

CROATIA

About Croatia



Croatia is a country similar to the size of West Virginia with population of 4.2 million located at the crossroads between Western and Eastern Europe. A variety of ethnic groups coexist within the republic. Croats constitute about nine-tenths of the population. It has been estimated that the number of Croats living outside the borders of Croatia is comparable to the number living inside the country. About 400 000 Croats live in the USA. Based on some theories about 3 million US citizens are Croatian descent. Serbs make up the largest minority group; however, their proportion fell dramatically as a result of the 1990s war of independence—from more than one-tenth of the population before the war to less than half that figure in 2001. In addition to the Croats and the Serbs, there are small groups of Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks) and other. There is traditionally a close correlation between ethnic identity and religious affiliation. The Croats are overwhelmingly Roman Catholic and more Western-influenced than the Serbs who are overwhelmingly Eastern Orthodox. A small minority of people are nonreligious or atheist. Bosniaks constitute most of the Muslim population. Croats speak Croatian, a South Slavic language of the Indo-European family written in Latin alphabet. Although small in size, Croatia is a middle European, Mediterranean and Balkan country at the same time. Unique crescent shape is the legacy of history after Ottomans invading and ruling over Bosnia and Herzegovina for several centuries. Croatia gained independence after

Croatian flag, surrounding countries and map of Croatia

breakdown of former Yugoslavia in 1991 and liberated its complete territory in 1995. Consequences of Homeland war are still visible through the care for families of fallen Croatian soldiers, testimonies of victims of war, disabled veterans and searching for 1858 still missing soldiers and civilians. Croatia joined European Union in 2013. Currency is still Croatian Kuna with a plan to make transition to Euro in 2023. Zagreb is the capital city with population of about 800 000 or 1 million with satellite towns and villages. Two main climatic zones dominate Croatia. The Pannonian and para-Pannonian plains and the mountain regions are characterised by a continental climate of warm summers and cold winters. The Dalmatian coast, Istria, and the islands have a mild Mediterranean climate.



Zagreb, capital of Croatia



Baptism in Kuslanova Church

About Mission in Croatia

Mission in Croatia began with two young American missionary couples coming to Zagreb in 1969. One of the first contacts they made upon arriving in Zagreb, Croatia, was their language teacher, Mladen Jovanovic. Through personal evangelism, the first missionaries befriended Mladen and his wife Dragica, which led to their subsequent conversion and ministry with the Church of Christ in Zagreb for more than forty years. Mladen became a preacher for the church in 1971 and had been doing that work since 2013 when he passed away. Mislav has since taken over the ministry of preaching and leading the church along with three elders. There were many short term and long term missionaries that have visited Croatia since the first two couples arrived. Each brought something unique with them, and many of them began ministries that are still in existence today. The main evangelistic strategy at the beginning included radio broadcasts and summer camps at the Croatian coast. Radio ministry

made transition to TV ministry. Summer Camps are still going on and we celebrated 52nd Camp this summer. The Institute for Biblical Studies, Bible Institute today, that was started by Mladen Jovanovic, which has been directed and led by Thomas Sibley from 1999 till 2018, and Perry Stepp since then, has truly served as a place of transformation and unity. Printing Bibles and literature through EEM and distributing became crucial part of mission work. Kuslanova Church was established in 2000 when congregation moved from old facility which became inadequate for growing church. First and second floor are used by church, while third floor and attic are used by Bible Institute. Kuslanova Church has been part of the thirteen Churches of Christ in Croatia fellowship since 2004.



Kuslanova Church building