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# Croatia National Day Special

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## Shared values amid growing opportunities

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AMBASSADOR OF CROATIA



Croatia marks its Statehood Day on May 30, commemorating its first democratically elected parliament in 1990. One year later, Croatia declared independence and bravely fought the

Homeland War, which ended in 1995, securing its freedom and sovereignty.

Today, Croatia is a fully integrated European and Euro-Atlantic partner. Croatia has now been part of the EU for 13 years. In 2023, it joined the Schengen Area and adopted the euro. This year also marks the 17th anniversary of Croatia's NATO membership.

Croatia's economy continues to show resilience and growth. In 2024, it stood out as one of the stronger EU economies in

terms of gross domestic product growth, maintaining positive momentum into 2025. Economic growth and a reduced debt-to-GDP ratio have strengthened stability and enabled Croatia to contribute to international aid, with Ukraine a key recipient.

Croatia is renowned for its natural beauty, cultural heritage and diversity, including 10 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, national parks and 17 UNESCO-listed elements of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Its appeal continues to grow: in 2025, Croatia welcomed a record 21.8 million tourists resulting with €15.298 billion (\$17.8 billion) in revenue.

Croatia's presence in Japan gained special visibility at the Osaka Expo in 2025, where the Croatian Pavilion, presented under the theme "Croatia — Climadiversity," won the Silver Award for Theme Development in the Shared Pavilion category. The pavilion offered visitors an innovative, multisensory experience by transmitting real-time weather data from Croatia to Japan, allowing them to feel the country's climate diversity.

The expo also created new opportunities for cooperation. During Croatia's participation, a science cooperation agreement was signed, adding momentum to academic, research and innovation links between the countries. Together with the Japan-Croatia Economic Forum and stronger people-to-people exchanges, this confirmed the expo as a platform for long-term partnership.

Our friendship has grown through mutual support in difficult times, including the Croatian Homeland War, the Great East Japan Earthquake and the earthquakes that struck Croatia in 2020. Cooperation holds significant potential in trade, investment, science, technology and culture.

Croatia deeply values Japan's role in global affairs and remains committed to strengthening our enduring partnership.

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*This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.*