

Dear readers,

This is the first special issue that the Croatian International Relations Review (CIRR) publishes, conveniently falling into the 20th year of the journal's existence. A decision to publish a special issue was motivated by a desire to mark another anniversary – that of the Croatian 5th year of membership in NATO.

Croatia and Albania joined NATO in 2009 and remain the only two countries – members of NATO – in the region five years after. With the exception of Serbia, all other countries in the region, more or less, express the desire to join NATO. The accession process, however, just as in the case of the accession to the European Union, is wrought with obstacles, both internally and externally. At the same time, NATO faces numerous challenges, in Europe and beyond. These and related themes are discussed in this issue.

A word about CIRR – we make significant efforts to strengthen the journal – attract excellent scholarly articles and widen the journal's reading audience. To this end, a number of changes have been introduced during the last two years. CIRR has an open-access policy and full texts can be downloaded through the CIRR website (<http://cirr.irmo.hr>), HRČAK – a portal of academic journals in Croatia (<http://hrcak.srce.hr/cirr?lang=en>) or through the De Gruyter website (<http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/cirr>), the journal's academic distributor. As of recently, full and free access to all previous issues of the journal is available at the CIRR and HRČAK websites.

CIRR is a member of COPE – Committee on Publication Ethics – and has a strict anti-plagiarism policy.

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**Senada Šelo Šabić,**  
editor-in-chief

