**Croatia** ([/kroʊˈeɪʃə/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help%3AIPA/English%22%20%5Co%20%22Help%3AIPA/English) ([listen](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/24/En-us-Croatia.ogg)), *[kroh-AY-shə](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help%3APronunciation_respelling_key%22%20%5Co%20%22Help%3APronunciation%20respelling%20key)*; [Croatian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Croatian_language%22%20%5Co%20%22Croatian%20language): *Hrvatska*, pronounced [[xř̩ʋaːtskaː]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help%3AIPA/Serbo-Croatian)), officially the **Republic of Croatia** (Croatian: *Republika Hrvatska*, [listen](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/33/Hr-Republika_Hrvatska.oga) ([help](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia%3AMedia_help%22%20%5Co%20%22Wikipedia%3AMedia%20help)·[info](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File%3AHr-Republika_Hrvatska.oga))) is a country at the crossroads of [Central](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_Europe) and [Southeast Europe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southeast_Europe%22%20%5Co%20%22Southeast%20Europe), on the [Adriatic Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adriatic_Sea%22%20%5Co%20%22Adriatic%20Sea). It borders [Slovenia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slovenia%22%20%5Co%20%22Slovenia) to the northwest, [Hungary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hungary%22%20%5Co%20%22Hungary) to the northeast, [Serbia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serbia%22%20%5Co%20%22Serbia) to the east, [Bosnia and Herzegovina](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bosnia_and_Herzegovina%22%20%5Co%20%22Bosnia%20and%20Herzegovina) and [Montenegro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Montenegro) to the southeast, sharing a [maritime border](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maritime_border%22%20%5Co%20%22Maritime%20border) with [Italy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italy%22%20%5Co%20%22Italy). Its capital, [Zagreb](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zagreb), forms one of the country's [primary subdivisions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Administrative_divisions_of_Croatia%22%20%5Co%20%22Administrative%20divisions%20of%20Croatia), along with [twenty counties](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twenty_counties%22%20%5Co%20%22Twenty%20counties). Croatia has an area of 56,594 square kilometres (21,851 square miles) and a population of 4.28 million, most of whom are [Roman Catholics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholics).

Inhabited since the [Paleolithic Age](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paleolithic_Age%22%20%5Co%20%22Paleolithic%20Age), the [Croats](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Croats%22%20%5Co%20%22Croats) arrived in the area in the 6th century and organised the territory into two duchies by the 9th century. Croatia was first internationally recognized as an independent state on 7 June 879 during the reign of duke [Branimir](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Branimir_of_Croatia%22%20%5Co%20%22Branimir%20of%20Croatia). [Tomislav](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tomislav_of_Croatia) became the first king by 925, elevating Croatia to the status of a [kingdom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Croatia_%28925%E2%80%931102%29%22%20%5Co%20%22Kingdom%20of%20Croatia%20%28925%E2%80%931102%29), which retained its sovereignty for nearly two centuries, reaching its peak during the rule of kings [Petar Krešimir IV](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petar_Kre%C5%A1imir_IV) and [Dmitar Zvonimir](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dmitar_Zvonimir%22%20%5Co%20%22Dmitar%20Zvonimir). Croatia [entered](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Croatia_in_the_union_with_Hungary%22%20%5Co%20%22Croatia%20in%20the%20union%20with%20Hungary) a [personal union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_union%22%20%5Co%20%22Personal%20union) with [Hungary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Hungary%22%20%5Co%20%22Kingdom%20of%20Hungary) in 1102. In 1527, faced with [Ottoman conquest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hundred_Years%27_Croatian%E2%80%93Ottoman_War), the Croatian Parliament elected [Ferdinand I of Austria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ferdinand_I%2C_Holy_Roman_Emperor) to the Croatian throne. In October 1918, in the final days of [World War I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I), the [State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_of_Slovenes%2C_Croats_and_Serbs), independent from Austria-Hungary, was proclaimed in Zagreb, and in December 1918 it was [merged into](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creation_of_Yugoslavia%22%20%5Co%20%22Creation%20of%20Yugoslavia) the [Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Serbs%2C_Croats_and_Slovenes%22%20%5Co%20%22Kingdom%20of%20Serbs%2C%20Croats%20and%20Slovenes).

Following the Axis [invasion of Yugoslavia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invasion_of_Yugoslavia) in April 1941, most of the Croatian territory was incorporated into the [Nazi-backed client-state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Independent_State_of_Croatia)which led to the development of a [resistance movement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Liberation_Movement_in_Croatia%22%20%5Co%20%22National%20Liberation%20Movement%20in%20Croatia) and the creation of the [Federal State of Croatia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_State_of_Croatia%22%20%5Co%20%22Federal%20State%20of%20Croatia) which after the war become a founding member and a federal constituent of the [Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socialist_Federal_Republic_of_Yugoslavia%22%20%5Co%20%22Socialist%20Federal%20Republic%20of%20Yugoslavia). On 25 June 1991, Croatia [declared independence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Independence_of_Croatia%22%20%5Co%20%22Independence%20of%20Croatia), which came wholly into effect on 8 October of the same year. The [Croatian War of Independence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Croatian_War_of_Independence%22%20%5Co%20%22Croatian%20War%20of%20Independence) was fought successfully for four years following the declaration.

The [sovereign state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sovereign_state%22%20%5Co%20%22Sovereign%20state) of Croatia is a [republic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republic%22%20%5Co%20%22Republic) governed under a [parliamentary system](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parliamentary_system%22%20%5Co%20%22Parliamentary%20system) and a [developed country](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Developed_country%22%20%5Co%20%22Developed%20country) with a [very high standard of living](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Very_high_standard_of_living%22%20%5Co%20%22Very%20high%20standard%20of%20living). It is a member of the [European Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Union%22%20%5Co%20%22European%20Union) (EU), the [United Nations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations) (UN), the [Council of Europe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Council_of_Europe), [NATO](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NATO), the [World Trade Organization](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Trade_Organization) (WTO), and a founding member of the [Union for the Mediterranean](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_for_the_Mediterranean). As an active participant in the [UN peacekeeping forces](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UN_peacekeeping_forces), Croatia has contributed troops to the [NATO-led mission in Afghanistan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NATO-led_mission_in_Afghanistan) and took a non-permanent seat on the [UN Security Council](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UN_Security_Council) for the 2008–2009 term. Since 2000, the [Croatian government](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Croatian_government%22%20%5Co%20%22Croatian%20government) has constantly invested in infrastructure, especially [transport routes and facilities](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transport_in_Croatia) along the [Pan-European corridors](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pan-European_corridors%22%20%5Co%20%22Pan-European%20corridors).

[Croatia's economy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Croatia%27s_economy) is dominated by [service](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Service_sector) and [industrial sectors](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Industrial_sector%22%20%5Co%20%22Industrial%20sector) and agriculture. [Tourism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tourism_in_Croatia%22%20%5Co%20%22Tourism%20in%20Croatia) is a significant source of revenue, with Croatia ranked among [top 20](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Tourism_rankings) most popular tourist destinations in the world. The state controls a part of the economy, with substantial government expenditure. The European Union is Croatia's most important [trading partner](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trading_partner). Croatia provides a [social security](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_security), [universal health care](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Healthcare_in_Croatia%22%20%5Co%20%22Healthcare%20in%20Croatia) system, and a tuition-free [primary and secondary education](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Croatia%22%20%5Co%20%22Education%20in%20Croatia), while supporting [culture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Croatia) through numerous public institutions and corporate investments in [media](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media_of_Croatia) and [publishing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Croatian_literature%22%20%5Co%20%22Croatian%20literature).





Left: *[Croatian Apoxyomenos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Croatian_Apoxyomenos%22%20%5Co%20%22Croatian%20Apoxyomenos)*, [Ancient Greek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greece) statue 2nd or 1st century BC.
Right: The Roman provinces of the Lower Danube. Old historical map from Droysens Historical Atlas, 1886



[Tanais Tablet B](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tanais_Tablet_B), name Khoroáthos highlighted



*The Arrival of the Croats at the [Adriatic Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adriatic_Sea%22%20%5Co%20%22Adriatic%20Sea)* by [Oton Iveković](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oton_Ivekovi%C4%87%22%20%5Co%20%22Oton%20Ivekovi%C4%87)



The [Baška tablet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ba%C5%A1ka_tablet), the oldest evidence of the [glagolitic script](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glagolitic_script%22%20%5Co%20%22Glagolitic%20script)



Croatian *[ban](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ban_of_Croatia%22%20%5Co%20%22Ban%20of%20Croatia)* [Nikola Šubić Zrinski](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikola_%C5%A0ubi%C4%87_Zrinski%22%20%5Co%20%22Nikola%20%C5%A0ubi%C4%87%20Zrinski) is honoured as a national hero both in Croatia and in Hungary for his defence of [Szigetvár](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Szigetv%C3%A1r%22%20%5Co%20%22Siege%20of%20Szigetv%C3%A1r) against the [invading Ottoman Turks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invading_Ottoman_Turks%22%20%5Co%20%22Invading%20Ottoman%20Turks)



[Stjepan Radić](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stjepan_Radi%C4%87), leader of the [Croatian Peasant Party](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Croatian_Peasant_Party%22%20%5Co%20%22Croatian%20Peasant%20Party) who advocated federal organisation of the [Yugoslavia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Yugoslavia%22%20%5Co%20%22Kingdom%20of%20Yugoslavia), at the assembly in Dubrovnik, 1928



People of [Zagreb celebrating liberation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zagreb_in_World_War_II) from [Axis powers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Axis_powers) on 12 May 1945



[Franjo Tuđman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franjo_Tu%C4%91man) was the first democratically elected [President of Croatia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/President_of_Croatia%22%20%5Co%20%22President%20of%20Croatia)



Croatia has been a member of the [European Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Union%22%20%5Co%20%22European%20Union) since 2013.



[Plitvice Lakes National Park](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plitvice_Lakes_National_Park)



[Dinara](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dinara) is the highest mountain in Croatia (1831m)

