General Introduction

The publication *Imagi_nation* is a result of the collaboration of Centre for Peace Studies from Zagreb and Peace Institute from Ljubljana on the course National and Supranational Identities, part of the 2010/2011 Peace Studies curriculum. Peace Studies is an informal education program for peace, nonviolence, and active citizenship at the Center for Peace Studies, Zagreb. This publication and the attached documentary[1] are part of the project: *A Common Framework for Understanding National and Supranational Identities in the Cases of Slovenia and Croatia*. Both states were formed by the dissolution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; Slovenia is now part of a new supranational community, the European Union, and Croatia is slowly approaching EU membership.[2]

The processes of raising awareness and questioning individual and group identities—majority and minority identities, national and civil identities, other multiple identities, and the strengths and rights derived from them—are an integral part of peace education and education in democratic citizenship. In order to build lasting and sustainable peace, it is necessary to promote respect for and protection of the rights of individuals and groups, regardless of belonging or identification. Our research, activism, and educational efforts focus on these processes and empower others to actively engage in them. In practice and everyday life, the various rights of individuals and groups are derived from their identities, affiliations, and identifications and a normative framework is employed to justify belonging to a particular community. This often places certain individuals and groups in an unjust and disprivileged position. The theoretical texts in this publication and practical examples demonstrate that citizenship today, considered in an international context, is "identity ascertained by passport." In theory, individual identity is a matter of free choice, while in practice (everyday life) it often leads to marginalization and inequality. Drawing attention to the divide between theory and practice, "good" laws and their "poor" implementation is an important part of emancipatory politics, peace education, and education for democratic citizenship. These issues are particularly significant in the context of a community such as the European Union, founded on the universal values of peace, freedom, tolerance, and interculturalism. While there is a clear commitment to and potential for the development of these values, failures in implementation create disprivileged groups and individuals.

History provides us with many examples of exclusion and segregation based on belonging to weaker groups and categories of identification (women, same-sex oriented persons, persons with disabilities, the homeless, members of various national and ethnic minorities, members of marginalized cultural and political organizations, and many others who in some way differ from the stronger majority). If our goal is to build lasting peace, we must address the fact that today, despite proclaimed acceptance of the universality of human rights, "rights to have rights" (Arendt) are often lacking; large groups of people are excluded from systems of protection and exposed to structural violence. The attitude of majority populations towards the "others" is often an additional impediment to creating a more just, less violent, and more peaceful society. The texts in this publication suggest that a focus on national identities, which necessarily evolves into nationalism, is not a thing of the past, nor is it limited to "developing democracies" (states formed by the dissolution of

communist/socialist countries, and where, as is the case with Yugoslavia, various identities were systematically repressed); it is a common occurrence in "developed democracies." Fueled by economic inequality, it has increasingly surfaced over the past several years. One of the greater challenges in contemporary Europe—in which the relationship between "us" and "them" is visible—is the attitude of states towards migrant workers.

The example we present here is Slovenia's treatment of construction workers who are (mostly) from Bosnia and Herzegovina. In that relationship, belonging or not belonging to a particular nation and/or territory means having or not having certain civil and social rights. The dividing line is therefore less dependent on nation and increasingly based on class, and in some cases we can speak of the transformation of nationalism into class or economic racism (Balibar and Wallerstein). When we examine the rights of migrant workers in the context of the former Yugoslavia, the creation of nation-states and dissolution of Yugoslavia created substantial bureaucratic obstacles for the lives and livelihoods of persons who suddenly became minority members of society, though they were until then citizens of constitutive nations. The situation in Croatia is particularly complex when it comes to refugees and now also returnees of Bosnian and Serbian ethnicity. Persons born in Croatia who fled the country as children now have to provide evidence of their birthplace and engage in repeated bureaucratic procedures to establish their rights to reside and work in the country. In this publication, we examine a similar process—the case of the erased citizens of Slovenia. When one of the former Yugoslav republics joined the European Union, the process of acquiring citizen and social rights was not simplified; it became even more bureaucratized and complex.

This publication presents several insights into the mechanisms and procedures that form national identity and examines how they affect the broader political processes that shape democracy. What elements are involved in shaping democracy through multiple identity and identification processes? How does the nation of a particular state develop from the race, ethnicity and people, and what are the positive and negative aspects of this process? How does nation as a secondary identity recreate and reformulate all other primary identities, and why is national belonging today (still) so significant? What are the ideological and repressive state mechanisms that construct the nation as an enclosed unit or "imagined community" (Anderson), and what are the underlying reasons and interests? How are patriotism and nationalism inscribed in the creation of the nation-state, and how is it that they can—in the process of establishing sovereignty and belonging—easily lead to racism, nationalism, and fascism? How is state sovereignty based on feelings of belonging to a community; how and why do those feelings transform into resentment, hate speech, and fear of other communities? The texts presented here also examine the idea of the border (physical—between two states, but also symbolic—as an expression of "otherness"), both as an essential feature of contemporary nation-states and as the location where national belonging is materialized and bureaucratized (e.g., in the form of passports and visas, allowing or forbidding entry). They question how contemporary "developed" states close their borders because of neoliberal pressures, and how this is presented as an attempt to ward off economic migrants, when in actuality this act produces and maintains the illegality of a cheap workforce, which establishes a clear link between the nationalization of societies and a growing class divide. The authors also examine how, in order to maintain the cohesiveness of a particular national community, migrants and foreigners are portrayed as the Other, substantially different from "us," and how this is a paradigm of the contemporary problem of inequality. Integration processes are in effect one-directional assimilation, while tolerance and multiculturalism are just other names for fascination with cultural difference, which certainly does not lead to true equality. Human rights, which should be universal and supranational, are in fact always enacted through the nation-state, and a person without a nation and citizenship is actually a person with no existence. This publication explores the difference between human and citizen and considers ways to bridge this divide in a supranational community such as the EU. How can we expand the concept of national belonging and citizenship beyond administrative status—in order to establish a global right to live in a certain territory based on personal choice, making "foreigners" truly equal to the "native" population?

Tamara Puhovski's introductory essay provides a basic theoretical framework for understanding civil and national identity formation in Europe by comparing the concepts of ethnos and demos. Which of these concepts will define European Union identity, and, in fact, should either concept prevail? Puhovski maintains that this line of inquiry creates "a new space . . . for the discussion, redefinition, and rethinking of sense of belonging to a political community on both the national and supranational level." The contributions of the Slovenian authors provide an overview of contemporary theories of national identity and a reassessment of the concept of nationalism in contemporary society (Veronika Bajt); an examination of citizenship as the inclusive/exclusive concept on which the nation-state is based, which produces stateless migrants (Mojca

Pajnik); a psychoanalytic view of identity formation (Peter Klepec Kršić); an inquiry into the positive and negative aspects of liberal nationalism (Gorazd Kovačič); a creative perspective on the construction of the Slovenian national narrative through the monuments and streets of Ljubljana (Lev Kreft); an analysis of the phenomenon of (n)ostalgia in the context of the former Yugoslavia (Mitja Velikonja). The case study chapter deals with the "erased" citizens of Slovenia, providing an overview of the case (Uršula Lipovec Čebron) and a contemplation of the possibilities of political emancipation and activism that arise from it (Lana Zdravković).

We would like to thank all the authors for their contributions, as well as the course participants who took part in discussions, engaged with the presented theories, and considered their practical, civil, and activist applications in decreasing violence and social injustice. We would also like to thank the Peace Studies Identities workgroup[3] for their research on a broad range of identities and identifications. The deciding event was our meeting with the Invisible Workers of the World during a study trip to Ljubljana. The attached film developed as a result of this meeting, and with a great deal of support from the production company Hulahop.

Iva Zenzerović Šloser, Center for Peace Studies, Zagreb
Lana Zdravković, Peace Institute, Ljubljana

1 The educational documentary In Search of Workers— People came employs the film medium to explore the issues discussed in this publication: the possibility of actualizing identities in the case of economic migrants. The film is a coproduction of the Center for Peace Studies and the production company Hulahop from Zagreb.

2 Croatia is in the process of EU accession. The final decision on membership will be made by referendum.

3 The following 2010/2011 Peace Studies course participants engaged in the exploration of identity and collaborated on the development of ideas for the film: Tea Vidović, Nataša Stepčić, Danijel Šarić, Jasmina Mujkić, Orhideja Skale and Jelena Tamindžija. We were greatly supported by the professionals from Hulahop Productions, Miljenka Čogelja and Đuro Gavran, who assisted in structuring our ideas.