

**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
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*Expanding National Boundaries: Compatriot Policies in Post-Communist  
Countries*

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**Research Abstract:**

How are compatriot policies developed, and how do they define the relationship of diaspora and ethnic kin populations to the state? What drives the development of Croatian policy toward Croats abroad, both citizens and non-citizens? This research examines the background and development of Croatia's 2011 Act on Relations between the Republic of Croatia and Croats outside of the Republic of Croatia in order to seek answers to these questions. Using interview data and government records, I find that today's compatriot policy in Croatia has grown beyond the nationalism-motivated relationship of the 1990s. In addition to these roots, today's policy has been developed explicitly on the models of other European states with similar policies, and is intended to address a range of political, economic, and social concerns in Croatia. This research will form part of a larger comparative study on compatriot policies in the post-communist region.

**Research Goals:**

My research focuses on post-communist states that have adopted wide-ranging policies toward ethnic kin abroad, including both citizens and non-citizens, those living as minorities in nearby countries, as well as those dispersed in global diasporas. I examine the origin of these policies, and trace the political and economic implications of the way that they have developed over time. In particular, I focus on those states which have passed laws that formally recognize non-citizen ethnic kin as part of the nation and specifically call for particular privileges, status,

**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT**

and/or programs to be put in place for them. In recent years, such policies have received significant attention. They are often interpreted as the result of an orientation to ethnicity in politics. For one, they focus on cross-border ethnic kin, in a region which has seen significant interethnic conflicts and disputes, and have to a large extent been supported by more nationalist-oriented parties of the right. Secondly, explicit recognition of non-citizen ethnic kin appears to blur national borders, potentially providing citizens of one country with a formal legal tie to another.<sup>1</sup> The adoption of these measures in countries with long histories of changing borders has raised some concerns about whether the current borders will stay in place.

That Russia has such a law, defining—vaguely—a wide swath of people in former Soviet territories and around the world as Russian “compatriots” is likely to shift perceptions even more into this camp. Russia’s invocation of the rights of its “compatriots” to justify intervention in neighboring Ukraine, alongside a history of granting full citizenship on a fast-track basis in other neighboring conflict areas, provides a compelling example of how the idea of treating ethnic kin abroad as an integral part of the nation can serve a variety of political motives.

This is far from the full story of these policies in the post-communist world, however. Some scholars have shown evidence that particular policies were developed as compensation for injustices during communist rule that led to the loss of citizenship.<sup>2</sup> On a global scale, very similar policies have been created across the developing world, including India, Pakistan,

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<sup>1</sup> Brigid Fowler, “Fuzzing Citizenship, Nationalising Political Space: A Framework for Interpreting the Hungarian ‘Status Law’ as a New Form of Kin-State Policy in Central and Eastern Europe,” ESRC working paper 40/42 (2002); Erika Harris, “What is New about ‘Eastern Nationalism’ and What are the Implications for Studies of Ethnicity Today?” *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 18:3 (2012); Zoltán Kántor, “The Concept of Nation in the Central and East European ‘Status Laws,’” in Osamu Ieda et al, eds., *Beyond Sovereignty: From Status Law to Transnational Citizenship?* (Sapporo: Slavic Research Center, Hokkaido University Press, 2006); Oxana Shevel, “The Post-Communist Diaspora Laws: Beyond the ‘Good Civic versus Bad Ethnic’ Nationalism Dichotomy,” *East European Politics and Societies* 24 (2010), 159-187; Zsuzsa Csergo and James M. Goldgeier, “Nationalist Strategies and European Integration,” *Perspectives on Politics* 2:1 (2004), 21-37.

<sup>2</sup> Andre Liebich, “Introduction: Altnenländer or the vicissitudes of citizenship in the new EU states,” in Rainer Bauböck et al, eds., *Citizenship Policies in the New Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007); Aleksandra Maatsch, *Ethnic Citizenship Regimes: Europeanization, Post-War Migration and Redressing Past Wrongs* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT**

Ethiopia, and Turkey.<sup>3</sup> In these cases, interpretation has largely centered around economic motivations rather than ethnic motivations. These states have high levels of emigration, and their versions of these laws are believed to facilitate development by engaging with diaspora abroad to utilize their newfound wealth, skills and global connections. The post-communist countries also have in recent years had very high rates of emigration, and it is possible that economic and development concerns play a larger role in these ethnic kin policies than has previously been acknowledged. The goal of my research is to sift through competing explanations for these ethnic kin policies to understand to what extent the forces of nationalist and ethnic politics, the particular legacies of the past, and the economic concerns of sending states play into them.

Croatia is one part of a larger comparative study. It was chosen as a country of focus because it has a long history of emigration and strong ties with Croatian diaspora, but only a relatively recent history of formal legislation passed to regulate the relationship between the state.<sup>4</sup> It also has several elements in its experience that are typically thought to contribute to policies of this type: a history of ethnic conflict and territorial disputes, a communist past that contributed to significant unwilling emigration, and current status as a sending state that receives significant economic input from diaspora. My specific goals in Croatia were a) To understand the development of the Act on the Relations Between the Republic of Croatia and the Croatians Outside the Republic of Croatia: Why was this policy codified in law in 2011? The 1990s nationalist surge that had supported a high degree of openness toward and inclusion of ethnic

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<sup>3</sup> Dovelyn Rannveig Agunias and Kathleen Newland, *Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development: A Handbook for Policymakers and Practitioners in Home and Host Countries*, International Organization for Migration and the Migration Policy Institute (Renouf Publishing, 2012), 96-99; Kingsley Aikins and Nicola White, *Global Diaspora Strategies Toolkit: Harnessing the Power of Global Diasporas* (Dublin: Diaspora Matters, 2011); Liza Mügge, “Dual Nationality and Transnational Politics,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 38:1, 1-19.

<sup>4</sup> Croatia did not have a formal policy regulating its relationship to ethnic Croats abroad until the passage of the Act on the Relations Between the Republic of Croatia and the Croatians Outside the Republic of Croatia, adopted on October 21, 2011. It previously depended strongly on the diaspora for assistance during the wars of the 1990s, and granted citizenship to diaspora generously on a discretionary basis. For more on this relationship see: Francesco Ragazzi and Kristina Balalovska, “Diaspora Politics and Post-Territorial Citizenship in Croatia, Serbia and Macedonia,” *The Europeanisation of Citizenship in the Successor States of the Former Yugoslavia (CITSEE)*, Working Paper Series 2011/18; Francesco Ragazzi, “The Invention of the Croatian Diaspora: Unpacking the Politics of ‘Diaspora’ During the War in Yugoslavia,” Center for Global Studies: Project on Global Migration and Transnational Politics Working Paper, George Mason University, 2009.

**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT**

Croats abroad had long since faded and the HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union)—strongly linked with the diaspora—lost power in 2000 to the left-wing SDP (Social Democratic Party). b) To understand which elements held primary importance in spurring the law’s development: factors relating to ethnic nationalism or cultural preservation, factors relating to political competition or legacies of the previous regime, or economic concerns? c) To put this case into the context of compatriot policies in the wider post-communist region, and in turn to place these cases into the broader global context.

**Research Activities:**

My central research activity was to conduct interviews with Croat officials, politicians, NGO leaders, and activists, to help create a clear outline of the development of and current administration of Croatia’s official policy toward Croats abroad. I also strengthened my previous work on the case of Slovakia by interviewing officials who work with the Slovak minority in Croatia, both in parliament and at the Slovak embassy in Zagreb.

Interviews with Croatian officials spanned a range of people who have worked on issues relating to the development and/or administration of Croatian diaspora policy, both in the present form of the policy, and in the periods prior to the passage of Croatia’s 2011 law. Interviewees included Croatian parliament representatives in a committee dedicated to Croats abroad who directly worked on drafts of the 2011 law, as well as parliament working on foreign policy and constitutional issues, which directly relate to the problems that Croatia’s policy on Croats abroad aims to address. I also interviewed representatives from the Office for Croats Outside the Republic of Croatia, along with those formerly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, from a short-lived 1990s ministry dedicated to diaspora and returnees, and the division of parliament that addresses minorities issues. Finally, I interviewed representatives from the diaspora council that was created as part of Croatia’s present compatriot policy.

The purpose of interviews with officials was to create a picture of policy development beyond the limited portrayal that can be found in government written archives and other documentary sources. Officials involved in the policy process corroborated but sometimes

**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT**

challenged the information that can be found in other documents, and were also described from their own perspectives the course of discussions and input from a wide variety of sources that went into the policy. Most importantly, they were able to provide insights into the motivations behind the policy, and discussed their own (and their perceptions of others') interests during the process. This was valuable in order to determine which aspects of the policy have come about due to particular special interests, due to compromise positions between political parties, or due to observation and emulation of other related legislation that other countries have previously passed to regulate their own relationships with diaspora and ethnic kin abroad.

I also conducted interviews with leaders of NGOs that are based within and outside of Croatia. This included people of Croatian descent from Canada, Australia, the United States, and Germany (including many who had returned permanently to take up leadership roles within the political, business, and scholarly spheres within Croatia). These interviews were crucial for learning about the perceived needs of Croats living abroad, and the organizations which represent them, and to determine what kind of role (if any) they play in the development of policy toward Croats living outside of Croatia.

My research activity also included the collection of materials relating to Croatia's relationship with Croats abroad: books, other published works, and material from parliamentary archives. I also attended major events relating to Croatian diaspora issues—the first ever Croatian Diaspora Congress, and the Croatian World Games—enabling the collection of materials produced at and for these events, such as videos and speeches. These meetings are also where I met a number of important contacts for interviews and for future research, including people based in Canada, the USA, Australia, and Germany.

**Important Research Findings:**

Croatia's policy toward Croats living outside of Croatia is based on a strategy developed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and then with the cooperation of the parliamentary Committee for Croats Outside of the Republic of Croatia, developed into a law passed in 2011. The Act on the Relations Between the Republic of Croatia and the Croatians Outside the Republic of Croatia

**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT**

draws on Article 10 of the Croatian Constitution, which states not only that Croatia will safeguard its citizens living abroad and promote their ties to Croatia, but more broadly that “parts of the Croatian nation in other states are guaranteed special care and protection of the Republic of Croatia.”<sup>5</sup> Broadly speaking, Croatia’s new policy divides ethnic Croats abroad into three key groups and tries to target programs to the needs of these groups: 1) Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who are in the unique position of making up one of the constituent peoples of another state, while many of them hold Croatian citizenship, 2) Croats living as ethnic minorities in other European countries (with a focus on assistance to those in the former Yugoslavia) and 3) overseas Croats, especially emigrants and their descendants in North and South America and Australia. The law created a central Office for Croats Abroad to manage the implementation of the law.<sup>6</sup> It provides funding for projects that preserve Croatian culture and promote Croatian rights, and also contain measures intended to extend a special status to people of Croatian descent who are for various reasons unable to acquire Croatian citizenship—either because of lack of ability to prove Croatian descent as required in citizenship law (which has become more restrictive than it was in the 1990s), or because of laws against dual citizenship in countries where some Croatian emigrants and their descendants now live. The law was passed in 2011 while the HDZ was still in power, and has so far been implemented under the SDP-led government that succeeded it.

What was the motivation for this law? What is the purpose of the type of engagement it creates with Croatian citizens and non-citizens living abroad? As previously stated, Croatia’s attention to Croats abroad had waned with the end of war and with the rise of the SDP as a real challenger to HDZ power. I have identified several factors which stand out in preliminary analysis of the materials I gathered during my research trip:

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<sup>5</sup> Croatian Constitution (Ustav Republike Hrvatske), recovered at the website of the Croatian parliament, [www.sabor.hr](http://www.sabor.hr).

<sup>6</sup> State Office for Croats Abroad, [www.hrvatijzvanrh.hr](http://www.hrvatijzvanrh.hr).

**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT**

1. Despite the shift in Croatia away from nationalist politics,<sup>7</sup> the persistence of highly-motivated small groups and individuals has kept alive the notion that the Republic of Croatia must develop a strong connection with ethnic Croats abroad. A shift in power in 2000 took political dominance away from the HDZ, the traditional supporter of diaspora and winner of the diaspora vote, but smaller numbers of people for whom the problems of Croats outside of Croatia are of particular interest and even personal value have continued to pursue a commitment to Croats abroad, and have driven the development of Croatia's current policy. A number of major activists inside and out of the government on this issue are people with experience as emigrants themselves, or come from Croatian populations outside of Croatia, in particular, Bosnia. In addition, the law was developed with a certain amount of consultation from non-governmental diaspora organizations and with the advisory participation of returned emigrants or their descendants.<sup>8</sup>

The issue of Bosnia is one area where this phenomenon can be seen. While Bosnia has been a continual focus for Croatia because of its large Croatian-citizen population and its need for assistance after years of war, this law helps to formally tie Bosnian assistance policy to the broader issue of Croats abroad. Bosnian representation in the Croatian parliament, via Croatia's three available parliamentary seats for diaspora representatives, has been crucial. For example, one of the main proponents of the law in the Croatian parliament was Dr. Ivan Bagaric of the HDZ, a Bosnian-Croat representative in parliament. His extensive work on the law was in part based on knowledge specifically of the needs of Bosnian Croats.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the Bosnia issue

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<sup>7</sup> Sabrina P. Ramet, "Politics in Croatia since 1990," in Sabrina P. Ramet, ed., *Central and Southeast European Politics since 1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Francesco Ragazzi and Igor Štiks, "Croatian Citizenship: From Ethnic Engineering to Inclusiveness," in Rainer Baubock, et al, eds., *Citizenship Policies in the New Europe*, Imiscoe Research (Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press, 2007).

<sup>8</sup> Interviews supporting this viewpoint included: Diaspora business and organization leader, July 1; Dr. Ivan Bagaric, July 16,18; former Ministry for Diaspora Official and activist, July 17; Diaspora Congress Organizer, Activist, July 28; Co-founder of Croatian Information Center, Former Director of the Croatian Heritage Foundation and Former Diaspora list parliament member, July 31; Official from the State Office for Croats Abroad, July 31; former external member of the Committee for Croats Abroad, August 27, 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Communication with Dr. Ivan Bagaric, July 16, July 18.

**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT**

features strongly in the parliamentary debates, and almost entirely dominates the final debate, in which the SDP did not participate.<sup>10</sup>

2. Partisan divides matter in Croatian compatriot policy, but the division is not always as clear-cut as it would initially seem. A partisan divide when it comes to compatriot policies has been found in other cases, with more right-oriented and nationalistic parties tending to subscribe to rhetoric of ethnic national unity across borders and to take interest in extending rights to ethnic kin abroad,<sup>11</sup> and Croatia is not an exception to this. While officially the 2011 law was passed unanimously and there was little open or serious opposition to it,<sup>12</sup> an SDP/HDZ divide played into the law's development,<sup>13</sup> and SDP support for it was not entirely wholehearted.

In parliamentary debates, HDZ politicians largely laud the law's potential, but criticism comes from the smaller numbers of SDP members who expressed their opinions of it. Some called its provisions, including the special status for non-citizens "romantic" but unfeasible,<sup>14</sup> "bizarre" and ill-defined, "some sort of substitute or some kind of category B citizenship."<sup>15</sup> They expressed concern that this law would privilege non-residents who have a poorly-defined affiliation with Croatia, perhaps over the people (of multiple ethnicities) actually living there. They also expressed skepticism that people who had chosen to leave the country should receive any special treatment, since Croats living in Croatia "do not have any backup country, nor, except a few, do they have any backup citizenship."<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the partisan association of Croatian diaspora and the HDZ still remained a sore point, with one SDP member suggesting

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<sup>10</sup> Rasprava prema aktu: Konačni prijedlog zakona o odnosima Republike Hrvatske s Hrvatima izvan Republike Hrvatske, drugo čitanje, P.Z. br. 857, October 14, 2011

<sup>11</sup> Shevel, 2010; Maatsch, 2011.

<sup>12</sup> Interviews: June 10, July 16/18, July 17, July 28, Office for Croats Abroad Official, July 31; Croatian Heritage Foundation official, August 4.

<sup>13</sup> Interview, former Ministry of Foreign Affairs Official, August 12, 2014; Interview, SDP official involved in the law development, August 25, 2014.

<sup>14</sup> Tatjana Šimac Bonačić, Rasprava prema aktu: Prijedlog zakona o odnosima Republike Hrvatske s Hrvatima izvan Republike Hrvatske, prvo čitanje, P.Z. br. 857, July 14, 2011.

<sup>15</sup> Tanja Vrbat Grgić, Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ingrid Antičević Marinović, Ibid.



**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT**

that a proposed Croatian Card giving Croats from abroad specific benefits and discounts, would be nothing more than an “HDZ [membership] card.”<sup>17</sup>

This shows that among politicians, loyalty of Croats abroad is still perceived to be the province of the HDZ. At the same time, there was no political gain in opposing legislation to help Croats abroad. As one SDP member from the committee that developed the law explained, the SDP supported the law because to do so was largely politically neutral—it was not a central concern of voters or the country at that point—but not to do so could have had ultimately negative consequences for the image of the SDP. In part, the SDP’s sensitivity on this subject originates from its status as a communist successor party, when during the communist era the relationship of the state with émigrés was tense and sometimes hostile.

Nevertheless, the partisan divide is not absolute when it comes to this issue. In order to achieve consensus, the law’s authors chose not to tackle one of the biggest concerns of those diaspora members who hold Croatian citizenship: their level of representation in parliament. While Croatia allows three representatives, this number is a compromise between the HDZ, which would allow greater representation, and the SDP, which stands against any representation for non-residents.

Additionally, differences in actual performance between the two parties when it comes to diaspora are not perceived to be very large. While this deserves more study, preliminary evidence suggests that at least some of the HDZ and diaspora enthusiasm for each other has been overestimated. Outside of the wartime crisis period when many diaspora members were providing crucial financing and aid to the state, the day to day administration of issues relating to Croats abroad—from possibilities for investment and requests for favorable property and residency laws, to tax and pension laws, to voting laws—has not differed quite as strongly as may have been expected, at least in the perception of a significant number of Croatian activists,

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT**

scholars, and politicians.<sup>18</sup> The first Croatian Diaspora Congress, for example, held this June, was organized by a number of non-governmental and government-linked groups to highlight the ways in which Croatian diaspora have contributed and continue to contribute to the country, and to discuss ways that Croatia could better integrate and utilize Croats abroad, and to discuss what many in the diaspora communities believe to be missed opportunities in past and present compatriot policy.

3. Finally, I found that Croatia's policy toward Croats abroad is also rooted in very practical concerns that drive similar policies in other countries in the post-communist region, and have led to the passage of very similar laws since the fall of communist regimes, such as managing the aftermath of ethnic conflict and seeking integration with international structures. It also is intended to address issues that are recognizable to the many other countries around the world which have also developed comprehensive policies to engage citizen and non-citizen diaspora: brain drain, demographic problems, and the possibility of using successful diaspora to help create development in the country.<sup>19</sup>

Specific to compatriot policies in the region is the need to address the issue of ethnic minority rights where there has been significant conflict and shifting borders. In terms of ethnic minorities, many states in this region have legitimate concerns about minority rights. As some officials involved in Croatia's law have pointed out, they still feel that Croat minorities are not being treated fairly in some of the former Yugoslav countries.<sup>20</sup> As with many other countries including Serbia and Slovakia, other organizations actively work abroad and at home to preserve Croatian culture, most notably Hrvatska Matica Iseljenika (known in English as the Croatian Heritage Foundation). Adding a legal framework based on constitutions that demand support for ethnic kin abroad can actually promote the status of ethnic minorities within other states, and

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<sup>18</sup> Interviews: July 1, Member of Diaspora Council, July 16; July 28; July 31; Returned emigrant activist, August 26; Academic expert on Croatian diaspora, August 26, 2014.

<sup>19</sup> Ivan Bagaric, July 16/18, 2014; Interviews August 26, August 12, among others. Various representatives, Rasprava prema aktu: Prijedlog zakona o odnosima Republike Hrvatske s Hrvatima izvan Republike Hrvatske, prvo čitanje, July 14, 2011.

<sup>20</sup> Various representatives, Prijedlog zakona, prvo čitanje; Interview, former Ministry of Foreign Affairs official, August 12, 2014; Interview, August 26, 2014.

**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT**

along with various specific bilateral agreements can be sources of cooperative behavior. A good example is that of the Slovak minority in Croatia. Slovak communities can take advantage of Slovakia's Law on Slovaks Living Abroad—its equivalent to Croatia's law—to partially fund their language study and cultural events, thus easing any demand on Croatia to provide for one of its minority populations.<sup>21</sup> Now these attempts can also be interpreted in the framework of European minority rights norms, and their development in the future should be examined, as more people travel between countries and make decisions about citizenship, residence, and participation in the cultural and political life of home and host countries.

In terms of problems recognizable to other states with similar policies, some of the motivation for Croatia's policy came from the realization that Croatia has long been a sending state, with large waves of emigration throughout several historical periods, and that engagement with some of that "lost" population may be a way to recover perceived cultural and economic losses.<sup>22</sup> It is also an attempt to compensate for a current outflow of younger skilled workers and to make Croatia more attractive for investment by those who might assist it in development and even further transition of its economic system. People with existing ties to the country, such as diaspora, are considered to be potentially more responsive to the needs of the country than are other foreigners. Similarly, in the policy there is a rational search for avenues of influence for a small country facing the forces of EU integration and globalization even as it has just recently gained sovereign status. Those who have been successful abroad are seen as contributing to the country's "brand" image and if their connection and interest is kept by favorable laws, perhaps a privileged status even for non-citizens, then they have potential to turn some of their attention and resources to the benefit of Croatia.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Interviews: Member of Croatian parliament division on national minorities, August 12, 2014; Member of Slovak diplomatic mission in Zagreb, August 15, 2014.

<sup>22</sup> Interview, July 17, 2014.

<sup>23</sup> Interview, August 26, 2014. According to the International Organization for Migration, the remittances estimate for Croatia in 2013 is 1,499 million USD. Some activists believe the number to be higher, and many hope to attract greater contribution in the form of investment and business creation in Croatia by returning Croats or Croatian diaspora. <https://www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home/where-we-work/europa/south-eastern-europe-eastern-eur/croatia.html>

**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT**

**Policy Implications and Recommendations/Conclusions:**

Compatriot policies are based on a range of concerns and cannot be explained fully by ethnic nationalism, economic motivations, or partisan struggles. Their causes and their effects in different countries cannot be determined based on the experience of any one example. They arise for a similar set of reasons across countries, but the relative weight of each motivation may be different depending upon the broader political environment of specific cases. Many of the similarities in the laws are likely to come from copying and emulating legislation that policymakers have observed elsewhere, especially cases which they perceive to be similar to their own. In Croatia, as in other post-communist cases, an additional factor is the shadow of the communist era's hostile approach to emigrants, and the fact that many people were forced to leave due to their political beliefs, a failing economic system, or later, war. Specifically in Croatia, another influence in the development of this policy is legacy of HDZ's perceived close partnership with diaspora starting from the early days of Croatian independence. On a more fine-grained level, we also see that smaller groups of political actors who are committed to Croatian diaspora, minorities, or Bosnian Croats, work together with cultural organizations like the Croatian Catholic Church and diaspora groups that also have an interest in maintaining a broader network of Croatian cooperation across borders and the preservation of certain aspects of Croatian culture. The elements of ethnic nationalism and notions of "national unity" are accompanied by a strong dose of pragmatic thinking about leveraging resources as a small country and emigrant nation, as a country with a history of ethnic conflict with neighbors, and as a country still trying to overcome some of the political and economic legacies of the past.

In the broader picture of the post-communist world, Croatia is not so different from others. Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland, to name just a few, have similar policies. While a few aspects of some of these policies have been questioned, on the whole they have not been a source of conflict. Unlike Russia, whose compatriot policy is geared toward a larger and multiethnic population abroad, and which can potentially involve it in countries that it very recently ruled, Croatia's policy and the policies of similar countries are

**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT**

more likely to result in regional cooperation and further participation in Europe-wide projects on diaspora and ethnic minorities.

It is important when assessing compatriot policies to consider not only the political and practical motivations behind those laws, and not only their on-paper similarity to others, but also to examine the geopolitical context in which they operate. For Croatia and many other post-communist countries, that context favors cooperation. Moreover, the expressed desire by Croatia and others to attract the investment and attention of skilled workers and businesspeople amongst their diaspora in Canada, the USA, Australia and other such countries, could be beneficial for all parties. Compatriot laws may have some roots in nationalist feeling that inspires suspicion, but with strong legal roots in the constitutions of many post-communist countries, they are unlikely to disappear. Thus, the avenues for positive cultural and economic cooperation and advancement which they offer should be taken seriously and should be encouraged to the extent that they do not infringe on the rights of other ethnic groups in the country.

**Co-Curricular Activity:**

The vast majority of my interview data comes from discussions with local and international NGOs that deal with the Croatian diaspora, from talks with government officials (both Croatian and Slovak) and scholars. I also attended specific events held by NGOs, including the Croatian Diaspora Congress and the Croatian World Games.

**Plans for Future Research Agenda/ Presentations and Publications:**

The research material I have gathered here will become part of the data contributing to my dissertation, which compares the development of compatriot policies in the post-communist world. Currently I am focusing on the comparison between the development of Russian compatriot law with those of post-communist countries now in the European Union, including Croatia and Slovakia. I am conducting further field research on the Russian case, in Latvia and Estonia. Later, I also will be presenting a paper on this topic at the University of Pennsylvania program for Democracy, Citizenship, and Constitutionalism in February 2015, and am seeking

**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT**

out other conference opportunities. I plan to include an analysis of media coverage of these compatriot policies in my final dissertation work, as well as the materials gathered in fieldwork. In the future, I hope to partner with other scholars who are working on this issue to conduct surveys amongst the populations served by these compatriot laws.

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**2013 -2014 TITLE VIII RESEARCH SCHOLAR PROGRAM  
FINAL REPORT**

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