# National identity and social distance:
# Does in-group loyalty lead to outgroup hostility?

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A sample of 670 participants, Croats, from Zagreb completed the questionnaire containing National Identity Scale and the measure of social distance toward in-group, and various outgroups, minorities living in Croatia. The objectives of the study were threefold: (1) to examine the national identity of Croatian adults, university students and high school pupils; (2) to examine the social distance of Croat participants towards various ethnic groups living in the same state; (3) to explore the relationship between national identity and general social distance as a measure of interethnic tolerance. Results revealed a different level of national identity in participants from three groups, with high-school pupils scored highest. They also show the largest distance toward outgroups. The four components of National Identity Scale are moderately to highly inter-related and only component of Nationalism showed the predictive power for social distance.

Unlike the scholars in fields of sociology, political science, philosophy, history and anthropology, the question of national identity itself has been relatively rarely examined by psychologists, although it is highly relevant for conceptualizing a very popular and widely examined theme of group belonging and social identity. History, especially recently, speaks for itself about the importance of a nation and ethnic groups and peoples' attachment to them. After the collapse of the communist system in all Eastern European countries the question of national identity and processes of national homogenization have become stronger and very important, leading to an increase of in-group loyalty and strong national(istic) sentiments (cf. Farner, 1994). Understanding the phenomenon of national identity is not only important from a theoretical point of view, but has an extreme practical value as well. By understanding the mechanisms of acquisition and development of this type of in-group loyalty, its causes, correlates and consequences we could be more able to identify possible directions for encouraging interethnic tolerance. This is particularly important if we bear in mind the fact that there are only few nationally homogenous countries (if any at

all) and that the contemporary social processes lead to multiethnicity and multiculturalism.

As Phinney (1990) pointed out, the body of research on ethnic/national identity in psychology, which has been done thus far, has several shortcomings: the amount of theoretical work surpasses empirical research and most studies have been conducted with children or non-representative samples. Furthermore, there are far more laboratory work than studies which take into account the social context of intergroup relations. The most salient obstacle in this field, as we see it, is the ambiguous meaning of the concept of national identity itself, leading to the consequence that scholars use very different definitions and measures. A different historical development of national states in Western Europe and on the North American continent on the one hand, and middle and Southeastern Europe on the other hand, caused a somewhat different theoretical approach to the term nation. While it is common for the West European and American scholars, to equalize the nation with the state or rather with the state territory (jus soli or the law of the soil; McCrone & Surridge 1998), the development of state in middle and Southeastern Europe resulted in spread of nations of the same ethnic, cultural, religious and language origins across the (national) state borders, and the origin is the basis of determining of the national being (jus sanguinis or the law of blood; McCrone & Surridge, 1998). In this fact lies at least part of the problem with defining of the terms state, nation, national identity, ethnic groups and ethnic identity. Although with no firm consensus, it is possible to determine two generally ac-

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cepted definitions. First one, which could be named the civic conception, assumes the definition of nation within a state territory on the basis of citizenship. In this definition it is understood that all the citizens of one state, regardless of their ethnic, cultural, language, historical, religious or other origin make a nation. The second conception could be named the cultural-ethnic, and it assumes that a nation is made of the members of the group who share the common characteristics: origin, language, culture, history, religious affiliation, and a feeling of sharing the same fate.

There are many reasons, to mention only few, confirming the concept of national identity to be highly relevant socio-psychological phenomenon:

1. The sense of belonging has a profound significance for human beings, so important that Maslow postulated the need for belonging as a basic human need. Moreover, the theory of social identity (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) suggests that the very definition of self depends on our membership in the groups we feel belong and attached to. According to this theory, our self-concept could be enhanced or weakened depending on the status our in-groups have in the society.

2. We have witnessed the processes of emerging new countries in the Europe. After decades of living together within the same borders, national movements emerged in, by then, multiethnic states, striving for self-determination and establishment of independent states. Few of these countries have been lucky in starting a new life - maybe not painlessly, but with no war. Former Czechoslovakia in an example. Far more countries experienced ethnic violence and war in its most cruel form - ethnic cleansing with very clear goal: to prevent expelled population to return to "cleansed" territory ever again. War in Croatia, and wars in Bosnia and Kosovo even more give us tragic examples. One cannot help asking what motivated such cruelties. In recent analysis of the war in Bosnia, Cornelia Sorabji said: "Brutality is aimed at humiliating, terrorizing and killing the "enemy" population in order to remove it from the territory, but also *at transforming the assumptions held by both victims and perpetrators about the very nature of identity groups and boundaries...*" (Sorabji, 1995; p. 81).

3. Highly relevant issue is a question of turning point when national identification and pride become nationalism, and national mobilization transforms itself into dominant ideology of the society.

4. Most of the members of our nation we won't meet in our lifetime. However, each and every on of us could define his or her nation and feels attachment to it. Although our nation in an "imagined community" as Anderson (1983) pointed out, we can easily recognize our language, culture, traditional values, customs, common name and so on. We simply know who "we" are and who we are not. Beside various "objective" or in certain degree distinguish-

able elements, which define our national identity, there is a strong affective component as well. People usually feel strong affection to a national group of their origin, seeing a national flag or hearing a national anthem could make people feel very proud and elicit strong emotion of unity. This emotion can be so strong and so powerful that sometimes it motivates people to incomprehensible acts of altruism (Stern, 1995, 1996). Indeed, people do hate others and people do die for their nation and in the name of it.

If national sentiment exists as an empirical phenomenon, how could we measure it? Is it uni- or multidimensional? What are components of national identity? How are they expressed? What are the social (and personal) consequences of having a weak or strong national sentiment, sense of belonging and identity and how those affect our relations with other communities and national groups?

Most of work in conceptualizing and developing measures of group identities has been done under the assumptions of social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986), which defines a social identity as "the part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1981; p. 255). There have been few attempts trying to measure the construct of national identity. Furthermore, the existing attempts comprise more often what has been called in the literature the ethnic identity rather than national identity as such. Probably the most often used measure of ethnic identity is one developed by Jean Phinney (1992) called Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure, measuring the ethnic identity as a component of the self-concept. The factor analysis of the scale administered to the American ethnic minority and majority groups (Asian American, African American, Hispanics and Whites), showed that "ethnic identity appeared to consist of a single factor, including three intercorrelated components: positive ethnic attitudes, ethnic identity achievement, and ethnic behaviors" (p. 169). The author suggested that the scale could be used for measuring ethnic identity in different groups and intergroups settings. The concept of ethnic identity itself is somewhat unclear and imprecise, even in the multiracial and multicultural context of the USA. As Phinney (1992) herself pointed out "...ethnicity appears to be a subject about which most of the White adolescents have not given much thought and about which they are not very clear" (p. 171). One could even raise a question what do we actually measure by measuring ethnic identity, since the ethnicity is a very broad social category, overlapping in great extent with the category of "race", at least as far as American minority groups are concerned. As results obviously show in Phinney's work, the category is not very salient to the subjects, at least to the Whites, and there are obviously some other more important social categories that people may identify with. One could

question even the possibility of the relevance of this issue in some different social context where different lines of social division exist and shape inter-group relations. Trying also to conceptualize ethnic identity, Valk and Karu (2001) proposed a definition which included "a) a combination of attitudes towards one's group of origin and its common cultural practices and b) one's feeling of attachment to the group" (p. 584). It should be noted that the participants in the study were adolescents and adults, Estonians from Estonia, Estonians from Sweden and Russians from Estonia, so the composition of the sample was a mixture of people of majority and minority status. However, both groups, Estonians and Russians, exist as the nations, so in our opinion the term "national identity" could be equally applicable in this context. Whether the ethnic-national distinction is only a matter or how one labels the groups, which presumably have common descent and idea of "we-ness", or are there some psychologically and socially relevant differences in how individuals define their groups and identify with them, remain an open question to be explored. The Ethnic Identity Scale by Valk and Karu measures two relatively independent components of ethnic identity: ethnic pride and belonging and ethnic differentiation. The authors argue that along with positive feelings towards one's own in-group, the ethnic identity also encompasses and inter-group component, i.e. inter-group differentiation. By doing so Valk and Karu provided a promising avenue for studying ethnic (national) identity and the relationship between ethnic (national) identity and attitudes towards various out-groups.

As previous work in the field shows, it is expected for national identity to be multidimensional concept, with sense of belonging, positive feelings and loyalty as being essential parts. Harold Guetzkow (1957) discussed three types of what he called national loyalty: multiple, when one holds positive feelings towards one's own nation but also feels bonds to other nations; patriotic, when one feels a commonness only with one's own compatriots, and alienated, when one feels no commonness to one's compatriots. Trying to shed light on some of the questions we stated above, we conducted a study aiming to highlight the multi-dimensionality of national identity phenomenon and to relate it to the measure of interethnic tolerance. We defined national identity as an attachment to one's oen national group and the sense of belonging to it, following the conceptualization of national identity as a particular type of social or collective identity. The national identification we consider more as the identification with people, with "imagined community", than with nation-state or with nation as a political entity. We start from definition of nation according to which "...a nation refers to a large group of people bound by perceived common descent, history, culture." (Spiering, 1996). More explicitly, the objectives of the study were threefold: (1) to explore the national identity of Croatian adults, university students and high school pu-

pils; (2) to examine the social distance of Croat participants towards various ethnic groups living in the same state; (3) to explore the relationship between national identity and general social distance as a measure of interethnic tolerance.

## METHOD

### Participants

A total of 670 paricipants, identified themselves as Croats, from three different populations completed the questionnaire. The majority of participants, $N = 332$, were students at the University of Zagreb. This stratified quota sample reflects a structure of students at the University and could be considered as representative. A second sample of 155 subjects was drawn from the population of high-school pupils in Zagreb. It included pupils attending third grade of grammar, vocational and artistic high schools. The final sample contributed an additional 183 subjects and was drawn from the population of adult employed persons. All subjects participated voluntarily upon request. Demographic characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 1.

### Instruments and procedures

Written instructions informed subjects that the survey tapped the attitudes of citizens of Croatia regarding various social issues. Anonymity was stressed. The results we present are the part of the larger study on sociodemographic, personality and social predictors of national identity and interethnic tolerance, conducted in 1998 in the city of Zagreb, the capital of the Republic of Croatia (Čorkalo & Kamenov, 1999).

*Table 1*

Demographics of the sample (*N*=670)

| | Age | | Males | Females | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *M* | *SD* | | | |
| Employed participants | 36.76 | 10.83 | 83 | 100 | 183 |
| High-school pupils | 16.57 | 0.57 | 93 | 62 | 155 |
| University students | 21.32 | 2.15 | 123 | 209 | 332 |
| Total | | | 299 | 371 | 670 |

*National Identity Scale* (NIS) (Čorkalo & Kamenov, 1999) contains 27 items, with response format of a 5-point Likert-like scale, ranging across strongly agree, moderately agree, neither agree/nor disagree, moderately disagree and strongly disagree. The general score is computed as a sum of all items, with reverse scoring of items 2, 3, 8, 14, 15, 22, 23 (Appendix). A higher score indicates stronger national identity. Cronbach alpha reliability is 0.95. The separate scores are also computed for the four components or subscales of the NIS (see below). The Cronbach alpha coefficients for respective subscales are given in the Appendix.

The *Social Distance Scale* measures the degree of intimacy an individual would allow to members of social outgroups. The scale consists of six degrees of intimacy (would marry into group, would have as relative, would have as close friend, would work in the same office, would have as next-door neighbor and would have only as a citizen in my country). Participants were asked to indicate each of them he/she is willing to accept with members of nine outgroups, significant minorities who live in Croatia, i.e. Serbs, Bosniacs, Hungarians, Macedonians, Romanies, Albanians, Slovenians, Italians, and Jews. The result is expressed as a highest degree of intimacy one is ready for with the member of an outgroup. As a control measure we asked participants to indicate the degree of intimacy they were willing to accept with their in-groups, i.e. Croats. A higher score indicates higher social distance.

## RESULTS

### National identity of the participants

A principal component analysis was performed on 27 items of National Identity Scale, using Varimax rotation. The analysis confirmed the hypothesis about multidimen-

sionality of national identity[1]. We extracted four interpretable dimensions, which together accounted for 54,3 percent of the total variance.

The first factor provided 10 items, explaining 39 percent of total variance. The factor could be named as the factor of *National pride* best described by items as "I feel worthy because of the rich culture of my nation." or "The feeling of belonging to my nation is very important to me". The second factor was the factor of *Exclusive national belonging* or *nationalism* and explained 7 percent of total variance. It is best represented by items such as "People who do not love their nation deserve contempt" or "Members of the same nation should always stick together". The third factor explained additional 5 percent of total variance and was labeled as factor of *National devotion*. The typical items emerged on this factor are "Loyalty towards the nation is more important than loyalty towards self." and "Children should be given national spirit from an early age". The fourth factor explained 4 percent of total variance and was labeled as *Cosmopolitanism*. Each item here refers to absence of national attachment of any kind and the sense of belonging to the humanity in the whole, for example "First and foremost, I consider myself as a citizen of the world."

From the selected items subscales were developed to yield a score for each subject on each factor. However, since the first factor was so robust and explained the most of the variance, we also computed the sum for the whole 27-item scale. The results on each subscale for all three groups of participants are shown in Table 2.

One-way analysis of variance on *National pride* shows significant differences among sub-samples ($F(2,617)=6.92$; $p<0.001$). Scheffe's posthoc procedure indicated significant differences between employed participants and university students, and between university students and high-school pupils. Analysis of variance on *Nationalism* shows significant differences between pupils and students,

*Table 2*

Means (*M*) and standard deviations (*SD*) of the scores on four national identity subscales and on the whole scale (Sum NI)

| | Employed | | Pupils | | Students | | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | |
| National pride | 32.40$_a$ | 6.828 | 32.45$_{a,c}$ | 5.751 | 30.59$_b$ | 5.874 | 6.92** |
| Exclusive NI | 17.11$_{a,b}$ | 5.764 | 18.55$_a$ | 4.787 | 15.87$_b$ | 5.523 | 12.77** |
| National devotion | 20.46$_a$ | 5.211 | 21.61$_{a,c}$ | 5.102 | 18.70$_b$ | 5.032 | 17.76** |
| Cosmopolitanism | 15.86$_a$ | 4.796 | 16.43$_{a,b}$ | 4.695 | 16.95$_b$ | 4.201 | 3.45* |
| Sum. NI | 85.68$_a$ | 14.661 | 89.18$_{a,c}$ | 13.112 | 82.27$_b$ | 13.041 | 11.78** |

*Note*: Means in the same row that do not share subscripts differ at $p< 0.05$ in the Scheffe posthoc comparison. * $p<.03$; ** $p< 0.001$

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[1] The items describing each of the four factors are given in the Appendix at the end of the paper. The more detailed discussion on development of the National Identity Scale could be found in Čorkalo and Kamenov (1999).

with pupils scoring highest $(F(2,650)=12.77; p< 0.001)$. There is a significant difference between employees and university students on the measure of *National devotion*, as well as a difference between university students and pupils $(F(2,634)=17.76; p< 0.001)$. On the measure of *Cosmopolitanism* one significant difference emerged, with university students scoring higher than employees $(F(2,649)=3.45; p< 0.03)$. The main effect of sample emerged on the composite of national identity $(F(2,574)=11.78; p< 0.001)$, with high-school pupils scored higher than employed participants and the employed participants scored higher than university students.

### Social distance

In further analysis we explored the subjects' attitudes toward aforementioned outgroups, by measuring social distance, i.e. a type of relationships subjects are ready to establish with the members of other nations. The results vary in range from 1 to 6, and the higher result indicates a higher distance, i.e. a less close relationship participants are ready to establish with members of other national outgroups. Table 3 and Figure 1 show the mean results of social distance toward outgroups for three sub-samples and for the total sample, as well as mean social distance toward ingroup.

Sub-samples do not differ significantly in distance toward their own nation $(F(2,644)=0,30; p<0.05)$. General distance toward all nations taken together, computed as a mean distance towards all outgroups, indicates that our participants are ready for relatively close relationships with members of outgroups, somewhere between being relatives and being friends $(M=2,55; SD=1,340)$. However, the results of general distance toward others differ significantly in our sub samples $(F(2,389)=13,28; p<0.001)$, with students being ready for as close relationships as being in-laws with others, and pupils being ready for establishing friendship. The similar pattern of results between sub-samples could be seen for measures of social distance toward each particular national outgroup. The subjects show the smallest distance toward Italians and they do not differ significantly $(F(2,610)=2.45; p<0.05)$. Low distance is shown toward Slovenians, however subjects differ significantly $(F(2,563)=5,79; p<.01)$. There are differences between pupils and students, with pupils scoring highest. Pupils differ significantly from the university students and employed participants in their distance toward Hungarians $(F(2,569)=16,07; p<.001)$, Macedonians $(F(2,522)=14,06; p<.001)$ and Jews $(F(2,548)=11,31; p<.001)$. Mean distances toward other target outgroups are above value 3, which means readiness for friendship. Pupils, scoring highest in their distance toward Bosniacs differ from adults and university students $(F(2,495)=10,49; p<.001)$. Pupils and students differ significantly in their distance toward Serbs $(F(2,443)=10,59; p<.001)$, and toward Albanians $(F(2,470)=9,35; p<.001)$, with pupils again score highest. The highest distance has been expressed toward Romanies and the participants differ significantly $(F(2,447)=10,16; p<.001)$. University students show the smallest distance,

*Table 3*

Mean distance towards ingroup and outgroups

| | Employed | | Pupils | | Students | | Total | | F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | M | SD | M | SD | M | SD | M | SD | |
| Croats | 1.13 | 0.551 | 1.16 | 0.695 | 1.12 | 0.629 | 1.13 | 0.624 | 0.30 |
| Gen. distan. | 2.67 | 1.252 | 3.20 | 1.307 | 2.29 | 1.321 | 2.55 | 1.340 | 13.28** |
| Albanians | 3.47 | 1.686 | 3.92 | 1.611 | 3.03 | 1.788 | 3.33 | 1.757 | 9.35** |
| Bosniacs | 3.00 | 1.521 | 3.80 | 1.606 | 2.95 | 1.717 | 3.13 | 1.675 | 10.49** |
| Hungarians | 2.33 | 1.370 | 3.08 | 1.503 | 2.15 | 1.515 | 2.38 | 1.510 | 16.07** |
| Macedonians | 2.50 | 1.328 | 3.42 | 1.667 | 2.45 | 1.684 | 2.64 | 1.624 | 14.06** |
| Romanies | 3.63 | 1.783 | 4.09 | 1.658 | 3.13 | 1.829 | 3.46 | 1.820 | 10.16** |
| Slovenians | 2.22 | 1.532 | 2.64 | 1.660 | 2.06 | 1.505 | 2.22 | 1.559 | 5.79** |
| Serbs | 3.33 | 1.768 | 3.89 | 1.835 | 2.87 | 1.809 | 3.20 | 1.841 | 10.59** |
| Italians | 1.98 | 1.363 | 2.11 | 1.412 | 1.81 | 1.377 | 1.92 | 1.384 | 2.45 |
| Jews | 2.60 | 1.480 | 3.20 | 1.548 | 2.37 | 1.600 | 2.60 | 1.585 | 11.31** |

**$p<.001$
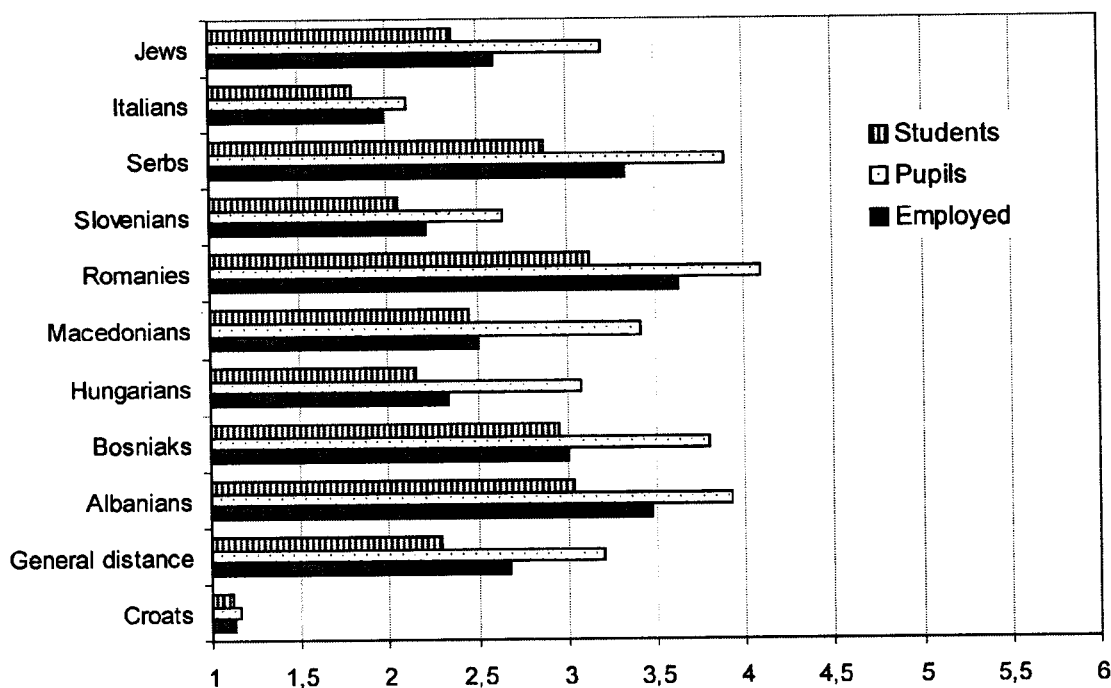
*Figure 1.* Mean distance towards ingroup and outgroups

and they differ significantly from pupils and employed participants.

### National identity and social distance

In order to examine the relation between national identity and social distance we computed Pearson's correlation among four components of national identity and general distance towards various outgroups.

As can be seen from Table 4, all components of national identity are significantly correlated with one another, indicating that the components of national identity are not completely independent.[2] Among them the components of *National pride* and *National devotion* are in the highest correlation ($r$=.756; $p$< 0.001). Highly related are also components of *National pride* and *Exclusive identity* ($r$=.723; $p$< 0.001), and the component of *Exclusive iden-*

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[2] A second order factor analysis produced a single factor with eigenvalue of 2,73, explaining 68 percent of total variance and indicating one robust dimension of national identity. However, different patterns of correlations of each component with the measure of social distance (particularly partial correlations) seem to corroborate the underlying theoretical position of multidimensionality of the national identity. Further research is needed to explore in more detail and more reliably the possible different consequences of particular types of national identity on attitudes toward other groups and inter-group relations.

*tity* and *National devotion* ($r$=.676; $p$ <0.001). As expected, the component of *Cosmopolitism* correlates negatively with other three components of national identity. The zero-order correlations between the measure of general social distance towards outgroups and the components of national identity indicate moderate and positive relationship in all cases (see Table 4) except in the case of correlation between outgroup distance and *Cosmopolitanism*. This correlation is negative and rather weak, although highly significant ($r$=-.22; $p$< 0.001).

### Table 4

Intercorrelations of components of national identity (Salient national identity, Exclusive national identity, National pride and devotion and Cosmopolitanism) and criterion Distance (general distance towards outgroups)

| | Distance | National pride | Exclusive NI | National devotion | Cosmop. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Distance | | .346** | .441** | .358** | -.215** |
| Nat. pride | | | .723** | .756** | -.364** |
| Exclusive | | | | .676** | -.405** |
| Nat. devotion | | | | | -.423** |
| Cosmop. | | | | | |

** $p$< .001

*Table 5*

Regression of social distance on components of
national identity

| Components of NI | Beta | Partial correlation | $t$ | $p$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nat. pride | 0.04 | 0.02 | 0.47 | 0.64 |
| Exclusive NI | 0.33 | 0.23 | 4.41 | 0.00 |
| Nat. devotion | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.49 | 0.62 |
| Cosmopolitan. | -0.07 | -0.07 | -1.264 | 0.21 |

$R=.43$; $R^2 = .18$; $F=19.30$; $p< 0.01$

In further data analysis we explored the possibility of prediction of outgroup distance on the basis of the components of national identity. We conducted a standard multiple regression analysis of the outgroup distance on the four components of national identity. The results are shown in Table 5.

As can be seen from this table, the only component with predictive power for outgroup distance is the component of *Exclusive national identity*, or *Nationalism*. The regression equation is significant ($F= 19.30$; $p<.001$), however it explains only modest amount of variance ($R=.43$; $R^2=.18$)

## DISCUSSION

We examined the level of national identity among employed adult participants, university students and high-school pupils. As we can see from the results, pupils have the highest scores on all subscales except on *Cosmopolitanism*. They also score highest on the global measure of national identity. We did not make any specific hypothesis about the relationship between age and the strength of the national identification. There are two major reasons for not doing so. First, the vast body of the literature deals with young population – either high school students or university students. When the participants are a bit older, the findings are contradictory (see Davey et al., 2003). The second reason is the fact that most of research has been done with minority population, specifically with different generations of immigrants. In that case, the pattern of achievement of ethnic identity could be different and not relevant for the present study that deals with majority population. Commenting on age differences we obtained in the level of national identity, it is possible to offer at least two psychologically sound explanations. First explanation is connected to the developmental stage our school participants are in. The pupils in our sample are slightly older than 16 years, and according to developmental theory of ethnic

identity formation (Phinney, 1990; 1992) adolescents of this age are in the phase of exploration of their group identity, exercising all kinds of group loyalties. Although children of this age are more likely to explore their group identities in contacts with their peers beyond ethnic lines and divisions, an ethnic identity may become especially salient due to some significant events or experiences adolescents face with. An exceptional experience of this kind is certainly a war. In the beginning of the war in Croatia the adolescents in our sample were children in the age of ten, and war certainly shaped their national values and feelings about their national group, making this aspect of group identity especially salient and important. Thus, the second explanation for the more salient national identity among high school pupils is related with this particular influences they were exposed to during their *formative age*, emphasizing the importance of contextual factors in identity formation (cf. Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Phinney, Ferguson & Jerry, 1997). The war itself, the feeling of threat to their own national group, but also massive hawkish messages and propaganda disseminated by the media and the whole social environment could have influenced greatly on shaping the views of how young people would feel about their national group. Although the pupils' national identity is relatively strong when compared to the other two sub-samples, it should be mentioned that even their results are around hypothetically neutral points of the subscale. The only exception in this regard is the result on the subscale of *National devotion*, where the pupils' results are clearly on the positive side of the scale.

Social distance results obtained in three sub-samples differ greatly. The answers of our participants vary from the most intimate relationship, marriage, reserved only for members of in-group to less close relationships as those one establishes at work. It is important to emphasize that the mean results of social distance in either sample do not exceed a value of 4 (being co-workers). What could be said about the social distance of our participants in terms of its absolute value? Is it big or small? The results, showing that on average, our participants are ready to marry only into their own in-group (the mean distance is very close to the value 1 only for the in-group), clearly indicate that there is a certain degree of national intolerance in Croatian society of those days. The most favorable group are Italians and the less favorable are Albanians and Romanies, unfortunately the "standard" scapegoat groups with the lowest social status in Croatian society. These results corroborate the well-known observation that the most deprivileged groups within society are usually also the most common targets of hostile attitudes and prejudices (cf. Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). It seems that the acceptance of these two groups has not been changed, comparing to some earlier study carried on in Croatia after 1990, but earlier as well (cf. Šiber, 1997). It should be mentioned that pupils have the highest

scores of social distance toward all target outgroups, indicating the most pronounced degree of intolerance and outgroup animosity among the youngest participant in our sample. Relating these results and the results obtained on national identity scales, where pupils also have the highest scores, especially on the scale on nationalism, the necessity to promote the values of tolerance, multiculturalism and respect for diversity among young people in society should be emphasized. Some earlier studies (Šiber, 1997) have shown an increase of social distance and ethnocentrism in Croatian society as a consequence of recent war. This increase in distance has not been a characteristic only toward those groups Croatia was in conflict with; one can argue that it is actually a general tendency of post-conflict society. A general theory of inter-group relations postulates mechanisms of in-group self-containment and ethnocentrism as very frequent consequences of inter-group conflict. These reactions work as a sort of group mechanism for preserving in-group loyalty, mobilizing in-group homogeneity in time of conflict and for enlarging the differences between "us" and "them". The recent conflict and complexities of transitional society are likely to be responsible for the biggest social distance we observed among pupils who were raised in difficult and violent times that have had obvious and serious consequences for their attitudes and behavioral tendencies toward minorities. Further research should be done in order to examine the dynamics of inter-group attitudes in post-conflict societies, in order to enable the relevant social actors to combat prejudice and prevent the possibility of future conflict.

Our results show that national identity components should be taken into account when considering the attitudes toward the outgroups. There is a considerable body of research which claims that in-group loyalty is related to the negative evaluation of the outgroup and even outgroup hostility. Following the findings of the famous Tajfel's experiments on minimal groups (Tajfel, Flament, Billig & Bundy, 1971) one could even conclude that since any kind of group belonging creates in-group bias, than it is perfectly sound to expect that group belonging whatsoever must have a detrimental effects on the attitudes toward outgroups. Moreover, as the theory of social identity postulates, our self-esteem as individuals could be enhanced or impaired depending on the status that the group we feel attached to has. Even further, our personal self-esteem could be reinforced by emphasizing our group identity or by glorifying our groups. In a recent study Masson and Verkuyten (1993) showed that positive evaluation of in-group was strongly correlated with prejudiced attitudes toward other ethnic groups. However, we propose that the attitudes and behaviors towards the outgroups are not as much a matter of either the belonging itself nor the intensity of belonging, as it is a matter of the type of belonging. Since Kosterman and Feshbach's (1989) study on patriotic

and nationalistic attitudes, is has become corollary to distinguish "benign" and "malignant" forms of (national) in-group loyalty (cf. Staub, 1997; Knudsen, 1997; Mummendey, Klink & Brown, 2001). These forms of in-group loyalty have different consequences for intergroup attitudes and behaviors. Although our study is correlational in nature, it seems that observed patterns of relations in multiple regression indicate that only nationalism might be responsible for intolerant interethnic attitudes rather than other aspects of national identity. One possible implication of our results seems to be that national identity as an important aspect of social self-concept could be harmless or not even related to the evaluations and attitudes one has towards the outgroups. It could be so until the national identity converts itself into its malicious form of nationalism. Where is the turning point at which it happens and what factors make it likely to happen remains an intriguing question for further research.

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# APPENDIX

## Items of the four components of National Identity Scale (Čorkalo and Kamenov, 1999)

*National pride* (Cronbach alpha = 0.69)

11. I am very aware of belonging to my nation.

12. Every nation should nurture its national ideals.

15. I do not feel that I belong to any particular nation.

17. The feeling of belonging to my nation is very important to me.

19. I feel worthy because of the rich culture of my nation.

20. I would feel empty without a sense of belonging to my nation.

21. Wherever I lived I would emphasize to which nation I belong.

22. My nationality is completely unimportant to me.

24. Any time I hear my national anthem I feel proud.

26. The feeling of belonging to my nation makes me feel like a complete person.


*Exclusive national belonging (nationalism)* (Cronbach alpha = 0.78)

5. Although my nation is not big, there are many more capable people in my nation than in others.

10. A person who does not have a clear sense of national belonging is a person with no identity.

13. People who do not love their nation deserve contempt.

18. In all historical conflicts with other nations my nation was always right.

25. Members of the same nation should always stick together.

27. A good member of my nation should not associate with our enemies.


*National devotion* (Cronbach alpha = 0.81)

1. Loyalty towards the nation is more important than loyalty towards self.

4. Children should be taught to love their nation.

6. I am proud of the history of my nation.

7. Children should be given national spirit from an early age.

9. I am prepared to give my life for my nation.

16. The feeling of belonging to one's nation is one of the most beautiful feelings one can have.


*Cosmopolitanism* (Cronbach alpha = 0.72)

2. To emphasize national symbols is a sign of primitivism.

3. First and foremost, I consider myself as a citizen of the world.

8. Humankind is the only true human community; this is why every division on nations is harmful and pointless.

14. I would like to live as an inhabitant of the world, not as an inhabitant of just one nation.

23. First and foremost, I am a member of humankind and only after that a member of my nation.