1910	166,000	16,600
1910-1914	74,000	22,650
1914-1921	150,000	21,400
1921-1940	110,000	6,900
1940-1948	250,000	31,250
1948-1961	160,000	12,300
1961-1981	165,000	8,250
1981-1991	45,000	4,500
1880-1991	1,210,000	10,900

¹ Only permanent emigrants who in fact never returned to Croatia or would very probably not return there. Due to the particular category "temporarily employed abroad", the numbers remain estimates.

the home country including its territorial expansion, history and accomplishments, an idealization of the home country together with the obligation to preserve its heritage, an ambivalent attitude to all countries of destination for migrants as well as the belief in a return.²⁰ Out of this follows that the corresponding migration policies, on the one hand, promote the return of those Croats living abroad together with their descendants and, on the other hand, set up a kind of minority policy to protect the rights of Croats living abroad. Accordingly, these diaspora policies must be understood as an important means of ethnic-national strengthening and unification of Croatia after its founding in 1991. Although the diaspora objectives lost meaning, they have an after-effect in present migration policies: to date, the interest in current or potential non-Croatian immigration remains low.

Target Groups

Historically conditioned and connected with the outlined idea of diaspora, the Croatian migration policies addressed three more or less different groups. *First* to be named are those migrants (together with their descendants) who have left Croatia or former Yugoslavia for various reasons. *Secondly*, it addressed the Croats who themselves were not forced to migrate but due to the historical development do not live in Croatian territory—most importantly this deals with Croats living in Bosnia-Herzegovina and to a lesser extent those in Serbia. A *third* unspecific tar-

get group of Croatian migration policy is to be differentiated from both of these “diaspora groups”, and that group comprises immigrants in general. This group is, however, both politically and quantitatively rather unimportant.

Development

The normative undertone set with the term of the diaspora makes the development of the Croatian migration policies understandable. Immediately after the nation’s foundation in 1991, migration policies were operated in party platforms, in the law on Croatian citizenship, in governmental programs for the development of Croatia as well as in the context of numerous visits by high ranking politicians to those Croats living abroad. The foundation of a ministry for immigration in November 1996 also attaches importance to the Croats of the diaspora.²¹ The right to citizenship and areas of law potentially related to remigration (e.g. customs regulations) were liberally constructed accordingly. These policies also included efforts by Croatia to actively resettle Croats in the regions of Krajina and East Slavonia after it had displaced those Serbs living there in 1995.²²

Formal Restructuring and Historical Continuity

The migration policies were restructured in the year 2000, after the effusive nationalism was internationally increasingly regarded with skepticism, the settlement policies in

Table 3: Emigration from and immigration to Croatia (2001-2011)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011 ¹
Emigrants	7,488	11,767	6,534	6,812	6,012	7,692	9,002	7,488	9,940	9,860	12,699
<i>of which, emigrants to:</i>											
European Union	no data available	no data available	no data available	no data available	1,268	2,175	2,307	1,299	9,820	1,697	2,633
Bosnia-Herzegovina	1,300	2,011	1,794	1,247	1,055	1,300	1,443	1,283	1,666	3,549	4,029
Immigrants	24,415	20,365	18,455	18,383	14,320	14,978	14,622	14,541	8,468	4,985	8,534
<i>of which, immigrants from:</i>											
European Union	no data available	no data available	no data available	no data available	2,362	2,687	2,579	2,820	1,739	997	1,818
Bosnia-Herzegovina	15,188	11,869	10,869	11,141	8,358	9,327	8,944	8,172	4,874	2,589	3,666
Migration balance	16,927	8,598	11,921	11,571	8,218	7,286	5,620	7,053	-1,472	-4,875	-4,165

¹ In 2011, in the context of the effort to harmonize methodologies in view of EU membership, the statistics were modified. The increase in 2011 is therefore likely to be an effect of these changes.

Table 4: Population of Croatia by population groups, census data from 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001, 2011

	1971		1981		1991		2001		2011	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<i>Republic of Croatia</i> <i>total population</i> of which:	4,426,221	100	4,601,469	100	4,784,265	100	4,437,460	100	4,284,889	100
Croatians	3,513,647	79.38	3,454,661	75.08	3,736,356	78.10	3,977,171	89.63	3,874,321	90.42
Albanians	4,175	0.09	6,006	0.13	12,032	0.25	15,082	0.34	17,513	0.41
Austrians	352	0.01	267	0.01	214	0.00	247	0.01	297	0.01
Bosniaks ¹	...	...	...	...	...	...	20,755	0.47	31,479	0.73
Bulgarians	676	0.02	441	0.01	458	0.01	331	0.01	350	0.01
Montenegrins	9,706	0.22	9,818	0.21	9,724	0.20	4,926	0.11	4,517	0.11
Czechs	19,001	0.43	15,061	0.33	13,086	0.27	10,510	0.24	9,641	0.22
Hungarians	35,488	0.80	25,439	0.55	22,355	0.47	16,595	0.37	14,048	0.33
Macedonians	5,625	0.13	5,362	0.12	6,280	0.13	4,270	0.10	4,138	0.10
Germans	2,791	0.06	2,175	0.05	2,635	0.06	2,902	0.07	2,965	0.07
Poles	819	0.02	758	0.02	679	0.01	567	0.01	672	0.02
Roma	1,257	0.03	3,858	0.08	6,695	0.14	9,463	0.21	16,975	0.40
Romanians	792	0.02	609	0.01	810	0.02	475	0.01	435	0.01
Russians	1,240	0.03	758	0.02	706	0.01	906	0.02	1,279	0.03
Ruthenians	3,728	0.08	3,321	0.07	3,253	0.07	2,337	0.05	1,936	0.05
Slovaks	6,482	0.15	6,533	0.14	5,606	0.12	4,712	0.11	4,753	0.11
Slovenians	32,497	0.73	25,136	0.55	22,376	0.47	13,173	0.30	10,517	0.25
Serbians	626,789	14.16	531,502	11.55	581,663	12.16	201,631	4.54	186,633	4.36
Italians	17,433	0.39	11,661	0.25	21,303	0.45	19,636	0.44	17,807	0.42
Turks	221	0.00	279	0.01	320	0.01	300	0.01	367	0.01
Ukrainians	2,793	0.06	2,515	0.05	2,494	0.05	1,977	0.04	1,878	0.04
Walachians	13	0.00	16	0.00	22	0.00	12	0.00	29	0.00
Jews	2,845	0.06	316	0.01	600	0.01	576	0.01	509	0.01
Other	103,427	2.34	404,450	8.79	152,803	3.19	21,801	0.49	18,965	0.44
Regional ties ²	...	...	8,657	0.19	45,493	0.95	9,302	0.21	27,225	0.64
Not specified	15,798	0.36	17,133	0.37	73,376	1.53	79,828	1.80	26,763	0.62
Unknown	18,626	0.42	64,737	1.41	62,926	1.32	17,975	0.41	8,877	0.21

¹ Until the Census in 2001, Bosniaks were not listed as a national minority.² Until the Census in 1971, regional ties were not surveyed. Declaring one's regional affiliation is a way to avoid an ethnic classification.

the region of Krajina were sharply criticized, after Croatia was urged to enable the return of the once displaced Serbs or to indemnify them for their property loss, as well as after the death of the overly powerful President Franjo Tuđman in 1999. Looking at the prospect of membership in the EU and its regulations, the law concerning foreigners was reformulated and the right to asylum was established. Although the laws have since then corresponded to EU requirements (or were later minimally readjusted) and do not foresee any significant legal differences between descendants of Croats or 'non-Croats', the Croatian migration policies continued to be aimed de facto primarily at Croats and their descendants. This happened despite the fact that a number of reasons (e.g. the age distribution of the Croatian population, the low birth rate, the negative migration balance) make a migration policy aimed at immigration appear sensible.

The Immigrant Population

The immigrant population of Croatia is made up most importantly of Croats (the majority from Bosnia-Herzegovina) and Serbs (the majority of whom had been at first displaced from Croatia but later returned). Numbers of other immigrants are of no significance, as all statistics on the topic substantiate. The census data shows, for example, that the share of Croats climbed from 75% in 1971 to 90.42% in 2011. However, it is to be noted, that the indicated division of the population into ethnic groups practiced in Croatia only indirectly represents immigration flows. There are 22 recognized national minorities besides the group of Croats. A person classified for example as belonging to a German minority must in no way have immigrated from Germany (this becomes clearer still with the national minorities of Ruthenians and Jews, for whom there is no clear country of origin). Yet, immigration movements are not completely absent in Table 4. They are for example reflected in the category Bosniaks which includes immigrants from Bosnia-Herzegovina or in the category Albanians which encompasses immigrants e.g. from Kosovo.

The trend of ethno-national homogenization can be gathered from the data on citizenship of the population living in Croatia: 99.41% of the Croatian population in 2011 was in possession of Croatian citizenship. In addition, taking into account that the acquisition of citizenship for those people who cannot provide proof of any particular form of belonging to Croatia was relatively costly for a long time and only first simplified or more fairly constructed in recent years, it becomes clear just how unimportant the non-Croatian immigration is on the whole.

The ethnic-national homogeneity is likewise expressed with the answer to the question about the native language: over 97% of those questioned in the 2011 census indicate speaking Croatian, Croatian-Serbian, Montenegrin, Bosnian, Serbian or Serbo-Croatian as their native language. Although they emphasize the smallest differences through the designation of the language, they have a language at their disposal in which they can make themselves completely understood without a problem, assuming a mutual will to understand the other.

Table 5: Population of Croatia by citizenship (2011)

Country of citizenship	Total	Percentage of the total population of Croatia
<i>Total population of Croatia</i>	4,284,889	
Croatia ¹	4,259,476	99.41
Bosnia-Herzegovina	6,733	0.16
Serbia	2,888	0.07
Slovenia	1,999	0.05
Germany	1,609	0.04
Italy	1,420	0.03
Kosovo	1,188	0.03
Macedonia	1,034	0.02
China	437	0.01
Austria	380	0.01
USA	378	0.01
Russia	352	0.01
United Kingdom	334	0.01
Hungary	325	0.01
Czech Republic	250	0.01
Albania	237	0.01
Poland	216	0.01
The Ukraine	212	0.005
Slovakia	211	0.005
Other countries ²	2,129	0.05
Stateless, unknown	3,081	0.07

¹ Including persons with dual citizenship

² States with less than 200 citizens in Croatia

Source: Croatian Bureau of Statistics (2012), p. 108

Citizenship

The current roll and form of the Croatian right to citizenship is the result of the particular situation of the right to citizenship in former Yugoslavia, of the ethnic-national policies for the determination of the Croatian people in the 1990s and of the liberalization and EU-harmonization since 2000. From this constellation, only rights and provisions which are partially difficult to understand yet have serious consequences are derived.²³

The core of the current right to citizenship is referenced in the Croatian Constitution of 12 December 1990 and the Citizenship Act²⁴ of 6 October 1991. Both the Constitution and Citizenship Act have been modified or amended several times since, however their common and foundational intention has remained the same. The Republic of Croatia, as it is called in the preamble of the Croatian Constitution, is constituted as a nation state of the Croatian people and as a state of the members of national minorities.²⁵ This phrasing particularly degraded the Serbs living in Croatia because in the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Croatia of 1974 it still read that the Croatian nation state was constituted of the Croatian people *and* of the Serbian people in Croatia as well as of other nationalities living on Croatian territory, but now the Serbs are also considered just a national minority. Another effect of this phrasing was and is that all people of Croatian descent are considered to be a part of the Croatian national state, independent of their current place of residence. In accordance, even until today, people who understand themselves to be of Croatian descent can obtain Croatian citizenship relatively easily by showing proof of their Croatian ancestry or by means of a written declaration of connection to Croatia. With this the door to Croatian citizenship stood open, above all for Croats living in Bosnia-Herzegovina and also for the descendants of labor migrants all over the world, whereas Serbs living in Croatia had to undergo a costly and seldom transparent naturalization process.²⁶

Integration and Integration Policies

Whatever one understands under the concept of integration, it should be recognized that there is no large scale political area of activity concerning this matter in Croatia. This owes itself, firstly, to the dominance of the immigration of Croatian descendants next to the simultaneous relative irrelevance of the international migration—the required action or pressure to act is correspondingly slight. Secondly this political field appears to be avoided by the parties. This does not necessarily mean that the integration of migrants runs without problems, nor that of the Croatian descendants, but any difficulties with their integration are not made the subject of discussion in particular.

Single traces of integration policies can be found in the statements about the rights of national minorities and in the asylum law. In order to exhibit and seek to preserve the 22 recognized national minorities or groups which traditionally live on Croatian territory and the ethnic, linguistic, cultural and/or religious characteristics of these groups, high legal standards have been set since the year

2000. A non-assimilative integration of these groups is intended; they may and should keep and care for (as they like) their cultural features, but should at the same time be integrated in the social structure. Not all legally granted possibilities are utilized (e.g. representation of the groups in the state administration) due to the inadequate preparation of some institutions for the related challenges (e.g. addressing the national minorities, informing them of their rights), among other reasons. Also, the minorities themselves and their organizations are not always motivated enough or able to articulate or assert their interests.²⁸ A similar pattern, that is high legal standards, which are, however, not always taken into account in practice, is found in the asylum policies. Support for asylum seekers is decidedly offered, but is not particularly demanded and the coordination of the participating institutions is weak.²⁹

Flight and Asylum

In Croatia, refuge and asylum are matters that are strongly influenced by the Yugoslav Wars in the 1990s and increasingly more considerably by the closer partnership with the EU in the 21st century. Accordingly, the after effects of the Yugoslav Wars on the one hand and the current immigration of refugees and the asylum policies directed at it on the other hand should be differentiated between. The long-term effects of the war alone are presently numerically meaningful.

In January, 2012, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) counted 24,301 people in Croatia and 85,402 people from Croatia as people to whom it felt itself obliged ('Population of Concern'). Only with a few of these people is the status legally clear (partly due to e.g. the status 'returned refugee' being connected with high restrictions). More frequent are the cases in which people e.g. are threatened by statelessness or are waiting for the possibility to return and are exactly because of this observed by the UNHCR. Table 6 gives information about the internal breakdown of these overall numbers.³⁰

Right of Asylum

The first right to asylum in Croatia was enacted in 2004. This establishment of the right to asylum, as well as its configuration, was clearly influenced by the conditions of the targeted EU-membership. With regard to chapter 24 of the *Acquis Communautaire* (justice, freedom and security), Croatia was obliged to adopt European Community law, or rather to harmonize their own legislation with European law, the demands of the Geneva Convention, as well as with the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees. Two years after the enactment of the law, in 2006, the right to asylum was granted for the first time. The right to asylum provides different protection statuses and integration measures. It regulates questions of stay, housing, work, health care and education, grants religious freedom, the right of family reunification, the right to access a legal system as well as social support and integration help.³¹ In practice, different ministries and other institutions like the Red Cross ensure that these rights are granted and implemented.

Table 6: Snapshot of the refugee situation in January 2012

Refugees and displaced persons in Croatia	
Refugees	824
Asylum seekers	235
Returned refugees (in 2011)	439
Internal refugees	0
Returned internal refugees (in 2011)	67
Stateless persons	1,720
Miscellaneous	21,016
Total	24,301
Refugees and displaced persons from Croatia	
Refugees	62,649
Asylum seekers	739
Returned refugees (in 2011)	439
Internal refugees	0
Returned internal refugees (in 2011)	67
Miscellaneous	21,508
Total	85,402

Source: UNHCR: [www.unhcr.org/pages/49e48d7d6.html#\(1-3-2013\)](http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e48d7d6.html#(1-3-2013))

The Number of Asylum Applicants

The number of asylum seekers has thus far been low, even though it has risen most recently. According to Šabić et al., by 6 October 2011, 1,539 people had applied for asylum (the numbers vary slightly from source to source).³² In the same time frame 22 people were granted the right to asylum and another 22 people received subsidiary protection. These figures do not show the difference between those asylum procedures that were rejected and those that were called off because the applicants cancelled the proceedings and migrated to another country (preferably and probably an EU member state). According to data from the UNHCR Croatia, the latter has been the case, nevertheless, in 80% of all applications.

In comparison with 44 other European and non-European industrial nations, Croatia held 27th place in 2011 if the number of asylum applicants is correlated with the total population, and 28th place if the gross domestic prod-

uct per capita is used comparatively.³³ Corresponding to these low numbers, the topic of asylum is discussed neither by the political parties nor by a wider public.³⁴ The small number of cases may also be responsible for the largely smooth processing of asylum applications so far. Whether the communication and coordination channels currently set up are also appropriate for larger numbers of cases and how the Croatian population will react to a probable rise in cases can currently not be answered seriously. The attraction of EU-member states all in all, the geographic position of Croatia, its future position on the EU external border as well as the EU regulations on asylum procedures (Dublin II Regulation) will, however, probably cause a rise in the number of asylum application with the accession of Croatia into the EU.

Table 7: Number of asylum applications in Croatia

Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Asylum applications	200	160	150	290	810

Source: UNHCR (2012), p. 20

Irregular Migration

Croatia as a Transit Country

The phenomenon of irregular migration is closely connected with Croatia's geopolitical position. Croatia is located in the northern part of the so-called Balkan route. The bustling traffic on this route led in 2011 to the Croatian-Slovenian border being crossed by over 47 million people and 21 million automobiles, making it clearly the most highly trafficked EU external border. Politically, it should be noted that Croatia borders the EU and Schengen states of Slovenia and Hungary as well as the states of Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. Additionally it must be considered that Romania and Bulgaria are EU states but do not belong to the Schengen area, so as regards Schengen borders, the EU and Schengen state of Greece is isolated. Irregular migrants that leave the Schengen state of Greece aiming to enter another Schengen country will, in all likelihood, attempt to cross the Serbian-Hungarian, the Croatian-Hungarian or the Croatian-Slovenian border. This implies the great importance of Croatia as a country of transit for undocumented migrants.³⁵

If one considers the high number of over 47 million border crossings on the Slovenian-Croatian border and the fact that the Slovenian and Croatian authorities check over 4,000 automobiles every day, the 202 people found hidden in automobiles on this border in 2011 may be tragic in the individual case but negligible on the whole.³⁶ Also, the 3,461 migrants caught without a valid visa in 2011 do not represent a particular threat or burden for Croatia.³⁷

Croatia as Part of the EU Border Regime

Legally, the action of illegal migration is regulated in the Aliens Act, in the penal code, in the law on border surveillance and in other statutes. Croatia has signed a total of 24 readmission agreements with 26 states, of which 17 are EU member states.³⁸ The pending EU-membership also ensures that the border and migration controls are restructured according to the EU standards. This restructuring falls under the sphere or duties of the Ministry of the Interior. Various trainings for security authorities, public awareness campaigns and the financial support of corresponding NGOs have become a fixed component of the policies and are regularly monitored by EU institutions.³⁹

Current Developments and Future Challenges

Croatia's migration history, the increasing geo-political stability and general insights of migration research⁴⁰ make the following three developments likely to occur: Croatia will *first* continue its efforts towards a good relationship with its citizens living abroad. This is a part of the 'reasons of state' and has to do with the high degree of organization by Croats living abroad and their political influence as well as the importance of remittances. *Secondly*, the existing transnational connections and the continuingly difficult economic situation make it likely that more people will leave Croatia as those who enter. *Thirdly*, with EU-membership, Croatia will gain importance as a country of destination for international migration. The legal system has been adjusted to this possibility. How the integration of immigrants will run is still to be concretely laid out, however. Overall, all developments indicate that in the future Croatia will also be influenced by the past (meaning by the migration of Croats and people of Croatian descent), and that it will increasingly normalize concerning migration, meaning it will be more strongly integrated in international and general migration patterns, which may diversify immigration flows on the whole.

Notes

¹ All data is from publications by the Croatian Bureau of Statistics. Differences between various publications by the office are possible. I thank Vera Hanewinkel and Jochen Oltmer for corrections and inquiries which hopefully have led to clarification and Karolina Novinščak and the staff at UNHCR in Zagreb for their quick and profound information.

² Goeke (2007a); Novinščak (2007; 2012).

³ The term *transnational migration pattern* points to the phenomenon that a (likely increasing) part of migration movements cannot be described as a sequence of departure, migration and integration, but instead is to recognize that some migrants permanently orientate their lifestyle around at least two places or nations as horizons of possibilities. This implies several migrations in a lifetime. The structural foundation for this development is discussed in the broad term of globalization. The phenomenon of transnational migration makes it clear that a variety of social systems

(e.g. the economy, science) cannot be distinctly bound to a single nation state and have begun to emancipate themselves from national standards (cf. Bommers 2003).

⁴ Cf. in addition the empirical studies by e.g. Čapo Žmegač (2005, 2007); Goeke (2007b).

⁵ Blitz (2005); Goeke (2007c).

⁶ Cf. Nejašmić (1995), p. 345.

⁷ Cf. Sundhaussen (1999), p. 143; Baučić (1973).

⁸ Nejašmić (1995), p. 347; cf. also Baučić (1973), p. 56.

⁹ About the proper name: In 1945 it was at first called Democratic Federal Yugoslavia (Demokratska Federativna Jugoslavija), then in 1946, Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (Federativna Narodna Republika Jugoslavija) and from 1963 to 1992 Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Socijalistička Federativna Republika Jugoslavija/SFRJ).

¹⁰ Nejašmić (1995), p. 348.

¹¹ Cf. Vernant (1953), p. 100.

¹² Novinščak (2012), p. 136f.

¹³ Roux (1995), p. 42.

¹⁴ Nejašmić (1995), p. 349.

¹⁵ The line between 'migrating' and 'being displaced' cannot be clearly drawn and this is the source of continuous disputes over the determination of the exact scope of asylum and displacement.

¹⁶ Cf. UNHCR (2011), p. 23; cf. also: Human Rights Watch (2003), p. 3.

¹⁷ Cf. UNHCR (2011), p. 26.

¹⁸ Meant here are those people, or rather families, who before the war lived in different constellations in Croatia as well as abroad (e.g. parents working in Sweden or Germany and the children living with relatives in Croatia).

¹⁹ Cf. for the case of employees in the health sector and in connection, the loss of human capital: Wiskow (2006), p. 92ff.

²⁰ Cf. Cohen (1997), p. 26.

²¹ Vidak (1998), p. 58.

²² Cf. for a more comprehensive look Leutloff-Grandits (2010).

²³ In Yugoslavian times one had two "citizenships", a Yugoslavian federation citizenship and a citizenship in one of the Yugoslavian republics. The republican membership, however, had become largely insignificant, but became a central membership category when Croatia declared its independence. This reactivation also aimed at excluding certain people groups from the reestablished national citizenship—e.g. Serbians in Croatia. A comprehensive portrayal of the citizenship regulation can be found in Ragazzi/Štiks (2009). Further considerations can be found in Vidak (1998); Ragazzi/Štiks (2010); Štiks (2010a, 2010b) and Koska (2011).

²⁴ eudo-citizenship.eu/national-citizenship-laws/?search=1&country=Croatia (partly translated into English)

²⁵ National minorities that live on Croatian territory and display various ethnic, linguistic, cultural and/or religious features which differentiate them from other citizens and would like to preserve them are considered, according to law, to be national minorities. Currently there are 22 national minorities (cf. Table 4), cf. Tatalović (2006).

²⁶ Cf. Štiks (2010a); Koska (2011).

²⁷ Koska (2011), p. 32; cf. further and similar estimations in: Ragazzi/Štiks (2010), p. 13.

²⁸ Tatalović (2006).

²⁹ Šabić et al. (2011), p. 4.

³⁰ Cf. also the discussion on the validity of data: UNHCR (2011).

³¹ Cf. Šabić et al. (2011), p. 3.

³² Šabić et al. (2011).

³³ UNHCR (2012), p. 20.

- ³⁴ Cf. Šabić et al. (2011), p. 2.
- ³⁵ International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2007), p. 33; Frontex (2011, 2012).
- ³⁶ Frontex (2012), p. 14.
- ³⁷ Europäische Kommission (2012), p. 14.
- ³⁸ A common treaty was signed with the Benelux states.
- ³⁹ United States Department of State (2012); Europäische Kommission (2012).
- ⁴⁰ Vgl. Bommers (1999).

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Online Resources

- Croatian Bureau of Statistics: Extensive data and information in Croatian and English: www.dzs.hr
- EUDO CITIZENSHIP at the Robert Schuman Centre of the European University Institute in Florence provides thorough analyses and an extensive collection of laws e.g. on citizenship regulations and their development in Croatia: www.eudo-citizenship.eu/country-profiles/?country=Croatia
- Institut za migracije i narodnosti – Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies: www.imin.hr
- Research project »The Europeanisation of Citizenship in the Successor States of the Former Yugoslavia (CITSEE)«, University of Edinburgh, School of Law: www.law.ed.ac.uk/citsee
- UNHCR Croatia: www.unhcr.hr

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