

Timeline: Croatia - A Chronology of key events

<p>BBC http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/1097156.stm (latest access 24 November 2011)</p>	<p>Croatia, the War, and the Future http://www.inavukic.com</p>
	<p>1900 – Croatia is part of Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.</p>
	<p>1914 – Croatia was a part of Austro-Hungarian Empire at the start of WWI (an enemy of the Allies). Many thousands of Croatians working and living at the time in the British Commonwealth countries (Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, South Africa, United Kingdom etc.) were interned in concentration camps throughout the duration of the war as Croatians at the time had Austro-Hungarian citizenship. Those that hadn't died in the camps were deported to country of origin, 1919.</p>
	<p>1915 – The government of the Kingdom of Serbia publicly claimed that it wanted the formation of South Slavic state.</p>
	<p>1917 – Declaration of Corfu – the new state would be a constitutional, democratic, and parliamentary monarchy under the rule of the Serbian Karadjordjevic dynasty (Alexander I, married to British Queen Victoria's great-granddaughter Maria; her mother was Queen consort of Romania and Prince Alfred's daughter. Prince Alfred was Queen Victoria's son, Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha and Duke of Edinburgh).</p>
<p>1918 - Croatia joins the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.</p>	<p>1918 – Alexandar, the Serbian regent and heir to the throne, proclaimed the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. The Croatian Parliament did not confirm the unification, as it had to do. A betrayal of Croatian national interests ensued, which enabled the centralistic, Greater Serbian system to be established in Croatia,</p>
<p>1929 - The Kingdom becomes Yugoslavia.</p>	<p>1929 – Tensions and grave dissatisfaction between different nationalities with the Kingdom reached a peak. Serb deputy in parliament, Punisa Racic, Belgrade, shot down five members of the Croatian Peasant Party including their leader Stjepan Radic.</p> <p>Soon after, King Alexandar abolishes the constitution, proclaims a dictatorship and imposes a new constitution which, among other things, renames the country the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.</p>
<p>1941 - Nazi Germany invades. A "Greater Croatia" is formed, also comprising most of Bosnia and western Serbia. A fascist puppet government is installed under</p>	<p>1941 – Axis powers invade Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which had already been on its "last legs" due to widespread calamitous disenchantments within its</p>

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<p>Ante Pavelic</p> <p>1941 - The regime acts brutally against Serbs and Jews as it seeks to create a Catholic, all-Croat republic. Hundreds of thousands lose their lives.</p>	<p>borders – the Kingdom collapses. Axis powers occupy the land.</p> <p>1941 - The Independent State of Croatia is proclaimed under Ante Pavelic/ supported by Nazi Germany and under Fascist Italian protectorate until Italian capitulation in September 1943.</p> <p>The Independent state of Croatia reclaims its pre-1918 (pre-formation of Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) and historical state and/or Croatian Kingdom borders.</p> <p>Both Croatian and Serbian extreme nationalists (Croatian Ustashi and Serb Chetnik [under leadership of Draza Mihajlovic/ Serbian royalists] movements are armed and supported by the occupying forces within the borders of the former Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Western Allied forces also support Chetnik movement until 1943, then, they turned their support to the communist Partisans.</p> <p>1941 Croatia is split into three differing political/military/guerilla..... forces</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ustashi (pro-Axis) forces led by Ante Pavelic who proclaimed the Independent State of Croatia. The regime acts brutally against Jews, Serbs and Croatians who actively opposed its regime; 2. The Partisans (communist-led antifascist resistance forces, based on pan-Yugoslav ideology, under the command of Croatian-born Josip Broz Tito, spreading quickly into many parts of Yugoslavia). Acted brutally against Croatians who actively opposed its political course, whether aligned with the Ustashi movement or not. 3. Home Guards (Domobrani). Kingdom of Yugoslavia crumbled and hence, Royal Yugoslav Army ceased to represent the conscripted army, The Croatian Home Guards “Domobrani” army was formed of enlisted men who did not participate in Ustashi or Partisan activities. <p>Its duty: to defend Croatia from external and internal enemies. Both Ustashi and Partisans exerted pressures upon the Home Guards to join their sides; The Home Guard forces by end of 1944 were split and scattered – many joined the Ustashi movement, many joined the Partisan forces, many were caught by the</p>

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	<p>Partisans, sent to execution camps or prisons. Hundreds of thousands lose their lives.</p>
<p>1945 - After a bitter resistance campaign by partisans under Tito, Croatia becomes one of the six constituent republics of the Yugoslav socialist federation. Croatia is multi-ethnic.</p>	<p>1945 – After a bitter resistance campaign by partisans under Tito (supported by Allied forces since 1943), Croatia becomes one of the six constituent republics of the communist-led Federative Peoples Republic of Yugoslavia (FNRJ). FNRJ becomes Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) in 1963, still under the rule of the Communist party.</p> <p>Croatia like all states of Yugoslavia is multi-ethnic.</p> <p>State borders of Croatia reflect those under the Kingdom of Yugoslavia i.e. those assigned it in 1918.</p> <p>May 8, 1945, World War II ends with western Allied forces victory. Croatian armed forces (surrendering to the Allied forces) and civilians, who did not want to live under a communist regime, are in exodus in their tens of thousands, seeking refuge in the West.</p> <p>On 13 May 1945, The British 5th Corp has control of Austria refused to accept the surrender of the disarmed Croatian armed forces (Home Guards/Domobrani and Ustashi) and the civilian Croatian refugees in southern Austria, turning them back to Yugoslav Partisans.</p> <p>The Croatian Way of the Cross began. The symbol of the Croatian tragedy is the slaughter of Croats near the city of Bleiburg in Austria. Those who were not killed immediately, were forced to walk up to 700-800 km. (the infamous "death marches") with mass executions on the way, organized mostly by Partisan officers, majority of whom were of Serbian extraction.</p> <p>Tens of thousands Croats are massacred at Bleiburg, Austria, and many more after. Mass graves of Croatians are scattered in their hundreds throughout Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.</p> <p>The numbers of Croatian victims of massacres in the period of the Way of the Cross have been estimated to be between 200,000 and 600,000. Other sources estimate these numbers to be below 200,000 but above 35,000. Hundreds of mass graves of Croatians massacred have been uncovered in Croatia and Slovenia during the last 30 years of 20th Century and into the 21st.</p> <p>(Under communist or antifascists' rule no persons had been indicted for these Communist crimes or crimes</p>

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	<p>committed by Yugoslav antifascists during and after WWII in former Yugoslavia.)</p>
	<p>1946-1962 Communist party under the anti-fascist banner has power in Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia.</p> <p>Majority of key positions in politics, in the army and the economy are held by Serbian nationals.</p> <p>The country's state borders are closed, and tens of thousands of Croatians flee the borders into neighbouring countries' refugee camps (Italy, Austria, Germany...). Those caught by the Yugoslav border patrols are sent to prison or killed.</p> <p>1961/1962 – Yugoslavia opens its state borders. Emigration is now possible. Over the ensuing years hundreds of thousands of Croatians emigrate either in family reunion, economic or political reasons.</p>
	<p>1971 People's movement Croatian Spring. Mass movement in Croatia calling for more rights for Croatia within Yugoslavia.</p> <p>Demands included: greater civil rights for Croatian citizens, the right to take pride in Croatia's history, the abolishment of Serbo-Croatian language and the right to speak/write either in the Croatian OR in the Serbian language, due representation on all major posts in Yugoslavia, proportional to population within the Federation.</p> <p>(By 1969 Serbs held 73.6% of key positions in the Yugoslav administration although their due representation was to be 39.6%/ Croatians held 8.6% although their due representation was to be 22%.</p> <p>At the officers of the Yugoslav People's Army/JNA structure there was 62.5% Serbs and 10.4% of Croats. This overwhelming inequity suffered distrust due to nationalistic leanings.</p> <p>Although Croatia was the largest earner [at least 50% of foreign currency entering Yugoslavia] among the 6 states of Yugoslavia it used only 16.5% while Serbia used 46.6%)</p> <p>Yugoslav Army siege was installed in Zagreb, the capital of Croatia. Many involved in the Croatian Spring, including university students, were persecuted, tortured in police cells, and imprisoned.</p> <p>Public gatherings of more than two people were prohibited for months; historical Croatian folksongs prohibited.</p>

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<p>1980 - Tito dies. The slow disintegration of Yugoslavia begins as individual republics assert their desire for independence.</p>	<p>1980 – Tito dies. The Presidency of Yugoslavia committee is installed. The position of the President of the Presidency is rotational; every 2 years a president from one of the six states.</p> <p>The slow disintegration of Yugoslavia begins as individual republics/states assert their desire for independence.</p>
<p>1989 - Collapse of communism in eastern Europe leads to rise in support for parties with a nationalist programme.</p>	<p>1989 – Collapse of communism in eastern Europe leads to rise in support for parties with a programme to materialise the people’s right to secede from communist Yugoslavia.</p> <p>In June 1989 the Croatian Democratic Union (CDU) movement was founded (Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica/HDZ). Dr Franjo Tudjman as its leader.</p> <p>The Croatian Communist Party (Croatian arm of the Yugoslav Communist Party) was in power.</p> <p>Ethnic composition of Croatia: 78% Croats, 12% Serbs, Slavic Muslims 1%, “Yugoslavs” 2%, Hungarians 0.5%, Italians 0.4%, others (Albanian, Czechs, Ukrainians, Jews, ...) 6%.</p>
<p>1990 - First free elections in Croatia for more than 50 years. The communists lose to the conservative, nationalist HDZ led by Franjo Tudjman.</p>	<p>1990 - May - First free, democratic, general elections in Croatia for more than 50 years.</p> <p>Running major political movements/parties: Croatian Democratic Union, League of Communists of Croatia, Croatian Peasant Party Croatian Socialist Party Coalition of Croatian People’s Accord: Croatian Social-Liberal Party, Croatian Christian-Democratic Party, Croatian Democratic Party, independents -(Savka Dapcevic-Kucar & Miko Tripalo. Minor parties included: Serb Democratic Party, Yugoslav Independent Democratic Party, European Green List, Rijeka Democratic Union</p> <p>The Communist rule ends.</p> <p>Croatian Democratic Union led by dr Franjo Tudjman wins the overwhelming majority of final votes (84.5%). Tudjman in line for President of the Republic of Croatia</p> <p>Stjepan Mesic/ 30 May 1990 – 24 August 1990/ Prime Minister of Croatia</p> <p>December - A new constitution of the Republic of Croatia is proclaimed.</p> <p>(December – the people of Slovenia vote to secede from Yugoslavia/ Slovenia proclaims independence).</p>

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<p>1991 - Croatia declares its independence. Croatian Serbs in the east of the country expel Croats with the aid of the Yugoslav army. By the end of the year, nearly one-third of Croatian territory is under Serb control.</p>	<p>1991 – 19 May – Referendum is held in Croatia on secession from Yugoslavia. The majority of citizens (94%) decided to live in a sovereign state of Croatia. 1991, June 25 – Croatia proclaims its sovereignty and independence from Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia.</p> <p>July – aggression against Croatia by the Serbian paramilitary and Yugoslav Army forces begins in earnest (Slobodan Milosevic at its head), and is brutal and merciless against Croats and other non-Serb population there.</p> <p>Serbs occupy 1/3 of Croatian territory, creating self-proclaimed Serbian Republic of Krajina, occupy Eastern and Western Slavonia, within borders of Croatia.</p> <p>Croatia is engaged in defence of its territory and citizens. Croatian Homeland War begins.</p> <p>1991 Serbs with the aid of the Yugoslav Army terrorise and expel the Croatian population of Western Slavonia and Krajina; roads are blocked, civilians Croatian taken to prisons/ concentration camps in Serbia and within the Serb self-proclaimed territory in Croatia; Croatian Guards and civilians massacred in their hundreds.</p> <p>September - UN imposes arms embargo against Yugoslavia, but the Yugoslav People's Army led by Serbian nationals remains among the strongest in Europe and is well armed.</p> <p>November – fall of Vukovar– Croatian population: most fled, many transported to concentration camps/prisons in Serbia (Begejci, Stajicevo, Sremska Mitrovica, Nis..., hundreds Croats massacred in Vukovar, Skabrnje, Gospic, Glina, Bacin, Bruska, Dalj, Lovas ... massacres by Serbian aggressor</p> <p>December – 15 countries around the world recognise Croatian independence.</p> <p>Serbian-led aggression continues. Nearly one-third of Croatia is under Serb control/occupation.</p> <p>UNHCR reports of 318,000 refugees in Croatia/Croats or other non-Serb population banished, expelled from their homes by Serbs</p> <p>1991 Stjepan Mesic – President of the Presidency of Yugoslavia</p>
<p>1992 - The UN sets up 4 protected areas in Croatia, with 14,000 UN troops keeping Croats and Serbs apart. Croatia also becomes involved in the war in Bosnia-</p>	<p>1992 – (January – Macedonia declares independence from Yugoslavia; April – Bosnia & Herzegovina declare</p>

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<p>Hercegovina (1992-5), supporting the Bosnian Croats against the Bosnian Serbs, then against the Bosniaks (Muslims). Franjo Tudjman is elected president of Croatia.</p>	<p>independence from Yugoslavia. Serbia & Montenegro form the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia with Slobodan Milosevic as its head)</p> <p>January – European Union (EC), Australia and numerous other countries recognise Croatian Independence</p> <p>February – United Nations sets up 4 protected areas in Croatia, with 14,000 UN Peacekeeping troops, primarily in the Serb-occupied regions of Croatia (Krajina & Eastern & Western Slavonia). Later in Prevlaka peninsula near Dubrovnik.</p> <p>April – United States of America recognises Croatian independence/53 countries recognise Croatian independence.</p> <p>Croatia becomes involved in the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, initially supporting Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Muslims against the aggression of Bosnian Serbs, then later supporting Bosnian Croats against Serbs and Muslims (Bosniaks).</p> <p>1992 - May – Croatia becomes member state of United Nations</p> <p>Dr Franjo Tudjman is elected as President of the Republic of Croatia.</p>
	<p>1993 – UN International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) is established in the Hague, Netherlands to process war crimes that took place during the war in former Yugoslavia, particularly in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina.</p> <p>UNHCR - December – refugees, displaced, and expelled persons predominantly of Croatian nationality from Croatia in make-shift accommodation numbered 500,000 (plus 150,000 refugees placed abroad e.g Germany) and some 230,000 from Bosnia & Herzegovina (Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Muslims)</p>
	<p>1994 – May - Stjepan Mesic, ousted as President/Speaker of Croatian Parliament. Month prior he was voted out of membership of the Croatian Democratic Union for attempted coup against dr Franjo Tudjman. Mesic participates in the formation of new political party Croatian Independent Democrats Party (HND).</p>
<p>1995 - Croat forces retake three of the four areas created by the UN. Croatian Serbs flee to Bosnia and Serbia. Tudjman is one of the signatories of the Dayton</p>	<p>1995 – August – Croat forces retake three of the four areas created by the UN/occupied by and named by Serbs as the Serbian Republic of Krajina - Croatian military Operations Storm and Flash</p>

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<p>peace accords ending the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.</p>	<p>liberated the occupied areas.</p> <p>Vast majority of Croatian Serbs flee to Bosnia and Serbia.</p> <p>November – dr Franjo Tudjman is one of the signatories of the Dayton peace accords ending the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The state of Bosnia & Herzegovina was set/divided as the Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina (primarily inhabited by Bosnian Croats and Bosniaks/Muslims) and Serbian Republic (primarily inhabited by Serbs)</p>
<p>1996 - Croatia restores diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia. Croatia joins Council of Europe.</p>	<p>1996 – Croatia restores diplomatic relations with Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (federation of Serbia and Montenegro)</p> <p>November – Croatia becomes the 40th state member of the Council of Europe.</p>
<p>1997 - Tudjman re-elected as president. The EU decides not to invite Croatia to start membership talks, criticising the Tudjman regime's authoritarian tendencies.</p>	<p>1997 – June - Tudjman re-elected as president of the Republic of Croatia.</p> <p>July - Slavko Dokmanovic, Serb, is arrested and sent to the Hague, ICTY – charged among other things for crimes against humanity in relation to 1991 Vukovar massacres (he dies in detention 1998)</p> <p>1997 Stjepan Mesic merges into Croatian People's Party (HNS)</p> <p>Stjepan Mesic –testifies for the ICTY in the case against Tihomir Blaskic as protected witness/testimony not accessible to the public. Blaskic, a Bosnian Croat was convicted for war crimes in Bosnia and sentenced to 45 years imprisonment in 2000. In 2004 most charges found unfounded and Blaskic's sentence reduced to 9 years imprisonment.</p> <p>Widespread distrust of Stjepan Mesic among the Croatian public and politicians. Much bitterness against Mesic developed, many stating that his testimony should not have been secret particularly as it affected Croatia and its defence/war efforts.</p> <p>The EU decides not to invite Croatia to start membership talks, criticising regime's authoritarian tendencies.</p>
<p>1998 - Croatia resumes control over the fourth UN area, Eastern Slavonia.</p>	<p>1998 – January –Croatia, under UN supervision resumes control over the remaining piece of eastern Slavonia under Serb control.</p> <p>March – Ministry of European integration formed within the Croatian Government</p>

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<p>1999 - Tudjman dies.</p>	<p>1999 – December 10 – dr Franjo Tudjman dies in hospital after a lasting battle with illness</p>
<p>2000 - Parliamentary elections in January see Tudjman's HDZ party defeated. The social democrats and social liberals win at the head of a coalition. The new prime minister is Ivica Racan. In February, Stjepan Mesic of the Croatian People's Party wins the presidency. He says he wants Croatia to join Nato and the EU.</p>	<p>2000 - Parliamentary elections in January see Tudjman's HDZ party defeated. The social democrats and social liberals win at the head of a coalition. The new prime minister is Ivica Racan.</p> <p>In February, Stjepan Mesic of the Croatian People's Party wins the presidency. He says he wants Croatia to join NATO and the EU.</p>
<p>2001 February/March - After two weeks on the run during which nationalists organise demonstrations in his support, General Mirko Norac gives himself up to a Croatian court on the understanding that he will not be extradited to face the international war crimes tribunal in The Hague. He is charged with killing Serb civilians in the Croatian city of Gospic in 1991.</p>	<p>2001 – February/March - After two weeks on the run during which nationalists organise demonstrations in his support, Croatian General Mirko Norac gives himself up to a Croatian court on the understanding that he will not be extradited to face the international war crimes tribunal in The Hague. He is charged with killing Serb civilians in the Croatian city of Gospic in 1991 (He was convicted in 2003 by Croatian court and sentenced to 12 years prison/ about 50 Serbs killed).</p> <p>(He was further sentenced in 2003 for 1993 crimes against Serb civilians and soldiers [23 Serb civilians killed and 5 prisoners] in relation to the Serb controlled Medak Pocket in Croatia).</p>
<p>2001 July - Prime Minister Racan survives confidence vote in parliament brought by nationalists opposed to his decision to comply with a request from The Hague tribunal for the extradition of generals Ademi and Gotovina. General Ademi becomes the first person from Croatia to face charges in The Hague by voluntarily appearing before the tribunal. General Gotovina goes into hiding.</p>	<p>2001 July - Prime Minister Racan survives confidence vote in parliament brought by nationalists opposed to his decision to comply with a request from The Hague tribunal for the extradition of generals Rahim Ademi and Ante Gotovina.</p> <p>General Ademi was sought by the Hague in relation to alleged crimes against Serbian civilians and soldiers in Medak Pocket/1991. Ademi voluntarily appeared before ICTY in the Hague; the Hague referred him back to Croatian court/ (Ademi was acquitted of charges in 2008 and acquittal upheld on appeal to Croatian supreme court in 2010).</p> <p>General Gotovina goes into hiding. The Hague insists that he is in hiding in Croatia /Croatian government denies this and mounts extensive searches for Gotovina.</p>
<p>2001 September - The Hague tribunal indicts former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic for war crimes and crimes against humanity in the war in Croatia in the early 1990s.</p>	<p>2001 – September - The Hague tribunal indicts former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic for war crimes and crimes against humanity, including participation in joint criminal enterprise over Croatia/forcible removal of Croatian and other non-Serb population from about 1/3</p>

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	<p>of Croatian territory that he planned to become a part of new Serb-dominated state in the war in Croatia in the early 1990s. (ICTY had also indictments against Milosevic on Kosovo & Bosnia & Herzegovina).</p> <p>(Milosevic died March 2006 in the Hague prison cell/his court hearings - terminated).</p>
<p>2001 December - Yugoslavia returns art works, including Orthodox icons, looted after the fall of the city of Vukovar 10 years earlier.</p>	<p>2001 – October - Croatia signs the EU Stabilisation and Association Agreement.</p> <p>November –Serb Zorana Badic, convicted in absentia for war atrocities in Croatia/1991/Skabrnje massacre, is arrested by Swiss authorities and extradited to Croatia.</p> <p>December Federal Republic of Yugoslavia returns more than 2,000 artworks looted by the Yugoslav Army from Vukovar in 1991, including Orthodox icons (more than 8,000 artefacts were looted/ in 1991 and the remaining 6,000 to be returned later).</p>
<p>2002 April - Foreign Minister Tonino Picula visits Belgrade for talks with his Yugoslav counterpart, the first such visit since independence.</p>	<p>2002 – April- Foreign Minister Tonino Picula visits Belgrade for talks with his Yugoslav counterpart, the first such visit since independence.</p>
<p>2002 July - PM Racan resigns as infighting within the coalition paralyzes economic reform. President Mesic asks him to form a new government.</p>	<p>2002 July - PM Racan resigns as infighting within the coalition paralyzes economic reform. President Mesic asks him to form a new government.</p>
<p>2002 September - Under pressure from nationalists, government declines to hand over retired Gen Janko Bobetko, indicted for war crimes by The Hague tribunal. Health grounds are cited.</p>	<p>2002 September - Under pressure from opposition, government declines to hand over retired Gen Janko Bobetko, indicted for war crimes by The Hague tribunal. Health grounds are cited.</p> <p>2002 - October - NATO and European Union called on Croatia to cooperate with the U.N. War Crimes Tribunal, urging the government to hand over indicted war crimes suspect Gen. Janko Bobetko</p>
<p>2003 February - Croatia submits formal application for EU membership.</p>	<p>2003 – February – Croatia submits formal application for EU membership.</p>
<p>2003 March - Gen Mirko Norac, seen by many Croats as a war hero, sentenced to 12 years for killing of several dozen Serb civilians in 1991.</p>	<p>2003 – March – Croatian Gen Mirko Norac, seen by many Croats at the time as a war hero, sentenced to 12 years in Rijeka court (Croatia) for war crimes against Serb civilians in 1991 in the area of town of Gospic (about 50 Serb civilians were killed in the particular operation Norac was in command of)</p>
<p>2003 April - Death of Gen Bobetko ends controversy</p>	<p>2003 -April - Croatian wartime army chief Janko</p>

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<p>surrounding his extradition to The Hague.</p>	<p>Bobetko (84), hailed at home as a hero of Croatia's 1991 struggle for independence but charged with war crimes by ICTY in the Hague, died.</p>
<p>2003 October - Croatian parliament votes to create ecological zone in Adriatic prompting objections from Slovenia.</p>	<p>2003 October - Croatian parliament votes to create ecological zone in Adriatic prompting objections from Slovenia.</p>
	<p>2003 – November-ICTY in the Hague issued an indictment against former Serb leader Milan Babic on five counts of war crimes for a campaign of ethnic cleansing against Croats and other non-Serb population in the Krajina region of Croatia early in the 1990's.</p> <p>The Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), led by Ivo Sanader, wins parliamentary elections.</p>
<p>2003 December - Ivo Sanader of the right-wing Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) becomes prime minister in a minority government following his party's success in elections the previous month.</p>	<p>2003 December - Ivo Sanader of the right-wing Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) becomes prime minister in a minority government following his party's success in elections the previous month.</p> <p>2003 - Britain and the Netherlands refuse to ratify associate membership accord because of Croatia's insufficient cooperation with the criminal tribunal in the Hague. Croatia formally applied for EU membership in February.</p>
<p>2004 June - Wartime Croatian Serb leader Milan Babic jailed for 13 years by Hague tribunal for his part in war crimes against non-Serbs in self-proclaimed Krajina Serb republic where he was leader in the early 1990s.</p>	<p>2004 – January - Wartime Serb leader Milan Babic (1991-1992) pleaded guilty to persecution in a plan to ethnically cleanse parts of Croatia (Serb self-proclaimed Serbian Republic of Krajina) of Croats and other non-Serbs in early 1990's.</p> <p>The Hague sentences Babic to 13 years imprisonment in June.</p> <p>2004 - February - US Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld visited Croatia and thanked Croatia for its small military police contingent (50) in Iraq.</p> <p>March – Miodrag Jokic/Yugoslav/Serb army – sentenced in the Hague to 7 years imprisonment for attacks on civilians resulting in deaths and wilful destruction of city of Dubrovnik (late 1991)</p> <p>2004 - Zagreb hands over six wartime Bosnian Croats (two of whom were wartime generals in Bosnia) to the tribunal (Jadranko Prlic, Slobodan Praljak, Bruno Stojic, Milivoj Petkovic, Valentin Coric, Berislav Pusic), in a sign of improved cooperation.</p>

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	<p>The EU Commission gives Croatia the status of a candidate country and sets date for accession talks in March 2005, but stresses Zagreb still needs to hand over Gotovina.</p>
<p>2004 December - EU agrees to start accession talks with Croatia in March 2005.</p>	<p>2004 December - EU agrees to start accession talks with Croatia in March 2005.</p>
<p>2005 January - Incumbent President Stjepan Mesic wins second term.</p>	<p>2005- January – ICTY sentences Serbian Pavle Strugar to 8 years of imprisonment for attacks on civilians; destruction or wilful damage done to institutions dedicated to religion, charity and education, the arts and sciences, historic monuments and works of art and science/ Dubrovnik 1991. The sentence reduced on appeal to seven years in 2006.</p> <p>Croatia seeks extradition from Australia of Serb Dragan Vasiljkovic (Captain Dragan) on charges of war crimes in Croatia 1991-1993. (The ICTY named Vasiljkovic as participant in joint criminal enterprise against Croats and other non-Serbs in the Martić decision 2007.) (September 2011 -Vasiljkovic lost his appeal to High Court of Australia against extradition orders brought previously by Australian Federal Court)</p> <p>Incumbent President Stjepan Mesic wins second term as President of the Republic of Croatia.</p>
<p>2005 March - EU delays talks on Croatia's membership because of failure to arrest Gen Ante Gotovina, who is wanted by the Hague tribunal on war crimes charges.</p> <p>2005 October - Green light given for EU accession talks to go ahead again even though Gen Gotovina remains at large.</p> <p>Croatia calls for international mediation after Slovene parliament declares ecological zone in the Adriatic with rights to protect and use sea bed.</p>	<p>2005 March - EU delays talks on Croatia's membership because of failure to arrest Gen Ante Gotovina, who is wanted by the Hague tribunal on war crimes charges.</p> <p>2005 October - Green light given for EU accession talks to go ahead again even though Gen Gotovina remains at large.</p> <p>Croatia calls for international mediation after Slovene parliament declares ecological zone in the Adriatic with rights to protect and use sea bed.</p>
<p>2005 December - Fugitive Croatian General Ante Gotovina, sought by the Hague tribunal on war crimes charges, is arrested in Spain</p>	<p>2005 December - Fugitive Croatian General Ante Gotovina, sought by the Hague tribunal on war crimes charges, is arrested in Spain</p>
<p>2006 November - European Commission publishes report critical of Croatia's progress towards EU membership. It says more needs to be done to tackle</p>	<p>2006 -November - European Commission publishes report critical of Croatia's progress towards EU membership. It says more needs to be done to tackle</p>

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<p>corruption and intolerance of non-Croats.</p>	<p>corruption and intolerance of non-Croats. (June – Croatia recognizes Montenegro as a sovereign and independent state (Montenegro proclaims independence from union with Serbia within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. June - Serbia declares its own independence.)</p>
	<p>2007 – June – Milan Martić – Serb – the Hague ICTY sentences him to life (35 years) of imprisonment for crimes against Croatian civilians and armed forces, crimes against humanity, persecution, extermination and murders of several hundreds of Croat civilians, deportations of tens of thousands of Croats and non-Serbs from the Krajina region including specifically in the villages of Hrvatska Dubica, Cerovljani, Baćin, Saborsko, Poljanak, Lipovača, Škabrnja, Nadin, and Bruška ...from 1991 to 1995</p> <p>The Trial Chamber had found that among others Blagoje Adžić, Milan Babić, Radmilo Bogdanović, Veljko Kadijević, Radovan Karadžić, Slobodan Milošević, Ratko Mladić, Vojislav Šešelj, Franko “Frenki” Simatović, Jovica Stanišić, and Captain Dragan Vasiljković (all Serbs) participated in the furtherance of the common purpose of the joint criminal enterprise.</p>
	<p>2007 – July - Antun Gudelj, a Croatian man charged with killing three police officials in the early days of the 1991, was extradited from Australia to Croatia to face a new trial after an earlier pardon</p>
	<p>2007 – September – ICTY in the Hague sentences Serb Mile Mrksić to 20 years imprisonment, and Veselin Slijivčanin to 5 years imprisonment for mistreatment and mass murder of 264 taken from Vukovar Hospital to Ovcara, November 1991 and executed (see Dec 2010 – Slijivčanin’s sentence increased to 10 years).</p>
<p>2007 October - Work begins on coastal Pelješac bridge which will allow motorists to skirt Bosnian territory, drawing criticism from Bosnia.</p>	
<p>2007 November - Parliamentary elections. Ruling Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) wins the most seats but needs coalition partners to secure a majority.</p>	<p>2007 November - Parliamentary elections. Ruling conservative Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) wins the most seats but needs coalition partners to secure a majority.</p>
<p>2008 January - Parliament approves Prime Minister Ivo Sanader's new HDZ-led coalition government. Includes first Serb in key position: deputy PM Slobodan Uzelac</p>	<p>2008 January - Parliament approves Prime Minister Ivo Sanader's new HDZ-led coalition government. Includes first Serb in key position: deputy PM Slobodan Uzelac</p>
<p>2008 March - Croatian ex-generals Ante Gotovina, Ivan Čermak and Mladen Markač go on trial at Hague war</p>	<p>2008 March - Croatian ex-generals Ante Gotovina, Ivan Čermak and Mladen Markač go on trial at Hague war</p>

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<p>crimes tribunal on charges of killing Croatian Serbs in 1990s. They deny the charges.</p>	<p>crimes tribunal on charges of killing Croatian Serbs in 1990s. They deny the charges.</p>
<p>2008 April - NATO summit in Bucharest invites Croatia to join alliance. Final status expected in 2009.</p>	<p>2008 April - NATO summit in Bucharest invites Croatia to join alliance. Final status expected in 2009.</p>
<p>2008 October - Government announces major drive against organised crime following a series of killings linked to the mafia.</p>	<p>2008 October - Government announces major drive against organised crime following a series of killings linked to the mafia.</p>
<p>2008 November - European Commission says Croatia is likely to end accession talks by 2009 and become a member by 2011, but demands tougher action against corruption and organised crime.</p>	<p>2008 November - European Commission says Croatia is likely to end accession talks by 2009 and become a member by 2011, but demands tougher action against corruption and organised crime.</p> <p>2008 - Croatia declares a protected fishing and maritime zone in the Adriatic, straining relations with neighbours. It soon backtracks, saying the zone will not apply to EU members. In December, EU neighbour Slovenia blocks Croatia's progress because of a border row dating back to the former Yugoslavia.</p>
<p>2009 February - Slovenia threatens to block neighbouring Croatia from joining the EU in a continuing dispute over borders.</p>	<p>2009 February - Slovenia continues to block neighbouring Croatia from joining the EU in a continuing dispute over borders. The block, affecting about one third of negotiating chapters, remains in force until October 2009.</p>
<p>2009 April - Croatia officially joins NATO.</p>	<p>2009 April - Croatia officially joins NATO.</p>
	<p>2009 -May - A Croatian court convicted an opposition lawmaker, Banimir Glavas, of war crimes, making him the country's first senior politician to be held responsible for wartime atrocities against Serbs during the 1991-1995 war in Croatia. Glavas was sentenced to 10 years in prison for war crimes against civilians.</p>
<p>2009 June - The European Union cancels the next round of EU membership talks with Croatia, citing a lack of progress in resolving a long-standing border row with neighbouring Slovenia.</p>	<p>2009 – June - Serbia's war crimes court convicted Damir Sireta, a Serb national, for the execution-style killings in Vukovar of some 200 Croatian prisoners of war in 1991 during the 1991-1995 war in Croatia. Sireta was sentenced to 20 years in prison.</p> <p>2009 June - The European Union cancels the next round of EU membership talks with Croatia, citing a lack of progress in resolving a long-standing border row with neighbouring Slovenia.</p>
<p>2009 July - In a surprise move, Prime Minister Ivo</p>	<p>2009 – July - In a surprise move, Prime Minister Ivo</p>

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<p>Sanader announces that he will resign and withdraw from active politics. Parliament approves Mr Sanader's deputy, Jadranka Kosor, as prime minister.</p>	<p>Sanader announces that he will resign and withdraw from active politics. Parliament approves Mr Sanader's deputy, Jadranka Kosor, as prime minister.</p>
	<p>2009 – September - PM Jadranka Kosor, reaches an agreement with Slovenia's Borut Pahor with regards to border disputes.</p>
<p>2009 November - Slovenia lifts block on Croatia's EU membership talks after the two countries sign deal allowing international mediators to resolve their border dispute. Croatian EU membership talks resume.</p>	<p>2009 November - Slovenia lifts block on Croatia's EU membership talks after the two countries sign deal allowing international mediators to resolve their border dispute. Croatian EU membership talks resume.</p>
<p>2010 January - Ivo Josipovic of the opposition Social Democrats wins presidential election</p>	<p>2010 January - Ivo Josipovic of the opposition Social Democrats wins presidential election</p>
	<p>2010 – May-The Croatian government and the UN said Justice Minister Ivan Simonovic has been chosen to be assistant UN secretary-general for human rights.</p>
<p>2010 June - Slovenia votes in a referendum to back international arbitration on the border dispute.</p>	<p>2010 June - Slovenia votes in a referendum to back international arbitration on the border dispute.</p>
<p>2010 July - Visit of President Josipovic to Belgrade signals thawing of relations with Serbia.</p>	<p>2010 July - Visit of President Josipovic to Belgrade signals thawing of relations with Serbia.</p>
<p>2010 November - Zagreb court convicts six men for mafia-style murder of investigative journalist Ivo Pukanic in October 2010.</p> <p>In what is seen as significant act of reconciliation between Croatia and Serbia, Serbian President Boris Tadic visits Vukovar, where he apologises for 1991 massacre of 260 Croat civilians by Serb forces.</p>	<p>2010 November - Zagreb court convicts six men for mafia-style murder of investigative journalist Ivo Pukanic in October 2010.</p> <p>In what is seen as significant act of reconciliation between Croatia and Serbia, Serbian President Boris Tadic visits Vukovar, where he apologises for 1991 massacre of 260 Croat civilians by Serb forces.</p> <p>Under Prime Minister Kosor, Croatia steps up fight against corruption among its political and business elite. It indicts several general managers in top state companies, a former cabinet minister and a former deputy prime minister Damir Polancec</p>
	<p>2010 – December – Former Croatian PM Ivo Sanader, under investigation in a corruption case</p>
<p>2011 April - Two senior Croatian generals - Ante Gotovina and Mladen Markac - are convicted for war crimes against Serbs in 1995 by the UN War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague.</p>	<p>2011 April - Two senior Croatian generals - Ante Gotovina and Mladen Markac - are convicted for war crimes against Serbs in 1995 by the UN War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague. Gotovina sentenced to 24 years imprisonment and Markac to 18.</p>
	<p>2011 – May – Notice of Appeal against ICTY judgment</p>

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	<p>Gotovina/Markac lodged in the Hague.</p> <p>2011 - May Fugitive war criminal Ratko Mladic, Serb, is captured in Serbia, after many years in hiding there. Although Ratko Mladic began his war crimes in Croatia in early to late 1991 (e.g. leading Serbian troops around Krajina/Knin, bombarding Zadar, Skabrnje massacres ...) the ICTY in the Hague omits to issue indictments for those alleged crimes in Croatia. ICTY indicts him (1995, 2002, 2011) for war crimes, mass murders (eg Srebrenica) and extermination of Croats and Muslims in Bosnia & Herzegovina (1992 – 1995), joint criminal enterprise to permanently remove Croats and Muslims from territory claimed as Serbian Republic within Bosnia & Herzegovina.</p> <p>Croatian government prosecutor had in 2003 sent to Hague the conviction of 20 years imprisonment for war crimes committed by Ratko Mladic (1991) delivered by Sibenik court in 1992 in Croatia; also criminal charges against Mladic from 1995/Split.</p>
<p>2011 June - Croatia successfully completes EU accession negotiations, putting it on track to become the 28th member state in mid-2013.</p>	<p>2011 – June-The European Commission says Croatia has met all the criteria for completion of EU entry talks, including the toughest chapters on reforming the judiciary and competition policy.</p> <p>It proposes that Croatia becomes a member on July 1, 2013.</p>
	<p>2011 – July – Goran Hadzic, Serb, is captured in Serbia after many years in hiding from ICTY, the Hague.</p> <p>ICTY in the Hague issued its indictment against Hadzic, charging him, among other crimes, with crimes against humanity, joint criminal enterprise for permanent removal of Croats and other non-Serb population from a large part of Croatian territory, extermination or murder of Croat and other non-Serb population in Croatia, torture and psychological mistreatment of Croats and other non-Serb people in Croatia during 1991 – 1995 war in Croatia.</p>
	<p>2011 – December – Croatia to sign EU Treaty on December 9</p>