

U.S. Embassy Citizen Outreach



Zagreb, Croatia

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A MESSAGE FROM AMBASSADOR JAMES B. FOLEY



Ambassador James B. Foley presented his credentials to President Mesić on September 15, 2009. Ambassador Foley is a career member of the U.S. Foreign Service and has served in a variety of positions for the Department of State, including as Ambassador to Haiti, and most recently as Coordinator for Iraqi Refugee Issues.

Greetings from your American Embassy in Zagreb! It has been an eventful year for both our staff here at the Embassy and our Croatian counterparts. We congratulate the people of Croatia and their leaders upon the successful June 30 completion of European Union accession negotiations. This milestone marked the culmination of years of efforts by Croatian authorities, supported by the United States, to meet the rigorous requirements for EU membership. We look forward to the expected signing of the accession treaty in December and to Croatia's formally joining the EU in 2013, an event which we believe will open the door to all the countries of Southeastern Europe and secure a stable future for the region.

"While Croatia faces continued economic challenges, I firmly believe that our Embassy's efforts to advocate for reforms and improvements in the business and investment climate will serve to bolster economic growth and build prosperity in the years to come..." Ambassador Foley

The partnership between the United States and Croatia continues to flourish. I was joined on September 11 by both President Josipović and Prime Minister Kosor in an event commemorating the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks on our country which symbolically underscored the solidarity of our two nations. In the meantime, while Croatia faces continued economic challenges, I firmly believe that our Embassy's efforts to advocate for reforms and improvements in the business and investment climate will serve to bolster economic growth and build prosperity in the years to come. As an example of our strong economic cooperation with Croatia, this year in April on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the airplane crash in Dubrovnik that killed then U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown and the members of his delegation, the U.S. Embassy partnered with the Office of the President of Croatia to successfully convene The Brown Forum. The Forum provided a unique opportunity for government and business leaders from the countries of the region to come together with U.S. government officials and business leaders for a wide ranging dialogue about improving the attractiveness of Southeast Europe as a destination for foreign investment and trade and creating business partnerships between regional and American businesses. Finally, in addition to close political and economic relations, our partnership has continued to feature cooperation on security matters both in the region and beyond. This week saw the deployment of the joint Croatian and U.S. Army Operational Mentor Liaison Team (OMLT) to Mazar-i-Sharif, Afghanistan and the arrival of the U.S. Sixth Fleet Command Ship, USS MT. WHITNEY, for a two month maintenance period at the shipyard in Rijeka.

In my travels throughout Croatia I have had the opportunity to meet many of you and discuss your concerns and perspectives as well as our Embassy activities. In 2011 we worked closely with Americans living in Croatia with one principal goal in mind: to ensure we hear your voice and meet our responsibilities to you. Croatia is a wonderful place to work and live and anything we can do to help you here continues to be among my highest priorities.

To that end, I would like personally to invite you to our upcoming American citizen outreach events. If you and your family find yourselves in Zagreb on Tuesday, September 27th, please stop by the Embassy in Buzin at 5:00 PM. We will have members of the Consular Section as well as other members of the Embassy and American educational, cultural, and business groups here to answer your questions on a variety of pertinent topics. This year we have again invited the American Chamber of Commerce, the Croatian-American Society, the American School (AISZ), the American College of Management and Technology (ACMT), and assorted representatives from the Croatian government such as the Foreign Ministry and Office of Vital Statistics among others to provide information and answer your questions. I hope I will have the chance to meet you during this event.

Additionally, members of our Consular Section will be in Dubrovnik at 5:30 PM on Thursday, October 6th, at the ACMT to hold a Town Hall meeting. For those of you in and around Dubrovnik, please take advantage of this opportunity to meet your consular representatives and bring your questions.

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U.S. EMBASSY COMMEMORATES SEPTEMBER 11TH ATTACKS

Musej Mimara in Zagreb hosted the 10th anniversary of the September 11th terrorist attacks. The event was attended by over 200 members of the American and Croatian communities. Ambassador Foley, Prime Minister Kosor, and President Josipović each spoke during the event as a gesture of Croatian-American unity for victims of those attacks and for continued support in the Global War on Terror. Following the speeches, Ambassador Foley presented various station chiefs from the Zagreb Fire Fighting Department with eight new fire fighting suits to honor the sacrifice made by the heroes of the New York Fire



President Ivo Josipović, Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor and Ambassador James B. Foley with 25 members of the Croatian and U.S. Army Joint Operational Mentor and Liaison Team

Department who perished in the World Trade Center. Additionally, special recognition was given to the approximately 25 members of the Croatian and U.S. Army Joint Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) team who will be deploying in the upcoming weeks to Mazar-i-Sharif in Afghanistan. The ceremony was a tribute to the resilience of the human spirit and to international solidarity against violent extremism around the world.



Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor, President Ivo Josipović and Ambassador James B. Foley



President Ivo Josipović and Ambassador James B. Foley

U.S SHIP “SHOWS THE FLAG” DURING PORT CALL IN RIJEKA

For the second time in three years, the U.S. Training Ship EMPIRE STATE conducted a successful port of call in Croatia, stopping in Rijeka for four days during their Mediterranean and European summer cruise. The 600 civilian merchant marine students from the State University of New York Maritime Institute partnered with their counterparts at the University of Rijeka’s



Maritime College to hold a ceremony onboard honoring a local Croatian who had recently assisted the United States government in the discovery and return of the remains of an American military serviceman who was killed in Croatia during World War II. Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission, Hoyt Yee, along with the Captain of the EMPIRE STATE presented Radovan Zivanović from Matulji with a Certificate of Appreciation for his successful ef-

forts to return a previously Missing in Action airman whose B-24 Liberator bomber had crashed over Primorje in March 1945.

In addition to the ceremony, the cadets participated in a community relations event and enjoyed some fantastic liberty on the island of Krk, around Opatija and Istria, and a day long trip to Venice. Besides meeting with the students of the Maritime College (Pomorski Fakultet), the cadets also hosted students from the Maritime High School in Bakar, one of Europe’s oldest and longest running maritime institutions, and shared their sea stories from their previous ports of call in Ireland and Latvia. The ship visit was supported by members of the Embassy’s Defense Attaché Office and Public Affairs Office.



Photo courtesy Novi List

Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission, Hoyt Yee presenting Radovan Zivanović with a Certificate of Appreciation

American Corner Zagreb

Public Library “Bogdan Ogrizovic”
Preradoviceva 5
10000 Zagreb
Phone: 4810 704

American Corner Osijek

Public and University Library
Europska avenija 24
31000 Osijek
Phone: 098 170 6383

American Corner Zadar

Public Library Zadar
Stjepana Radica 11b
23000 Zadar
Phone: 091 193 4069

American Corner Rijeka

University Library
Dolac 1
51000 Rijeka
Phone: 098 794 633

UNCLE SAM WANTS YOU...

...and so does the Embassy American Citizen Services team to become a warden. We are looking for helpful, qualified American Citizens living in Croatia to serve as they and other Americans reside. emergencies that befall American regions where Americans tend to travel help of volunteers in dealing with the American in Croatia. The Department warden systems all over the of our citizens have received a waiting for a family or Embassy have visited fellow Americans in traveling through Croatia to pass on forwarded the Embassy's bereaved families of Americans, facilitated the Act Waivers, and most established a large American contacts communities. The latter most important way an warden can help us. In emergency, for disaster, our wardens communicating instructions throughout



much needed wardens in the communities where While the Embassy has staff to handle most of the citizens here in Croatia, our distance from the most frequently often necessitates the immediate myriad of issues that might adversely affect an of State has established successful world and through this system thousands helping hand after an emergency while response. Here in Croatia, wardens hospitals, helped track down Americans urgent family news from the U.S., condolences to deceased signing of Privacy importantly, network of within their is by far the Embassy the event of an example a natural assist us in immediate information or their communities.

Does this interest you? If you are an American citizen living in Croatia, have good connections with other Americans within your community, or just might be able to lend a hand to someone in need in locations far from the Embassy in Zagreb we would love to include you on our warden list. Please contact the ACS section at zagrebacs@state.gov or call us at (+385) 1-661-2345.

American citizens living overseas might find *I.R.S. Publication 4732*, "Federal Tax Information for U.S. Taxpayers Living Abroad," useful in trying to navigate the confusing web of U.S. tax requirements. The I.R.S. developed this brochure as a resource to assist taxpayers in locating useful tax information to help in the preparation of their tax returns and/or in resolving tax problems. To view the Publication, use the following link:

<http://tinyurl.com/y9p9yyg>



NEW LAW MAKES ABSENTEE VOTING EASIER FOR OVERSEAS AMERICANS

On October 28, 2009, Congress enacted the Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act. This legislation amends existing law regarding overseas voting in federal elections, and should make voting easier for overseas Americans.

New Procedures for 2010 Elections

Beginning with the November 2010 general, special, and primary elections, states will select earlier primary dates in order to request waivers due to special circumstances. However, each state's laws determine whether ballot requests can be returned via fax or email. The marked ballots based on notarization, the witnessing requirements of individual



eral election, and for all subsequent general, This requirement may cause some states to ply with the 45 day mailing deadline, or to re-stances. In addition to mailing ballots to over-at the voter's request, to provide registra-forms, and blank ballots via fax or email. whether ballot requests or voted ballots new law prohibits states from rejecting paper size, or paper weight requirements. ual states remain in place.

Overseas Absentee Ballot Requests

Effective immediately, states will no longer be re-rials to overseas addresses (even when they are determined basis of a single ballot request. It will now be up to each state to determine how long to continue to send out election materials before requiring overseas voters to submit new ballot requests. This change, sought by local election officials, should greatly decrease the volume of voting materials sent abroad to addresses where Americans no longer reside.

quired by federal law to continue to mail election mate- to be invalid) for two complete general election cycles on the

State Department Recommendations

In light of these changes, the Department of State recommends that all U.S. voters residing abroad request absentee ballots from their local election officials at the start of each calendar year, and whenever there is a change of address, change of e-mail address, or change of name, by completing and sending in a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA). To locate information on your specific state's requirements, and to obtain an on-line version of the FPCA, please visit www.fvap.org. Voters may also pick up a hard copy of the FPCA from any U.S. embassy or consulate. FPCAs may be mailed to your local voting officials in the United States via international mail or from any U.S. embassy or consulate. Many states allow U.S. citizens overseas to submit the FPCA by e-mail or fax. The Department of State strongly encourages all U.S. overseas voters to provide email addresses or fax numbers on their FPCAs to enable local election officials to transmit election materials in the fastest manner available, which should then allow sufficient time for the return of voted ballots. For information regarding your specific state, please visit www.fvap.org.

Emergency Ballots

The Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB) serves as an emergency ballot for the November general elections for federal offices, although some states also permit its use for elections for state and local offices. Beginning in January 2011, the new law allows use of the FWAB for primary, special, and runoff elections for federal offices. Voters who request an absentee ballot in advance of their state's ballot request deadline, but who fail to receive an official ballot from local election officials in time to vote, should complete the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot and send it back to local election officials in time for it to be counted. An on-line version of the FWAB, together with instructions for its use, is available at www.fvap.gov.

Questions?

The Voting Assistance Officer at the US Embassy Zagreb is also always available to answer questions about absentee voting. To contact the Voting Assistance Officer, call +385-1-661-2276 or send an e-mail to ZagrebACS@state.gov.

—COME JOIN US IN DUBROVNIK—

- AMERICAN CITIZEN TOWN HALL MEETING ON OCTOBER 6, 2011 -

American School of Management and Technology, Room 21, 3rd floor

Address: Don Frana Bulica 6, 20000 Dubrovnik.

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH WITH AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES

Telephone: (+385-1) 661-2345

FAX: (+385-1) 665-8933

Email: ZagrebACS@state.gov

Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday: 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., Wednesday : 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., and 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

For American Citizen Services in the event of an **EMERGENCY**, call: (+385-1) 661-2400



FEDERAL BENEFITS UNIT SHIFTING OPERATIONS

The Federal Benefits Unit (FBU) in Zagreb will close permanently on September 16, 2011. Primary responsibility for adjudication of Federal Benefits Claims for American Citizens in Croatia will transfer to the FBU in Athens, Greece, however, applicants and beneficiaries residing in Croatia will still be partially assisted by the American Citizen Services section in Zagreb in obtaining information about Social Security and other agencies.

The U.S. Embassy in Zagreb, Croatia, will no longer have access to the Social Security Administration computer system.

For information requests related to Federal Benefits, please e-mail to: zagrebACS@state.gov or call at: 01-661-2345 or write to: U.S. Embassy c/o ACS Section, Thomasa Jeffersona 2, 10010 Zagreb or fax to: 01-665-8933.

Most questions may be answered over the Internet from all of the government agencies at websites shown below:

Social Security Administration - www.ssa.gov

Veterans' Administration - www.va.gov

U.S. Department of Labor - www.dol.gov

Office of Personnel Management - www.opm.gov

Medicare - www.medicare.gov



Contact us

If you have a question for the U.S. Embassy staff or an idea for an article in a future edition, write to us at:

ZagrebACS@state.gov



US Embassy - ACS Services

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10010 Zagreb

Phone: 385-1-661-2345

We're on the Web!

<http://zagreb.usembassy.gov>