

## **Abstract**

This bachelor thesis deals with the research of the development of cooperation of Croatian governments with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in the matter of prosecution and extradition of war criminals during the Yugoslav wars in the 1990s with regard to the Croatian general Ante Gotovina. The aim of the thesis is to analyze, on the basis of relevant documents, how this cooperation was or was not successful. The prosecution of war criminals has been a key part of the foreign policy of the former Yugoslavia for many years. In the case of Croatia, it was even one of the main aspects that prevented the country from joining Western structures, such as the European Union and the North Atlantic Alliance. In the early 1990s, authoritarian President Franjo Tuđman came to power to determine Croatia's course until his death at the end of 1999. This period was very empty for Croatia within foreign policy. Only the accession of Croatia to the Council of Europe in November 1996 could be described as a success. With the advent of Račan's government in 2000, Croatia's cooperation with the ICTY has improved, but the Tribunal has found this to be inadequate. After the new government of one side of the Croatian Democratic Union, led by prime minister Ivo Sanader, the cooperation has improved again. The fact that Ante Gotovina was still fleeing the law was a major obstacle to the success of this cooperation. Although the Croatian side has argued in this case that he is not on Croatian territory and therefore has a very limited scope for prosecution. But the Tribunal together with the European Commission, was very uncompromising in this matter. This actuality postponed the opening of accession negotiations on Croatia's accession to the EU until Gotovina was caught and brought to justice in The Hague. Ante Gotovina was subsequently detained in December 2005 in the Canary Islands, a key moment in Croatian foreign policy. Ante Gotovina was convicted only in 2011, but in 2012 he was acquitted. The Republic of Croatia became a full member of NATO in April 2009 and joined the EU in early July 2013. In view of these facts, I would describe Croatian cooperation with the Tribunal as successful, although the beginnings were very difficult.