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## Political Tolerance among Youth in Croatia

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### *Summary*

This research on the political tolerance among youth (high school and university students) is based on the theory and concepts by J. Sullivan and his associates (1979). The level of political tolerance of our respondents towards the least liked group depends largely upon group itself, and the content of political freedom that is tolerable or intolerable. Averaging the responses to the six questions of political tolerance, only 35 percent of the respondents displayed political tolerance. This level of tolerance is closer to that of Israeli citizens than American or British.

The results of research on political tolerance in the least-liked population group, based on J. Sullivan et al.'s concept and model of political tolerance will be discussed here (Sullivan, 1979). As demonstrated previously (Vujčić, 1993) their findings represent a specific theoretical and methodological turning point in the research on political tolerance. The basis of their approach is that *opinions and attitudes* toward the least-liked population group must be methodologically separated from *tolerance* of these groups. Namely, they considered the research of S. Stouffer (1955), and other researchers after him, was not suitable to measure tolerance because it did not succeed in distinguishing attitudes towards the group and tolerance for the group. Stouffer's methodology demonstrated a significant increase in political tolerance of U.S. citizens in the 1970's as compared to the 1950's. Sullivan et al. considered research on political tolerance in the U.S., based on Stouffer's methodology, was simply inadequate. It was thus necessary to develop the so-called control on political tolerance, that is, attitudes toward specific groups as objects (targets) of tolerance and tolerance of these same groups. The ensuing research showed there were no significant changes in the levels of political tolerance of U.S. citizens during the 1970's (and later) as the research using Stouffer's methodology had concluded.

Sullivan et al. first asked respondents to select a least-liked group (political or apolitical), and then probed their levels of tolerance toward the selected group, that is, the group they like least. Tolerance was examined in the framework of political freedom (political and civil rights), and in doing so Sullivan defined tolerance and its effect on this finding.

In our research we applied the methodology of these researchers, except for necessary adjustments to accommodate the political situation in Croatia.

### *Research Methodology*

In our research on political tolerance of high-school students we determined groups as objects of tolerance which apply to our political context. This was not an easy task as the former socialist/communist regime eliminated political pluralism, formation and perception of unpopular groups. Respondents were presented seven possible groups as possible targets of their political tolerance. The following groups were presented: fascists, communists, Yugoslavs<sup>1</sup>, ustashas<sup>2</sup>, anti-abortion activists, proabortion activists, and atheists. These are political and apolitical groups as well as those with a left and right orientation.

The research was conducted at the end of 1992 and beginning of 1993. This was two years after democratic elections and changes were executed in Croatia. A sample of students from various high schools and universities in Croatia were polled. In total, 746 respondents were polled.

Before the results of the structure and levels of political tolerance of our respondents are presented, the findings related to least-popular group selection are presented. From that, we will see the relationship between group selection and tolerance because we started with the premise that the same group selected as least-popular will have a significant effect on the level of their tolerance. We do this because previous works which we analyzed did not indicate such an analysis. Namely, Sullivan et al. considered it sufficient to control groups by specifying them as targets of tolerance but did not do a separate analysis of the relationship between the selected groups and the tolerance levels of the respondents.

It is clear from Table 1 that most of the respondents selected Yugoslavs as the least-liked group, that is, the group they found least tolerable. Following Yugoslavs, were Fascists, then Communists, etc. It is important to note that the least-tolerated group was selected by only one-third of the respondents. This shows that political intolerance in Croatian youth is not focused. It would seem to indicate pluralistic intolerance, but

<sup>1</sup> This term is defined as all those who, in the former Yugoslavia, set themselves apart as Yugoslavs in the national sense, as well as those who would most likely support the emergence of a new Yugoslavia. In any case, this group associates itself with the former Yugoslav state or desires its reemergence.

<sup>2</sup> Ustashes were members of an organisation and movement which, during World War II, fought for formation of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH). In order to accomplish that goal, they allied themselves with Hitler Germany.

as selection of the Fascists and Yugoslavs groups combined is over 64% it is possible to say that a focused intolerance exists. Namely, if in today's Croatia the concept of Yugoslavs, and that of neo-fascism, symbolizes adversity toward the newly formed Croatian state, then the selection of those groups as least-popular is in line with the political situation and context of Croatia and its citizens. That is important to emphasize because those groups, as targets of intolerance, represent a serious and difficult test of tolerance for our respondent because they symbolize a threat to the new Croatian state, its democracy and the freedom of its citizens. Thus it is important to compare the relationship between the selected groups and the respondents' levels of political tolerance.

*Table 1: Selection of the least-popular groups (in percent)*

|                            |      |
|----------------------------|------|
| 1. Fascists                | 28.8 |
| 2. Yugoslavs               | 35.6 |
| 3. Communists              | 15.8 |
| 4. Ustashas                | 3.2  |
| 5. Pro-Abortion activists  | 3.0  |
| 6. Anti-Abortion activists | 10.7 |
| 7. Atheists                | 2.7  |

*Table 2: Level of education and gender as factors affecting selection of least-popular groups (in percent)*

|                         | Education Level |            | Gender |        |
|-------------------------|-----------------|------------|--------|--------|
|                         | High School     | University | Male   | Female |
| Fascists                | 22              | 36         | 27     | 31     |
| Yugoslavs               | 39              | 32         | 40     | 32     |
| Communists              | 21              | 11         | 15     | 14     |
| Ustashas                | 3               | 4          | 4      | 3      |
| Pro-Abortion Activists  | 2               | 5          | 3      | 4      |
| Anti-Abortion Activists | 12              | 9          | 7      | 14     |
| Atheists                | 2               | 4          | 3      | 3      |

It is important to show the role of gender and level of education (high school or university) in the selection of the least-liked groups. This is shown in Table 2.

The data in Table 2 show significant differences in selection of the least-popular groups according to the education level and gender of the respondents. The differences between education levels are more distinct than between genders. Later we will show that gender affects tolerance more than education does. Gender plays a greater role in differentiating the respondents' tolerance levels toward selected groups rather than in the selection of the least-liked groups. This agrees with J. Sullivan's findings that education level is more important in the selection of the least-liked group than in the tolerance levels towards it (Sullivan et al., 1981, 75). It seems that gender plays the opposite role — it is a factor in the level of tolerance rather than in the selection of a group.

### *Levels and Structures of Political Tolerance*

After selection of one least-liked group we administered a "test" of political tolerance. Namely, the respondents were administered a questionnaire in which they were asked questions such as: should members of the least-liked group be allowed to run for President of Croatia; should they be restricted from working as teachers in our schools, etc. to whether the government should be allowed to monitor their telephone conversations. The tolerance "test" thus deals with questions of basic political and civil rights of citizens (freedom to work, freedom to assemble, freedom of political organization, freedom of speech, freedom to run for political office and freedom of private communication).

The influence of group selection on the level of political tolerance will be tested here with six questions. Data on tolerance levels towards members of the least-popular groups will be presented in tabular form for each of the six questions. Each question had 5 possible answers which measured strength of opinions. In the table we will present percentages for answers which indicate a tolerant position toward members of the selected groups. In order to follow the content of political tolerance, we will show the tolerance levels for each individual measure, of which there were six.

It is evident from Table 3 that tolerance varies according to the content or political freedom of the statement. The majority of our respondents tolerate freedom to private telephone communication, but interestingly the least amount of tolerance was shown toward allowing members of the least-liked groups to work as professors in their schools. On the average, 35% of the respondents indicated tolerance for political freedom of the least-liked group members. This, then, does not reach a so-called democratic majority. In comparing similar research done on the consequences of political tolerance in the U.S., Britain and Israel, our high-school and university students have demonstrated political tolerance in the range (3-4% lower) shown by citizens of the above countries.

Differences exist, however, in the structure of tolerance, as American and British citizens were markedly more tolerant towards questions of telephone tapping or giving public speeches. The structure of tolerance demonstrated by our respondents was closest to that of Israeli citizens. However, a new study of political tolerance in Russia showed that Moscow citizens have a tolerance of around 17% (Gibson et. al., 1982, 341) which is significantly lower than our respondents (high school and university students). Factor loading shows that a well structured tolerance scale can provide us with a general tolerance factor. This one factor of political tolerance (an index) shows a 62% common variance, which means that the respondents had a high level of agreement on six of the presented tolerance tests.

*Table 3: Level and structure of political tolerance towards members of the least-liked groups*

| Question   | Percent tolerant | Factor Loading |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| 1. Give opportunity to run for President of Croatia        | 26.81            | .80            |
| 2. Allow to work as professor in our school                | 22.65            | .77            |
| 3. Allow their political organization and public influence | 34.58            | .91            |
| 4. Give opportunity to give a public speech in my town     | 35.66            | .94            |
| 5. Enable organization of public rallies in my town        | 34.59            | .95            |
| 6. Restrict authorities on tapping of their telephones     | 53.48            | .72            |

*Note:* Average level of tolerance is 35%. The percentages of those who agreed and strongly agreed with the statements are indicated here as measures of tolerance.

Even though table 4 shows only a percentage of tolerance, and not indifference or intolerance towards the six questions, these two tables provide a solid basis for the conclusion that a tolerance level depends upon the target of tolerance. It is obvious that the level of tolerance is highest in those that chose non-political groups as their least-liked groups (atheists, pro- and anti-abortion activists), while the lowest tolerance is shown by those who chose "Yugoslavs" as their least-liked group. This is, perhaps, because the group "Yugoslavs" carries an association with the greatest threat to Croatia and its citizens.

Table 4: Tolerance relationship and least-liked group (in percent)

| Least-liked group       | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | Average |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------|
| Fascists                | 30  | 17  | 36  | 41  | 40  | 58  | 37      |
| Yugoslavs               | 19  | 14  | 27  | 25  | 24  | 41  | 25      |
| Communists              | 37  | 34  | 43  | 42  | 40  | 58  | 42      |
| Ustashas                | 35  | 29  | 38  | 33  | 33  | 46  | 36      |
| Pro-Abortion activists  | 30  | 30  | 44  | 53  | 48  | 65  | 45      |
| Anti-Abortion activists | 26  | 37  | 40  | 43  | 42  | 71  | 43      |
| Atheist                 | 35  | 45  | 40  | 45  | 45  | 70  | 47      |
| Chi square              | 56  | 71  | 52  | 75  | 72  | 79  |         |
| C (coeff.cont.)         | .27 | .30 | .26 | .30 | .30 | .31 |         |
| % tolerance (all)       | 27  | 23  | 35  | 35  | 35  | 53  | 35      |

Note: Percentages and Chi square values are rounded off, while all contingency coefficients between choices of least-liked groups are rounded to two decimal places.

For easier and more accurate recording of further analysis of the tolerance levels of the respondents, it is worthwhile noting some statistics on non-tolerance, neutrality, and tolerance:

Table 5: Tolerant, neutral, and intolerant respondents (in percent)

|            | Six Target Group Questions |    |    |    |    |    |
|------------|----------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
|            | 1                          | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| Intolerant | 65                         | 62 | 48 | 49 | 51 | 28 |
| Neutral    | 7                          | 10 | 18 | 16 | 14 | 19 |
| Tolerant   | 28                         | 23 | 35 | 36 | 35 | 54 |

From table 5 we can see that, on average, 14% of the respondents expressed indecision or neutrality on the 6 questions on tolerance. The most indecision was expressed in response to the question about the right of the government to tap phone conversations.

### *Education and Gender as Determinants of Political Tolerance*

This study does not attempt to define a complex model for terms of reference of political tolerance, but only to see the effects of education and gender upon the total level of tolerance of the respondents. Precise conclusions about the roles of these variables do not yet exist, but it is worthwhile noting that there is little consensus between researchers. If the educational question is approached independent of other variables, then the role of this variable is very significant in explaining the differences in tolerance levels of the respondents. However, in the political tolerance model developed by J. Sullivan (1981), the role of the level of education of the respondents is less than expected. The effects of education seem to be more indirect than direct, that is, they are pronounced through other variables. These can include *psychological security*, which agrees with Maslow's *personal motivation structure*, or *personal values* as explained by J. Fletcher in his research (Fletcher, 1990).

In this study, we wish to show the direct effects of education and gender upon the level of political tolerance of the respondents. We will show only the results of tolerant answers for clearer results:

Table 6: Education and political tolerance

| Question | Percent of tolerant respondents |            |               |
|----------|---------------------------------|------------|---------------|
|          | Secondary                       | University | Cont. Coeff.* |
| 1.       | 26.05                           | 27.59      | 0.08          |
| 2.       | 19.21                           | 26.23      | 0.09          |
| 3.       | 28.16                           | 41.26      | 0.14          |
| 4.       | 29.74                           | 41.81      | 0.14          |
| 5.       | 28.68                           | 40.71      | 0.13          |
| 6.       | 51.04                           | 56.01      | 0.07          |
| Average  | 30.48                           | 38.93      |               |

\*Note: these values are rounded to 2 decimal places.

It is obvious from the data in table 6 that university students are more tolerant than high-school students — on average, by around 9%. A statistically significant difference is present only in three questions (3, 4, and 5); the freedom of association (political organization), freedom to hold public speeches, and freedom to assemble in groups. These are the

fundamental political freedoms of citizens. Thus, there is no doubt that education plays a pivotal role in determining the political tolerance among the respondents (youth). Whether this effect is realized directly or indirectly through other relevant variables is unimportant here. The main point is that education is a significant factor in differentiation between levels of tolerance between respondents. We believe this differentiation would become even more pronounced on a sample of all citizens (a national sample) as this would include those with lower education levels.

Table 7: Gender and political tolerance levels

| Question | Percent of tolerant respondent |        |            |
|----------|--------------------------------|--------|------------|
|          | Male                           | Female | C. Coeff.* |
| 1.       | 37.90                          | 17.37  | 0.26       |
| 2.       | 29.16                          | 17.12  | 0.17       |
| 3.       | 44.32                          | 26.30  | 0.23       |
| 4.       | 43.15                          | 29.28  | 0.18       |
| 5.       | 41.69                          | 28.54  | 0.19       |
| 6.       | 60.93                          | 47.14  | 0.21       |
| Average: | 42.85                          | 27.62  |            |

\*Note: values are rounded two decimal places.

The figures show undoubtedly that the males are significantly more tolerant than the female respondents. There is a difference of over 15 % in the percentage of tolerant respondents. The differences, as shown by the c-coefficients in the last column, show a significant difference on all six questions on political tolerance. The differences between the sexes are more pronounced than those by produced education level. The reasons for this should be further researched.

Finally, an analysis of the variance (as defined by factor analysis) in the index of political tolerance (see the last column of table 3) shows that there exist statistically significant differences in education and gender of the respondents for definition of political tolerance. Factor analysis has, namely, shown that for the six questions on political tolerance there exists a single common index and homogenous position.

The figures in the Table 8 show that there exists a statistically significant difference in the political tolerance of the respondents grouped according to education and gender. High school students, and females are significantly below average in their political tolerance index than university

students and males. However, here the gender of the respondents appears to be a dominant factor differentiating levels of political tolerance.

*Table 8:* Analysis of the index of variance in political tolerance according to education and gender

| Education   | N   | X    | SD  | Gender | N   | X    | SD   |
|-------------|-----|------|-----|--------|-----|------|------|
| High school | 380 | -.11 | .99 | Male   | 343 | .16  | 1.01 |
| University  | 366 | .11  | .99 | Female | 403 | -.14 | .89  |

$F = 9.89$

$p = .00$

$F = 16.81$

$p = .00$

### *Multivariate analysis of the source of political tolerance*

Here and within this framework it is necessary to discuss briefly the multivariate model of variables (sources, determinants) of Croatian high school and university students' political tolerance. Within this multivariate model special attention will be paid to the impact of variables such as education (formal education degree), the socio-economic status and political participation on the level of political tolerance of individuals of unaccepted (or the least respected) social groups. This is important considering the fact that education and gender, when analysed separately as sources of political tolerance, show significant effects on this phenomenon among pupils and students.

By administering a questionnaire we collected data for establishing and defining various independent variables as the source or determinants of political tolerance. The questionnaire helped us to define variables (such as gender, educational level, religion etc.), whereas other determinants had to be defined by applying factor analysis of the main components to collected data. Variables defined in this way represented indices of the variables for the data they are normally based on (for example, index SCR stood for "index of civil rights" — representing the data on attitudes supporting civil rights and liberties. Thus, multivariate analyses of the relations between these indices and tolerance deal with integrally defined variables (indices) and not with a mass of individual data they consist of. This, certainly, allows for an analysis on a higher level of synthesis which is the primary goal of scientific research.

Before we present the results of the multivariate analysis of independent variables and political tolerance, we will only briefly describe the measured variables and the defined indices for particular independent variables. It also needs to be said that political tolerance was defined as an index (by applying factor analysis of the main components), thus we

have one index instead of six individual measures used for testing political tolerance. This index represented one dependent variable in our research and it was marked by letters TUG = "tolerance of unaccepted groups". This index explained more than 62% of variance in six measures of political tolerance, which means that among youth there was a high degree of agreement in in/tolerant attitudes on different measures in the applied test.

Independent variables are defined as follows:

EDU = the level of education (third grade high school students, sophomore students with different majors)

SA = study achievement (high school or university average grades)

SES = socio-economic status based on parents' education

GENDER = male or female

REL = intensity of religious feelings

FAM = family relations (closeness with parents, rearing model, parents' interests in politics)

PS = psychological stability as a personality variable had four separate indices based on accepting different values on scales specially designed for their evaluating (PS1 = tolerance, creativity, true love; PS2 = self-respect; PS3 = sociability, friendship; PS4 = love, friendship)

AD = authoritarianism-dogmatism;

CON = confidence in people

RESA = respect of authority as a value

GND = acceptance of general norms of democracy had four separate (specific) indices (GND1= tolerance of the freedom of petitioning and demonstration; GND2= equal rights and freedom of speech; GND3= freedom of using the phone without its being tapped and person's moral autonomy; GND4= freedom of abortion)

SCR = support of civil rights and civil liberties

PP = political participation represented a separately defined index on different measures of political participation

OT = observed threat by the tolerated group

PI = political ideology on the scale of left-right wing orientation

Given is a summarized description of variables and indices for the above variables. There are obviously three groups of variables in this research: socio-demographic (SES, education, gender etc.); psychological (personality variables) and political (political participation, political ideology and etc.)

*Table 9:* Standardized regression analysis of political tolerance of unaccepted groups (TUG) in the system of independent variables

| Independent variables             | r      | p.r                         | B (beta) |
|-----------------------------------|--------|-----------------------------|----------|
| EDU (pupil-student)               | .11    | .03                         |          |
| GENDER (male-female)              | -.15   | -.05                        |          |
| SA (study achievement)            |        |                             |          |
| PI (political ideology)           | -.14   | -.09                        |          |
| REL (degree of religious feeling) | -.19   | -.01                        |          |
| SES (social status)               | .11    | .00                         |          |
| FAM (family relations)            |        |                             |          |
| PS1 (tolerance, creativity)       | .11    | .01                         |          |
| PS2 (self-respect...)             |        |                             |          |
| PS3 (sociability...)              |        |                             |          |
| PS4 (love...)                     |        |                             |          |
| AD (authoritarianism, dogmatism)  | -.34   | -.12                        | -.11     |
| RESA (respect of authority)       | -.20   | -.07                        |          |
| PP (political participation)      |        |                             |          |
| OT (observed threat)              | -.29   | -.25                        | -.22     |
| SCR (civil rights)                | .41    | .30                         | .28      |
| CON (trust in others)             | .20    | .14                         | .12      |
| GND1 (freedom of demonstration)   | .21    | .04                         | .04      |
| GND2 (freedom of speech)          | .38    | .25                         | .23      |
| GND3 (freedom of privacy)         | .21    | .05                         | .03      |
| GND4 (freedom of abortion)        |        |                             |          |
|                                   | R= .62 | R <sup>2</sup> = .378 (38%) |          |

*Note:* given are correlation coefficients (r) bigger than .10, partial correlation coefficients (p.r) and standardized coefficients of multiple (beta) correlation.

These data show that the given structure of independent variables can predict political tolerance of social groups unaccepted (least-liked) by individuals, especially when considering school population. These independent variables explained about 38% of the common variance in the tested tolerance. It needs to be said that only two variables explained about 20% of the common variance and those are indices of support of civil rights (SCR) and support of general democratic norms GND2 (equality before the law and freedom of speech). Further 10% of the common variance within the tolerance index explained further two independent variables. Those are observed threat by the selected group as the target of tolerance (OT) and authoritarianism-dogmatism (AD). As for other variables, we might point to a certain meaning of the variable "trust in others" (CON), which explained further 2.5% of the common variance. All remaining variables contributed with about 5% in explaining the common variance. On the basis of these results we could say that political tolerance among Croatian youth can be well predicted if they support general democratic norms (civil liberties: freedom of speech and expression, equality before the law, freedom of assembling etc.) and if they incline to non-authoritarianism and non-dogmatism and, if the observed level of threat by the tolerated group is as low as possible.

Interestingly, differences in education and gender, when observed separately, proved to be significant for political tolerance among youth, in the way that university students were more tolerant than high school students and male subjects were more tolerant than female respondents, but when the data were analysed within the multivariate model, these difference almost disappeared. Only about 1% of the common variance in the tested tolerance can be accounted for by these two variables. Political participation in relation to tolerance did not play a significant role. The significance of these variables in this study should be considered tentatively due to the fact that respondents came from school population, where the differences in education are not significant or are not yet established. As far as political participation is concerned, in particular that of high school students, we can speak about it only in basic terms.

All this leads to the conclusion that education has an indirect rather than direct role in the development of political tolerance, as Sullivan et al. (1982) emphasized, i.e. through giving strong support to civil liberties and general democratic norms and through developing flexibility and open-mindedness. In any case, it seems that in Croatian circumstances education has a respectable role in raising the level of political tolerance among Croatian people. It seems to perform this role indirectly, i.e. through developing flexibility and open-mindedness and through helping students to adopt a positive attitude to civil liberties and general democratic social norms. If this is true, and this is suggested by the results, then it is not true that tolerance education has little significance in reducing conflict and that this can be achieved solely by democratic structures and governing procedures, as is frequently claimed by

conservative theoreticians of democracy, particularly by those of a federalist-republican orientation. Political socialization of youth by means of education has a significant role in developing tolerance in general, and political tolerance in particular. Our conclusions, here drawn on the basis of collected data and their evaluation, should be further researched in a systematic way.

### *Conclusions*

This research on the political tolerance among youth (high school and university) is based on the theory and concepts by J. Sullivan and his associates (1979). This necessitates a "separation" of attitude towards various political and non-political groups, from the actual tolerance of these groups. Someone may have a negative attitude toward a given group, yet exhibit tolerance towards it; and vice versa. This had to be controlled and was achieved in the above-described manner.

The research led us to the following conclusions:

1. The choice of least-liked group of the seven offered was not focused upon any one group. This distributed, or unfocused choice suggests an unfocused political intolerance in youth. This is definitively better than a focused intolerance, although war (Serbian aggression upon Croatia) and the historical lack of political plurality are hardly ideal conditions for tolerance. Distributed intolerance is better suited to pluralistic democracy since this creates the conditions for resolving political conflicts in the society.

2. The level of political tolerance of our respondents towards the least liked group depends largely upon group itself, and the content of political freedom that is tolerable or intolerable. Averaging the responses to the six questions of political tolerance, only 35% of the respondents displayed political tolerance. This level of tolerance is closer to that of Israeli citizens than American or British.

3. Education and gender have a significant influence upon the choice of least-liked group and the tolerance towards that group. This research agrees with that of J. Sullivan in the USA, inasmuch education is more important a factor in the choice of least-liked group than in the level of tolerance shown for that group. Education and gender have a significant influence upon the choice of least liked group and upon the level of political tolerance — but they act in opposite ways: where education is more important for the choice of group, gender is more important in the level of tolerance shown. It was shown that males are more tolerant than females, and university students more so than high school students. How much these variables act directly, and how much indirectly should be further researched. Their direct influence upon political tolerance among

youth is significant and shows a differential effect upon the political tolerance of youth in Croatia. This is important for the processes of political socialization, and in developing strategies for political education that will raise the level of political tolerance of youth overall.

4. However, the multivariate model of regression analysis of political tolerance in the entire system of independent (socio-demographic, psychological, political) variables shows that education and gender have little direct impact on the level of this phenomenon among youth (high school and university students). It is more likely that education plays an indirect role through developing flexibility and open-mindedness among youth and through developing a positive attitude to general democratic norms and civil liberties etc.

5. The applied standardized regression analysis showed that political tolerance among Croatian youth depends largely on a positive attitude to civil liberties (rights) and on the level of accepting general democratic norms (equality before the law and freedom of speech). About 20% of the common variance in political tolerance of least-liked groups, is explained by these two variables. Thus, we can claim that the processes of political socialization and education of Croatian youth play a significant role in raising the level of political tolerance because the acceptance of civil liberties and general democratic norms cannot be achieved without processes of social learning. These data support the hypothesis of the socialization of political tolerance.

6. Observed threat by the selected group as a target of in/tolerance showed a significant impact on the level of political tolerance among Croatian youth. The higher the level of observed threat, the lower the level of political tolerance. However, the effects of observed threat, although acting contrary to the variables "support of civil liberties" and "general democratic norms", still cannot cancel the above mentioned effects. The observed threat significantly reduces effects of supporting civil liberties, but does not eliminate them completely. Trust in people as a separate variable has a positive although a minimal contribution to developing political tolerance among Croatian youth.

We think that the indirect finding that raising the level of political tolerance among youth can be achieved through processes of political socialization and political education and through stimulating a positive attitude to civil liberties and democratic norms may be the most important one. This implies the notion that systematic political education as an organized part of political socialization is very important for nurturing political culture and political tolerance as its important components. Certainly, the contributions of formal education and real effects of political socialization, particularly of political education, to the development of political tolerance need to be studied in a more systematic manner. These contributions need to be analysed and

theoretically explained more precisely by applying more sophisticated methodologies.

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