

T.C.
İSTANBUL 29 MAYIS ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
SİYASET BİLİMİ VE ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLER
ANABİLİM DALI

THE EUROPEAN UNION ACCESSION PROCESS OF THE
POST-YUGOSLAVIAN COUNTRIES:
CASE STUDIES OF SLOVENIA AND CROATIA

(YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ)

Seçil BÜYÜKÇOLPAN

Danışman:
Prof. Dr. Semiha Özgür ÜNAL ERİŞ

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TEZ ONAY SAYFASI

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Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler Anabilim Dalı, Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler Bilim Dalı'nda 030119YL01 numaralı Seçil BÜYÜKÇOLPAN'ın hazırladığı “*The European Union Accession Process of the Post-Yugoslavian Countries: Case Studies of Slovenia and Croatia*” konulu yüksek lisans tezi ile ilgili tez savunma sınavı, 10/02/2023 günü 14:00 – 15:00 saatleri arasında yapılmış, sorulan sorulara alınan cevaplar sonunda adayın tezinin başarılı olduğuna oy birliği ile karar verilmiştir.

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BEYAN

Bu tezin yazılmasında bilimsel ahlak kurallarına uyulduğunu, başkalarının eserlerinden yararlanılması durumunda bilimsel normlara uygun olarak atıfta bulunulduğunu, kullanılan verilerde herhangi bir tahrifat yapılmadığını, tezin herhangi bir kısmının bu üniversite veya başka bir üniversitedeki başka bir tez çalışması olarak sunulmadığını beyan ederim.

Seçil BÜYÜKÇOLPAN

10/02/2023

ABSTRACT

This study analyses the reasons for the different progress of Slovenia and Croatia during the European Union accession processes with the past events they lived in the Yugoslavia Federation. Behind the collapse of Yugoslavia, there were particular motives. One of them was the increase of nationalism in the states after the death of Josip Broz Tito. The study also examined the impact of the European Community as another reason. During the independence movements, most of the Central and Eastern European countries used "return to Europe" as a rhetorical device. In this context, what distinguishes Slovenia and Croatia from other former Yugoslavian countries is that they have become the only countries that joined the European Union. However, Slovenia joined in 2004, while Croatia could join in 2013. Although their independence from Yugoslavia in 1991 was the same, the following process developed differently. This study attempts to ascertain the reasons for this time difference by analysing the legacy of Yugoslavia's past. However, the results reveal that the reasons are unrestricted to their past but also the European Union's evolving enlargement concerns.

Key Words: European Union (EU), Yugoslavia, Slovenia, Croatia, Nationalism

ÖZ

Bu çalışma Slovenya ve Hırvatistan'ın Avrupa Birliği'ne katılım süreçlerinin farklı ilerlemesinin nedenlerini Yugoslavya Federasyonu'nda yaşadıkları geçmiş olaylarla incelemektedir. Yugoslavya'nın çöküşünün arkasında belirli sebepler vardı. Bunlardan biri Josip Broz Tito'nun ölümünden sonra devletlerde milliyetçiliğin artmasıydı. Çalışmada bir diğer neden olarak Avrupa Topluluğu'nun etkisi de incelendi. Bağımsızlık hareketleri sırasında, Orta ve Doğu Avrupa ülkelerinin çoğu "Avrupa'ya dönüşü" bir retorik araç olarak kullandı. Bu bağlamda Slovenya ve Hırvatistan'ı diğer eski Yugoslavya ülkelerinden ayıran özellik, Avrupa Birliği'ne katılabilen yegâne ülkeler haline gelmeleridir. Ancak Slovenya 2004 yılında, Hırvatistan ise 2013 yılında katılabildi. 1991 yılında Yugoslavya'dan bağımsızlıkları aynı olsa da sonraki süreç farklı gelişti. Bu çalışma, Yugoslavya'nın geçmişinden kalan mirası inceleyerek bu zaman farkının nedenlerini tespit etmeye çalışmaktadır. Ancak sonuçlar, nedenlerin geçmişle sınırlı kalmadığını, Avrupa Birliği'nin genişleme kaygılarının da arttığını ortaya koyuyor.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Avrupa Birliği, Yugoslavya, Slovenya, Hırvatistan, Milliyetçilik

ÖNSÖZ

Danışmanım olmayı kabul eden, Yüksek lisans tezimin planlanmasında, yazılmasında ve tamamlanmasında, aksaklıklar olsa da sabrını esirgemedi tecrübe ve bilgileriyle bana bu süreçte en büyük katkıyı sunan saygıdeğer Prof. Dr. Semiha Özgür Ünal Eriş'e, Lisans ve Yüksek Lisans boyunca eğitim gördüğüm bütün İstanbul 29 Mayıs Üniversitesi, Siyaset Bilimi ve Uluslararası İlişkiler bölümü Profesörlerine teşekkür ederim.

Tez sürecinde bana inanan, beni hep destekleyen ve maddi manevi desteklerini her daim arkamda hissettiğim, benim bu günlere gelmemi sağlayan annem Gülçin Büyükçolpan'a, babam Bülent Büyükçolpan'a, ağabeyim Gökay Büyükçolpan'a ve sonradan ailemize katılan ve çalışkanlığıyla bana örnek olan Işıl Büyükçolpan'a, dayım Cenap Kondal'a, hayatım boyunca benden sevgilerini ve desteklerini esirgemeyen anneannem Meryem Beyhan'a ve merhum babaannem Selvare Büyükçolpan'a teşekkür eder ve onlara çok şey borçlu olduğumu ifade etmek isterim.

Ve son olarak, üniversite dönemini ve tez dönemini birlikte geçirdiğim, moralimi yüksek tutan bana yardımcı olan sevgili arkadaşım Aslıhan Dursun Darwish'e teşekkür ederim.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TEZ ONAY SAYFASI	ii
BEYAN	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZ	v
ÖNSÖZ	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
ABBREVIATIONS	ix
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
NOTES ON PRONUNCIATION OF SERBO-CROATIAN LANGUAGE	xii
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Methodology	4
1.2 Literature Review	6
1.3 Plan of the Thesis	8
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	10
2.1 Nationalism	10
2.1.1 Nationalism in Yugoslavia	15
2.1.1.1 Slovene Nationalism	16
2.1.1.2 Croat Nationalism	16
2.2 EU Theories.....	17
3. A BRIEF HISTORY OF YUGOSLAVIA	23
3.1 The Post-Yugoslavian Period.....	25
3.1.1 The Short History of Slovenia.....	26
3.1.2 The Short History of Croatia.....	29
3.1.3 World War I & Unification	33
3.2 The First Yugoslavia	36
3.3 The Second World War and Revolutions.....	41
3.4 Socialist Yugoslavia with Tito's Leadership (1945 to 1980).....	43
3.5 The Demise and the European Union's impact.....	50

4. THE RELATIONS OF CROATIA AND SLOVENIA WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION.....	57
4.1 Slovenia's EU Relations and Impacts	57
4.2 Croatia's EU Relations and Impacts	68
4.3 Comparison of the Accession and Integration Process of Slovenia and Croatia	82
CONCLUSION	89
BIBLIOGRAPHY	95
ÖZGEÇMİŞ	103



ABBREVIATIONS

EU	European Union
EC	European Community
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
SAP	Stabilisation and Association Process
SFRY	Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
AVNOJ	Antifascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia
NDH	Independent State of Croatia
JNA	Yugoslav People's Army
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
USA	United States of America
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
ITF	International Trust Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
NPAA	National Programme for the Adoption of the <i>Acquis</i>
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
UN	United Nations
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
HDZ	The Croatian Democratic Union (<i>Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica</i>)
USKOK	Suppression of Corruption and Organised Crime
SDP	Social Democratic Party (<i>Socijaldemokratska Partija Hrvatske</i>)
VHTD	Victory and Homeland Thanksgiving Day
FTT	Free Territory of Trieste
VMRO	Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Bilateral Relations of Slovenia and Croatia, adapted by Bojinović Fenko and Šabič, From the Balkans to Central Europe and Back: The Foreign Policy of Slovenia 2014	86
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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. The Slovene Lands (Benson 2004, xxi).....	26
Figure 2. The Illyrian Province: 1809-14 (Clissold 1968, 53).....	28
Figure 3. The Military Frontier of Austria and Hungary (Benson 2004, xx)	30
Figure 4. Formation of Yugoslavia 1918-20 (The Map Archive n.d.).....	34
Figure 5. Trieste and Istria in the Twentieth Century (Cattaruzza 2011, 68)	48
Figure 6. Distribution of National Groups by Republic and Province in 1991 (Pavkovic 2000, 49).....	52



NOTES ON PRONUNCIATION OF SERBO-CROATIAN LANGUAGE

Language had a vital role and was often used as a political tool in all states of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Even before Yugoslavia, the states had struggled to retain their language. However, the spelling choices and expressions of the thesis do not aim to replicate any political orientation. In the thesis, I referred to maintaining the original spelling of individuals' names. I will also include the Slovenian and Croatian versions of the expansions to understand the abbreviations.

Croatian is a phonetic language and does not have silent letters. In the following guide, pronunciation is illustrated based on the Latin alphabet:

A	<i>a</i> in father.
B	<i>b</i> in bed.
C	<i>ts</i> in Tsar.
Ć	<i>t</i> in mixture.
Č	<i>ch</i> in reach.
D	<i>d</i> in dog.
Dž	<i>j</i> in John.
Đ	<i>d</i> in duke and <i>dg</i> in bridge.
E	<i>e</i> in let.
F	<i>f</i> in full.
G	<i>g</i> in good.
H	<i>ch</i> in loch (in Scottish)
I	<i>i</i> in machine.
J	<i>y</i> in yet.
K	<i>k</i> in kite.
L	<i>l</i> in look.
Lj	<i>ll</i> in million.
M	<i>m</i> in man.
N	<i>n</i> in net.
O	<i>o</i> in not.

P	<i>p</i> in pet.
R	<i>r</i> in run (slightly rolled).
S	<i>ss</i> in glass.
Š	<i>sh</i> in she.
T	<i>t</i> in tap.
U	<i>u</i> in rule.
V	<i>v</i> in veil.
Z	<i>z</i> in zebra.
Ž	<i>s</i> in pleasure.

The pronunciation table listed above was adapted from:

Benson, Leslie. *Yugoslavia: A Concise History*. Rev. and updated ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

Lampe, John R. *Yugoslavia as History*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1

1. INTRODUCTION

“Return to Europe” was a common slogan in Central and Eastern European independence movements. The people united around this slogan called for these states to return to the cultural space they symbolically deserve and to enter Europe's economic and political institutions. The desire to re-join Europe became increasingly crucial in countries such as Croatia and Slovenia attempting to become sovereign states for the first time in their national history. The importance of the European Union (EU) enlargement in the post-Yugoslavian region is to transform the region with the integration process would open a new chapter after a decade of failure. The European perspective remains open to South-eastern Europe.

Regarding the “return to Europe,” joining the EU requires considering the EU accession process and requires the adaptation process, but primarily the preliminary stage of Europeanisation. There are various suggestions in the literature regarding the definition of Europeanisation. However, most definitions include European influence on something in the domestic political and economic system. Therefore, when we consider European influence as European Union influence, Europeanisation occurs with the impact of European integration (Sigér 2018, 3). In the initial step of Europeanisation, the Europe or Accession Agreement is signed as the basis of current and future institutional associations. The second phase covers the pre-accession period, which results in the first fundamental institutional reforms, particularly in the effective coordination of European affairs at the national level. The third stage of Europeanisation involves the negotiation process, in which incremental and radical changes occur in individual policy areas. The last phase comprises the membership period. Among the states of the former Yugoslavia, only Slovenia and Croatia have been able to complete all these stages, and Slovenia is the only country that has integrated them in a natural pattern (Djurovic and Lajh 2020, 671).

The EU has two integration capacities; for preparing possible member states, external integration and preserving the cohesion of members, which is internal integration. Both dimensions of integration are intricately linked. Institutional and public support integration capabilities are two subdimensions of internal integration. There was an academic concern about the Eastern European enlargement, which might overburden

the EU policies and institutions because most of the new member states transitioned from the communist system, and their economic situation was not well. Internal integration capacity is for the protection of the EU mechanisms toward that kind of concern. European Commission evaluates whether the country is competent to meet the conditions required to join, known as the Copenhagen Criteria. The Copenhagen Criteria were formed in 1993 at Copenhagen European Council to integrate Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries into the EU, which comprises political, economic, and legal conditions that candidate nations must fulfil. Furthermore, the Madrid European Council in 1995 added public administration reforms implemented by candidate countries as additional criteria for enlargement (Butković and Samardžija 2014, 93). The Copenhagen Criteria and additions of the Madrid European Council are the primary essentials of the external integration capacity and adaption of political and institutional conditions. The Copenhagen and Madrid European Councils determined criteria as follows: the political criteria, which include human rights, the rule of law and the guarantee of democracy, and the economic criteria comprise the existence of a functioning market economy, the capacity to fulfil membership requirements, particularly implementation to the objectives of political, economic, and monetary union, and administrative criterion as the requirement for the legal and organisational capacity of accession countries to integrate the *acquis Communautaire* (Bojinović Fenko and Urlić 2015, 109). Eastern European countries have struggled to compromise the conditions. Therefore, ever since the countries became members of the EU, their political and economic integration capacity has been limited. The democratic backsliding of the new members undermines the support for future enlargements like Southern Europe integration. The EU integration capacity has three necessary conditions: credible membership perspective, conditionality, and assistance. The absence of any of these conditions causes ineffectiveness and imbalances, one of the Southern European enlargement process problems (Börzel and Schimmelfennig 2016, 18-19).

With the end of the Cold War, The EU developed an innovative approach for South-eastern Europe and the Balkans. This approach is the post-liberal discourse of governance which enables external regulation and the use of regulatory power without formal responsibility for governing (Chandler 2010, 69-71). The discourse is problematic for the countries because it restricts their sovereignty. This discourse operates in domestic

institutions and civil societies. Partnership and country ownership are the leading edges of the post-liberal framing of post-liberal sovereign rights and legitimacy. These are the principal concepts of the Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) which came into force in May 1999 and in some post-Yugoslavian countries. Croatia, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Montenegro were included in the SAP (Berend 2009, 102-103). The EU emphasises three levels of conditionality as necessary leverage over states: SAP, program, and project levels. All of these are the EU-defined priorities. The EU uses the 'one size fits all' model for strengthening South-eastern European government institutions (Chandler 2010). The SAP is far from the EU partnership, which was a prominent element for the Central European countries. As a result, the integration process of South-eastern European states is more interventionist and harder to implement. However, Slovenia's integration process was different. The comparison and reasons will be mentioned in the fourth chapter.

At the EU Summit Conference held in Thessaloniki in 2003, the integration of Western Balkans as part of the EU with the implementation of the EU's enlargement conditionality was mentioned for the first time (Butković and Samardžija 2014, 94). The EU opened clear prospects for membership to all Balkan countries by making them respect detailed political, economic, and value-based criteria according to each country's specific needs. No matter how close to EU membership, every Balkan country had to transform the rule of law as a crucial requirement for any social progress to meet these criteria. The EU accession process is the practical entry into force of domestic legislation to EU standards. One of the first steps that all countries leaving Yugoslavia had to take to EU membership was admission to the Council of Europe to ensure more substantial respect for citizens' human, civil, and political rights in their region. Another central pillar was the partnership with NATO for regional stabilisation and overcoming the region's turbulent war experience and a series of frozen conflicts. They differ quite a lot in terms of NATO and what these countries have accomplished, and the same is true of the levels they have reached in European integration. Only Slovenia and Croatia could become members of the EU and NATO from the former Yugoslav countries (Bešlin and Milošević 2017, 551-552).

The study chose Slovenia and Croatia as case studies among the other post-Yugoslavian countries. There are many reasons for this selection. The EU integration

process has various aspects in terms of candidate countries. These issues vary according to the candidates' political, economic, and social development status. Since its demise, only two post-Yugoslavian countries that could join the EU are Slovenia and Croatia. The candidacy process of other countries is still in progress. Like being EU members, Slovenia and Croatia have many other similarities. The two countries are neighbours and called 'small states' compared to the other EU states. They gained their independence from the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia in 1991 together, but even before the Yugoslav unification, they were part of the Habsburg Monarchy. Two states were the best-developed states of the former Yugoslavia in the context of economy and progress of reforms. After the independence, both countries provided their road as maximally differentiated from their Yugoslav legacy. Both reminded the state's history as a European nation to justify their wish to reintegration with Europe. Despite their similarities, these two countries joined the EU nine years apart. Also, their accession process developed differently. That is the main reason for selecting Slovenia and Croatia as case studies.

This study's main aim is to analyse the different timelines of the two countries' accession process due to Yugoslavia-related reasons. Their past in Yugoslavia is significant in the states' accession and transition process. The study will analyse their status in Yugoslavia, their relations with other Yugoslav states, the domestic and foreign instruments they used and how these affected their subsequent policies. In addition, the study will analyse the reasons for the collapse of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and whether there was a European impact.

1.1 Methodology

This study's research question is: What are the reasons for the different EU accession processes after Slovenia and Croatia gained independence from Yugoslavia?

I expect to confirm the impact of the Yugoslav legacy on the difference in the accession processes of Slovenia and Croatia. Secondly, the influence of enlargement fatigue of the EU with the changing enlargement policy of the European Commission on the accession process of Croatia, and how it was different from Slovenia. Regarding the research question, the paper primarily relies on finding the impact of Europe on the collapse of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by looking at the background of

the demise. Then their situation during the Yugoslavia period and its contributions or regressions were searched. The two countries' goal of becoming an EU member has been examined in the context of past events and post-membership satisfaction.

The method chosen to achieve the above aims is the comparative method with case studies. The analysis of the EU accession and integration process of the former Yugoslav countries in the comparative method was deemed more appropriate. Because of the various features of the post-Yugoslavian countries, the EU has had to follow distinct accession paths for most of them. Slovenia and Croatia are the thesis case studies because of their similarities and differences. Both states gained their independence by breaking away from the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia at the same time and had a similar historical institutional organisation and historical background from the Austrian-Hungary Empire to Yugoslavia and their independence. However, they went through the accession process under different conditions. Also, the timelines of their accession process were different. The study's main aim is to find out the Yugoslavia-related reasons for the time difference.

This research used a qualitative analysis of the secondary resource data methodological approach because this research is based on historical processes and the effect of the past. Yugoslavian history was reviewed from the beginning to the end, and the impact of the EU was investigated. The historical part's data is specially collected from recent time articles and books to see that time's perspective. The relationship between the EU with Slovenia and Croatia is analysed analytically. The data were collected covering an extensive period to explore the details of the relationships without missing the point. The sources were examined with particular attention to the chronology of events to reveal detailed connections between the impacts and causes of specific developments.

This study benefited from online archives of Slovenian and Croatian states, journal articles, reports, working papers, websites, news, books, and e-books. The map figures were used and collected according to the state map in the period mentioned.

1.2 Literature Review

The Yugoslav idea has existed since the nineteenth century. Drago Roksandić (2017) expressed the concept of Yugoslavism as the recent version of German neologism and became the nationalist model for the South-eastern European countries. In the study, Slovenian and Croatian history is predominantly included because of the purpose of the research. For understanding their path to Yugoslavia and the emergence of Yugoslav nationalism, the book *A Short History of Yugoslavia* (1968), edited by Stephen Clissold, was used as the primary resource. The parts of Yugoslav history were described by Marie-Janine Calic (2019), John R. Lampe (1996), and Leslie Benson (2005) chronologically and in detail. I focused on specific parts of the history: particular leaders who shaped the federation, fascist movements related to Croatia (Ustaše) and Yugoslavia in general, the situation and status of Slovenia and Croatia inside Yugoslavia, political parties that had an important place in the federation and nationalism, the effect of the World Wars to the region, Tito period as the golden era of Yugoslavia, and the collapse of the federation with the death of Tito. About the history of Yugoslavia, there are many resources. However, considering the study's limitations, there is a lack of resources focusing on the relations between Yugoslavia and the EU at that time. One of the aims of the thesis was to examine and analyse the impact of Europe on the collapse. Because of the lack of resources, the analysis of this aim was limited. In addition, the studies of David Anderson (1995) and Sait Yağcı (2019) are significant for understanding Yugoslavia's collapse.

The study gives special attention to the relations of Slovenia and Croatia with the EU. Slovenia was the first country to join the EU and was also one of the pioneer countries to leave the Yugoslav Union. Later, other former Yugoslav states were influenced by Slovenia's progress. After its independence in 1991, Slovenia's path to the EU began. Ana Bojinović Fenko and Zlatko Šabič (2014) explained the development of Slovenia's foreign policy into three stages. The first stage was disassociating itself from the post-Yugoslavian states, the second stage was gaining membership in Euro-Atlantic international organisations, and the third stage was the foreign policy development of Slovenia. However, I decided to integrate Slovenia's foreign policy into five phases to consider why it was the first former Yugoslav country to join the EU and successfully integrate its domestic and foreign policy. In the first phase, Slovenia disassociated itself

from the former Yugoslavia and Western Balkans. Slovenia dedicated itself to gaining EU and NATO membership in the second phase. András Inotai and Peter Stanovnik (2004) explained the reasons for seeking the EU membership of Slovenia and other Central and Eastern European countries with economic arguments, security concerns, financial resources, and other reasons. Slovenia has made reforms and decisions on economic-social-political issues according to European matters since the end of the 1980s. In the third phase, the accession process of Slovenia began. Regarding the accession process with bilateral relations, the articles of Gordana Djurovic and Damjan Lajh (2020) and Ana Bojinović Fenko and Marjan Svetličič (2017) are beneficial resources. In the fourth phase, Slovenia adapted and transformed the necessary conditions. Danica Fink-Hafner (2010) defined Slovenia as a textbook example and Fenko and Svetličič as the star pupil in this context. Slovenia became a member in the fifth phase, and its adventure started in the EU.

Croatia also achieved its independence in 1991. Senada Šelo Šabić (2014) described Croatia's foreign policy development elements into three stages. Šabić separated the phases like disassociating from former Yugoslavia, gaining international recognition after independence, recapturing, and reintegrating occupied territories, and aiming for membership in Euro-Atlantic structures. I added and changed the stages about Croatia's differences from other Western Balkan countries and the obstacles it faced. The first phase was receiving international recognition from Europe. After the declaration of Croatia's independence, the public and politicians had many expectations from the EC. David Anderson (1995) and Božo Skoko (2016) claimed the expectations and disappointment of the Croatians, especially about the lack of EU support during the independence war, also called the Homeland War. The second phase was the era of President Franjo Tuđman. The EU and Croatia's relationship was frozen in this phase. Dejan Jović (2006) mentioned the frozen relations in this period with the aggressive attitude of Tuđman after the independence towards the Regional Approach Policy of the EU regarding the independence war results. In the third phase, after Tuđman, the new government faced some obstacles in the path of the EU. In this part, reports from press websites were examined, such as the New York Times and CNN. Also, ESI Discussion Paper (2014) was one of the most beneficial papers concerning the obstacles. Vassilis Petsinis (2013) represented reintegrating Serbs minority in Croatia within the context of

integrating European minority rights. The studies of Petra Roter and Ana Bojinović (2005), Darko Šeperić (2011), and Božo Skoko (2016) distinguished some struggles of the integration process. Hrvoje Butković and Višnja Samardžija (2014) aimed to evaluate Croatia's experience by focusing on the conditionality and new methodology of EU enlargement negotiations. They concluded their study with the proposal that “one size doesn't fit all.” This research assisted me in analysing the experience of Croatia. Additionally, the works of Senada Šolo Šabić and Sonja Borić (2016) about the impact of Croatia on other Western Balkan countries, Visnja Samardzija (2016) about the Euroscepticism, the public thoughts, and economic goals, and Senada Šolo Šabić (2019) about the progress of Croatia in political criteria were the valuable research. Dario Cepo (2020), differently, focused on the decline of democracy in Croatia after the accession.

The only research I could benefit from comparing Slovenia and Croatia's accession and integration process was the article by Ana Bojinović Fenko and Ana Urlić (2015). However, this article focused on comparing political criteria and the political conditionality of the EU. In this sense, the thesis has a broader focus.

1.3 Plan of the Thesis

The structure of this thesis is framed in five chapters. The first chapter comprises an introduction, the research methodology, and a literature review. The introduction includes the EU accession and integration process towards South-eastern European countries and the five steps of Europeanisation. Copenhagen Criteria and Madrid European Council in 1995 describe the conditions of the European Commission with necessary requirements for the EU integration capacity. The new additions to the accession period after the concerns about the Eastern European enlargements. The reasons for selecting Slovenia and Croatia as case studies and the main aims. Lastly, expectations from the answer to the research question.

The second chapter will be a theoretical framework. Firstly, the chosen theory of the thesis with the explanations and why the other theories did not select for the study will explain. Secondly, how this theory, nationalism, contributes to the perspective of the thesis.

The third chapter will contain a concise history of Yugoslavia, focusing on Slovenia and Croatia. The importance of the chapter is to understand the reasons for the occurrence of the failure and the influence of the disintegration problem by looking at the period from the beginning to the end. The EU's impact on the demise of Yugoslavia is also included in the chapter.

The fourth chapter is the chapter in that The EU dimension is explained. The fourth chapter will mention the nine-year difference in membership, the relationship between the EU, Slovenia, and Croatia, their integration process comparison, and the analysis.

The closing chapter discusses all the analyses and the research question's answer with a thesis summary.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory of "nationalism" is used to address this research. The reasons for that will be mentioned in this chapter by looking firstly at nationalism as a theory, Yugoslavian nationalism, and Slovene and Croat way of nationalism. In addition, European theories, especially Neo-Functionalism, with the reasons why these theories are not used due to the purpose of the study, will be mentioned.

2.1 Nationalism

Nationalism is a relatively new phenomenon that developed in the late eighteenth century. The concepts of nation and nation-state are closely tied to each other. A nation can be defined as a shared language group, residents of a particular territory, an ethnic community, a religion or a group with shared cultural traditions or values. In practice, a group of people identify as a nation for several reasons: the group might be lives in a particular state, be discriminated against by a state, or they establish their state with a common interest (Kaldor 1993, 248).

The concept of nationalism has generally been associated with various definitions at diverse levels, such as the individual, society, and government. Ireneusz Paweł Karolewski and Andrzej Marcin Suszycki (2011, 5) defined nationalism with six types of connotations. First, the attachment of primitive feelings of people to a national collectivity. Here, nationalism relates to several political concepts like racism, totalitarianism, and fascism. Second, the usage of belonging of people to a nation with their willingness to sacrifice themselves for the welfare, security, and social welfare. Nationalism acquires a republican connotation and a higher ethical concept of patriotism in this context. Also, nationalism represents the responsibilities of citizens within a national political community. Third, the term nationalism refers to a nationalist ideology based on a definition of the nation's history, the core stories of its identity, the nation's political preferences, current standing concerning other countries and recommendations for national objectives achievement. Fourth, nationalism describes political groups attempting to attain goals that they claim reflect the nation's desire. Nationalist political

movements are seen to be inextricably linked to nationalist ideology or even impossible of thinking in the absence of pre-existing nationalist ideology. Nationalism as a social movement may reflect the justifications for legitimising and protecting power. Fifth, nationalism can be defined as a process of nation-building to establish or maintain national identity. Sixth and lastly, the concept of nationalism may refer to a cultural discourse that emphasises language and national symbolism and is primarily practised by a nation's cultural elites. It is a thought that nationalism, as a cultural discourse, uses and continually perpetuates certain national beliefs, symbols, and ceremonies (Karolewski and Suszycki 2011, 5-8).

The ideology of nationalism developed with emotionally powerful arguments by a particular arrangement that some nationalists placed on the public agenda in the French Revolution. In some ways, the contemporary concept of nation was merely one of the responses to the underlying query in this concept, namely, who are the people? The French Revolution unavoidably posed this question but did not instruct how to address it (Stokes 2003, 115).

Nationalism as a subject of academic research encloses many approaches and perspectives, which resulted in various definitions of nationalism. Especially after the Second World War to the beginning of the 1990s, with the dissolution and establishment of the states, the studies on nationalism increased rapidly. After 1990, nationalism studies have gained new dimensions with the new world conditions such as globalisation, newly established states, independent post-colonial states and postmodern expansions emphasising ethnic minorities. As a result of the enlargement of the issues, there are many diverse perspectives and classifications in scholars' approaches towards various nationalisms. The essentialist and constructivist approaches are the two major theories of nationalism (Arslaner 2022, 124-125).

The essentialist approach reduces the diversity of a community to a single criterion, which is the defining 'essence' and most important characteristic of that community. That is often compounded by the claim that 'essence' is inevitably or naturally provided. This approach assumes that people live in the same world, lead a single lifestyle, have a single nationality and a single gender, and as individuals, are singular and whole beings. The differences in identity categories, like different ethnicities, races, and genders, reflect societies' differences. The essentialist approach claims that nations

create nationalism. The primordialist perspective and the Ethno-symbolist perspective are two perspectives of the essentialist approach. According to the primordialist perspective, the national essence has always existed, but it may fall into the background due to the events experienced in the historical process (Arslaner 2022, 125). Therefore, the primordialist perspective assumes that group identity is a "given". It can be given by social existence, family connection, religious community, speaking language and pursuing particular social practices (Geertz 1973, 259). According to the Ethno-symbolist perspective, the basis of today's national culture is the ethnic culture that preserved the essence of symbols, myths, and traditions over the centuries. The Ethno-symbolist researchers state the importance of the attachment of nations to their ethnic cores. Unlike the primordialists, the Ethno-symbolist researchers accepted the notion that "nationalism was the product of the modern age", but additionally, they claim that even though the changes and transformations happened in the historical process, the nations' ethnic origin preserved their essence for centuries (Arslaner 2022, 125-127).

The constructivist approach emphasises the importance of the desire to establish a nation-state for people who are conscious of being a nation. Therefore, the nation-state-building process stems from nationalist movements that affect a society that desires statehood. According to this approach, unlike essentialism, nationalism, or national identity constructs nations. The constructivist approach states that it is natural for people to feel an attachment to the societies that they live in and a sense of belonging because of this commitment. Socioeconomic, socio-political, and sociocultural perspectives are one of the main perspectives of this approach. According to the socioeconomic perspective researcher Tom Nairn, the unbalanced development, and an enormous gap between developed and underdeveloped countries because of industrialisation and capitalism brought nationalism (Arslaner 2022, 127-129). The socio-political perspective's leading thinker John Breuilly defines nationalism as an exclusively modern political force. Also, nationalism is a political argument and movement that arose as a false solution to the alienation caused by the divide between the absolutist state and civil society (Bekus 2010, 27). Breuilly claims that "like all forms of politics, nationalism is entangled in a world of material interests, corruption and self-seeking rhetoric", it has "its symbols and ideas, and its genuine believers", and "it can rise and fall" (Breuilly 1993, 401). The sociocultural

perspective examines nationalism with cultural phenomena such as kinship and religion (Arslaner 2022, 131).

When looking at the definition of nationalism basically by particular researchers, lastly mentioned sociocultural theorist Benedict Anderson defines the nation as an "imagined political community" and "it is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion". So, he claims that nations occur when the creator of nations, the people, imagine themselves as a part of it and a national collectivity (Bekus 2010, 24). Anderson argues that nationalisms are closer to religion or kinship and will drive us longer than nations and ideology. The fear of being forgotten leads us to seek immortality through our lineage and society. For Anderson, nations and nationalism are modern phenomena. Other kinds of societies had to retreat because nations were born. The fall of powerful divine monarchs and the existence of religious-linguistic communities that, for a long time, dominated human thought and existence formed the genealogical ground from which nations could emerge. According to Anderson, an imaginary political community, and the nation, both sovereign and limited, appeared, and provided the consolation of permanence beyond death and that provided by great religions and dynasties (Şimşek 2009, 88). Anderson defines nationalism as an "integrative belief system" (Bekus 2010, 25).

As a constructivist theorist, Ernest Gellner (1983, 1) claims that "nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent.". Nationalism is neither given in nature nor a component specific to the human condition. According to him, nationalism is a sociological necessity in each historical era, namely modernity, in which we must live in a unitary and nationalist world (Şimşek 2009, 85). Gellner states that industrialisation developed a culturally homogenous society, but only high cultures will survive. The cultural differences will reduce with globalisation and other factors so that the high culture will be more like each other than the ethnic cultures (İşiksal 2002, 7).

This study is referred to the definition of nationalism by ethno-symbolist theorist Anthony D. Smith. Smith argues that for the emergence of nationalism, other components are needed, not only through a mass political organisation but also through the existence and clarification of ethnic and cultural ties, which are the basis of a claim to belonging.

According to Smith, the development process of nations should be evaluated over a broad period. It is impossible to explain the birth of modern nations without considering their ethnic background. Smith (1991, 73) defined nationalism as "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some members to constitute an actual or potential 'nation'". Also, Smith argues that any "*ethnie*" that aspires to become a nation should be politicised and that the political mobilisation of the lower strata is crucial for the rise of nationalism. The uses of ethnohistory were fundamentally political and social. Nationalists were not concerned with examining their past for its own sake but with reappropriating the mythology of their people's territorialised past. So, the process was "the mobilisation of a passive *ethnie* and the politicisation of its cultural heritage" with poetics and cultural myths (Smith 1991, 126-127). In connection with the subject of the thesis, the use of the Illyrian myth by Ljudevit Gaj for the unity of Yugoslav ideas and thought can be given as an example of Smith's definition.

All types of nationalism have two shared features: the concept of citizenship, although varied, and the sense of distinct group identity. The growth of nationalism was linked to the rise of vernacular written languages, which was associated with the increase of the intellectual elite (Kaldor 1993, 248). Ethnic nationalism manipulates language to achieve its goal (Bugorski 2001, 73). The importance of language in Yugoslavian states will take place in the following sections of the research.

Mary Kaldor (1993, 248) stated that the Cold War era in Europe was called "post-nationalist". In this period, the language of nationalism in the eastern part was replaced by the language of Marxist and Leninist discourse. After that, there was a wave of nationalist movements. These movements were one of the main reasons for selecting "nationalism" as the thesis theory. The role of nationalism as an explanatory variable of concerns and delays in the European integration process is notable, considering the significance of nationalism as an actor of disintegration in multi-national polities in the twentieth century, like Yugoslavia.

2.1.1 Nationalism in Yugoslavia

A progressive opening up throughout the 1980s led to significant nationalist grievances and revisionism, which would later dominate during the 1990s (Pavkovic 2000, 191). There were no independent political groups or parties, nor were there any public political discussions throughout the communist era. There were any mechanisms for political ideologies, tenets, morals, or political organisations. So, there were no traditionalist power politics regarding the national conflicts and clashing political aims defined by opposing parties in the former Yugoslavia. The reasons for the extremes of the situation were based on historical and geographical reasons. Central European countries are much more homogeneous in the context of ethnicities, and there were some ethnic tensions in the region that politicians could easily use. The communist regime of Josip Broz Tito exploited national questions to maintain their rule (Kaldor 1993, 249-251).

More critical voices developed after Tito's death in 1980 with generational shifts in the party and state leadership. Furthermore, translations of international publications, many of which were written by diaspora historians, were available in Yugoslavia. The wars in the 1990s reinforced revisionist nationalist historical interpretations. The wars were Slovenia in 1991, Croatia from 1991 to 1995, Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1992 to 1995, and Kosovo from 1998 to 1999 (Bieber 2021, 190-195). The wars intensified discussions on the level of the national factor's role in the collapse of Yugoslavia. The ideological base has transformed, but national narratives remain dominant and functionally connect the past to the state's current legitimacy. The end of Yugoslavia was the result of several interconnected causes. One of them was a shared historical crisis and the taboos that Yugoslav socialist authorities established on fundamental conflicts. Many subsequent tensions stood out for decades, such as the joint use of the Serbo-Croatian language and the emergence of nations such as Macedonia, Montenegro, and Muslim nations recognised during the socialist era, all within the larger Serb or partially Croat nations (Bieber 2021, 19).

2.1.1.1 Slovene Nationalism

In the nineteenth century, the traditional belief in the linguistic and cultural diversity of the Slovenian nation became stronger. In addition, diverse philosophical, economic, social, historical, and even religious reasons have been put forward to support the Slovenian state. As early as September 1988, the Slovenian Party passed new laws to defend Slovenia's sovereignty and transformed the regional defence units into a state army. By 1989, most of the supporters of this issue had initiated their political parties and groups determined to make Slovenia a sovereign state (Pavkovic 2000, 91-92).

The physical disintegration of the country, which began with the secession of Slovenia and then Croatia, was announced about a quarter of a century ago through linguistic and cultural separatism peculiar to these republics. In Slovenia, the culmination of efforts to protect the Slovenian language from Serbo-Croatian influences was notable by the establishment of a special semi-official Language Court, which oversaw the public use of Slovenian. Slovenes insisted on complete and substantive language equality in all federal matters, including military ones. A few years later, federal authorities decided to conduct the trial of four Slovenes, accused of spreading classified information, in Serbo-Croatian instead of Slovenian in a Yugoslav Army court in Ljubljana, and that caused an outbreak of a public revolt (Bugarski 2001, 73). Slovenians' struggle with the language issue will be mentioned in more detail in chapter three.

2.1.1.2 Croat Nationalism

In difference from to openly preached separatism of Slovenian nationalism, Croatian nationalism in the 1980s continued the tradition of the 1970s Croatian nationalist movement by demanding a comprehensive con-federalisation of Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia must be turned into a union of truly equal and completely sovereign states because sovereignty implies complete authority over all elements of a nation's life. Furthermore, Croatian national ideologues considered establishing national armed forces as a critical component of national sovereignty. Croatian ideologues may also refer to the myth of the Croatian state's uninterrupted historical line, which originated in the eleventh century. Later Croatia proceeded to change the constitution by removing the reference to the Serbs

as a component country of Croatia and restoring the traditional symbols of the Croatian state that the Ustaše administration previously used. Finally, Croatia began to develop its national military forces while advocating the transition of Yugoslavia to a fully sovereign state confederation in cooperation with the Slovenian government (Pavkovic 2000, 92-94).

2.2 EU Theories

One of the main events in world politics in the 20th century was the establishment of the European Community and its transformation into the EU. Many scholars have attempted to explain the genesis and evolution of European integration as the most compelling example of regional integration in world politics. The notion of an integrated Europe dates to the nineteenth century, but two World Wars, especially the Second World War, significantly impacted the formation of the EC. At times, how to avoid wars between nation-state questions was crucial to early thinkers, soldiers, and expeditions such as David Mitrany, Ernst Haas, Karl Deustch, Jean Monnet, Robert Schuman, Altiero Spinelli, and the like (Özçelik 2019, 3).

There are several approaches to building Europe and explaining the process and outcome of integration in Europe, each with its theoretical framework to support its claims. The end objective is the same, the formation of a European entity, but the causes have shifted throughout the process. At first, it was evident that avoiding wars was the fundamental goal of the European organisation; nevertheless, this goal has now been met because a war between France and Germany seemed unthinkable. The current goal is to create a strong union that can compete with other world powers at least on an equal footing and prevent Europe from losing its position as a global leader. The many integration theories are just alternative ways of perceiving the topic, particularly the major societal concerns. Nationalism was believed to be the primary cause of the wars that caused problems, and a different approach theory the issue in various ways. For instance, federalism, which is closer to the United States of Europe, is based primarily on giving political rights to individuals, to European citizens, and not to the nations of Europe. While intergovernmentalism, where nations are still the core of the organisation but follow the premise of cooperation between them, tackles the issue in numerous ways

(Troitiño and Chochia 2012, 1). While early integration theories such as Federalism, Functionalism, and Transactionalism addressed the basis and nature of integration, contemporary integration theories such as Neo-Functionalism, Intergovernmentalism, and Liberal Intergovernmentalism have pursued to understand how and why the EU occurred, as well as how it functions daily (Özçelik 2019, 5).

Federalism, as a theory, appeared to react to the excessive national sovereignty during the First World War. The thinkers Altiero Spinelli and Luigi Einaudi saw this as the root cause of this century's armed struggles. Altiero Spinelli's thought was a need for a European Constitution for federal Europe that could be like the "United States of Europe", in which citizens would fully participate in European integration (Özçelik 2019, 6). The theory of Federalism identified several standard features that applied to European integration. As a European project, a European federation state is supposed to be a sovereign state with a central government in which the decision-making process incorporates regional units. Regarding European integration, the main objectives are establishing a joint foreign, security, and defence policy from the federation with ultimate control. One of the complaints addressed towards the federalist theory is its overemphasis on the ultimate result of integration without providing adequate detail on how to get there (Bergmann and Niemann 2015, 166-167). After the breakup of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the states' first goal was to separate themselves from their former federation. Federalism theory's common aim is bringing the formerly separated, autonomous and regional states together to construct a new form of unity, which was the same aim at the beginning of the Yugoslav Union. However, their object resulted in the breakup in the end. So, the theory of Federalism contrasts with the former Yugoslav state's new purposes.

Transactionalism theory focuses on the social dimensions of integration rather than political and economic. The leading thinker of the theory, Karl Deutsch, proposed a social level of sufficient integration for preventing world conflicts. As a result, unlike federalism, the Transactional approach does not assume a particular institutional and legal framework. Transactionalism sees integration as a process of cultural assimilation that establishes worldwide security communities where people are bound together by mutual trust and identification, and wars are no longer seen as attainable. The basis of Transactionalism is the belief that as social interaction between individuals increases,

trust and goodwill among them grow, making conflict inconceivable (Özçelik 2019, 9). The former Yugoslav states, Slovenia and Croatia, had already faced cultural assimilation in the communist era. Croatia attended value-based policymaking after its independence. On the other hand, Transactionalism disclaims value-based policymaking and attaches to a zero-sum worldview. Due to the integration of both countries, the Transactionalism theory could not fit in the case of Western Balkan integration because it is a unique case to discuss.

Functionalism emerged as an alternative to the federalist understanding of the international system organisation. Regarding international relations theory, Functionalism is a part of the liberal-idealist tradition. David Mitrany was the leading thinker of the Functionalism theory, and Functionalism was not a European integration theory when Mitrany first mentioned it. Instead of regional European integration, he insisted on a universal solution. He thought that nationalism and the power of territorial organisation caused the wars. According to the classical Functionalist approach, states can form a peaceful world society by gradually and pragmatically cooperating in areas of technical and economic activity, such as agricultural cooperation. The idea was to attack national sovereignty to reduce nationalism for preventing world conflicts. Mitrany's Functionalist concept divided collaboration between political as constitutional and technical as functional. His approach, especially technical and sector-specific integration, influenced the leading figures of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman. Mitrany's Functionalism than developed by Neo-Functionalism thinkers due to the new requirements (Özçelik 2019, 7-8).

Neo-Functionalism theory drew on some of the core principles of Transactionalism and Federalist integration theory traditions. However, in the post-World War II period, Neo-Functionalism was mainly influenced by Functionalism and Pluralism. Neo-Functionalists see the state as a setting where societal actors can pursue their goals. Instead of describing international politics as a game between states, Neo-Functionalists see international relations as the interaction of societal actors. Ernst Haas, the leading thinker of the theory, focused on the importance of supranational organisations and non-state actors, including political parties and interest groups, as the primary forces behind regional integration initiatives (Özçelik 2019, 10). Neo-functionalism theory identifies integration dynamics, unlike the federalism theory, and

understands European integration as a process. Regional integration is described by various, multiple, and dynamic players, particularly transnational actors who form coalitions across governments or bureaucracies. Decision-making requires self-interested and rational actors who can learn from past experiences and evaluate them due to preferences (Bergmann and Niemann 2015, 169-170). The goal of the Neo-Functionalists was to achieve greater economic integration in Europe and then more comprehensive political integration, through the cooperation of particular economic policy sectors. Regarding the change, Neo-Functionalism briefly encapsulated this in the concept of spillover. The functional type of spillover refers to how integration in one policy area, such as coal and steel, produces a demand for integration in other areas, such as currency exchange rates. The political type of spillover describes the role of supranational and subnational players in the integration process since they exert additional pressure for further integration to promote their interests. According to the Neo-functionalism theory, European integration is a self-sustaining process that will conclude with a new polity creation, and its centre will be in Brussels (Hatton and Sonny 2015). Neo-Functionalism is a highly elitist approach, limiting the influence of ordinary citizens on European integration. Although Haas was aware of the opposition and public criticisms of the European integration process, also called Euroscepticism, he did not give particular attention to public thought. Even Haas justified ignoring such scepticism for two reasons. First, he reasoned the ignorance of the public and their lack of understanding of European integration. Second, given the bureaucratic nature of European integration, decision-makers were protected from public scrutiny, and therefore public opinion was not influential for integration. Neo-Functionalism aimed to divert attention from national rulers to the importance of organised groups (Özçelik 2019, 11-12).

Neo-Functionalism theory did not seem appropriate to explain the drastically changing atmosphere and slowing the progress of the European integration project in the Western Balkans. Firstly, public opinion had a considerable impact on the accession and integration processes of Slovenia and Croatia, both positively and negatively. In the case of Slovenia, becoming an EU member was a national project and goal, so there was a significant amount of support from the Slovene public, and their support continued till the membership. On the other hand, even though the Croatian public supported EU membership, there were negative perceptions as well, which was one of the obstacles in

the Croatian accession process. Secondly, Euroscepticism has been seen in countries during membership after certain crises. The scepticism was based on a decrease in some European values, such as democratic backsliding. Although the aspects of Neo-Functionalism are used in the integration process to carry out political integration, there was backwardness in the member countries, even before the membership of Slovenia and Croatia, particularly in the CEE region, that caused enlargement fatigue in the EU. Therefore, the Neo-Functionalism theory's absence of interest in these issues made the theory insufficient for the study.

Intergovernmentalism theory focuses on the agreements between states. Since states are seen as the final recipient of sovereignty, the organisation supports coordination to resolve conflicts among its members. This theory contends that state leaders do not have the authority to cede control over their citizenry to an artificial organisation. Additionally, intergovernmentalism identifies the people's emotional allegiance as a unique quality that cannot be transferred to any other political entity (Troitiño and Chochia 2012, 7-8). According to intergovernmentalism, the development of European integration is related to the interests of states and the results of EU bargaining. For integration, there is a requirement for a permanent surplus of gains and losses for nation-states. Nation-states are getting stronger because nation-state decisions are at the centre of the process (Bergmann and Niemann 2015, 172). However, an adaptation of the Intergovernmentalism theory to the practice has not happened the same. So the Liberal Intergovernmentalism concept has been devised. Intergovernmentalism theory is a state-centred theory, also limited and ineffective in the accession processes.

Andrew Moravcsik developed the liberal Intergovernmentalism theory. Regarding international anarchy, states are important actors, and national governments are essential players in the integration process. Like Intergovernmentalism, the states' bargaining power is significant in pursuit of integration. In contrast to Neo-Functionalism, Liberal Intergovernmentalism founds supranational institutions unimportant in the integration process (Hatton and Sonny 2015). According to the Liberal Intergovernmentalists, various interest groups would compete in domestic politics to shape national preferences for integration. The outcomes of these conflicts would then inform the stances governments would adopt in interstate bargaining. Yet, when the

negotiations, the states are unitary actors. Moravcsik claimed that every state is different, and each must be explained by a distinct theory (Özçelik 2019, 15-16).

Both Neo-Functionalism and Liberal-Intergovernmentalism are inefficient in conceptualising the state of subnational administrations inside the EU's multi-level framework in general. Also, both theories pay more attention to macro-level agreements, such as the connection between nation-states and supranational institutions, than the governance impact at the various territorial levels. Besides, their analysis of the link between nation-states and supranational institutions has not been successfully proven.

Overall, European integration theories aimed to reduce the power of national governments' power by creating impersonal, a new level of distant and powerful government in Brussels. In addition, national identity is lost when laws, regulations and norms harmonise. At least, the purpose was that. However, in the case of former Yugoslavian states, the national identity and nationalism, in general, resisted the system. Therefore, the accession processes of the Western Balkan states took a long time, as in Croatia and continue for most candidate countries. Their bond with nationalism evolved the accession process of the Western Balkan states uniquely. There are distinct additions and implementations for each state. For instance, in the case of Croatia, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) trials had a significant place in the negotiations. However, war crimes did not become a big deal in the negotiations with Slovenia.

Minimising national platforms can be achieved by ensuring economic and political stability for member states, but not all members of the EU have achieved equal success in this regard. The unequal distribution of development within the EU concerns about expanding the EU to include post-socialist nations, and a rise in the significance of nationality in post-communist Europe has shown that the nation-state still has a significant role to play despite the EU.

As a result, nationalism theory was chosen as the main theory of the study for the above reasons and to answer the research question stated in the methodology section. Nationalism in Slovenia, Croatia and Yugoslavia will be discussed in more detail in the third and fourth chapters.

3. A BRIEF HISTORY OF YUGOSLAVIA

Why and how was the idea of Yugoslavia created? What were the reasons for the fall of Yugoslavia? Was the demise inevitable? What was the effect of nationalism? How could this multinational state stay together for more than seventy years? Did the European Union have an impact on the disintegration of Yugoslavia? All these questions and more will get their answers in this chapter. Yugoslavia is one of the most complex, multifaced, and confused European countries. In this chapter, Yugoslavia's history will include the reasons for its complexity.

The word "Jugoslav" means South Slavs, and "Yugoslavia" means homeland of South Slavs. The concept of Yugoslavism is a new phrase of the German origin word *Slawentum*, so it looks like the German concept of *Deutschtum* that was created around 1770. Also, their thinking was similar because both were about nationalism (Roksandić 2017, 29).

The idea of unifying the South Slavs into a single state has existed since the early nineteenth century. Intellectuals and social elites of the century thought that creating a united South Slav nation would be possible because of the states' similarities, especially those of language, culture, and descent, although even the religious differences would be ignored for the common shares. For this reason, it is essential to answer how the South Slavs identified themselves at that time. There are important identity markers such as ethnicity, regional affiliation, language, and faith. However, faith can call as the main one with the consideration of the people's primary identification (Calic 2019, 7-9).

Three religions dominated the region, especially after significant historical factors. The Croats and the Slovenes from western Illyria had western and Roman Catholic influence, while the Serbs from eastern Illyria had Orthodox impact (Darby 1968, 2). On the other hand, the fourteenth-century Ottoman's Southern European invasions spread Islam through Bosnia-Herzegovina and the region in general (Hewitt, n.d.). Orthodox identity was dominant for Serbia, Montenegro, and Orthodox minorities in other states, while Catholic identification was not yet identical to Orthodox identification until the 1920s. This identification was so strong that even Serbs were not

distinguishing faith and nationality from each other. Vladimir Karić¹ called the issue 'Serbian faith' in the 1880s, and he claimed that if you were an Orthodox, you were a Serb in his times. In that sense, Montenegrins defined themselves as Serbs (Calic 2019, 8-9).

The Slavic language gained importance as an identity marker because of the language barrier that South Slavs had, which was a problem because they lived among other nations like Hungarians and Germans. Regarding the language they speak, the Slovenes' language is different from the Croats and the Serbs. However, the Croats and the Serbs, also Montenegrins and Bosnians, speak the same dialect called Štokavian (Calic 2019, 8). The Croats use the Latin alphabet, and the Serbs use the Cyrillic alphabet because of their past influences.

Regional affiliation as another identity marker could not have too much importance because of the division inside the region by two powerful forces: the Muslim Ottoman and the Catholic Habsburg Monarchy. In the 1800s, the region could not develop economically because of foreign interventions, migrations, and internal conflicts. Also, the geography was causing the population to disperse in rugged terrain. The other reasons were the lack of easy access to the sea or other water resources and fertile lowlands. Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina were under the rule of the Ottoman for a long time, and they gained their independence separately. Croatia and Slovenia were divided into several jurisdictions under the Habsburg Empire. These two multi-ethnic forces established institutions and imposed institutional frameworks (Lampe 1996, 9). As John R. Lampe (1996) claimed, both failed to apply them.

Regarding ethnicity, in general, native ethnic groups were isolated from each other, but also there was not much evidence of long-standing ethnic hostility (Lampe 1996,10). Ethnicity could not be a significant factor like religion. Serbs saw Montenegrins as Serb and saw Macedonians as South Serbs because of not ethnicity but religion.

In the following part of the chapter, firstly, there will be the history of the South Slavs with the origins of Slovenia and Croatia from ancient times because nationalism was even strong in ancient times and left a legacy for the creation of Yugoslavia. The First World War and its impact on the unification of the early steps of Yugoslavia, the

¹ Serbian Geographer of the late 1800s.

Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenians will be mentioned in the following part. Then, the Second World War and the term revolutions with the transformation of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenians to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia will be mentioned. In the next part, there will be the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the situation of Slovenia and Croatia in Tito's leadership. In the last part of the chapter, there will be the demise and its reasons.

3.1 The Post-Yugoslavian period

Before the principal Slav inhabitants took the Yugoslav territory, there was a population with diverse origins that lived in the region long before Yugoslavia. The people of Ancient Greeks from the fifth century B.C. and various tribes like Illyrians and Thracians were one of the first historical references who lived there. The area occupied by the Thracians later became the land of Serbia. Illyrians occupied the area called as Dinaric region currently (Clissold 1968, 8-12). Their movement at that time in different contexts later will resurface with considerable importance while looking at the unification of Yugoslavia.

The Slavs settled in their European region in the sixth century. They were amid the struggles between Byzantium and the newly rising Frankish Empire. There was a conflict between them because Frankish Empire was claimed to be the heritage of the Roman Empire (Váňa, Vácha and Major 1983, 66-37).

The history of Slovenia consists of short-lived developments. The development processes were constantly hindered by other powers and went backwards. Croatian history has similar aspects. They both were under the Habsburg Monarchy for a long time. The Croatian-Hungarian conflicts had a significant factor in developing Croat nationalism. Also, Croat history is full of peasant revolts. However, nationalism took place even before the monarchy in both nationalities. For this reason, the post-Yugoslav periods of Slovenes and Croats are included to examine the factors that led to the formation of Yugoslav unity.

3.1.1 The Short History of Slovenia



Figure 1. The Slovene Lands (Benson 2004, xxi)

The first appearances of the Slovenes were known in the sixth century in the upper Sava valley and its surroundings of the Alps to the Adriatic Sea. Their location was close to the Frankish Empire (Lampe 1996, 29). They formed the Empire of Samo, the first Slav state (Váňa, Vácha and Major 1983, 67). After that, they got under the Frankish kings. King Charlemagne and his work of missionary conversion to Christianity associated with German colonisation influenced the Slovenes. Even their language was affected (Darby 1968, 13). In the fourteenth century, the Holy Roman Empire, and the Slovenes' long history under the Habsburg family had been started (Darby 1968, 14).

In the Slovene lands, a sizable Protestant movement arose here in the early sixteenth century, but there was no serious threat from Ottomans, which led the Vienna regime could deal with the Protestants. However, the tenets of Luther fascinated Slovenes who lived in towns and the countryside because they opposed the Catholic hierarchy's authority (Lampe 1996, 29). The New Testament was translated into Slovene, and this was a crucial step for Slovene nationalism. Because reformation provided a greater interest in studying the Slovene language, such as the foundation of the Slovene dictionary and translation of the Bible, also, this new movement contained the seeds of independence against the Austrian centralisation. Even though the Austrian rulers

ruthlessly suppressed the new movement and erased further improvements, the Protestant reforms revived the Slovene language and stimulated Slovene self-consciousness (Darby 1968, 15-16).

During the early nineteenth century, Europe was surrounded by the Romantic Movement. There was a strong feeling for preserving and cultivating their language among the Slavs. If we focus on the Slovenes, H. C. Darby (1968, 17) claimed about their situation in his book, “A number of people in the Slovene land were drawn increasingly to write ‘in the tongue of the people, and for the people’”. With the French Revolution, the feeling of self-consciousness spread around Europe. As a result of the events that followed, the Treaty of Vienna (Treaty of *Schönbrunn*) was signed between Austria and France in 1805. In this agreement, the Illyrian Provinces (Figure 1) emerged. In the Illyrian Provinces, there was western Carinthia, the units of Carniola, Istria, part of Croatia, Dalmatia, Görz and Ragusa (Darby 1968, 18). The French administrators’ intention for establishing the Illyrian Provinces was primarily military integration (Lampe 1996, 41).

Under French control, the Illyrian Provinces had material and administrative improvements. The Code Napoléon was enacted, a French civil code with fundamental principles about freedom of person, freedom of contract and inviolability of private property (Augustyn n.d.). As an intellectual improvement, the Slovene language regained importance. Poems were written about the consciousness of the Illyrian Slavs and praised Napoleon for the establishment of the Illyrian Provinces and political unit (Widmar 2022). This one unit of the Illyrian Slavs was successful but short-lived. At the Congress of Vienna in 1814, the French had to abandon the Illyrian Provinces because of the Russian campaign. Afterwards, most of the provinces returned to the Austrian Empire (Darby 1968, 18-19).



Figure 2. The Illyrian Province: 1809-14 (Clissold 1968, 53)

During the nineteenth century, with the restoration of Austria, liberal political trends ended, and German influence turned back, but self-consciousness stayed in the Slovene lands. A Slovene society called Slovenija was founded in Vienna and put forward a demand for establishing an autonomous kingdom under the Austrian Empire that included the Slovene provinces. However, their request was denied. This attempt was one of the significant examples of the improvement of Slovene nationalism. The new Austrian constitution of 1861 also did not assist their demands (Clissold 1968, 19-22). Slovenian nationalism aimed at promoting greater acceptance of the Slovenian language in education and administration. Although, unlike Croats, they were not exposed to Hungary's aggressive language policy after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 (Benson 2004, 16).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the problems of the Slovenes were further expanded by events outside their borders. Their communication with the Croats increased, becoming aware of their mutual issues under the Habsburg Monarchy. With the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908, the "South Slavic question" came to

the surface and became a major foreign policy issue for the region (Calic 2019, 46). Also, the annexation was conducted to rebellions in Ljubljana and other cities. Moreover, the events in Serbia, like their new democratic regime in 1903 and their Balkan Wars victories in 1912-13, increased their enthusiasm for the idea of unification with Serbs and Croats (Darby 1968, 22).

Slovenian nationalism in this period was primarily passed on to protect their identity and get acceptance of their language.

3.1.2 The Short History of Croatia

The arrival of the Croats in present-day Croatian lands was with a Slavic migration in the seventh century. Their first settlement was in Dalmatia, but they later expanded north and inland, giving rise to two separate Croatian states in the eighth century. The inland Croats came under the domination of the Franks in the ninth century. Also, in the ninth century, the Croats were converted to Western Christianity and became part of the Roman Catholic Church (Lambert 2020). So that their alphabet did not evolve to the Cyrillic alphabet, they used the Latin alphabet.

There was resistance to the constant Turkish threat from the twelfth to sixteen centuries. The fall of Bosnia in 1463 caused the full Ottoman impact in Croatia (Darby 1968, 27). The death of the Hungarian king during the resistance caused the successors to divide the kingdom, and this caused many Croatian lands to fall into the hands of the Ottomans (Benson 2004, 4). Eventually, the resistance fell, and the Hungarian kingdom was divided into three parts. In the west, there was Austria-Hungary; in the east, there was the principality of Transylvania; and between them, there was Ottoman Hungary. This was a hundred- and fifty-year division. The Ottomans conquered much of Croatia and most of Slavonia, and because of that, they had to organise a special marchland in 1578, which was called the “Military Frontier” under the control of Austria. This land was depopulated during the Ottoman attacks, and later the attacks, some people from eastern Croatia and Slavonia, also some Germans and Orthodox Serbs, came there (Darby 1968, 28-30). That occurrence, even before the foundation of Yugoslavia, can be considered the root of minority wars. For four hundred years, the land was used for

military service (Calic 2019, 4). After the treaties² with Ottomans, the military frontier was expanded, reorganised, and shaped, as in Figure 3. The Croatian Diet wanted unification with the military frontier's civil administration, and they were against the territorial sovereignty of the military frontier. However, the frontiersmen did not accept any changes, and they were loyal to the Emperor for a long time, even in the 1914-18 independence war (Darby 1968, 29-30).



Figure 3. The Military Frontier of Austria and Hungary (Benson 2004, xx)

The French revolution provided to the Hungarians to pressure Austria for independence. They persuaded an aggressive policy of magyarization to influence others. This policy of Hungarians affected Croatian nationalism (Benson 2004, 5). Hungarians wanted to use the Magyar tongue instead of Latin as the official business language. The Croats rejected the use of the Magyar tongue, and instead of it, they put forward the Illyrian tongue (*lingua Illyrica*) (Darby 1968, 32-33). Napoleon resuscitated the ancient term Illyria with the establishment of the Illyrian Provinces in 1809 (Figure 2). Napoleon's project lasted four years, but it caused sparks in this area. Croats, Slovenes, and Serbs gathered in the same political unit. This short-lived experiment left a solid legacy for Yugoslav thought (Lampe 1996, 40-43).

² The Treaty of Carlowitz in 1699, Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718 and Treaty of Belgrade in 1739.

During the early times of the nineteenth century, also the romantic movement's national awareness influenced the Croats. In the 1830s, some Croatian nobles fleshed out the Yugoslav idea. Their leader was Ljudevit Gaj (1809-72), who was a poet and publicist; he named his group "Greater Illyria" (Lampe 1996, 43). He was inspired by the national movements of the Polish and Czechs (Darby 1968, 33). Gaj focused on the importance of language and the Illyrian union. He wanted to create a single literary language to reach a single South Slav state, so there was a literary revival of the Serbo-Croat language by Gaj (Lampe 1996, 43-44). He defended the Serbo-Croat dialect, štokavian, rather than the Kajkavian dialect of Zagreb. His purpose was to remove the religious difference. In 1835, by order of the Emperor, Gaj published an anti-Magyar newspaper for Croatian readers. In 1841, he became the leader of the Illyrian Party, and he combined Illyrian nationalism with political Croatianism. He communicated with Serbs and Russians to seek support. At that time, there were also movements of Magyar nationalism against the centralisation of Vienna. In 1843, Hungarian Diet declared Hungarian as the language of public administration rather than Latin (Benson 2004, 5). Also, the official language of Croatia would become Hungarian as well after six years period. There were many protests after that. The Magyar leader responded to the protests by openly denying Croat nationalism. The relations with Croats and Hungarians completely broke. Due to the events in six years, they could not realise their plans (Darby 1968, 34).

In 1848, Hungarians benefited from the general crisis in Europe to move the Hungarian diet from Pressburg to Budapest. Croats and Serbs joined on the Emperor's side and sent their soldiers to suppress the Hungarian revolts. They defeated the Hungarians in 1849, but the Croats and Serbs did not get the reward they wished for from the Emperor (Benson 2004, 6). The new Habsburg constitution separated Croatia and Slavonia from Hungary and gave control of the Fiume port. However, they did not get the liberty they wished for (Darby 1968, 35). That was the only time in the nineteenth century that Croats and Serbs were on the same thought. The Serbs had a different opinion about Gaj's linguistic reforms. A common tongue and equality of the two dialects did not suit them. Gaj did not get the reaction he expected. Thus, the Illyrian movement of Gaj ended (Benson 2004, 6).

In 1860, after the defeat of Austria in Italy, the October Diploma promised the renewal of constitutional rights, but they did not take their promise even though they limited an executive's all affective power at Vienna. This limitation was the last straw for Croats and Hungarians. Prussia defeated the Habsburg monarchy in 1866. The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 resulted in the creation of the Dual Monarchy. However, the constitution stayed the same (Darby 1968, 36). Unlike the claim of the Croat nationalists, Croatia returned the Hungarian tutelage. They signed The Croatian–Hungarian Settlement (*Hrvatsko-ugarska nagodba*) in 1868. In the settlement: Croatia was recognised as a national entity, Serbo-Croatian became the official language of Croatia, and the decision of internal affairs belonged to the Sabor in Zagreb, but the decision of economic and foreign policies belonged to the Sabor in Budapest (Benson 2004, 13). Many Croats were against the settlement, especially when Hungarians took the Fiume ports because Croatia lost access to the Adriatic (Darby 1968, 36-37).

The Military Frontier was incorporated in Croatia with the help of Hungarians in 1881. After that, the population of Serbs increased in the Hungarian part. Denominational schools were founded for the Serbs living in Croatia, and Cyrillic script was allowed. Ante Starčević (1823-1896), the leader of the Croatian Party of Right, was against the special claims of the Serbs. His main goal was an independent Great Croatia. He claimed that Slavoserbs were Orthodox Croats (Benson 2004, 14). He also seemed Slovenes as mountain Croats. However, the Party of Right did not get an adequate number of seats in the Sabor elections (Lampe 1996, 61-63). Starčević and his party could not play a significant role in developing Croatian nationalism. Nevertheless, Bishop Josip Strossmayer (1815-1905) was a dominant figure. He founded the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb with Franjo Rački. They published early Croat poems and documents about early Southern Slavs. Strossmayer believed that only a commitment to education could overcome the differences between Catholic Croats and Orthodox Serbs. Therefore, he re-established a Croatian University in Zagreb in 1874 (Darby 1968, 38-40). After that, his opinion changed about the Serbs because they disagreed with Croats towards Hungarian repression, and he abandoned the idea of unification with Serbs under a Catholic South Slav union. However, the main target was the Magyars. He demanded equality between the Croats and Hungarians. He wanted to unite all Croats within the framework of the Habsburg Monarchy. In 1903-7, there were conflicts between Austrians

and Hungarians. During the conflicts, the Croatian People's Party was founded by Stjepan Radić in 1904. Like Radicals in Serbia, Radić wanted to mobilise the peasants of Croatia through his political vision. Russian populist beliefs influenced him. The main difference between Radić's thoughts between Starčević and Strossmayer's thoughts was Radić's broader view of the Slavs. He seemed all Slavs from Bulgaria to Poland as brothers. However, he also distrusted the Serbs (Benson 2004, 16-18).

In 1905, forty Croat deputies issued the demand for political reforms, freedom of the press and the union of Dalmatia with Croatia in the Resolution of Fiume. The Serb part gave their support to the Croats. In 1908, some Serbs and Croats were arrested because of a pan-Serb movement in Croatia. Balkan Wars victories of Serbia in 1912-13 gained great enthusiasm in Croatia and Slavonia. There were three schools of thought mentioned in 1914. One of them was an association with Hungary and the renovation of the Croatian-Hungarian Settlement. The second one was the "trialist solution," which created a Slav state within the Habsburg Monarchy. This Slav state included Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, the Slovene lands, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. There would be an equal status between Austrians, Hungarians, and Slavs. The third one was the creation of an independent Yugoslav state (Darby 1968, 41-42).

3.1.3 World War I & Unification

The Illyrian Provinces lasted for a brief time, but the possibility of one unit of the various Southern Slavs remained in the nineteenth century. However, the idea of a union of all South Slavs faced many obstacles, such as differences in their political and administrative units, various historical backgrounds, and the antagonism between the Catholic and Orthodox populations. However, the events inside and outside the Habsburg Monarchy brought the Southern Slavs together during the early beginning of the twentieth century. Inside the Monarchy, there were events suppression of the Croats, growing Magyarization, Resolutions of the Fiume conflict, the antagonism between Catholic Croats and Orthodox Serbs, and lastly, the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina with its effects in the region. Outside of the Monarchy, there were events like regime change in Serbia, differences between Serbian democracy and the rule of the Habsburg Monarchy, the victory of Serbs in the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, the Concordat made

between Orthodox Serbia and Catholic Vatican in June 1914, and finally, the dynastic rivalry in Montenegro caused diplomatic union with Serbia. After its victories, Serbia was described as the “Guardian of the Gate” among the Southern Slavs. The “South Slav Question” was also in the Monarchy (Seton-Watson and Laffan 1968, 154-157).



Figure 4. Formation of Yugoslavia 1918-20 (The Map Archive n.d.)

Seton-Watson and Laffan (1968) claimed four viable solutions for all the problems. Maintaining the *status quo* would be one option, but it was not easy to implement outside the Monarchy, especially in Serbia. The second one was the Trialist solution which was an idea of conversion of the Dual Monarchy into a Triple Monarchy. Hungarians were opposed to such an arrangement with Croats. The German nationalists inside Austria would not let the inclusion of the Slovenes. Lastly, the Serbs were against the possibility of Catholic Croat dominance. The third possibility was Greater Serbia. It means gathering all Orthodox Southern Slavs under one rule. The fourth and final solution was the union of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in a Yugoslav state. Among all solutions for these issues, the option of establishing a Yugoslav state was realised. However, there

was a lot of doubt and prejudice when the war broke out in 1914 (Seton-Watson and Laffan 1968, 157-159).

On 28 June 1914, Austrian throne Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife were assassinated in Sarajevo by a Bosnian Serb, Gavrilo Princip, during the anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo. The Austrian Prosecutors blamed the Serbian government instead of Young Bosnians. On 28 July 1914, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia (Calic 2019, 54-55). During the First World War (1914-1918), the Serbian army and population suffered greatly. Serbia could drive out Austrians from their lands in 1914, but in 1915 Austrian, German and Bulgarian armies attacked Serbia together. Serbia became very weak after this attack and could not get help from Paris, London and even Petrograd. (Benson 2004, 21).

On 4 September 1914, the Serbian government announced their plan to create a Southern Slavic state that included all Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. The idea of “one people with different names” began to be discussed among politicians, diplomats, and scholars (Calic 2019, 62-63). In November 1914, the Yugoslav Committee was formed by Croat, Serb and Slovene politicians such as Croat Ante Trumbić and Frano Supilo. They submitted their desire for one state to the Entente powers before establishing the Committee at the beginning of the war. However, the establishment of the Yugoslav state became possible only at the end of the war. Italy opposed the Southern Slav union. The Yugoslav Committee and other Yugoslav state supporters faced a severe obstacle with the Treaty of London of 26 April 1915. Italy demanded a share of the Croat and Slovene territories on the Adriatic, like Carniola and Dalmatia. Also, the remaining territory would be distributed between Serbia, Croatia, and Montenegro. Instead of creating one state, the territory would divide into many states (Šepić 1968, 29). In the beginning, the Yugoslav Committee was focused on recognising the South Slavs and finding a way out of the Treaty of London. The Committee requested the recognition provided for Czechoslovaks and Poles (Robinson 2011, 15-16).

On 20 July 1917, they signed the Corfu Declaration. It was the first formal step in the creation of Yugoslavia. Then, they announced the foundation of the State of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes under the Serbian Karageorgević dynasty. They decided on the equality of religions, alphabets, and nations. The new unified state was a democratic, constitutional, and parliamentary Monarchy. However, they did not decide the state's

centralist or federalist character. Meanwhile, the Austrian Emperor tried to save the Monarchy with reforms. President Wilson declared the recognition of Yugoslav unity in November 1918. Radić announced to the Serbian government their demand for the new state. If the new states' character is not tarnished by centralism and militarism, they want to agree with the Serbs. On 1 December 1918, Prince Alexander Karageorgević proclaimed the foundation of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in a ceremony. In May 1919, the new state was recognised internationally at the Paris Peace Conference (Benson 2004, 23-25).

3.2 The First Yugoslavia

Politicians had a glorified perception of South Slavs, but they did not know them well. Differences in religion were the primary concern. Anton Bonaventura Jeglič, a Slovenian prince and bishop, shared his concerns about leaving a Catholic Emperor for an Orthodox king's rule on 22 November 1918. However, he knew the Slovenians had no choice because of the German Austrians' fanatic behaviour and the Italian army's pressing (Repe 2017, 193). Theoretically, it looked like Serbs, Croats and Slovenes had options, like being the only independent state, but they did not have any. Because of that, they had to unify. However, internal problems stroked shortly after the unification.

First, there was a disagreement about federalism and centralism between the state tradition of Serbia and the national idea of Croatia. This conflict existed even before the unification. After establishing the new state, federalism has no longer considered. Every man over twenty-one was given the right to vote, and women could not vote (Calic 2019, 73-74). The Croatian peasants could vote for the first time in Croat history. Radić saw that as a chance to create mass followers. He was unsatisfied with the two seats that were offered in the Provisional Assembly to his Croatian Republican Peasant Party in the Zagreb Sabor (Benson 2004, 27). Radić became an icon of the Croats, who were against Serbian centralism. He claimed that the new state was undemocratic. Because of that, he boycotted the constitutional assembly (Calic 2019, 77-78). Minister of the Internal Affairs Svetozar Pribićević imprisoned Radić and released him one day before the Constituent Assembly elections in November 1920. Pribićević was a boyhood friend of Radić and his political enemy. According to Croatian peasantry, Radić was a hero and martyr. Since the

unification, about one-fifth of agricultural production has declined. The Serbian economy was in a challenging situation. Croat peasants have blamed the Serbs for their agricultural problems. There was a hunger threat in the region. This problematic situation can be counted as the most threatening internal challenge in the new unified state (Benson 2004, 27-28).

From 1919 to 1929, the party rivalries took as an internal challenge. The strongest party of the new state was the Democratic Party which was on the side of Serbo-Croatian cooperation and strong democratic centralism. Pašić's People's Radical Party was the main competitor of the Democrats. Radical Party was a conservative nationalist party. The Yugoslav Muslim Organisation and the Slovenian People's Party were also critical political parties of the new state. Two political parties opposed the system: the Croatian Republican Peasant Party and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. Both had a dedication to supporting peasants' rights, but the Communist Party of Yugoslavia promoted the Soviet model (Calic 2019, 80). The Democratic Party was a new coalition party formed in February 1919 and led by Ljuba Davidović from Serbia's Independent Radical Party with the alliance of Pribićević's Serbian Independent Party (Lampe 1996, 122). The Democrats had the most considerable number of deputies in the assembly. Their main aim was bridging the divisions between Serbs and other nationalities, especially Croats. However, they could not succeed. Both Davidović and Pribićević wanted to diminish the influence of Pašić. They promoted a common Yugoslav identity within the framework of centralism. Their slogan was "One king, one state, one people" during the 1920 elections (Benson 2004, 30-31). In the parliamentary elections of 1923, the Democrats lost their seats from 92 to 51. On the other hand, the Radicals gained seventeen more seats and had 108 seats out of 313. Croatian Republican Peasant Party also gained more seats, increasing from 50 to 71. The main reason for the Democrat's decline was the Pribićević's split from the alliance (Lampe 1996, 135-136). The Communist Party of Yugoslavia, in the local election of 1920, gained two dozen municipalities. After that, the authorities suspended the local government (Benson 2004, 32). During Tito's period, historians claimed that during the 1920s, the Communists missed opportunities because of the government's repressions (Lampe 1996, 142).

On 20 June 1928, at the opening session of the parliament, in a heated debate, Puniša Račić, who was a Montenegrin deputy of the Radical Party, suddenly shot Radić

in the stomach and killed two deputies. Radić died in August (Calic 2019, 104). He was seen as a martyr, and his funeral had the largest attendance in Zagreb's history. The assassination had a shock effect on Croatia and the Kingdom. Some newspapers published Geographic maps for the Croatian independence options (Goldstein 2017, 134-135). Vladko Maček, Radić's successor, said that "there is no longer a constitution, but only king and people" (Seton-Watson and Laffan 1968, 174). The radicals refused the vague demands of Maček for a new federal structure, and king Aleksandar I Karađorđević³ rejected the election proposal of Pribićević to a new constituent assembly (Lampe 1996, 162). The situation worsened when the Zagreb police started shooting the student protesters on the tenth anniversary of the unification on 1 December 1928. A dozen students were killed by the police force (Goldstein 2017, 135).

The first Yugoslavia parliamentary government could work for just ten years. On 6 January 1929, the parliament dissolved, the 1921 constitution was abolished, and on 3 October, King Alexander redesigned the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes into the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. He also declared himself a dictator, thus beginning the royal dictatorship in Yugoslavia. However, his aim was not a totalitarian ideology. His main aim was to unify the people with Yugoslav nationalism and overcome the internal divisions. King Alexander's dictatorship gained support from the army, police, older elites in the bureaucracy, church, and the monarch's charisma (Calic 2019, 104-105). At first, the regime also gained support from a section of the Croatian political scene. They thought dealing with the king personally would be easier than with Serbian politicians in a dramatic situation (Goldstein 2017, 135-136). The regime implemented nationalism and state unity by dictatorial means. Fundamental civil rights are suspended, like freedom of association and freedom of expression. The regime spent the effort on school curriculum and infused unity into the army to establish integral Yugoslavism. In 1938, "National Hour" named broadcast programs started in Belgrade, Ljubljana, and Zagreb radio stations to promote patriotism. The regime banned any one-sided nationalistic material (Calic 2019, 105).

³ Aleksandar I Karađorđević reigned King of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes from 16 August 1921 to 3 October 1929 and King of Yugoslavia from 3 October 1929 to 9 October 1934.

The Great Depression surrounded all over Europe, including Yugoslavia, from the beginning of the 1930s. The Great Depression first ruined the agricultural sector. Agricultural countries are more affected than industrial countries (Calic 2019, 107). In 1932, the full force economic catastrophe came to Yugoslavia. Many people became homeless. Peasants could not sell their goods on the markets because they could not pay taxes. The government announced the six months postponement of peasant debts. However, the peasants were not available to pay for at least a year. Later, the government extended the time. This also heavily impacted export trade. The government desperately began negotiating with the European countries for clearing agreements (Seton-Watson and Laffan 1968, 185-186). Internal tensions had radicalised because of the Great Depression.

The Croats' optimism toward the regime turned into a bitter disappointment. The Croatian question did not get its solution. Except for Italy and Germany, the ultra-right movements and fascism were powerless in the region. Only in Croatia was there a solid fascist group. When King Alexander banned the nationalist parties in 1929, leading party leaders fled (Calic 2019, 112). In 1932, Ante Pavelić founded a fascist underground organisation Ustaše in Italy. His goal was the establishment of an independent Croatia, for which he advocated radical methods like terrorist actions and the use of armed violence (Goldstein 2017, 136). His supporters were students, former Austro-Hungarian military officials, intellectuals, and veterans. They had militantly anti-Yugoslav, anti-Serb, anti-communist, and anti-liberal ideologies (Calic 2019, 112). Their obsession with violence was at its peak, the event they cultivated mystic communal rituals, and they went up to the crimes of genocide. In the beginning, they were like Fascist Italy and later Nazi Germany. They started their violent events and killed or wounded civilians in the summer of 1932 (Goldstein 2017, 136). They were repressed by the King's security forces and police forces. Their movements mostly failed. They had only four thousand members even in 1941. The ultra-right movements in Yugoslavia did not become powerful as in Italy and Germany. However, communism had been able to influence the South Slavic countries (Calic 2019, 112-113).

On the other hand, King Alexander's death was at the hand of the Ustaše organisation with Macedonian nationalists (VMRO) on 9 October 1934. This assassination disrupted the modernisation process of Yugoslavia, both in the state and as

a society (Goldstein 2017, 139). There were arguments about who will become the ruler because the King's son was only eleven. In the December 1938 election, the coalition led by the Croatian Peasants' Party won forty-five per cent of the votes, and the governing party only got fifty-four per cent.

Meanwhile, in Europe, there was the demise of Czechoslovakia, and Nazi Germany took over Slovakia. Great Britain and France did not protect against military aggression. This event caused fear in Yugoslavia. In addition to that fear, they were also afraid of the possibility of help toward the rebellious Croats from Hitler. Also, an increase in support for the Peasant's Party strengthened the eventuality of the demise of Yugoslavia. Therefore, the government agreed with the Peasant's Party's leader Maček. In April 1939, Prime Minister Dragiša Cvetković met Maček in Zagreb. Their negotiations dragged on for five months and concluded on 26 August 1939 with the Cvetković- Maček Agreement (*Sporazum*), just one week before the invasion of Poland by Hitler (Benson 2004, 68). They established an independent Banovina of Croatia as an administrative unit. The Banovina covered Croat majority parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Dalmatia, and the greater part of Croatia. Cvetković continued to stay prime minister, and Maček became his deputy. Some Croatian Peasants' Party members and the ultra-right nationalists criticised the agreement because they wanted to separate Croatia from Yugoslavia (Calic 2019, 120).

The Slovenes were in fear of their future. They denied the autonomy of the Croats. Some Slovenes wanted to create the Banovina of Slovenia, but they were primarily interested in the security of the state from the Axis powers (Benson 2004, 69). Even though their economy was one of the most prospered economies in Yugoslavia, it would have been more effective if economic policies had been in the hands of the Slovenes rather than the Serbs. Nevertheless, only Kranjska had a majority. Their educated workforces were employed in the developed parts of the country (Repe 2017, 202-203). However, their economic force could not provide security for them.

When the Nazis invaded Poland, Yugoslavia declared its neutrality. As the invasions around them increased, Yugoslavia felt that its only chance was Hitler's protection, which later came at a heavy price. At first, Hitler decided to maintain peace in the Balkans. However, the Italian attack on Greece on 28 October 1940 changed his strategy and turned its direction to Greece. Maintaining neutrality was getting more

challenging because of the aggression of Germany against Greece and the possible reactions of Great Britain, the Soviet Union, or even the United States, but the German threat was still a problem. Therefore, Yugoslavia decided to join the German, Italian, and Japanese Tripartite Pact of 1940. Meantime, internal problems in Yugoslavia caused a bloodless coup on 27 March 1941. King Peter II was placed on the throne, and Dušan Simović, air force general, became the prime minister. Maček and Simović thought the declaration of loyalty to the Tripartite Pact would suspend them out of war. Many people celebrated the neutrality of Yugoslavia in Belgrade. However, Hitler seemed the coup as a potential risk to Britain's alliance with the Yugoslavs. Hitler considered Yugoslavia as an enemy that they quickly must crush. On 6 April 1941, German aircraft bombed the defenceless capital. Within eleven days, the Yugoslav army had to surrender (Calić 2019, 121-122).

3.3 The Second World War and Revolutions

With the Second World War, the term first Yugoslavia ended, and second Yugoslavia began. During the war, Yugoslavian internal politics became even more chaotic. Most importantly, there was the partition following the military defeat. Italy and Germany divided Slovenia. The northern half of Slovenia was annexed by Germans and settled Austrians for Germanisation in the area. Italy took Ljubljana and the rest of Slovenia. Also, Italy occupied Montenegro and the significant Dalmatian littoral strips, including the naval base. The most considerable fragmentation was the founding of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In theory, the Independent State of Croatia counted as a kingdom, but it was under the control of two Axis powers: Italy and Germany. The Axis powers doubted the control of the Serbians (Clissold 1968, 209-211). In short, Slovenia was annexed, Croatia was a puppet state, and Serbia and Montenegro were occupied.

The motives of Germany and Italy were different for Yugoslavian states. Hitler followed political, military, and economic ideals. He desired to secure transport lines, access to economic resources, and prevent an invasion of the Allies. On the other hand, Italy's wish to control the parts it took was coming from the past, so Italy wanted to evolve its sphere of influence and extend its territory from Adriatic to the Middle East and Africa.

However, both dictators revealed permanent friction and severe conflict of interest (Calic 2019, 125-126).

With the declaration of so-called Independent Croatia, the goal of the extremist Croats has now been achieved. However, it was unattainable to resolve the problems in their agenda. The first problem was the Croats' dependence on Germany and Italy. The Ustaše organisation members seemed to link with the Germans as an advantage because the Germans created a new order in Europe and claimed its superiority towards capitalism and godless Communism in their sense. Conversely, the people who had sympathy for NDH at the beginning became disappointed. They disapproved of the situation of the special treatment toward German and Italian armies. Afterwards, they realised they were under a puppet state. Also, the cruelty toward Serbs, Jews, and Croat political opponents arose in aversion. The hanging of the opponents and shooting the innocent hostages suppressed great enthusiasm. In addition, economic problems brought starvation and hatred against the Ustaše increased more (Goldstein 2017, 142).

Meanwhile, Tito was the Commander-in-Chief of the National Liberation Partisan Detachments. Tito and his Partisans committed serious acts of sabotage on the German output. They started revolts in most of Serbia. They had delicate negotiations with Chetniks, which was an armed guerrilla unit under the command of Colonel Mihailović in Serbia. Because Mihailović distrusted the Croats, especially the communists, their main difference was the countability of their movement. Tito had a clear-cut programme of action and had support from the civil population. However, by the end of November, Germans attacked and indiscriminately massacred the population in Užice, where the Partisans' headquarters was. The Chetniks escaped from the Germans and took virtual control of the Serbian countryside. Mihailović's aim was now to hunt down the survivors of the Partisans as well. Tito's reestablishment of his influence again in Serbia took a while. (Clissold 1968, 213-217).

In occupied Slovenia, the Communist Party formed the Liberation Front with Christian socialists and intellectuals in April 1941. They could establish a parallel state in Ljubljana. The Partisans also continued operations in East Bosnia and Montenegro for the first half of 1942. The partisans captured the western Bosnian town of Bihać, Ustaše's bastion, in early November 1942. The Bihać Republic was formed in western Bosnia, Dalmatia, Lika, and Independent Croatia's heart. The first all-Yugoslav assembly with

delegates from various parts of the country was held on 26 November 1942. The assembly is also known as the Antifascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ). The cornerstones of socialist Yugoslavia were shaped in the assembly, but Tito could not dare establish a new state yet (Calic 2019, 135-138).

Hitler ordered a brutal military operation called Operation White. On 20 January 1943, their heavy attack put Tito's troops in a completely hopeless situation. There were thousands of wounded and hundreds of thousands of refugees. Tito asked for help from Moscow but could not get it. Nevertheless, Tito's leadership qualities got admiration from even his opponents. In 1943, he got compliments from British liaison officers Fitzroy Maclean and Winston Churchill. He was called "old man or father" (*stari*) by his followers. Tito and Partisans succeeded in escaping many of the enemy's clutches. Each military victory of Tito increased his power and influence on the people (Calic 2019, 139-140).

By the end of the war, after the defeat of Italy and Germany, Yugoslavia could stand but had a heavy burden. In a newly elected Constituent Assembly, the Communists' National Front held all the seats at the end of 1945 (Lampe 1996, 227). Yugoslavia became the second country in Europe where communism came to power on its own after the Soviet Union.

3.4 Socialist Yugoslavia with Tito's Leadership (1945 to 1980)

In this part of the thesis, the Socialist Yugoslavia of Tito will divide into three terms: from 1945 to 1953 as the first steps of Socialist Yugoslavia, from 1954 to 1967 ascending of Tito's Yugoslavia, and finally, from 1968 to 1988 descending of the Tito's Yugoslavia. Because of the thesis's aim, Croatian and Slovenian situations will be examined in these periods.

Tito and other Communist leaders took control of all civil and military authority in Yugoslavia after the war ended. There was no organised political opposition, and most people struggled to live after the war's devastation. On the second anniversary of the AVNOJ, November 29, 1945, communist delegates dominated the Constituent Assembly in Belgrade. Tito's Prime Ministry began in March when the monarchy was abolished, and the Kingdom became the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (SNRJ). The

establishment of the second Yugoslavia took much more time than the first Yugoslavia. Its beginning was bloody. The foundation of the second Yugoslavia took much longer compared to the first. It started out bloody. In addition to the war's losses, over two million individuals died during 1945-46. In the beginning, the socialist federation maintained its agenda of local democracy and promised worker self-management. Their initial intent was to follow the Soviet hierarchical management model and sustain the rapid development of heavy industry, but it took short. The Tito-Stalin split in 1948 strengthened their siege mentality. The various disadvantages of the Soviet model and the desire to renounce its validity publicly led Tito to new socialism. They replaced the Soviet-style 1946 constitution with the 1953 constitution of new theory. The particular development of the new practice was to delegate the arbitrary, undisputed authority of the communist leadership, the police, and the army to committees run by local communists rather than the famous workers' councils (Lampe 1996, 229-230).

The new constitutional framework of 1953 promised only bottom-up communist control. By the 1960s, however, too much power was left to the top party leadership and its appointed nomenklatura, communist party member bureaucrats. Members of the renamed League of Communists (SKJ) continued to dominate the newly strengthened joint committees and the still-secondary workers' councils. After all, Tito had occurred victorious, first from the war and then from the struggle with Stalin. Compared with other Eastern European countries, economic growth was in a better situation than the others in the 1950s. However, living standards were incomparably worse due to heavy industrialisation. Although during the 1960s, living standards improved with domestic production and imports from the West. Besides, compared to other Communist states, the people could speak, travel and study more freely. Tito's diplomatic skills provided a balance between the Soviets and the Western powers. The West opened its markets so skilled workers could work in the West. The 1965 economic reform set market-oriented changes. The standard of education increased, and the practice of religion and freedom of expression was allowed. However, the situation that went well started to deteriorate after the late 1960s (Lampe 1996, 265-266).

Regarding the Croats and Croatia situation, at the end of the Second World War, the People's Republic of Croatia inherited the NDH, divided politically, ethically, and ideologically. However, compared to other states, Croatia was in a specific position

regarding its Ustaše institutions and changing territory of NDH like the independence of Bosnia (Jović 2011, 118-121). Therefore, Tito's regime first eliminated the opposition military forces in 1945. As a result, there was a massive migration from Ustaše fighters and Chetniks abroad, specifically to Austria, to save their lives. Later, the Croat emigrants claimed that the Partisans executed around 70,000 people through martial court (Calic 2019, 160). Croatia and Slovenia suffered the most significant death tolls accompanying Communist power consolidation (Lampe 1996, 228). Croat nationalism was also defeated with the abolishment of the political parties and the suppression of the opposition. Meanwhile, communism became an alternative to nationalism and liberal democracy in global politics (Jović 2011, 122).

In the early 1950s, the democracy and federalisation process began to initiate. As a result, the Government of the People's Republic of Croatia reorganised according to a 1952 parliamentary decision. Between 1952 to 1960, there was fast economic growth in general Yugoslavia. In the 1960s, with liberalisation, living standards increased, Croatian tourism arose, and there was cultural expansion. On the other hand, during the 1960s, the public discussion about constitutional amendments started (Goldstein 2017, 147-152). The downfall of Vice President Aleksandar Ranković in 1966 was the victory of the decentralisation concept that the Croats wanted. Nationalist and anti-communist groups came to resurface for the first time after the war. Between 1967 to 1971, there was a Croatian crisis called the Croatian Spring. Croatian nationalism's revival divided and destabilised Croatia's political, ideological, and ethical lines. The tension between Croats and Serbs began again (Jović 2011, 129-130). At the end of 1971, Tito forcibly intervened in the conflict. Various ideological, social, and national aspirations, previously suppressed during the crisis, emerged again. The national and liberal democratic ones were dominant (Goldstein 2017, 153).

The Croatian Spring ended, but its influence remained in post-1972 Croatian politics. Almost all Croatian leaders promoted political reforms. The Croats continued to insist on decentralisation and the return of the old reliance on class rhetoric. Therefore, in 1973, Tito sharpened his Marxist rhetoric by sending an open letter to the Yugoslav communist party members. However, the biggest supporter of this new discourse was again Croatia. So, the Croatian policy began to defend the position of Croatia within

Yugoslavia. Tito spent more time in Croatia than even in Serbia from 1973 to his death on 4 May 1980 (Jović 2011, 131).

From 1972 to 1990, the republics and autonomous provinces became more powerful. In both Croatia and other states in Yugoslavia, events took place across the entire socialist world, and the reasons for the collapse of Yugoslavia began to emerge. In the 1980s, there was a liberalisation wave in Croatia, but it was lesser than in Slovenia and Serbia. Because of the national oil crisis in 1979, the economy declined, and unemployment arose in Yugoslavia. So, Croatia has been affected by economic problems and found itself in a new situation where the balance of international relations deteriorated. Croatian politics within Yugoslavia has reflected in a blatant crisis of a fragile but long fruitful balance achieved between the various parts of the Yugoslav puzzle. It was not the Croats who first bothered, but the Kosovar Albanians and then the Serbs and Slovenes. Nevertheless, the domino effect also destabilised Croatia. It also dramatically increased the general level of uncertainty, anxiety, and fear about the future, especially when Tito was no longer there to protect or understand Croatian interests (Jović 2011, 133-135).

Slovenian Socialist Yugoslavia's experience was different from the Croats. The complications started from the beginning of the Second Yugoslavia in 1945. Ljubljana had critical reactions towards to federal economic and financial decisions of the Communists for achieving a centralised economy. Slovene ministerial offices openly said that the federal economic regulations damaged Slovene's economy. There were many problems, such as the transfer of revenue surpluses of Slovenia to the federal treasury, harmed state ownership in Slovenia after the first five-year plan of the federal government, and the agricultural collectivisation policy. The consequence for agriculture was a catastrophe (Štih, Simoniti and Vodopivec 2008, 454-455). By the start of the 1950s, the collective farming system had collapsed. The second agrarian reform worsened the situation because agricultural lands over ten hectares became a state or cooperative asset, which caused rural depopulation. The agricultural population decreased, and migration arose from rural areas into towns simultaneously with the modernisation and growth of the industrial sector. After 1954, living standards increased with industrial development. However, the conditions of most of the population were insufficient (Štih, Simoniti and Vodopivec 2008, 467).

Inter-ethnic conflicts and Slovenian separatism objections were constant political events from the end of the 1950s. However, becoming public in 1964 with the recognition that Yugoslav socialism had not finally fixed the national question. Moreover, the feeling of being left behind got more vital for Slovenes because the purchasing power of Slovenes was getting down (Repe 2017, 204-205). Therefore, there were criticisms of political, national, and social conditions in newspapers and journals with the increased enthusiasm in public for these issues. Even there was a movement of university students in 1963-1964 on a level unseen in Slovenia since the war. The 1965 laws could not solve the situation because of the lack of implementation of the reforms. On the other hand, the relaxation of the borders and working abroad led to see Yugoslavians to a different in Yugoslav communism than in other communisms in Eastern Europe, and Yugoslavia was the only communist state that opened its borderer, which was purposely shown by the state. Also, Yugoslavians were influenced by western cultural ideas (Štih, Simoniti and Vodopivec 2008, 477-480).

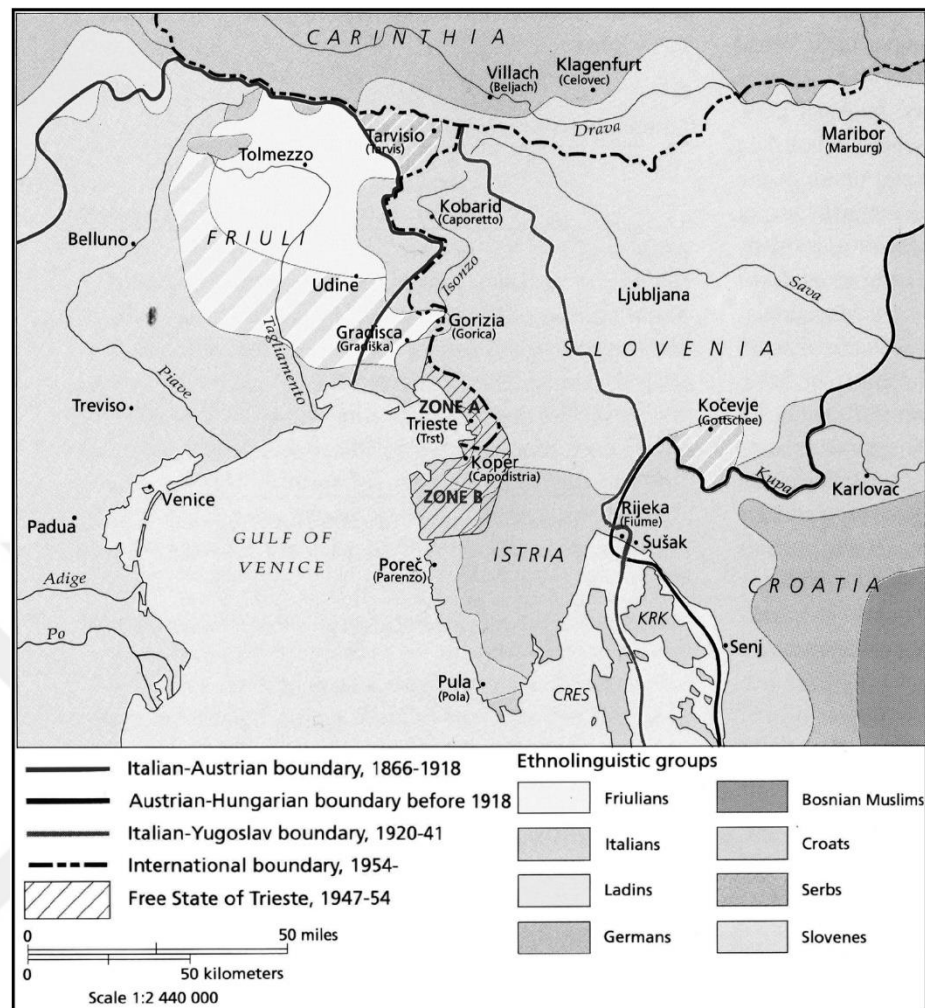


Figure 5. Trieste and Istria in the Twentieth Century (Cattaruzza 2011, 68)

The border dispute issue between Italy and Yugoslavia, particularly Slovenia and Croatia, was settled in November 1975 with the Treaty of Osimo, about the dispute over the Free Territory of Trieste (FTT). The basis of the conflict was the end of the First World War and the fall of the Habsburg Monarchy. Because after the war, many new borders were drawn, and Italy extended its borders to the former Austrian provinces of South Tyrol and Littoral. Therefore, Italy was able to include all the significant Italian-speaking populations within its borders. However, after the Second World War, Italy lost almost all of the eastern territories gained from Austria to Yugoslavia (Cattaruzza 2011, 66). There was a Yugoslav occupation of Trieste from 1 May to 12 June 1945, called "Forty Days". During the "Forty Days" occupation, the Yugoslav army tried to legitimise and strengthen its dominance in the region through intimidation and violence, but the threat of Allied confrontation eventually forced it to withdraw on 12 June 1945.

(McConnell 2019, 117-120). During the Peace Conference in Paris, the Peace Treaty was signed in February 1947 with Italy to mediate the Italian and Yugoslav dispute to "an approximately 740 km² strip of territory running from Trieste to Novi Grad on the northern littoral of the Istrian peninsula" (Zaccaria 2020, 506). Also, the port town of Trieste became FTT under the supervision of the United Nations (UN) (Cattaruzza 2011, 66). Moreover, FTT *de facto* divided into two zones: in the north Zone A, Trieste included, which was placed under the control of the allied troops, and in south Zone B, Northern Istria was subject to the control of Yugoslavia (Cattaruzza 2011, 82). However, in 1954 the London Memorandum, Trieste, Zone A became the Italian. Both countries recognised this partition of the zones only in 1975 with Osimo Treaty (Cattaruzza 2011, 78). Slovenia played an active role in the negotiation process with the Slovenes, like Boris Šnuderl, in the Yugoslav negotiation team (Škorjanec 2016, 290). While the border situation for Slovenia had not changed so much in favour, the agreement guaranteed the political and linguistic rights of Slovenes living in Italy, which had been problematic since the 1940s. Also, the agreement with Italy has resulted in economic growth in Slovenia, primarily due to a free and open border (Cox 2005, 56).

During the 1970s, the living standards in Slovenia reached the highest in the post-war period. Unemployment was low, and incomes were higher than in the other Yugoslavian states. Nevertheless, on the other hand, there was a political division inside Slovenia. One side of the people was the supporter of Communist authorities, and the other side of the people looked more to the West and Western way of life. In the latter half of the 1970s, economic and political crises increased. Economic modernisation was too slow, and consumption grew faster than production. However, like their Yugoslav counterparts, the Slovenian political leadership remained optimistic (Štih, Simoniti and Vodopivec 2008, 495-498).

The older Slovenian authorities could not imagine Slovenia outside of Yugoslavia, even though they defended Slovenian interests during the first half of the 1980s. However, this belief changed in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Conversely, the younger generation could only link with the Yugoslav consciousness in the context of sports. They were seeking European modernisation. In general, the Slovenian people knew that the Slovenian economy was the most substantial economic factor in Yugoslavia. They were also against immigrants from the south, as they were more influenced by nationalism.

The media exaggerated the issue and declared Slovenia as the scapegoat of Yugoslavia. When Tito died, Slovenian policy focused on preserving their achievements (Repe 2017, 206-207).

3.5 The Demise and the European Union's impact

The communist regimes collapsed one by one. For Yugoslavians, there was no hope for solutions to the political deadlocks and for achieving a multiparty democracy and a market economy. The mutual goodness of Yugoslavia no longer mattered. At the end of 1988, the federal parliament made its last efforts and introduced privatisation together with the abolishment of socialist property rights and self-management. However, these reforms had no importance because of the battle against inflation. The most crucial internal conflict was, in 1989, the tension between Serbs and Slovenes. After the death of Tito, there was a rally for an independent republic for all Albanians in Yugoslavia, which also means Southern Serbia in Kosovo. So, the conflict between Kosovars and Serbians started from this point. Because of the growing tension in Kosovo, the Serbian parliament repealed its province's autonomy in March 1989. When it did this, Belgrade developed the ability to exert its authority over the entire republic but, at the same time, wasted trust in the federal state. Slovene intellectuals made a significant rally to demonstrate solidarity with the Kosovars in Ljubljana, which angered the Serbian public. Also, Slovenes and Serbs had different ideas of constitutional reforms. The newly elected president of Serbia, Slobodan Milošević, presented a comprehensive proposal for qualified majority decision making. Conversely, Slovenian politician Milan Kučan called for an asymmetrical federation. The conflict continued in November 1989 with the forbidden of the Serbian demonstrators' entrance to Slovenia by Slovenian police. In reaction, Belgrade broke off all bilateral trade relations with Slovenia. In contrast, Ljubljana refused to contribute to the federal development fund. In the January 1990 meeting of the League of Communists, Slovenian delegates could not get any sufficient support for its new reform proposals. The Croats then refused to pursue any reform discussion (Calic 2019, 284-285).

Meanwhile, the communist systems across Eastern Europe were falling apart in 1989 and 1990. There were rumours about Slovenia and Croatia's leaving the Yugoslav Federation, the most substantial states within Yugoslavia in terms of economy (Yağcı

2019). The Slovenian Parliament reported that it would declare independence if a loose confederal solution were not found within six months in December 1990. Also, Croatian politician Franjo Tuđman joined them and said they would do the same for Croatia (Anderson 1995, 9). In the meantime, The European Community (EC) claimed that they would recognise the independence of Slovenia or Croatia when they agreed with Yugoslavia about their independence. Also, they were promised loans for quick inclusion in the EC, but if they stayed in one piece and reformed (Repe 2017, 213). However, no agreement was reached between the leaders of the six republics in the meetings. Slovenia served as an incentive for Croatia, almost always taking the initiative towards secession. Following every Slovenian attempt, Tuđman ignored the quite different natures of the struggle for Slovenian independence and the struggle for Croatian independence (Anderson 1995, 9).

In the Spring of 1991, the states began factual preparations for the war because the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) declared that they would use any necessary means for the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia. Croatian politician Stipe Mesić publicly bragged that he would be the Yugoslav Federation's last president. The final straw came in May when Serbian and Montenegrin leaders blocked Mesić from assuming the post of federal president, as planned according to the rotation principle. The political order collapsed, the multi-ethnic conflicts continued, and with the loss of the state monopoly, a dangerous war vacuum came into Yugoslavia (Calic 2019, 290-291).



Figure 6. Distribution of National Groups by Republic and Province in 1991 (Pavkovic 2000, 49)

Slovenia and Croatia suddenly declared independence on 25 June 1991 (Calic 2019, 297). They both disregarded the warnings of the EC and the United States that they would not recognise internationally in these circumstances because there was not any ceasefire agreement with Yugoslavia. Slovenia and the JNA collided within twenty-four hours, and the Croats clashed with Croatian Serbs. The JNA failed against the well-prepared Slovenians, and the conflict took short but was decisive (Anderson 1995, 10). Slovenia lost eighteen soldiers, while the JNA lost forty-four soldiers. Finally, the EC convinced Slovenes of a ceasefire agreement and signed on the Adriatic Island of Brioni on 7 July 1991 to end the hostility. As a result, the JNA pullback the soldiers on 18 July, and Slovenia got its recognition of independence. The Slovenes were proud of themselves for the success of the battle with the mighty army of Yugoslavia through its outstanding war strategy (Calic 2019, 297).

The main difference between Slovenia and Croatia was the amount of ethnic population inside of their countries. Only two per cent of Serbs lived in Slovenia, while twelve percent were in Croatia (Figure 5). Especially for this reason, the independence process was not as easy as the Slovenes. The Croats imposed a militant Croatian regime in Serb-dominated areas. Their policies caused fear among the Serb minority with the legacy of the Ustašes. Violent clashes between Croatian forces and the Croatian Serb

paramilitary forces with the JNA took six months, from July to December. There was just a *de facto* civil war and mainly border skirmishing during July and early August. After that, the fighting had significantly boosted. The Serbian siege of Vukovar, which kept three months and the Serb assault on Dubrovnik was the fiercest battles between them (Anderson 1995, 10-11). Serbs took control of the embattled region. The Croat population of these provinces fled from there (Calic 2019, 298).

International crisis management was in doubt about interfering with the crisis because it was a domestic affair of another state. Also, international law was in a dilemma. The United Nations charter was on the side of Croatia and Slovenia about protecting people's right to self-determination. However, the territorial integrity of the states, which Belgrade insisted on, was also an objective. Germany and Austria supported the independence of Croatia and Slovenia. On the other hand, the UN Secretary-General and the governments in Washington, Paris, and London endorsed the unity of Yugoslavia because they thought that Slovenia's and Croatia's independence would trigger other states' wishes and Yugoslavia was a block for the new Balkan troubles. On 7 September 1991, the European Community hosted a peace conference in The Hague after Luxembourg's foreign minister, Jacques Poos, said pompously, "this is the hour of Europe". However, all mediation attempts and threats of sanctions failed. Countless ceasefires have broken (Calic 2019, 299). The UN was invited to mediate with Cyrus Vance as the special envoy of the UN secretary-general. Eventually, Croatia accepted the Vance peace proposals on 15 January 1992, and Belgrade and the JNA also accepted. The UN peacekeeping troops arrived on the front line for solidification in March 1992. The rebellious Serbs felt betrayed, but Belgrade rejected their objections because of the UN troops. Besides, the EC officially recognised Croatian and Slovenian independence under German pressure on 15 January 1992. After that, the war continued in Bosnia, and ethnic cleansing and Srebrenica massacres happened. The Bosnian war continued from 1992 to 1995 between Bosnians and Serbs, including the Croats, because of the Croat population in Bosnia (Anderson 1995, 12-18).

The reasons for the collapse of Yugoslavia have two faces, domestic and international factors. Domestic reasons came even from the establishment of first Yugoslavia. All the states have a long history and ethnic identity. They unified under Yugoslavia because they had to save themselves from the outside threats of great powers.

They were not ready to have just one Yugoslav nationalism, abandoning their state nationalism. However, they could manage their stay in a unified state until the Second World War. After that, the communist Partisans formed Socialist Yugoslavia. This time, also their common points were the same, external threats. The structure of Socialist Yugoslavia was not as promised by the Communists. Because of that, internal conflicts began at the beginning. First, too much power was given to the top party leadership and communist bureaucrats. The people were afraid to express their counter ideas with the abolishment of the political parties. The structural problem continued until the collapse, in the last discussion of the asymmetrical federation and qualified majority decision making between Serbs and Slovenians. They had different ideas and different interests.

On the other hand, economic problems were one of the reasons. Economic plans and reforms worked differently in the states. The first five-year plan caused the agricultural decline in Slovenia and other agriculture-oriented states. Moreover, the Croats could not get the decentralisation of the economy they wanted till the 1970s. The inflation rate and the foreign debts were other problems. In terms of economy, the federation is divided into the northern part; Slovenia and Croatia, and the southern part; Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro. The northern parts' economy was rapidly growing, and they could not engage in an economic interaction with the southern part. Also, the northern part thought that this situation affected their economy negatively, while the southern part claimed they did not receive enough aid. In addition, Slovenia and Croatia wanted the entrance to a full market economy, but this would be an obstacle for the other countries, so they could only achieve it with sovereignty (Yağcı 2019, 247-248).

Inter-ethnic conflicts were the other reason for the collapse. Ethnic diversity was also a long history problem coming from the beginning. The Serbian and Croatian dominancy felt left behind for the others. Moreover, they suppressed the minorities in their states and caused revolts and civil wars, especially in the last few years. Therefore, nationalist movements happened.

On the other hand, there were also external factors, although not as essential as internal ones. Even though the great powers did not cause the internal crisis, they increased the tension and were unsuccessful in preventing wars. According to David Anderson (1995), they were aware of the danger before battles, and he claimed that the

CIA warned of the fall apart in November 1990. Nevertheless, they did not take any course of action. The United States left the leadership in crisis to the EC (Anderson 1995, 19). The US wanted the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia, and its policy was to get Yugoslavia closer to the West because Yugoslavia was the major obstacle to Soviet expansion in Southeast Europe (Yağcı 2019, 253).

Europe failed to get the complexity and potential of the crisis at first because it was also dealing with the USSR in 1990 and the Gulf War conflict in 1991. Therefore, when the EC was concerned about the Yugoslavian crisis, it saw that as a chance to show the premier security institution of Europe. However, they could not be successful as mediators because it was too late (Anderson 1995, 20). The Brioni agreement became possible because Serbia was not interested in Slovenia but in Croatia. So, European pressure did not play a significant part. The EC member states had ancient geopolitical codes with national interests. According to this claim, Germany had sympathy toward the Croats, France was on the side of the Serbs, and Britain had an antagonistic feeling towards all Balkans (Debié 1997, 128-129). So, France and Britain supported the unity of Yugoslavia, while Germany and Austria were on the side of Slovenia and Croatia because of their historical ties. This lack of unity in the EC affected their actions. They could not achieve a coherent strategy about Bosnia's future and inter-ethnic tension. The EC did nothing during the beginning of the inter-ethnic tension between Bosnia and Serbia. Later, it was again too late (Anderson 1995, 20-21). European pretensions were insufficient because of the absence of any effective military sanction. Without the USA content, any serious military action would not happen (Debié 1997, 128-129). As a result, the EU could not prevent the collapse of Yugoslavia and manage it well.

In comparison, there are differences in the Yugoslav history of Slovenia and Croatia. For example, Slovenia took more in economic affairs about their position in the Federation. On the other hand, Croatia was more effective until the last stages of the unity in the internal conflicts. Also, Croatia was rising against the Serbs in most of the Yugoslavian period, both in elections and in public. However, Slovenia was on the front line more than Croatia in the last conflicts until the Bosnians and Serbians conflict. The reason for this was Croatia's good situation in the last term. Slovenians were looking forward to getting their independence, and the Croats tried to follow their smooth

independence process. However, their path was full of hardness, and the EU accession process was no different.



4. THE RELATIONS OF CROATIA AND SLOVENIA WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

Both Slovenia and Croatia had a similar historical institutional organisation. From the Habsburg Monarchy to the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia to their independence, they have had a similar historical background, a close territory and administration. However, their EU accession process caused other membership dates under different circumstances. Slovenia became a member of the EU with the Big Bang enlargement with ten new members. On the other hand, Croatia became a member of the EU alone in 2013 as the latest member state. Considering these assessments, the main objectives of the chapter are to describe the evolution of Slovenia and Croatia's relations with the EU, to examine the effects of the EU on both countries, and to address the main changes between the two countries.

4.1 Slovenia's EU Relations and Impacts

The democratic transition began in all the former Yugoslav countries, albeit under varied conditions, in the early 1990s, when all the republics adopted new constitutions and had their first democratic and free elections. Apart from Slovenia, the democratic transition was initially severely delayed in the other former republics. Indirect or direct involvement in the war, strong ethnic divisions, and other socio-economic factors can be counted as reasons for the delay. The Yugoslav Federation was multi-ethnic and remarkably diverse, and the region remains politically and socio-economically diverse (Djurovic and Lajh 2020, 668). As a result, Slovenia became the first former Yugoslav country to join the EU on 1 May 2004, the most extensive enlargement in EU history. Along with the membership and accession process, Slovenia has experienced the Europeanisation process in various aspects of its public policies and political systems. All other former Yugoslavia countries faced delays in their democratic transitions. Rather than facing the task of completing their European integration processes, they were struggling for democratic survival. As will be seen later in the chapter, Slovenia also had some problems. However, its accession passed smoothly in comparison to others.

The Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia enacted a Declaration to Respect the Fundamental Conventions of the European Council and the Plebiscite Law for Independence and Sovereignty of the Republic of Slovenia in December 1990. Then the referendum of independence was organised on 23 December 1990 and resulted in 88.5 percent support from the voters. Voter turnout was high 93,2 percent attended. On 26 June 1991, the Socialist Republic of Slovenia declared its independence. Compared to others' independence, Slovenian independence smoothly happened. However, it still took ten days to war because of the counterpart of the Yugoslav Army. Slovenia became a United Nations member like Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina (Bojinović Fenko and Šabič 2014, 48-49).

Since its independence, Slovenia has gone through several foreign policy phases. We can group them into five. The first one was disassociating itself from former Yugoslav states and the Balkans. The independence movement of Slovenia and then Croatia caused the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a result, Slovenia decided to change its friendly approach towards the former Yugoslav states because of the image Slovenia wanted to take. So, Slovenia's novel approach was the 'away from the Balkans'. It focused on showing the differences between Slovenia and other former Yugoslav states. Slovenia arranged its public and domestic diplomacy around this approach. The most significant element to show its irrelevance was democracy. Also, it focused on respect for human rights, the triangle of international law and the separation of the state from the geographical proximity and historical context of the Balkans. As a democratic country, Slovenia cannot be related to the notion of a war-waging country (Bojinović Fenko and Šabič 2017, 52-53). Thus, the state began to define itself as a Western democratic society, which respects EU values, and geopolitically, a Central European country even attempted to enter formally collaborate with the four states of Visegrád. Despite this unsuccessful attempt, it left the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), of which it was a founding member and an active member. Also, due to the general reluctance of non-aligned countries to recognise Slovenia as an independent state at the time, Slovenia did not show much interest in cooperating with Third World countries (Bojinović Fenko and Šabič 2014, 53). However, the other former Yugoslav states acted more carefully on this subject because NAM was a considerable global player that was instrumental in building and maintaining Yugoslavia as a credible foreign policy actor. As another alternative, Slovenia started to

promote itself as the most Central European among the Mediterranean states. It also attempted to join the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), but the result was not favourable (Bojinović Fenko and Šabič 2017, 53).

In 1998, Slovenia left the New Agenda Coalition (NAC) and the Human Security Network. On the other hand, the Slovenian government promoted the formation of the International Trust Fund (ITF) for Mine Clearance and Assistance to Mine Victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The ITF later expanded its geographical coverage to Latin America, South Caucasus, the Middle East, and North and West Africa, making it a key player in humanitarian demining activities worldwide. ITF proved the possibility of Slovenia's credible and successful partnership (Bojinović Fenko and Šabič 2017, 54).

The second phase of Slovenian foreign policy was its strategic goal after and even before the independence, dedicating itself to gaining EU and NATO membership. The NATO part did not be taken in the research. The goal of EU membership was not new, and it preceded independence. The answer to why Slovenia is counted as a unique case in the transformation process lies at this stage. Firstly, Slovenia's GDP per capita was the highest in the region in 1993, about 70 percent of the EU average. So, Slovenia was the most developed Yugoslav state. Also, Slovenia was the most oriented state to foreign trade in the Western markets. Already in 1980, its major trade partners were EC countries, and 58 percent of exports were towards the western developed countries in the eighties; then, in 1996, it became 68 percent. However, even before the eighties, in 1965, Slovenia's economic reforms regarding integration with European partners began to be implemented. In the 1960s, foreign direct investment (FDI), foreign investment of Slovenian companies and the global orientation of Slovenian companies had begun. In addition, Slovenia benefited from the 1974 amendments to the Yugoslav constitution, which gave additional powers in the external relations of the states. Within Yugoslavia, disagreements occurred about Europeanization in terms of social and economic modernisation, as well as how Slovenes saw their political future, meaning Europeanization in terms of democratisation. Yugoslavia signed a special Cooperation Agreement with the European Commission in 1980. However, after 1989, when the West aggressively promoted the "Europe 1992" program, Yugoslavia began to renew its tactics of cooperation with the New Europe. Even though Slovenia was keen to start negotiating an Association Agreement with the EC, the other states were not ready yet. So, the EC

refused the Association Agreement that Yugoslavia filed in February 1990. In the spring of the same year, the Slovenian government embraced directives for adjusting the “Europe 1992”. The government knew that all the new laws had to be according to *acquis Communautaire*. For the coordination of adaptation of all EU adjustment activities, they established Co-ordinating Commission for “Europe 1992” (Bojinović Fenko and Svetličič 2017, 5-6).

For Slovenia and other Central and Eastern European countries, there have been several reasons for seeking EU membership. First, there is the prospect of achieving better and stronger democratic institutions, a greater economic and social environment, and security. In the Slovenian case, external security reasons played a significant role. Secondly, several economic reasons result in underlying joining EU accessions, like free trade, EU internal market, trade with new countries, sectoral protection, and legal security. Third, EU membership removes barriers to the free labour movement within the enlarged union. Slovenia was interested more in the mutual liberalisation of the labour market. Fourth, regarding EU financial resources, a net gain in its EU-related financial balance was considerable for Slovenia. Fifth and particularly important was the argument that Slovenia would be affected by the decisions to be taken in Brussels in any case, whereas, without EU membership, it would not have a say in these decisions, and only membership could solve the problem. Accession will overcome this problem, and despite its small size and limited representation in European public institutions, Slovenia will have a meaningful impact on the day-to-day operation of integration and the process that shapes Europe's future. Slovenian interests and ideas were successfully incorporated into the decision-making process of the expanded EU due to the country's high-quality public administration, broad political consensus on EU-related matters, and powerful social support. Another factor supporting this assumption is that the accession discussions were completed successfully and smoothly (Inotai and Stanovnik 2004, 355-356).

The third phase is Slovenia's EU accession process, which has substantially influenced its foreign policy and has made it even more EU-oriented. As mentioned above, EU membership wish was already on the agenda of Slovenia. “Europe now!” slogans used by the reformed former Slovenian League of Communists during the first multiparty elections in 1990. Europeanisation was replacing the old ideology. Also, EU integration had a place in the electoral programmes of the other political parties. The

Slovenian National Party (*Slovenska Nacionalna Stranka*, SNS) was the only exception in this regard. In the Basis of Slovenian Foreign Policy, Slovenia officially declared the requisition to be an EU member in 1991 (Djurovic and Lajh 2020, 672). The application for Slovenian EU membership happened in June 1996 (Bojinović Fenko and Šabič 2014, 54), and then, all parliamentary parties, except SNS, decided to sign an Agreement on Cooperation with the EU in the accession process (Djurovic and Lajh 2020, 672).

Slovenia's 'away from the Balkans' approach was replaced by 'back to the Balkans' due to external pressures from the EU and the USA, with the start of membership negotiations in 1998. They conditioned Slovenia's Euro-Atlantic integration with the re-engagement of the state in the newly established international forum for post-conflict reconstruction and the transition of Southeast Europe. Slovenia was seen as a mediator between the Western Balkans and the EU (Bojinović Fenko and Svetličič 2017, 10-11). The Slovenian government had concerned about the reaction from the public and the opposition parties. In the 2002 government document, this new approach of the state displayed Slovenian identity as a South-eastern European country that linked both Central European and Mediterranean traditions with the context of “a bridge between different European regions” (Bojinović Fenko and Šabič 2017, 55-56).

Although Slovenia's accession process went more smoothly than most countries, Slovenia had to deal with some struggles. The membership application was followed by tough pre-accession negotiations, in which Italy and Austria blocked Slovenia's accession to the EU with some requests. Italy demanded that the Italian minority's position situation be solved. Also, despite the legal validity of the Osimo Treaty (1975), which depicted the border between Italy and the former Yugoslavia, Italy insisted that the national border issue be reopened (Bojinović Fenko and Šabič 2014, 54-55). In 1992, there was a meeting in Rome in which they agreed to recognise and enforce previous agreements. In addition, Italy also demanded real estate status for their national communities who lost their property after the Second World War. Thousands of Italians fled to Istria, Fiume and Dalmazia, most of them died and were arrested during the "Forty Days" occupation, and then Tito nationalised their property and possessions. Also, according to the 1991 Slovenian constitution, non-Slovene citizens cannot buy land (Geddes and Taylor 2016, 934). This issue was likewise problematic for Austria because in 1945, many expelled

German speakers' properties were nationalised by AVNOJ decrees (Cox 2005, 168). The other one was, like the demand of Italy, about the status of the German-speaking community in Slovenia. Austria had also repeatedly expressed its concerns about the safety standards of the Krško nuclear plant. The Austrian government convinced the European Commission that the issue of denationalisation should be treated as a non-discrimination principle within EU market regulation. However, the European allies did not warmly receive Italy's bilateral conditions (Bojinović Fenko and Šabič 2014, 54-55). The negotiations took four years, and then Slovenia accepted the non-discrimination of foreign property buyers under the mediation of the Spanish presidency, which called as 'Spanish compromise'. After that, Slovenia could apply for membership, and it got into force in 1997 (Bojinović Fenko and Svetličič 2017, 7).

Slovenian citizens were suspicious about the certain adaptations that were required. The 'Spanish compromise' triggered the old fear of occupation of the land. There was unhappiness about closing the duty-free stores on the Italian and Austrian borders because the foreigners were doing their luxury goods shopping there. In addition, another salient issue was the transition period for the free movement of labour. However, even though there became some Euroscepticism, public support for the membership did not decrease (Djurovic and Lajh 2020, 672).

In connection with the third phase, the fourth phase was the transformation and adaptation process of Slovenia into EU integration. During several years of negotiations, an agreement was reached detailing the conditions for Slovenia's accession. Slovenian legislation has been harmonised with European provisions, and specific exceptions have been established with transitional periods. If we categorised the transformations into two: the first was new national socio-political system building, and the second was the adaptation of national institutional systems and actors. Danica Fink-Hafner (2010, 238) claimed the institutional transformation of Slovenia as a "textbook example". Slovenia had a successful transformation in terms of economic developments, decisions of the main political actors, and transition to democracy (Ibid.). When Slovenia accepted negotiations, it had to complete the Copenhagen criteria. Slovenia had adopted three main instruments for implementing the *acquis*. The Europe Agreement was a framework for the preparation of legislation and administrative structures in the context of preparing Slovenia's political, economic, and social convergence within European shared values.

The main instruments that assisted the EU's financial assistance programme progress were The Accession Partnership and the National Programme for the Adoption of the *Acquis* (NPAA). The Accession Partnership focused on the priority areas indicated in the European Commission's opinion on Slovenia's membership application which included Slovenia's unwavering commitments to democratic stability, macroeconomic performance, industrial transformation, and adoption of the *acquis* in general. The NPAA was a national document that gave precise information and details on how Slovenia aimed to fulfil the Accession Partnership priorities. Each year, the progress of Slovenia was recorded by the European Commission. The PHARE program, an economic restructuring assistance program for Central and Eastern European countries, provided financial assistance with external aid for the many distinct aspects of Slovenia's transition (Potočnik and Lombardero 2014, 371-372).

The national political system of Slovenia adopted a new role and became part of the policymaking of the EU. For European matters, a new parliamentary structure has been established by the National Assembly, which adapts the statutory rules of the *acquis* to national law (Fink-Hafner 2010, 240). The government amended the Statutory rules in 2004. Government Office for European Affairs prepared special guidelines for the representatives who participated in the decision-making of the EU in November 2005. The government representatives and the guidelines provided to speak with one voice while communicating with EU institutions (Fink-Hafner 2014, 44).

In the transition process, Slovenia had to concern with several politically and permanently ideologically significant issues. The continual process of transition and democratic consolidation in favourable socio-economic preconditions and the conservative change in social/state ownership allowed the gradual pursuit of some main reforms in the areas of social policy, health, and pension reform. Slovenia had a satisfactory situation regarding some subjects of the socio-political condition, such as the inequality of income being the lowest in the EU and the crime rate could be considered low, except the international organised crime. However, some points had to be a concern. One of them was the left and right cleavage argument of textbook reform, which caused the interpretation of World War II and the socialist regime. The other one was the controversial treatment of social minorities. Because of the troublesome events Slovenia lived in its past, Slovenia had a defensive nationalism. During the civil war at the time of

independence, many refugees came to Slovenia. Slovenia's refugee policy demonstrated the gap between democratic and human rights norms represented in the new Slovenian constitution of 1991 and the *de facto* level of the implementation of the international authorities and standards. The defensive nationalism of Slovenia was reflected when a particular group of refugees did not apply for citizenship before the deadline. They were erased from the registration of permanent residents of Slovenia in a controversial practice, without considering the amount of time they lived there. The “erased” issue caused discussions among the political parties inside Slovenia (Fink-Hafner 2010, 247-248).

The fifth and final phase was the EU membership of Slovenia. In 2002, accession negotiations in Slovenia with the EU were concluded. The EU accession referendum happened on 23 March 2003. The result was high, with a 60,4 percent turnout and 89,6 percent support. The result was expected due to the high level of citizens' support. Then in April 2003, Slovenia's Treaty of Accession to the EU was signed, and Slovenia became part of the European family of nations on 1 May 2004 (Haček 2019, 420-421).

In the first years of membership, Slovenia concentrated on EU-related national projects, such as being a eurozone country, joining the Schengen area, and conducting the presidencies, which were the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) presidency in 2005, the Council of the EU presidency in 2008 and the Council of Europe presidency in 2009. When Slovenia concluded the Maastricht criteria, it became the first 2004 enlargement state that became a member of the eurozone on 1 January 2007. The transition from Slovenian tolar and euro happened smoothly and quickly. The dual currency period just took 13 days. After that, the full participation in the Schengen area was on 12 December 2007 (Bojinović Fenko and Svetličič 2017, 7-9). Slovenia accomplished its strategic goals from and before the independence. Holding the presidency of international organisations became the short-term goal. As a new and small state, particularly the EU presidency was a challenge. However, Slovenia could successfully manage the presidency, especially the running of the OSCE presidency, which provided to see Slovenia's leadership ability. Because Slovenia is a small country, it had relatively little room to build its footprint. So, Slovenia found a suitable area for itself which was, as mentioned above, being a bridge builder towards the Western Balkans (Bojinović Fenko and Šabič 2017, 57-58). During the EU presidency, Slovenia prioritised

inherited agenda issues, promoting intercultural dialogue, and the most focused was the Western Balkans (Bojinović Fenko and Svetličič 2017, 18-19).

In 2004, the first European Parliament elections in Slovenia resulted in a low turnout, 28,4 percent. One reason for this was the less adequate evaluation of the importance of these elections. The other was dissatisfaction with the politics of the public. Then parliamentary elections were held on 3 October 2004 (Haček 2019, 423). Slovenia's party system has been the least polarised among post-communist Central East European countries. In 2004, a bipolar system emerged. The alternation of centre-left and centre-right governments brought an opportunity structure that contributed to the normalisation of EU business and the inclusion of Europe in the scope of party rivalry (Fink-Hafner 2014, 50). The twelve years govern of Liberal Democracy ended, and for the first time, Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS) came to power with a centre-right coalition. The new Prime Minister, Janez Janša, dealt with the adoption of the euro, joining the Schengen area and the EU Council Presidency. In the 2008 parliamentary elections, there was again a political U-turn, and the right-wing coalition was defeated. Even though there were significant achievements in this term, the public's interest shifted to the left side of the political continuum. The main reason was the socio-political cleavage from the period of the Second World War to the EU membership. Because of the long communist past, the left side had more connections with NGOs, major media outlets, and more influential political forces. The right side could not use the opportunity that gave to them after the deficit between the 1940s to 1990s (Haček 2019, 423-424).

The global economic and financial crisis of 2008 affected Slovenia harshly. With the economic crisis, Slovenes realised that the perception of the EU mainly offering absolute gains was argumental. Slovenia also realised that if it wanted to achieve beneficial results from EU policies, it could only do so through a much more active participation in the EU policy-making process. EU's handling of the Greek bailout caused questioning of the equality position among Eurozone states. The crisis affected domestic politics and brought political changes with early European parliamentary elections (Bojinović Fenko and Šabič 2017, 59-60). The turnout was still low, 28,4 percent, but after eight months of its defeat, Slovenian Democratic Party won this election. The continuation of the poor economic conditions in 2010 and 2011 caused even more political instability. For the first time, there was a triple referendum. Two of them were

about the reform of the pension system and the labour market. They rejected decisively. The third one was the Arbitration Agreement with Croatia over the border dispute, and 51,5 percent of the voters accepted the Agreement (Haček 2019, 424-425). The border dispute and other conflicts between Slovenia and Croatia will be discussed in more detail later in the thesis.

The triple referendum defeat of the government resulted in the first early parliamentary elections held on 4 December 2011. Positive Slovenia (PS) as a newly established political party, just sixty days before, won the elections. However, it failed to emerge a ruling coalition, so Slovenian Democratic Party and Janez Janša came to power once again. In the first months of 2013, the Prevention of Corruption Commission accused Janša and the leader of Positive Slovenia, Zoran Janković, of corruption for violating financial disclosure obligations. They could not prove their assets. When Janša did not resign, the National Assembly dismissed him with a vote of confidence in 2012. Then Alenka Bratušek from Positive Slovenia was elected with the centre-left coalition. The political instability continued similarly. Janković retired from his leadership of Positive Slovenia, but then he resumed, which caused tensions within the party and even resulted in the resignation of Bratušek, causing an early parliamentary election during the summer holidays. During this period of tension, the turnout of the European Parliament elections in 2014 became even lower than before, 24,6 percent (Haček 2019, 426-427).

Another challenging crisis was the migration crisis of 2015 and 2016. The control of illegal migration and refugees proved the importance of the neighbourhood and cooperation with the Balkans. The refugees and migrants used the Balkan route to pass the West. Slovenia, as a Schengen state, demanded to check the flow of passengers, especially Austria. Italy was a common point for migrants, and Slovenia struggled to control passengers. Prime Minister Miro Cerar criticised the mismanagement of the EU during the EU mini-summit and called for a joint solution (Bojinović Fenko and Šabič 2017, 61-62).

The latest European Parliament election was held on 26 May 2019. The turnout was 28,9 percent of Slovenia, which was slightly higher than the last election. However, regarding the EU average of 50,9 percent, it was one of the lowest ones. The main reason for the low turnout in the European elections in Slovenia for all four elections since the membership was the general disillusionment with politics, the lack of interest among the

voters, and the lack of understanding of the EU among the electorate. Even though Slovenian EU membership was a national plan, the support of the public after the accession started to decrease. According to the Eurobarometer surveys, while only five per cent of the survey respondents in 2004 had a negative comment, in 2016, 54 percent expressed their distrust about the EU. One reason for this distrust of 50 percent of the Slovenes was explained as the dissatisfaction with the democracy in the EU. 53 percent of the Slovenes stated that Slovenia should look at its future outside the EU. This percentage was the highest among the EU. So why have the Slovenian citizens' satisfaction and trust decreased significantly after the accession? It can be explained by partial answers in recent events, such as expectations from the EU when the global economic and migration crisis bombed (Haček 2019, 431-433).

Based on the above analysis, although Slovenia is a success story for EU accession, its social, economic, and political transition had problems. As a former communist country, it managed to consolidate democracy. After its independence in 1991, Slovenia did not have the political interest to continue Yugoslavian, both domestic and foreign policy, and immediately adopted Western democracy. Slovenia became a small state that focused on the global agenda rather than the regional one. On the other hand, Yugoslavia had a self-management way of ruling in the socialist context. Slovenia's foreign policy decisions already started differently from Yugoslavia during the 1980s. As an economically developed country, Slovenia was seeking EU membership. It could not achieve this in Yugoslavia but after. Slovenia made its economic reforms regarding integration with European states. When Slovenia joined the EU in 2004, Prime Minister Anton Rop expressed the expectations by his statement, *"So far Europe was the future of Slovenia; now Slovenia is the future of Europe"* (Haček 2019, 422). After the independence, the 'away from the Balkans' approach was initiated for made no connection with the former Yugoslavia. However, this approach replaced to 'back to the Balkans' approach with the demand of the EU. Later, Slovenia chose the path of being the bridge between the Western Balkans and the EU, which provided a successful first European Presidency in Slovenia. Even though Slovenia's integration process is defined as a smooth process, it had some struggles. From the Austrian and Italian blocks to instrument adaptations. The real problem, however, was Slovenia's mistakes in putting theory into practice. For instance, the 'erased' issue caused huge constraints for Slovenian foreign

policy. On the other hand, while implementing democracy, the transition to a bipolar political system caused instabilities in the political system but provided to hear different prospects. Another critical issue was the decline of public support after accession due to the global economic and migration crisis and distrust of equality among member states. For a long time, Slovenia prepared itself for EU membership and its benefits, but the result was insufficient. However, Slovenia became a case study for scholars as a 'textbook' example.

4.2 Croatia's EU Relations and Impacts

For a country to become an EU member, it had to undergo a four-stage process. First, the government must apply for membership, as Croatia does. Secondly, the EU will review the institutions and practices of the applicant country against EU technical and political standards and must meet EU standards. Official discussions and a review of Croatia's situation began in October 2005. Third, the Council of Ministers must approve the admission of the applicant. Lastly, the applicant country must decide to join the EU. In the principle of the EU, all European countries that want to join, if it meets the criteria, can join the EU. In Croatia's situation, there is no geographical problem. Before Yugoslavia, it was part of the Austria-Hungary empire, like some member states. Its language is in the Roman alphabet. Also, Croatia is overwhelmingly a Catholic country. However, the accession process took quite a long time for distinct reasons.

When Croatia started the negotiations, the EU had upgraded the *acquis* because of the lessons from the previous enlargements for the especially Western Balkan region. The EU attached importance to the chapters related to the rule of law, justice, and fundamental rights. For most of the former Yugoslav states, war crime issues related to these minority rights problems caused the addition of a new chapter to the *acquis*.

Croatian experience only can be understood by considering the people's wish to join the EU and particular reasons. Europeanisation took place here after the nineties significantly in the political area. In the parliament, every party was pro-European, and state leadership did its politics according to the membership. However, the negotiations took an amount of time that was not expected. The EU accession process required deep social transformations, which need deeper public engagement that can take much longer.

In the Croatian case, after the independence, particular periods led to backwardness and, eventually, membership.

Croatian foreign policy can be divided into three phases after declaring independence. The first phase was acquiring the international recognition of its statehood (Šabić 2014,72). This phase was full of expectations. The dissolution of Yugoslavia was for the Croats' long-awaited independence and a chance to return to the Western civilisation circle. The Croats sought ways to escape the Serbian domination to become part of the West. They counted on the support of the EC's institutions and member countries, which had common history and culture with Croatia. They thought their aspirations were mutual because of their economic advancement and cultural and religious links with Western Europe. Therefore, they expected protection and recognition of their independence and autonomy at the beginning of the war in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. On the squares of Croatia, the EC's flags waved, and intellectuals called on the support of European politicians. However, they could not get the expected reaction from the EC (Skoko 2016, 64). The EC lacked the appropriate tools for crisis management, and with the failure of diplomatic and peacekeeping efforts, the EC began delegating its duties to the UN in the last months of 1991. When the conflict started in June, the dominant position in the Security Council and the General Assembly was that this was a civil conflict that international intervention would exacerbate (Anderson 1995, 20).

Božo Skoko (2016) mentioned some scholars' statements, such as Pavao Novosel's statement in 1991 about Croatia's relationship with the West. He defined it as a romantic relationship in which the Croats considered themselves an uncontested part of Europe, even though it was a minor partner who should seem equal or a poorer first cousin. According to Skoko, Novosel then expressed the Croats' attitude towards EC's reaction as a return to reality. So, the expected help from the EC turned to lectures and doubts about Croatia's survival ability (Skoko, 2016, 64). Also, the lack of unity of the twelve EC member countries prevented any rapid and decisive response during 1991 and early 1992 (Anderson 1995, 20).

Besides the Croats, ten French intellectuals led by Eugene Ionesco were worried about the war destruction in Croatia. They addressed their demand for Croatia's recognition to the European presidents because Croatia has had Baroque and Roman

churches and Venetian places. The leaders of the EC members decided not to recognise Slovenia and Croatia if they unilaterally left the Yugoslav federation on 23 June 1991. However, on 21 September 1991, after severe and serial attacks on cities of Croatia, the European Parliament first recognised the right of the republics of the former Yugoslavia to self-determination and secession and called on member states to consider the possibility of recognising republics that had declared independence. Finally, in early 1992, they recognised independent Croatia (Skoko 2016, 65-66).

When Croatia became independent, the Croats realised two significant misconceptions. Firstly, as much as the Croats felt they belonged to Western civilisation and culture, it was not mutual. Secondly, the slogans of the Croat politicians for the past two decades, Croatia's belonging to Europe, and their highlights about the differences in relations with Western Europe between Croatia from other Balkan states did not happen as they stated. The second one did not happen as expected because of the disorientation of Europe during the conflict in former Yugoslavia that affected the EC's contemporary perception. These misconceptions would come to the fore, especially during the accession negotiations, where Croatian citizens began to look much more critically at the EU and its role in Croatia's life. With the international recognition of Croatia in 1992, there were public expressions from Croatian officials about their commitment to full EU membership. However, slowing democratic progress with the war's legacy on the country prolonged the plans (Skoko 2016, 66-67).

The second phase was President Franjo Tuđman's (1990-1999) European vision. The wartime years between 1991 and 1995 they have affected Croatian internal and foreign policies. In 1993 and 1994, intervention in Croatia in the conflict between Bosnian Croats and Bosniaks was unofficial in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The war ended with the Dayton Peace Agreement, and Tuđman was the co-signatory. Meanwhile, the other East-Central European states had already begun their EU accession process, and Croatia was still dealing with the unresolved problems inherited from the collapse of the federation of Yugoslavia. In fact, Tuđman's nationalism form became against the EU and Europeanism with the Regional Approach Policy of the EU (in April 1997). Croatia has become increasingly entrapped in a closed ideology. According to Tuđman, the demands of the EU were unfair in the Regional Approach Policy, and Croatia had the right to reject them. Also, he criticised Europe's insufficient help and not enough support in the post-Yugoslav

wars and the Croatian independence process. Moreover, he banished any cooperation membership of states that led to a renewal of Yugoslavia (Jović 2006, 85-86). On the other hand, the EU demanded cooperation with its neighbours, but he rejected this and chose isolation from them. Mainly because they were trying to catch up Central European side, and they were trying for it, which was not on the agenda of Tuđman (ESI 2014, 3). He was aggressively against the concept of Western Balkans that the EU introduced. Furthermore, he claimed that Europe's illusion would replace the existing small identities with a new culture of Europe. For him, Croatia already took the lessons from the collapse of Yugoslavia about the importance of ideological, historical, and religious differences (Jović 2006, 88-91).

Any nation experiencing transition faces both political and economic difficulties. In fact, Croatia has encountered challenges that are in many respects like those faced by post-communist nations in Europe. These challenges include building a civic culture that can sustain democratic politics, privatisation and demonopolisation of the media, and corruption. The simultaneous management of democratisation, state-building, and war was a unique aspect of the Croatian transition. The ruling party, the Croatian Democratic Union (*Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica*, HDZ), which was founded in 1989, ruled alone from 1990 to 1999 and came back to power in a coalition in 2003, taking on a hegemonic role after Croatia's first multi-party elections in 1990 and dominating the political arena and executive offices (Søberg 2007, 31-32). However, HDZ has been a unifying but also a divisive force in Croatian politics. In actuality, in none of the parliamentary elections HDZ received more than fifty percent of the vote. Instead, adopting an absolute majority, single-member district election system intended to establish a parliamentary majority directly tied to the HDZ's strict control of parliamentary and executive authority through the nineties (Søberg 2007, 38). Tuđman had autocratic tendencies and impatience with the democratic opposition and made several attempts to suppress public critics. For instance, in October 1995, even though a candidate from the opposition won the Zagreb mayorship, Tuđman prevented his taking office by citing his mayorship as national security concern because he opposes state policy (Søberg 2007, 48).

There were supporters of Tuđman's ideas in public. His party's success in the parliamentary elections in the 1990s showed this. One of the reasons was the military conflicts on its territory at the beginning of the new state. Also, as mentioned before, the

people were unsatisfied with Europe's lack of help. The other reason was the war's legacy which radicalised the participants. Therefore, Croatian nationalists adopted his rhetoric about Europe after the 1995 victories. In addition, the war created a belief that Croatia did not need the superiority of the Yugoslav Army or Europe's strong military. It survived with just its strength. So, this idea of self-sufficiency became popular again, likewise in Tito's times. However, Tito's Yugoslavia and Tuđman's Croatia had varied factors. The countries' situation in the region was different, and Tito created international institutions rather than Tuđman. Moreover, Tito was not against the multi-ethnic semi-autonomous states. While for Tuđman, there was little place for minorities (Jović 2006, 91-92).

So, Tuđman's attitude put an ultimate distance between Croatia and Europe. They had a frozen relationship without any agreements in the 1990s. When he died in 1999, the third phase started, seeking membership in Euro-Atlantic structures.

In 1996, there were massive public protests against Tuđman's governance in Zagreb. While their neighbours Slovenia and Hungary were applying for membership in the EU, the opposition uprise Tuđman. In 1997, his illness courage the opposition forces, and they openly started to argue about the future. When he died, the coalition of anti-Tuđmanist forces won the parliamentary elections on 3 January 2000 (Jović 2006, 93). With a pro-European reformist government under Ivica Račan, Croatia became on the path toward EU and NATO membership. For this, they had to change many policies of Tuđman.

The most critical issues they needed to change and deal with in foreign policy were the Bosnian issue and the transformation of the Balkan policy. The new government wanted to inform Balkan countries that they disowned Tuđman's policy of hosting the EU summit in November 2000. The isolation Tuđman chose was not an option anymore (ESI 2014, 4).

In addition, the war crimes issue in Bosnia and Herzegovina was one of the most significant problems that Croatia challenged with the EU. In 1993 the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) was established in the Hague. Because of the brutal slaughter and the violation of the Geneva Convention during the war between the Yugoslav countries, the Tribunal trials the war crimes with superiority to constitutions and national courts. Instead of judging the government or the nation in general, the Tribunal was interested in investigating allegations and surrendering

criminals committing war crimes to the Tribunal in the Netherlands. In the Croatian case, General Ante Gotovina was indicted in 2001 for the operation in the Krajina region (Rose 2005, 2). Tuđman was very limitedly cooperating with the ICTY, and in 2000, a group of generals protested the arrests of their colleagues with an open letter. In February 2001, the situation heated with a rally in Split. And then General Gotovina escaped and hid without arrest. Also, the Croatian army's former chief of staff, Janko Bobetko indicted in 2002, but he did not surrender. The war veterans defended him (ESI 2014, 4). In the end, he died in his home because of his illness in April 2003. Thus, the government's dilemma to deliver him ended. He was never tried in the Tribunal (The Associated Press 2003).

Meanwhile, the Tribunal could not resolve General Gotovina's case as his place could not be found. As a result, the Croatian government officially accepted responsibility and said he would be handed over when found. However, the accession talks in March were postponed as the cooperation seemed insufficient. The EU stipulated that negotiations should only continue if the Tribunal declared it was satisfied with the association. The discussions started the following day when the Tribunal declared on 3 October 2005 (Rose 2005, 2). Last, General Gotovina was captured in Spain in December 2005 (ESI 2014, 4).

Minority relations inside the country were another critical challenge the new pro-European government had to concern. According to the speech of President Tuđman in 1995, the Serbs disappeared from the town of Knin, and there will be no return. He also claimed that the European criticism of Croatia's minority politics was hypocritical, while France, for example, does not even recognise their existing minorities (ESI 2014, 5). In May 1997, when the US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright visited Croatia, she criticised his government's record of allowing refugees to return to Croatia. The region's most urgent need is for people of all ethnic groups to be able to return home safely. However, he told her their record is much better than Serbia's, and their goal is not becoming ethnically pure, "but it would be insane to repatriate the 180,000 ethnic Serbs who fled" (CNN Interactive 1997). Consequently, Tuđman's government exercised hegemonic control as part of its goal of nationalising Croatian society against the Serb minority. In the late 1990s, HDZ was aware of the possible alienation from the European institutions because of the hegemonic control. Therefore, to accommodate the ethnic difference, the Račan government changed the policy from nationalisation to

decentralisation. They created a new legal framework for minority rights by establishing the national minorities' councils, the national minorities' proportional representation in the state administration bodies, and supervisory mechanisms (Petsinis 2013, 12-13). In 2004, HDZ leader Ivo Sanader invited the main Croatian Serb minority party to the new governing coalition, and Milorad Pupovac, as a leader of the Croatian Serb party, helped to convince the improvement of the Serbian minorities' situation (ESI 2014, 5).

Another obstacle was the negative perception among parts of the Croatian public about the unfair treatment and double standards during the accession process. Several reasons can be given as examples. Before the June 2004 European Council meeting, Italy and Slovenia threatened Croatia to give veto the upcoming candidate status in the EU decision because of the declaration by Croatian Sabor of an Ecological and Fisheries Protection Zone in the Adriatic Sea on 3 October 2003. For Italy, the ecological part was a risk of pollution from the oil-full tankers headed towards the Italian port of Trieste. However, Italy was mainly upset about the possibility of reducing the fishing of Italian fishers in the Adriatic. For Slovenia, there was also the risk of pollution in the Slovenian port of Koper, but the main problem was the delineation of the sea border in Piran Bay in the Adriatic (Roter and Bojinović 2005, 452). Between December 2008 and November 2009, Slovenia blocked the opening of eight chapters and closed three. The Slovenian block received significant media coverage and accused of undermining Croatian accession (Šeperić 2011, 469). Even though Croatia had the right to declare the zone, likewise the other EU members, in the end, the Croatian government chose to back down and made a fisheries agreement with the EU and accepted Slovenia's request for political compromise rather than strict legal arbitration (ESI 2014, 5). There was a thought that the EU delayed Croatia's accession deliberately with the purpose of acceptance of all other former Yugoslav countries together. Therefore, there was doubt about the EU's decisions on membership. The people started to believe that the decisions made by the discretionary political decisions of great power countries rather than the preparation of a particular country (Skoko 2016, 74-75).

The EU gave special attention to corruption and the rule of law in Croatia. It was an enormous challenge for the Croatian government. The State Attorney's Office for the Suppression of Corruption and Organised Crime (USKOK), established in 2001, started work actively in 2007 with indictments on high-level corruption cases, and significant

dealing occurred in 2009, after the resignation of Prime Minister Sanader. With Jadranka Kosor and his HDZ government, USKOK's court proceedings took place towards several ministers and some high-level officials, and even one of them was Sanader himself (Šeperić 2011, 468). Sanader sentenced to ten years in prison and accused of making illegal financial gains for himself and his party, especially from state-run firms in 2012. Since the independence, this trial has been one of the most significant corruption cases in Croatia (Sigér 2018).

Croatia had to conclude its opening and closing of thirty-five negotiating chapters like the other candidate countries. It increased from 31 to 35 by the EU legislation. Totally there were 127 benchmarks; twenty-three were opening, and 104 were closing benchmarks. One of the most challenging was Chapter 23, “Judiciary and Fundamental Rights” (Šeperić 2011, 467). Together with Chapter 24, “Justice, Freedom and Security”, these two chapters opened late in the negotiation process and were problematic because they required to implementation of numerous reforms. Another late opening chapter was also Chapter 8, “Competition Policy”. Because this chapter was particularly sensitive and needed restructuring in the metal and shipbuilding sector (Butković and Samardžija 2014, 97-98). The main problem was the state aid for these sectors. The implementation of restructuring was problematic because it had to confront the global crisis of 2008 and the expectation of bankruptcy and liquidation by the end of 2011. Therefore, Croatia had to conclude negotiations, train civil servants, and build new institutions amid a global economic crisis and budgetary tightness (Šeperić 2011, 468).

While accession negotiations with Croatia continued after 2008, expectations for the future in Europe were quite different. It was no longer a transitional process that needed to be anchored. Instead, it diverted to a rescue from the crisis. Even though Croatia had a slow pace in terms of the benchmarks, the EU's pressure significantly impacted Croatian policymaking (Sigér 2018, 13). According to the 2008 Progress Report of the European Commission, the overall progress of Croatia was good, and, in March 2008, EC President Barroso stated that, as a part of the 2008 Enlargement package, if Croatia fulfils a set of conditions, Commission will present an indicative timetable for the technical conclusion of the negotiations in 2009 (European Commission 2008, 5). In addition, the handling of EU funding provided to Croatia under the PHARE and IPA programs severely needed improvement (Sigér 2018, 13-14).

The 2009 Progress Report stated that the final stage could reach by the end of 2009 if Croatia fulfils all the necessary conditions and the overall progress aligns with the roadmap (European Commission 2009). However, Chapters 23 and 8 were not in line with the roadmap. The negotiations resumed and completed in June 2011. In December, the council announced Croatia would become an EU member (Cerruti 2014, 781-782).

In the referendum on Croatia's accession to the EU in January 2012, only 43.5 percent of the electorate voted, and 66 percent wanted to join. After the 1991 referendum on independence, this was the second one. Finally, after nine years of negotiations, on 1 July 2013, Croatia became the twenty-eighth member of the EU. For the first time, Croats gave a vote for the European Parliament in April 2013 and elected twelve members. However, only 20.8 percent of the voters went to the polls. That was one of the lowest percentages of voters for the European Parliament elections. The citizen was misinformed, which was the main reason because this election was only one year old (Šabić 2014, 83). Yet, this was the first election and coming to this stage took lots of effort and time. This low interest of the citizens wondered about the continuation of the 'Euroscepticism' of the people during the accession. According to Bozo Skoko's (2016, 78-80) survey research on the Croatian public's perception of the EU on the eve of the accession, Croats generally have assumed quite a positive perception wherefore fight against corruption, quality education, erasing boundaries, openness and other good benefits. On the other hand, they also noticed its shortcomings. Their past biases, like "European institutions are dominated by the interests of large and powerful states", were still present (Skoko 2016, 79). In the 2014 elections, it only rose 5 percent compared to 2013. Five years later, it again rose 5 percent with 29.85 percent attendance. Croatian percentages are not the least one compared to other EU members. In the list that the European Parliament shared, in the 2019 elections, the attendance of the citizens who were lower than 30 percent was in order; Croatia, Slovenia, Czechia and Slovakia. Thus, Croatia was not the only small post-communist state with prejudices against the EU.

During the accession process, the Croats had big expectations from being an EU member, but after one year of EU membership, they had mixed feelings because economic problems at that time and slowing reforms did not answer their expectations. Their everyday life was the same. This is understandable, as the EU's benefits are often long-term (Samardžija 2016, 131-132). In 2016, after three years of membership, the

Croats still did not feel deeply integrated. Building Bridges Paper of Croatia (2016) shows that Croatian citizens considered EU membership to receive certain benefits like accessing EU funds. Their view was more realistic way, and they were aware of the limitation of its capacity to influence EU policymaking.

Croatia's membership impacted the other countries in the region concerning the EU's neighbouring policy, which could bring a contribution to stability and security. Croatian support for further enlargements to include other Western Balkan countries was above the average of the EU at 61 percent to 39 percent. The reason was similar because this is a national interest in protecting peace and prosperity in the region. Also, Croatia can mitigate some open issues with its neighbours (Šabić and Borić, Croatia- An expanding Learning Curve 2016). Croatia's transition went from war to peace, and as a country that competed successfully in the negotiations within the Stabilisation and Association Process influenced other countries in the region.

As the newest EU member, Croatia has had a demanding position. Due to its obligation to supervise 2,374.9 km of land border and 948 km of the maritime border, Croatia wanted to join the Schengen area (Samardžija 2016, 139-140). The government then tried to complete the Schengen *acquis*. In October 2019, the European Commission said Croatia had met all required criteria to enter the Schengen Zone. Even though they heavily criticised Croatia for its brutal treatment of migrants (Schengen Visa News 2021). On 8 December 2022, Croatia announced that it would join the Schengen area on 1 January 2023 (Schengen Visa News 2022).

Alongside the good achievements, Croatia's democratic situation has been on the decline, especially in the period from 2013 to 2018. Dario Cepo (2020) claims the period was Croatia's democratic backsliding because of its shift towards illiberal practices in the 1990s. In wartime and transition, Croatia's semi-presidential system of government, which Tuđman and HDZ supported, offered an appropriate institutional setting for the authoritarian regressions in the method and nature of political decision-making in the 1990s. Along with these, the absence of alternative power and constellation of mixed party system caused democratic backwardness. Until 2015, the political system was stable between HDZ and Social Democratic Party (*Socijaldemokratska Partija Hrvatske*, SDP). However, after 2015, SDP had the weakest position, and even though HDZ still maintained its dominance, it was also losing voters to new right-radical parties. That

shows the disintegration signs of stability. The rise of anti-establishment populist parties threatened stability. These newly established parties criticised the political elite for being unskilled and corrupt, but their political agenda was complex. Because they also advocated alliances with the elites, they criticised for implementing reforms and bringing prosperity (Čepo 2020, 3-4).

The left-right ideological divide and the cultural sphere of politics are the main sources of contention in Croatian politics. These concerns are related to immigration policy, World War II memory, and lack of trust in the electoral system (Čepo 2020, 5). The controversial issue of immigration policy was linked to being an EU member. During the accession process, the Croatian government struggled to adopt the EU's minority policy and, as a country with some problems with former immigrants, was sceptical of new ones. After the Syrian Civil War, the total number of immigrants and refugees who entered the country to pass Western Europe was 658,068 between September 2015 and March 2016. Croatia was a transit country, so immigrants from Croatia were directed first to Hungary and then to Slovenia. That was a heavy burden for the government regarding the organisation of transportation and accommodation. Croatia was preparing for the parliamentary elections in November 2015 when the crisis began. The Social Democratic government, led by then-Prime Minister Zoran Milanović, characterised the situation in terms of both humanity and the country's national security concerns. As the election approached, the government had to demonstrate that it could handle the situation because the opposition might easily seize on any incapacitation. The issue of immigration immediately became the centre of the political agenda in diverse ways. Croatia would do its part, contributing to the orderly and humanitarian transit of refugees through its borders, but would not allow itself to become a hotspot for migrants, a prospect feared and deeply opposed by the opposition. The government aimed to demonstrate that Croatia could assist refugees and was responsible for doing so. Overall, the citizens and the media have responded positively to the refugees concerning their past experiences. However, security concerns grew in the media after the November terrorist attacks in Paris and the harassment attacks in Cologne on New Year's Eve (Šabić and Borić 2016, 11-13). The HDZ used the crisis to attack the SDP government over concerns about national security weakness. Also, Croatia has used the migration crisis to demonstrate its importance at the EU's external borders.

The most critical consideration is the collective memory and cultural trauma of World War II and Croatia's war of independence, also known as the Homeland War, in the 1990s. The main components were the public reaction to the ICTY decision in 2017, the Bleiburg commemoration for World War II and the Victory and Homeland Thanksgiving Day. It is all about reinterpreting the brutality of the Second World War and confronting the past with controversial aspects of the war campaigns on Croatian soil in 1995. As criteria of the accession, Croatia had to deliver war criminals to the ICTY, even though the war veterans' march and opposition. In 2013, six Bosnian Croats got sentenced to 111 years imprisonment for many criminal reasons, including joint criminal enterprise. Their main accusation was the ethnic cleansing of Bosnian Muslims, so Croatia founded guilty of being an accomplice. During the UN war crimes appeal trial in November 2017, one of the sentenced Bosnian Croats, Former General Slobodan Praljak, drank poison in the Hague while the decision was reading after he claimed he was not a criminal (Ozturk 2017). This event influenced the Croatian public and the media. Their reaction was a strong outcry in the media and demand for revision of the ICTY decision, even if it was impossible. In the Croatian parliament, they held a minute of silence for Praljak. Prime Minister Andrej Plenković insisted on their anguish and decided to disregard the decision of the ICTY ruling, but when warned by some EU capitals, he changed his rhetoric. The reaction of the EU members would not be the same if the Prime Minister of Croatia would react like that during the accession (Šabić 2019, 180).

In 2016, after a short break, a commemoration was resumed for the victims of the mass killings carried out by the Yugoslav army in the fields near Bleiburg, a town in the Austrian Corinthian region, at the end of the Second World War. The commemoration was under the auspices of the Croatian Parliament. During the Bleiburg commemoration, some Ustaše symbols and chanting of the Ustaše salute "*Za dom spremni*" (Ready for the Home(land)) took place. Austrian local authorities criticised the annual event in Bleiburg in April was abused to display fascist symbols. The Austrian interior ministry took stricter measures, including Nazi salutes and fascist symbols, including Al-Qaida and ISIS, to prevent the events. However, the organisers did not or could not effectively control these displays. The relativisation of past crimes distorted the core values Croatia claims to have espoused (Šabić 2019, 180-181).

Another critical issue of democratic backsliding was the lack of trust in the electoral system of the Croats. Some of their criticisms were that the electoral system supported the most significant political parties and was not reflected in the demonstrations due to unnatural electoral units and the underrepresentation of other parties. Even electoral engineering has been criticised. The electoral registry was one of the significant legitimacy issues that concerned the people. Legitimacy issues have doubted all elections in the country because of the lack of a single electoral registry. The number of people on the electoral rolls was the criticism of the people. While some argued that there were more voters in Croatia than living, others found that many people on the electoral rolls had no identity, lived in addresses that did not exist, and were even found dead while voting in some electoral rolls. The electoral law on the national level was the same and has not been changed since the membership (Čepo 2020,6-7). So, the EU membership did not contribute as expected on that part.

Croatia's "Victory and Homeland Thanksgiving Day" (VHTD) is a state-sponsored event commemorating the 1995 recapture of Croatian lands and the end of the Yugoslav war in Croatia. Every year on August fifth, with a live broadcast show, Croatian people participate and are encouraged symbolically in the holiday and identify with the story being told. Croatia had to recreate itself politically and culturally after the war while also building a barrier from Yugoslavia's history. Collective war memories are active during state commemorations, play a vital role in nation-building and function as a reference point in creating national identity (Bruno 2019, 2). This event provides a confrontation with the past, but in a nationalistic way. The identity of being a European or EU member and Europeanisation cannot erase Croatia's nationalist identity. The people's and politicians' reactions in 2017, also a celebration of the VHTD, show that they somehow resisted the notion given to them by the EU.

Since Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina gained their independence, the bilateral relations between these countries have been very dynamic and variable regarding constructivism and turmoil. Undoubtedly, the military confrontation between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1993-1994 and historical and political problematic relations are the heaviest burdens of the countries' relationship. The most controversial issues in Croatia's relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina are the negotiations and agreements between Franjo Tuđman, the president of Croatia, and Slobodan Milošević, the president

of Serbia, regarding the division of Bosnia and Herzegovina between neighbouring states after the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, there have been periods when both parties have engaged in exceptionally positive activities. That is partly due to Croatia's presidential terms of Stjepan Mesić and Ivo Josipović. Under Mesić's administration from 2000 to 2010, Croatia underwent a pragmatic transformation as the governmental structure attempted to rid the burden of its destructive policies towards Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1991 to 1994. The approval of inter-state relations in both Croatia and BH and the suppression of the influence of nationalist movements characterised the change. Mesić endorsed the principle that Bosnian Croats should return to Sarajevo, not Zagreb (Subašić 2020, 59-60). In addition, in April 2010, Josipović apologised for the wartime policies of Croatia and the attitudes in the 1990s in general. He said, "I am deeply sorry that the Republic of Croatia has contributed to that with its policies in the 1990s. .. that the then Croatian policy has contributed to the suffering of people and divisions which still burden us today." (Arslanagic 2010). On the other hand, the HDZ politicians and some of the Croatian public heavily criticised both Josipović and Mesić. Also, there were some unresolved interstate issues. Both countries' parliaments had never ratified the 1999 Treaty on the State Border between the countries, and both countries have submitted later requests for border reviews. Another unresolved problem is Bosnia and Herzegovina's right to create corridors for free access to international waters under the Law of the Sea. The other controversial issue is the status of properties located in Croatia but owned by Bosnian citizens and companies. Bosnia and Herzegovina have returned all the property to Croatia in accordance with an earlier bilateral agreement, but Croatia has not done. The institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina share some of the guilt for this situation because they did not properly address the restitution issue and the incapacity of the officials (Subašić 2020, 60-61). So, the war still creates problems between these two countries even though there was a peace attempt in the relationship.

After the global economic and monetary crisis, the EU focused on more internal matters than enlargement. Croatia became the first country in Stabilisation and Association Process that concluded with EU membership. The process took more than a decade. After the independence, Croatia's orientation was not on accession. Its foreign policy was focused on dismissing any relation with former Yugoslav countries, in opposition to the Regional Approach Policy of the EU. Eventually, during the Tuđman's

rule, there was an ultimate distance between Croatia and Europe. However, after Tuđman, Croatia's foreign policy completely changed, and long-time preparations started for EU membership. In the beginning, the main struggle was the ICTY trials, and discussions about the trials surfaced from time to time, even after the process was over. The other obstacles were the past Balkan policy, minority relations that left from the homeland war, corruption and the rule of law, land border distributions, the public thought on double standards and unfair treatment of the EU, and thirty-five negotiating chapters. After a long time of dealing with the struggles, Croatia became a member of the EU in 2013. The quick changes became unrealistic, and unresolved issues continued to exist. After the accession, past problems came again. In 2015, the monopoly of the HDZ government re-established. The primary source of the democratic decline was the structural weakness established during the independence after Yugoslavia. The EU membership, instead of developing democracy, resulted in backsliding. Also, the Homeland War legacy brought Croatia unerasable tragedy and traces of my fascism. However, after the accession, there were improvements in other areas. Croatia could achieve most of its goals, became a member of the Eurozone, and joined the Schengen area on 1 January 2023.

4.3 Comparison of the Accession and Integration Process of Slovenia and Croatia

Slovenia and Croatia were the pioneers in getting independence from the Socialist Federation of Yugoslavia. From then, their path to the EU had significant changes. Before the recognition of its independence in 1992, Slovenia wasted no time after its independence aimed at EU membership. In the 1980s, its reforms were in the direction of the European context. Slovenia was a part of the Big Bang enlargement so in a favourable climate. While the Slovenian independence war took ten days, Croatia was at war between 1991 to 1995. The EU accession path of Croatia only could start in 2000, after Tuđman's rule and his isolationist foreign policy. Besides, enlargement fatigue was an important issue for the delay of the accession progress of many countries. The speed of the negotiations was affected negatively. Thus, Croatia became the only country among the other Western Balkan countries that managed to become a member. Croatia had to deal with additional demands and complete the Stabilisation and Association Process. Moreover, just a few months before starting the negotiations, there was disappointment

over the failure of the Constitutional Treaty in 2005 (Bojinović Fenko and Urlić 2015, 112). In this context, the two states were comparable in terms of the political and domestic institutional setting to include criteria for political participation. However, their starting point for the application was in a different environment, which was a significant difference.

When Slovenia declared independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, the central authority in Belgrade was minimally opposed. However, as Croatia declared its own independence, concerns about the Serb minority within Croatia's borders turned the division of Yugoslavia into a war of nationalism. Croatia's accession to the EU was more complex than previous processes, as the country was at the centre of post-Yugoslav wars and disputes. The intense military conflict lasted from 1991 to peace in 1995. Thousands of people were killed while leaders like Tuđman manipulated the media to promote ethnic politics and maintain ethnic and national differences among Yugoslav states. Having experienced major conflicts has made its democratisation and Europeanisation much more difficult regarding the society's defensive nationalist reaction toward the war.

As a common approach, both countries chose to become 'away from the Balkans'. Their reason was first sustaining the separation from Yugoslavia and second, the exclusionary view of Europeans towards the Balkans. Croatia would finally and definitively surpass the Balkans by becoming part of Europe. One of the main claims of Croatian nationalist rhetoric that Croatia was not a Balkan country but a Central European country would finally come true. However, the EU insisted on a 'back to the Balkans' approach with the Regional Approach Policy. That caused great doubts about membership in Croatia. On the other hand, the defensive nationalism of Slovenia smoothly adopted the situation and turned it into its benefit by being a bridge country.

Substantial differences can be seen when comparing the application of political participation criteria for both countries. According to the 1997 and 2004 European Commission reports, the issue of minority rights and the protection of migrants and refugees was analysed more in Croatia than Slovenia. The consideration of minorities in education, culture, minorities representation in judicial bodies, parliamentary elections, and media was mentioned more in Croatian reports. On the other hand, the 'erasure' case in Slovenia the Commission addressed in 1998 but settled in 2012. So, the problem could resolve after the accession with the payment of damages to individuals who suffered

prejudice. Moreover, Chapter 23, “Judiciary and Fundamental Rights,” was added to the *acquis* after Slovenia. That was one of the most challenging chapters to close for Croatia (Bojinović Fenko and Urlić 2015, 115-116).

One of the obstacles that Croatia had to manage was the war legacy. Croatia claimed itself as a victim of the war, and Croatian nationalists argued that the EU was too passive in the war period, which was a disappointment. The Victory and Homeland Thanksgiving Day displays the Croatian view of the war as the winner but also as a victim. Initially, cooperation with the ICTY of the Tuđman era was limited. When the management changed, the new government tried to resolve the issue, but also there was a dilemma. Former Generals escaped from the trial, and there was support from war veterans. The Croatian government was under pressure from both sides, and in the end, this case has settled, but it took quite some time. According to the research of Ana Bojinović Fenko and Ana Urlić (2015, 120), the Council of Europe Conclusions’ content analysis reveals that Croatia received four references to “further changes needed,” “full cooperation with the ICTY,” and “take necessary actions,” but none for Slovenia. In Croatia, the public initially did not react much to the ICTY decisions. It had to happen because the goal was membership, and the commission was strict. However, in 2017, after former General Slobodan Praljak's suicide in front of the cameras, the public reaction was different. Even Prime Minister Andrej Plenković reacted to the trials. However, as a response, there were just warning by the EU states. The attitude of the EU would be different during the accession. In the case of Slovenia, there was full cooperation of Slovenia, and this issue did not have that much importance (United Nations 2006).

Both countries faced bilateral demands from their neighbouring EU member states. Slovenia dealt with three conditions of Italy. The border issue had historical reasons, and Slovenia was able to manage the situation in its favour. Because the Treaty of Osimo was legit, going out of it would also question other parts. The Council of Europe answered Italy's demand for minority rights negatively, and the Council stated that on some occasions, Slovenia's attitude towards the minorities' standard of living was a role model. The other issue was the compensation for the past Italian properties on Slovenian territory that must leave during the Second World War. Italy insisted on this issue by saying this would be proof of Slovenia's Europeanness. After the Spanish compromise, Italy signed the Europe Agreement. In the context of Austria, Slovenia only could accept

its propositions. Regarding the Krško nuclear plant safety concerns, Austria claimed that it would not accept the closing of Chapter 14, the energy. This issue closed after Slovenia introduced new precautions. Another issue concerned the status of the German-speaking community. Finally, Slovenia signed the Cultural Agreement proposed by Austria on April 30, 2001 (Bojinović Fenko and Urlić 2015, 122-124).

In the case of Croatia, the first demand was about the Ecological and Fisheries Protection Zone in the Adriatic Sea. Italy was concerned about the possibility of reducing the fishing of Italian fishermen, and Slovenia considered the delineation of the sea border between Croatia. Italy and Slovenia were seeking on European solution with an agreement. After the blocks of Slovenia on specific chapters, Croatia delayed the proclamation of the zone. The other issue was also with Slovenia. The border dispute conflict between the two countries lasted quite a long time. Thomas Bickl (2021), in his book, divided the process of the border dispute conflict into four: the bilateral phase between 1992 to 2007, the Croatian EU accession negotiations term in 2007 and 2008, the arbitral proceedings between 2012 to 2017, lastly, violation action brought by Slovenia to the EU Court of Justice against Croatia between 2018 to 2020. If we look at the first two phases, the relations between Slovenia and Croatia caused a slowdown in the accession process of Croatia. The first attempt to solve the conflict happened in 2001, with the Initialled Draft Agreement, signed by Prime Ministers Janez Drnovšek and Ivica Račan. However, the draft agreement did not enter into force, first of all, The Foreign Affairs Committee of the Croatian Parliament did not accept it. After that, Prime Ministers Janez Janša and Ivo Sanader agreed on the Bled Agreement in 2007. This agreement also failed because of the debate on substantive issues of the mandate for judicial adjudication (Bickl 2021, 139-146).

Succession-related Issues	Post-Independence Issues
• Disagreements over the nuclear plant in Krško regarding ownership, waste management, profit from electricity production, and timespan of the plant. • Open question on the border demarcation to be solved by international arbitration.	• Slovenia threatened to veto the EU decision to give Croatia the status of a candidate country because of the proclamation by the Croatian Parliament, on 3 October 2003, of an Ecological-Fishing Protection Zone in the Adriatic. Disputes delayed until the conclusion of a new partnership on fisheries agreement between Croatia and the EU. • Slovenian blockade of EU-negotiation chapters' closure because of Croatian unilateral documentation production – resolved in November 2009. • 2013 dispute before Slovenian ratification of Croatian EU accession treaty.

Table 1. Bilateral Relations of Slovenia and Croatia, adapted by Bojinović Fenko and Šabič, From the Balkans to Central Europe and Back: The Foreign Policy of Slovenia 2014

When Croatia included the border proposal in the maps submitted during the EU accession process without explicitly marking the disputed status of the relevant parts of the border, Slovenia perceived the documents as a possible reason for prejudicing the settlement of the border dispute between the two countries. As a result, thirteen chapters of Croatian negotiations were blocked by Slovenia. In 2009, the conflict was settled with the mediation of the Swedish Prime Minister, and as a result of the 2010 referendum, Slovenia lifted the blockade on the chapters (Bojinović Fenko and Urlić 2015, 127-128). So one of the obstacles and delays was the relations between Croatia and Slovenia. Even in 2013, before the membership, Croatians were in fear of Slovenia's prevention of their long-time plan to become an EU member. Denis Romac, a political analyst in the Croatian newspaper Novi, stated that being the only post-Yugoslavian state in the EU is in favour of Slovenia because, besides the symbolism, it is also advantageous economically. He said, "Slovenia was the EU's gateway to the western Balkans, and Ljubljana profited from that a lot. Now that lucrative role will be taken over by Croatia." because Croatians kept promoting that they will become "the bridge between the EU and the western Balkans" which Slovenia used a lot (Kreizer 2013). Their bilateral relations with each other are shown in Table 1.

In the comparison of the public perception during the negotiations, the support of the public towards the EU started similarly. In the beginning, people were excited about their future in the EU in both countries. For Slovenians, accession to the EU had become a national project since independence. Their Euroscepticism began after certain adaptations. The three most critical issues were the Spanish Compromise, the closure of duty-free shops on the Austrian and Italian border, and the free movement labour transition process. However, this doubt was not reflected in the votes of the accession referendum. In Croatia, the disappointments of the Croatians began during the war after the independence when the EC did not give the support they expected. During the accession, the Croatians accused the EU of unfair treatment and double standards. The main reasons were Croatia's problems with Italy and Slovenia and the EU's attitude towards them.

Besides differences, Slovenia and Croatia had something in common that influenced their accession to the EU: they had the support of Germany and Austria. Germany became the first great power to recognise their independence only six months later their declaration. Serbian media claimed that "Germany, for the third time this century, assumed the right to chart the map of Europe" they assumed that was a part of the plan for Germany to dominate Europe. However, Germany defended their recognition as the best way to halt Serbian aggression towards its neighbours was the recognise them internationally (Silber 1991). Also, Germany sent aid to Croatia during the early post-war reconstruction effort (Bartlett 2006, 98). Like Germany, Austria defended their recognition towards other EC member states at that time (Anderson 1995, 20). Regarding the EU membership, despite the bilateral dispute issues, Austria strongly supported their accession. There were rumours from 2001 that Austria sought to support a "former Habsburg caucus," Vienna has demonstrated an appreciation for the concerns of smaller EU countries, such as the maintenance of cultural identity (Cox 2005, 170). German Chancellor Angela Merkel stated that during their six months presidency of the EU starting from 1 January 2007, their national priority "reiterated support for Croatia's admission to the EU." (Government of the Republic of Croatia 2006).

Based on the above analysis, the accession process of Slovenia and Croatia was different from the beginning regarding the EU's changing enlargement policy. Slovenia's accession process was not limited to the Association Agreement it signed. There were

additions like the bilateral demands from the EU member neighbours. For Croatia, with the effect of enlargement fatigue, the Stabilisation and Association Process became more detailed and broad. There were also additions to the Croatian process with unexpected bilateral relations. Slovenia was the main country with which Croatia had to deal. European Commission's political conditionality imposed on Slovenia was only regional cooperation in Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe and Southeastern European Cooperative Initiative, while there were few conditions for Croatia. The most significant conditions brought forward were the fundamental rights of minorities, full collaboration with the ICTY and regional cooperation in the Western Balkans. Consequently, the differences in the accession process between Slovenia and Croatia were due not only to Croatia's past or the pace of reforms but also to the EU's experience from past enlargements. The additional conditions and the scepticism of the further enlargements of the EU resulted in the main difference between Slovenia and Croatia's accession process. However, the research also shows the importance of preparation. While, in the case of Croatia, there were upsides and downs in progress, the Slovenian road was always straight. That was also because of the results of Croatia's strict ethnic nationalism and Slovenian smooth defensive nationalism during the transitions in the accession process.

CONCLUSION

The study analysed the reasons for the different EU accession processes regarding the nine-year time difference after Slovenia and Croatia gained independence from Yugoslavia. The scholars the study benefited from had the same idea that "Slovenia had a smooth accession process". Also, some called Slovenia's progress a "textbook example" and Slovenia "a star pupil". About the timeline of Slovenia's accession process, Slovenia applied for membership in 1996 and signed the Europe Agreement, the negotiations concluded in 2002, and the EU accession referendum happened in 2003 with a result of 89,6 percent support. Then Slovenia joined the EU in 2004. So, the entire process took eight years. And then Slovenia became a member of the Eurozone in January 2007, and its full participation in the Schengen area was in December 2007.

On the other hand, Croatia's process took a long time than Slovenia's. However, Croatia has been noticed as a prosperous country because it could still achieve membership among the other Balkan states. About the timeline, Croatians applied for membership in 2003, but the official discussions began in 2005. The negotiations concluded in 2011, the referendum resulted in 66 percent support in 2012, and Croatia became a member in 2013. Also, Croatia became a member of the Eurozone very recently and joined the Schengen area on January 1, 2023. So, the accession process took almost ten years. Before the accession process, applying for membership after the independence also took ten years and then joining the Eurozone, the Schengen area took ten more years. Therefore, Croatia's EU-related processes took a longer time than Slovenia's.

In the context of the reasons for the time difference, the study's main expectation was the Yugoslavian legacy's impact on the accession process. The thesis first analysed nationalism in Yugoslavia. When a community disintegrates, its reasons are questioned, whether it is an expected situation or not, and finally, it is decided whether it is the fate of that community. In the context of the SFRY, the territorial crises, unsolved conflicts, economic problems and dominance competitions, there were many reasons for the collapse. The history of Yugoslavia started with the "one people with different names" and ended with the battlefield. The First World War had a critical place in the establishment of the union in terms of the common framework of war culture, new

national understanding, and political legitimacy. The states' nationalist identities fought for their entity. Unity was the only way. 'One people' idea had a historical background. The Illyrianism movement during the nineteenth century was the first step of Yugoslavian nationalism. The poets used that later with the language importance for protecting the national identity under the dual monarchy. However, John R. Lampe (1996, 4) claimed that "its creation was a mistake from the start" because of its "two incarnations" and the artificial creation. The Second World War reshaped the unity, the first one replaced with Socialist Yugoslavia under the rule of Tito. The Socialist period was the golden era of Yugoslav unification, even though the period was full of unresolved national issues, underdevelopment, disparities inside, and a lack of the rule of law. Considering the stability of the region's instabilities, it remained for thirty-five years with a unique way of communism. In the case of Slovenia and Croatia, their different experiences can also be seen in this period. While Croats were trying to emphasise their national interest with revolts, Slovenians, on the other hand, were demanding replacing the economic regulations and sharing their industrial concerns. However, in the end, the first seeds of the collapse started with Slovenia, the result of the type of nationalism Slovenia had. Slovenian nationalism continued as "defensive nationalism" inside Yugoslavia with an effort to preserve its language, culture, religion, economic development, and national identity. In Croatia, the situation was different. Croats were more aggressive in the ethnic division and resisted Serbian power. It eventually resulted in a civil war with the national armed forces. The study defined Croatian nationalism in this sense as "ethnic nationalism". The different understanding of nationalism of the countries was one of the Yugoslavia-related issues.

This study analysed the critical phases of the foreign policy development of Slovenia and Croatia after the independence. Their stages were similar but in diverse progress. As mentioned above, Slovenia managed the independence process and could do it more smoothly than others. Until coming to this process, Slovenia prepared itself with reforms and plans. Slovenia adopted Western-type democracy immediately when it gained its independence. Also, the economic and institutional transition can be seen even before the independence. Since Slovenia did not experience a struggling independence process compared to others, the Slovenian public's thoughts towards the EU continued positively after independence. Meanwhile, Croatia was considering ethnic conflicts,

which eventually turned to war. After the independence, primarily because of the homeland war, its preparations could not happen like the Slovenians. The conflict between the states only could resolve in 1995. Croatia also had a developed economy, and the Croatian public had a pro-European vision like the Slovenes. However, the Croatian public and politicians were disappointed about the EC's support during wartime. However, Euroscepticism also took place in Slovenia after ten years of membership. As small states inside the EU, both countries had struggles which caused Euroscepticism more.

When Croatia followed Slovenia about independence, their later plans were also similar. Their political leaders shared parallel discursive visions of Europe. Therefore, looking briefly at their joint plans: the first step was disassociating itself from the former Yugoslavia. The second step was to differentiate itself from the other Balkan state as European. The last step was seeking membership in Euro-Atlantic institutions.

In the accession process, even Slovenia chose the "away from the Balkans" approach immediately after the independence, with the claim of the EU its approach became "back to the Balkans". The shift happened smoothly, and Slovenia turned it into its successful initiative of "being a bridge between the Western Balkans and the EU." As a small country, Slovenia could manage the demanding situations with that strategy even it immediately had to deal with presidencies. Like Slovenia, Croatia also decided to "away from the Balkans", the former Yugoslav states. President Franjo Tudjman was aggressively against the Regional Approach Policy of the EU and chose an isolationist foreign policy. Because of that and some unresolved problems, the relations between Croatia and the EU froze after the independence period. After the death of Tudjman new government was pro-European, and preparations only could start at the beginning of the 2000s. The Balkan policy changed. The isolation in Tudjman's rule was not an option anymore, and the government expressed their new vision to the Balkans. But the problem was more than that policy. There were more related issues with the Balkan states.

The other issue was the war criminals and their trials in Hague, the ICTY. Croatian ethnic nationalism played a vital role in the nation-building process after independence. HDZ, which was the governing party at the time of its independence, maintained its power under Tuđman with a wartime perspective. Ethnic conflicts in Yugoslavia came forward in the Homeland war. The new pro-European government tried to deal with the results of

the war, firstly with the trials. However, there was a dilemma in the government about the delivery of the criminals because of the protests of the war veterans and the possible public reaction in general. With the declaration of the Tribunal, Croatia's accession process could officially start in 2005. Therefore, this issue caused a delay and caused later problems even during the membership period. The Council of Europe Conclusions' content analysis reveals that Croatia received four references to "further changes needed," "full cooperation with the ICTY," and "take necessary actions," but none for Slovenia.

When we look at the relations of the two states with the minorities, there were problems in both. However, the EU saw Croatia's issues as more problematic because they resulted in the war and complications after. The main point to note between Slovenia and Croatia was the amount of ethnic population in their countries. Only two percent of Serbs lived in Slovenia, while twelve percent were in Croatia. Especially for this reason, the independence process was not as easy as the Slovenes. When we look at the percentages, only ten percent of the Slovene population had different ethnicities in 1991, while in Croatia, it was 25 percent (Pavkovic 2000, 49). However, during wartime, numerous refugees came to Slovenia. The defensive nationalism of Slovenia caused a new refugee policy, which resulted in the "erased" issue. "25671 persons were affected by the 'erasure' because they did not apply for Slovenian citizenship" before the deadline (Council of Europe 2022). Although the "erased" issue caused discussions inside and outside the country, it did not prevent Slovenia's membership. On the other hand, Croatia's minority issues became a significant obstacle to its accession process. The topics discussed with the EU were the record of allowing refugees to return to Croatia and the improvement of the Serbian minorities' situation.

Regarding bilateral relations, Slovenia was the primary country with which Croatia had to deal. Specifically, the border dispute conflict between the two countries lasted quite a long time. During the conflict, Slovenia blocked thirteen chapters of Croatian negotiations. So, one of the obstacles and delays reason was the relationship between Croatia and its former Yugoslavian partner Slovenia.

These Yugoslavia-related reasons caused differences in Slovenia's and Croatia's accession processes. There were additional problems, such as the "enlargement fatigue" of the EU, and new conditions in accession criteria like Chapter 23, "Judiciary and Fundamental Rights". The EU maintained a different attitude throughout the accession

process, closely observing Croatia's *de facto* compliance with more detailed criteria and a more cautious stance. As with previous enlargements, the negotiation path has been full of difficulties, both due to Croatia's failure to meet certain criteria and to broader issues concerning the overall EU system. The EU's careful attitude towards Croatia related to the EU's suffering from the "enlargement fatigue" of the previous enlargement wave. The scepticism, the democratic decrease in the new member states, and the lingering economic crisis were the main critical issues on the side of the EU. Croatia was the only one that became a member in 2013, unlike the other enlargements. As a result, the Croatian process' different pattern was one of the issues that should be concerned.

Except for the Yugoslavia-related time difference reasons of the two countries' EU accession processes, the study also expected to uncover the role of Europe in the collapse of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by looking at the background of the demise as an external impact. The study aimed to identify the impact of the EC as an external reason. As a result, the attitude of the EC was insufficient to prevent the break, even though they tried to mediate the conflict. However, the main impact was the "return to Europe" signals inside Yugoslavia. The Croatians' disappointment after the independence was coming from this rhetoric. In addition, when Slovenian Parliament, as the pioneer, and then the Croatian Parliament expressed their plan for declaring their independence if there would not be any confederal solution, the EC claimed that they would recognise the independence of Slovenia or Croatia when they agreed with Yugoslavia. The EC even promised loans for quick inclusion in the EC with some conditions. When Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence in 1991, the EC did not recognise them internationally in these circumstances because of the lack of any ceasefire agreement with Yugoslavia. In the case of Slovenia, it did not become too much problem because the Slovenian independence war just took ten days and ended with a ceasefire agreement. However, in the case of Croatia, Europe failed to get the complexity and potential of the crisis at first. Also, there was a lack of unity among the EU members. France and Britain supported the unification of Yugoslavia, while Germany and Austria were on the side of Slovenia and Croatia because of their historical ties. As a result, their lack of unity and achieving a coherent strategy with the absence of any effective military sanction, also their past encouragement founded as the impact of Europe on the collapse of Yugoslav unification.

Based on the analysis, the study reached two general conclusions regarding the reasons for the different EU accession processes. The first conclusion is the impact of the Yugoslav legacy as the main reason for the difference. The second conclusion is the EU's changed attitude toward the enlargement and the additional criteria.

For future studies, firstly, I propose research that aims at finding out about European influence on the collapse of Yugoslavia. Secondly, I recommend research about the role of Germany in the accession of Slovenia and Croatia and the other Western Balkan states' progress in a comparative way regarding Germany's interest in these countries and how it achieved its goal with Slovenia and Croatia but could not with others. Thirdly, there is a lack of research on the comparison of Slovenia's accession process and the other Western Balkan states' processes.

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ÖZGEÇMİŞ			
Adı, Soyadı	SEÇİL		BÜYÜKÇOLPAN
Doğum Yeri ve Yılı			
Bildiği Yabancı Diller	İngilizce		Rusça
Ve Düzeyi	İleri		Başlangıç
Eğitim Durumu		Başlama- Bitirme Yılı	
Lise	2010	2014	Kartal Anadolu İmam Hatip Lisesi
Lisans	2014	2019	İstanbul 29 Mayıs Üniversitesi
Yüksek Lisans	2019	2023	İstanbul 29 Mayıs Üniversitesi
Çalıştığı Kurum (lar)	Başlama Ayrılma Yılı		Çalışılan Kurumun Adı
1.			
2.			
Üye Olduğu Bilimsel ve Mesleki Kuruluşlar			
Katıldığı Proje ve Toplantılar			
Yayınlar:			
Diğer:			
İletişim (e-posta):			
Tarih		10.02.2023	
İmza			
Adı Soyadı		Seçil BÜYÜKÇOLPAN	

