

Zagreb to Remove Tito's Name from City Square

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Zagreb city assembly voted to rename a square dedicated to former Yugoslav President Josip Broz Tito after pressure from right-wingers to erase the legacy of Communist rule. Zagreb city assembly voted by 29 to 20 just after midnight on Thursday to rename Marshal Tito Square as the Square of the Republic of Croatia.

“With this [move], Marshal Tito Square has gone into history, and I hope it stays there,” Andrija Mikulic, the assembly chairperson, said after the vote. Veteran Zagreb mayor Milan Bandic proposed the new name in June. Needing additional support to gain a majority in the city assembly after local elections in May, Bandic was acceding to the wishes of a newly-formed far-right party led by controversial former Culture Minister Zlatko Hasanbegovic and former historical researcher Bruna Esih. Hasanbegovic and Esih said that they wanted to rename the square because of Tito’s post-war crimes and human rights abuses committed under his rule, and to remove the legacy of what they describe as a totalitarian Communist regime. Due to Hasanbegovic’s public criticism of the WWII anti-fascist struggle in Croatia and Yugoslavia, some have seen the move as a part of an ongoing attempt by right-wingers to suppress the anti-fascist legacy in the country. From the 1990s onwards, many streets named after anti-fascist fighters and units have been renamed, and around anti-fascist 3,000 monuments partially or completely destroyed. Sven Milekic
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