



Language

The public campaign to defeat the ruling Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) party in the January 2000 parliamentary and presidential elections was strongly influenced by the success in Slovakia of OK'98 (see below). But the mobilization also built on a growing internal opposition by civil society groups engaged in anti-war activity, aid to refugees and human rights (which had begun to develop under the Communist regime) and public discontent, shown by opposition success in local elections in Zagreb in 1995 (although the regime barred the opposition from taking office) and falling support for the HDZ in parliamentary elections that year.

Franjo Tudjman, who dominated Croat politics from 1990 to his death in 1999, and his HDZ party, promoted an extreme form of nationalism. The Croatian government was regularly condemned by international organizations for its role in the wars that fragmented Yugoslavia and for its treatment of the Serb minority in Croatia. Isolation also led to unemployment and high inflation.

The public mobilization to overthrow the HDZ in 2000 was led by two key organizations: Citizens Organized to Monitor Voting (GONG) and the Civic Coalition for Free and Fair Elections (Glas 99) (both of which received significant external western aid). Campaigners targeted youth, women (women's NGOs were very active), pensioners and environmentalists. Political parties formed two separate opposition coalitions, which defeated the HDZ, and Tudjman's successors, in both parliamentary and presidential elections.

Bellamy, Alex, [Croatia after Tudjman: The 2000 Parliamentary and Presidential Elections](#) [1], Problems of Post-Communism, Vol. 48, issue 5 (September/October), 2001, pp. 18-31

Fisher, Sharon, [Political Change in Post-Communist Slovakia and Croatia: From Nationalist to Europeanist](#) [2], New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, pp. 272

Analyses rise of nationalist movements, how the regimes in newly independent Croatia (1991) and Slovakia (1992) promoted nationalism and the subsequent decline of nationalism and rise of democratic civil society and opposition movements.

Irvine, Jill, [From Civil Society to Civil Servants: Women's Organizations and Critical Elections in Croatia](#) [3], Politics and Gender, Vol. 3, issue 1 (March), 2007, pp. 7-32

See also:

Joerg Forbrig; Pavol Demes, [Reclaiming Democracy: Civil Society and Electoral Change in Central and Eastern Europe](#) [4], (D. II.1. Comparative Assessments [5])

Valerie J. Bunce; Sharon L. Wolchik, [Defeating Authoritarian Leaders in Post-Communist Countries](#) [6], (D. II.1. Comparative Assessments [5]), pp. 78-84

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