

## **Evaluating the Structure of Nationalistic Inclinations: Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

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### **Abstract**

Starting from the notion that nationalism can be presented and interpreted as nationalistic inclinations composed of various components or dimensions of ethnic views and sentiments, the aim of this paper is to research whether national emotional attachment, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, the perception of threat posed by some ethnic minority groups, and national siege mentality are correlated to such a degree that they form a latent homogeneous and internally coherent construct of nationalistic inclinations. In this research, the nationalistic inclinations are defined as a system of mutually associated ethnic orientations and sentiments constructed from the threat perception (cognitive component), ethnic exclusionism (potentially behavioural component) and strong national affection (affective component). The study was carried out on a random sample of students at the University of Zagreb (N=368). In order to establish the factor and construct validity of the created Nationalistic Inclination Scale (NIS-1) consisting of 15 items, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed. The first order CFA yielded a three-factor model ('xenophobia and anti-Semitism', 'perception of threat to national security', and 'national emotional attachment') which on the level of second-order CFA resulted in plausible model of nationalistic inclinations with acceptable goodness-of-fit measures (SRMR=0.06; RMSEA=0.09; CFI=0.95; NFI=0.95). The results imply that the theoretical model of nationalistic inclinations is confirmed, and high reliability of the NIS-1 ( $\alpha=0.89$ ) proves it is a parsimonious, useful and efficient tool for assessing nationalistic inclination, and thus one aspect of nationalism in sociological and political sciences.

**Keywords:** nationalistic inclinations, nationalism, threat perception, confirmatory factor analysis, NSS-1

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## Introduction

This article represents a somewhat extended version of an already published article in the Croatian language in the journal *Political Perspective*, 4 (1), 2014. Namely, distribution of results are explained in more detail, the section “Influence of gender on the internalization of the nationalistic inclination” is added, graphical presentations of results are made, and in this paper we used the term “nationalistic inclinations” instead of “nationalistic syndrome”.

The concept of nationalism can be studied on various levels of analysis and from different aspects, so it is hard to define it in a way that would be generally accepted in the social sciences. For example, nationalism can be studied as a particular political ideology (Conversi 2012; Freeden 1998; Zaslove 2009), as a process of creating a nation or establishing a national state (Wimmer and Feinstein, 2010), as an individual political orientation (Dekker, Malova and Hoogendoorn 2003; Reeskens and Wright 2013), a socio-anthropological construct (Gingrich 2006; Jaspal and Cinnirella 2012), or as a space of particular ethnic attitudes that indicate the existence of a nationalistic sentiment (Breuilly 1996; Fenton 2012; Hjern and Schnabel 2010; Ting 2008). In other words, studying the phenomenon of nationalism can be approached from the aspect of political science, sociology, anthropology, history, and political psychology. It is the different disciplinary starting points in studying nationalism, as well as the application of different methodological procedures in measuring it, that lead to ambiguity in terms of conceptualization and operationalization of the phenomenon of nationalism. Additional blurring of the concept and measuring of nationalism comes from the authors who identify the ‘nationalistic’ with the perception of national superiority and orientation towards national dominance (e.g. Kemmelmeier and Winter 2008; Kosterman and Feshbach 1989); who make insufficient distinction between the political-psychological meaning and the sources of ethnocentrism and nationalism (e.g. Kangrga 2002; Sekulić and Šporer 2006; Todosijević 1995); who define nationalism in terms of strong national attachment and strong awareness of being affiliated to one’s own nation (Cottam et al. 2010; Kissane and Sitter 2013; Križanec and Čorkalo Biruški 2009; Sidanius et al. 1997), or who define nationalism by using various other concepts, like chauvinism, collection narcissism or blind patriotism (Coenders and Scheepers 2003; Golec de Zavala, Cichocka and Bilewicz 2013; Lieven 2004; Schatz, Staub and Levine 1999). It can be noted that the political ideology or world view of certain authors often greatly influences the measuring methods, and interpretation of nationalism as attitude inclinations composed of various components or dimensions of ethnic views and sentiments. This imbalance in

defining and measuring the nationalistic inclinations makes it difficult to predict the political, social and economic behaviour of individuals and particular social and national groups in a potentially conflictive historical-political context. The importance of conceptualization, operationalization and construction of instruments for measuring nationalistic inclinations is certainly important in the area of studying the migration processes (Ariely 2012), national security (Griffith 2010; Melander 2009), globalization processes (Olzak 2011) and economic relations (Chorafas 2010; Solt 2011). The confusion in conceptualization and operationalization of nationalistic inclinations as a political-psychological construct contributes to its weak explanatory power, and also both makes it difficult to construct an integral theory of nationalism, and makes it impossible on the empirical level to make a valid interpretation of findings obtained from research in various historical and political contexts. Unlike the historical-developmental and political approach in studying nationalism, on the level of individual political orientation it is much more complex to define nationalism that actually presents a set of different individual ethnical viewpoints and sentiments, i.e. the structure of the nationalistic inclinations. Hence, in an ideal-typical sense, we could treat the 'phenomenology' of nationalism as historical-political processes that result in the creation of a particular nationalistic ideology on one hand, as well as the inter- and intra-psychical processes that result in the appearance of nationalistic inclinations in the form of particular internalized ethnic viewpoints and sentiments. Although in this study we primarily deal with the nationalistic inclinations construct, this does not mean that it will not provide us with the possibility to make implicit conclusions about the political-psychological background of the structure and dynamics of a possible nationalistic ideology and its social and political consequences.

Since this paper treats the concept of nationalistic inclinations as an attitudinal construct, i.e. a compound of various opinions, beliefs, evaluative judgments and emotional involvement, a question arises of what exactly is the core of the attitude we hold to have nationalistic inclinations in a political-psychological sense. In this research, we defined the nationalistic inclinations as the system of mutually connected ethnic orientations and sentiments that (1) on the affective level indicate a strong national identification (*national emotional attachment*); (2) on the cognitive level indicate the presence of perception of threat (*perception of threat posed by some ethnic minority groups – threat from minorities; perception of threat coming from hostile nations and countries – national siege mentality*) and prejudice (*anti-Semitism*);<sup>1</sup> (3) on a potential behavioural level indicates ethnic exclusionism

(*xenophobia*). We see that, apart from the concepts like the national affective attachment, xenophobia and anti-Semitism, we used the concept of the perception of threat in the conceptualization and operationalization of the nationalistic inclinations construct. We strived to implicitly include the theoretical concept in the very structure of the nationalistic inclinations construct, which, among other things, may lie in its political-psychological background.

Namely, perception of threat as a concept is considered in literature as one of the best individual predictors or the explanatory variable of different forms of ethnic *exclusionism and intolerance* (Canetti-Nisim, Ariely and Halperin 2008; Quillian 1995; Stephan and Stephan 2001), *national identification* (Cameron et al. 2005; Falomir-Pichastor and Frederic 2013; Verkuyten 2009) *authority* (Canetti et al. 2009; Cohrs 2013; Feldman and Stenner 1997), *prejudice* (Legault and Green-Demers 2012; McLaren 2003; Stephan and Stephan 2000) and *ideological orientations* (Duckitt and Fisher 2003; Jost et al. 2007; Lahav and Courtemanche 2012). Therefore, the perception of threat lies in the social and political-psychological background of various patterns of exclusionism in ethnic and other social interactions, in the strong national identification and non-critical affective relation to one's own nation, various forms of authority, and the type of prejudice and ideologies that can present perceptive distortion. In that case, the combination of various patterns of ethnic exclusionism and perception of threat can lie in the background of authoritative political ideology. It is the perceptive distortion of reality that can in certain cases generate not only forms of social and political isolation of particular ethnic and social groups and discrimination against their members, but it can sometimes also lead to their destruction in a particular political-historical context (Hetherington and Suhay 2011; Huddy, Feldman and Weber 2007; Oxman-Martinez et al. 2012).

Therefore, in this study, we tried to investigate whether the national emotional attachment, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, perception of threat posed by some ethnic minority groups and the national siege mentality are correlated in such a way that on the higher order latent level they form a homogenous and internally coherent attitude, i.e. whether the Nationalistic Inclination Scale (NIS-1) is a reliable instrument that can be used in various studies in political science, sociology and psychology. The relationship between these concepts basically represents the theoretical background of nationalistic inclinations. On the level of first-order factors, we assumed that the nationalistic inclinations will represent a multidimensional construct. Keeping in mind the research that found intercorrelations of

various dimensions of *ethnic exclusionism*, intercorrelations among various dimensions of threat perception, and *national emotional attachment* (implying the existence of a strong national identification), we assumed a three-factor model of nationalistic inclinations. The research namely shows that there is a positive correlation between anti-Semitism and xenophobia (Bergman 1997; Fertig and Schmidt 2011; Krumpal 2012) which is particularly established in a psychodynamic set and under the influence of authoritative socialization (Bohm 2010; Raden 1999). Other research found a substantial correlation between the perception of the inside and outside threat (Šram 2010), and the perception of a threat posed by some ethnic minority groups and national siege mentality (Canetti-Nisim, Ariely and Halperin 2008; Golec de Zavala and Cichocka 2012; Šram 2009) under the strong influence of collective memory of physical violence in interethnic conflicts (Bar-Tal 2003). Also, without the strong emotional saturation, i.e. strong national identification, it is difficult to grasp the nationalistic inclinations or sentiments (David and Bar-Tal 2009; Davidov 2011; Druckman 1994; Šram 2010; Weiss 2003). In order to verify the theoretical model of nationalistic inclinations that we defined as an internally coherent system of threat perception (cognitive component), ethnic exclusionism (potentially behavioural component) and strong national affection (affective component), we conducted the confirmatory factor analysis. Also, the reliability analysis of the final scale, including the test of the gender differences, was performed and the results are presented in this paper.

## **Method**

### ***Survey participants***

A random sample of students from the University of Zagreb (N=368; 63% female) participated in the study. Out of this number, 62% of the students studied humanities and/or social sciences (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Centre for Croatian Studies), 30% technical sciences (Faculty of Architecture, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing) and 8% at the Faculty of Science. A significant majority of respondents studied humanities and social sciences because professors from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences were more willing to enable the students to take part in this research. The average age of participants was 21. All participants were Croatian. Participants filled in the questionnaire in groups, during their regular classes at the University. The research was carried out in 2009 as a part of a larger research of ethnic attitudes and political orientations of students in Zagreb.

## ***Instruments***

*Nationalistic Inclinations Scale* (NIS-1) was developed by selecting items of ethnic attitudes and sentiments which define five sub-dimensions (Table 1): (1) *national emotional attachment* - the existence of a strong feeling of national identification, where the individual's nation is his 'alter ego' (Šram 2008) (codes: ns1, ns2, ns3); (2) *xenophobia* - an anti-immigration sentiment or a strong social distance towards migrant workers (codes: ns7, ns8, ns9) (Halperin, Canetti-Nisim and Pedahzur 2007); (3) *anti-Semitism* - the existence of prejudice towards Jewish people in terms of their honesty and the power of Jewish people in the business world (Selznick and Steinberg 1969) (codes: ns10, ns11, ns12); (4) *perception of threat posed by some ethnic minority groups* - a threat to national security (Canetti-Nisim et al. 2009) (codes: ns4, ns5, ns6); and (5) *national siege mentality* - a feeling of a threat to the nation, i.e. the mental state in which members of a particular nation maintain a central belief that other nations and countries have strong hostile intentions toward them (Bar-Tal and Antebi 1992) (codes: ns13, ns14, ns15). To answer each of the items the respondents used a 5-point scale defined from 1 = 'Strongly disagree' to 5 = 'Strongly agree'.

Table 1

*Nationalistic Inclination Scale (NIS-1)*

<i>Code</i>	<i>Variable</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
ns1	Love towards your nation is one of the most beautiful feelings a person can have	368	2.96	1.28
ns2	I always get mad when someone speaks badly about my nation	368	3.16	1.16
ns3	I perceive every insult to my nation as an attack on myself	368	2.46	1.20
ns4	There are national political parties of ethnic minority groups that should not be allowed into our national parliament	368	2.37	1.18
ns5	Certain ethnic minority groups are a threat to our country's safety	368	2.10	1.10
ns6	Certain ethnic minority groups are trying to politically destabilize our country	367	2.17	1.04
ns7	I wouldn't like to live in a neighbourhood with migrant workers	368	1.98	1.02
ns8	I would never approve of someone in my family marrying a migrant worker	367	1.69	0.99
ns9	A higher number of migrant workers would be a threat to the Croatian nation, because they could not be prevented from marrying our girls	368	1.89	1.03
ns10	Jewish people are not as honest in business as other business people	367	2.08	1.03
ns11	Jewish people have too much power in the business world	367	2.74	1.25

ns12	Jewish people use dishonesty in order to get ahead	367	2.17	1.06
ns13	My nation has many enemies	368	2.31	1.07
ns14	Our nation is under threat from all sides	367	2.04	1.12
ns15	There is always a threat from neighbouring nations	367	2.83	1.21

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## Results

### *Confirmatory factor analysis of the Nationalistic Inclination Scale*

To test the factor and construct validity of the Nationalistic Inclination Scale, we conducted the confirmatory factor analysis by using structural modelling software (PreliS and Lisrel, version 8.54). Simply put, the confirmatory factor analysis is a statistically stronger procedure than the explorative analysis, because it is impartial in testing how well a theoretically-based model (or hypothetical latent structure) fits the empirical data. It is desirable for the model (conceptualized as a set of interrelated covariance matrices) to fit as well as possible (i.e. to have the best possible ‘*fit*’) to the covariance matrix of the actual data. The absence of a good fit (or insufficient ‘*fit*’) usually means that the model is not well supported by actual data, and that the model needs to be modified or completely abandoned. There are various criteria for a model’s suitability, i.e. the goodness-of-fit indices linking empirical data with the theoretical model. Among them, the most used ones are the chi-square test and the corrected chi-square test (relative to the degrees of freedom, i.e.  $\chi^2/\text{df}$ , relative  $\chi^2$ ), and various indices of comparative fit. Usually, several complementary indices are used simultaneously. In this study, we list the following: comparative fit index (CFI), normed index of fit (NFI), standardized root mean-square residual (SRMR), and the root mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA). CFI and NFI values should be greater than 0.90 (Bentler 1992, Bentler and Bonett 1980), and SRMR values (Hu and Bentler 1999) and RMSEA values (Browne and Cudeck 1993) should be less than 0.10. In other words, greater CFI and NFI values, as well as lower SRMR and RMSEA values, indicate a better fit of the suggested model. The value of relative chi-square less than 3.00 is usually accepted as a good fit, although some researchers accept value 5.00 (Mueller 1996). The fit of results with the theoretical postulates of the model was compared with comparative indices CFI and NFI, and the deviation from the model with indices of relative chi-square, SRMR and RMSEA.

Confirmatory factor analysis of the Nationalistic Inclinations Scale on the level of first-order factors extracted a three-factor structure, or the nationalistic inclination model (Figure 1). The first factor is defined by variables indicating prejudice towards Jewish people, concerning their honesty and influence in the business world. The Jewish people are perceived as dishonest and too influential. This factor is also defined by variables that indicate a strong social distance towards migrant workers. We named this first factor *Xenophobia and anti-Semitism* (defined by items: I wouldn't like to live in a neighbourhood with migrant workers; I would never approve of someone in my family marrying a migrant worker; A higher number of migrant workers would be a threat to the Croatian nation, because they could not be prevented from marrying our girls; Jewish people are not as honest in business as other business people; Jewish people have too much power in the business world; Jewish people use dishonesty in order to get ahead).

The second factor is defined by variables that indicate a national siege mentality and perception of threat posed by some ethnic minority groups. In other words, the perception of threat to national security posed by some ethnic minority groups living in Croatia, and the perception of threat to national security coming from other nations and countries define the factor we called *Perception of threat to the country's and nation's safety* (defined by items: There are national political parties of ethnic minority groups that should not be allowed into our national parliament; Certain ethnic minority groups are a threat to our country's safety; Certain ethnic minority groups are trying to politically destabilize our country; My nation has many enemies; Our nation is under threat from all sides; There is always a threat from neighbouring nations).

The third factor indicates national identification of the type where the border between one's own ego and national collectiveness disappears. In other words, the national belonging receives psychological characteristics of an alter ego. We named this factor *National emotional attachment* (defined by items: Love towards your nation is one of the most beautiful feelings a person can have; I always get mad when someone speaks badly about my nation; I perceive every insult to my nation as an attack on myself).

It can be seen in Table 2 that the suggested nationalistic inclinations model is not completely satisfactory on the level of primary factors, i.e. the empirical data somewhat deviates from the hypothetical model. However, we can see that the comparative goodness-of-fit indices are marginally acceptable (CFI=0.90; NFI=0.89), which means that the suggested three-dimensional model of nationalistic inclinations should not be completely rejected.



Table 2

*Goodness-of-fit indices for the **nationalistic inclinations** model on the level of first-order factors and on the level of second-order factor*

	<i>Nationalistic inclinations</i>	
	First-order factor	Second-order factor
df	90	87
$\chi^2$	614.68	326.19
$\chi^2/ss$	6.8	3.7
SRMR	0.26	0.06
RMSEA	0.13	0.09
CFI	0.90	0.95
NFI	0.89	0.95

df – degrees of freedom

$\chi^2$  – chi-square

SRMR – standardized root mean-square residual

RMSEA – root mean-square error of approximation

CFI – comparative goodness-of-fit normed

NFI – normed goodness-of-fit index

On the level of the second-order factor, the confirmatory factor analysis extracted a more general nationalistic inclinations factor (Figure 2). Table 2 shows that the nationalistic inclinations model on the level of second-order factor has a satisfying goodness-of-fit within the allowed levels of standard error. We can see therefore that the nationalistic inclinations measured with the NIS-1 represents a theoretically based model as a second-order factor. In other words, the hypothetical latent structure of nationalistic inclinations on the level of second-order factor has a satisfactory fit with the empirical data.

Figure 1

*Confirmatory factor analysis of the Nationalistic Inclinations Scale on the first-order factor level*

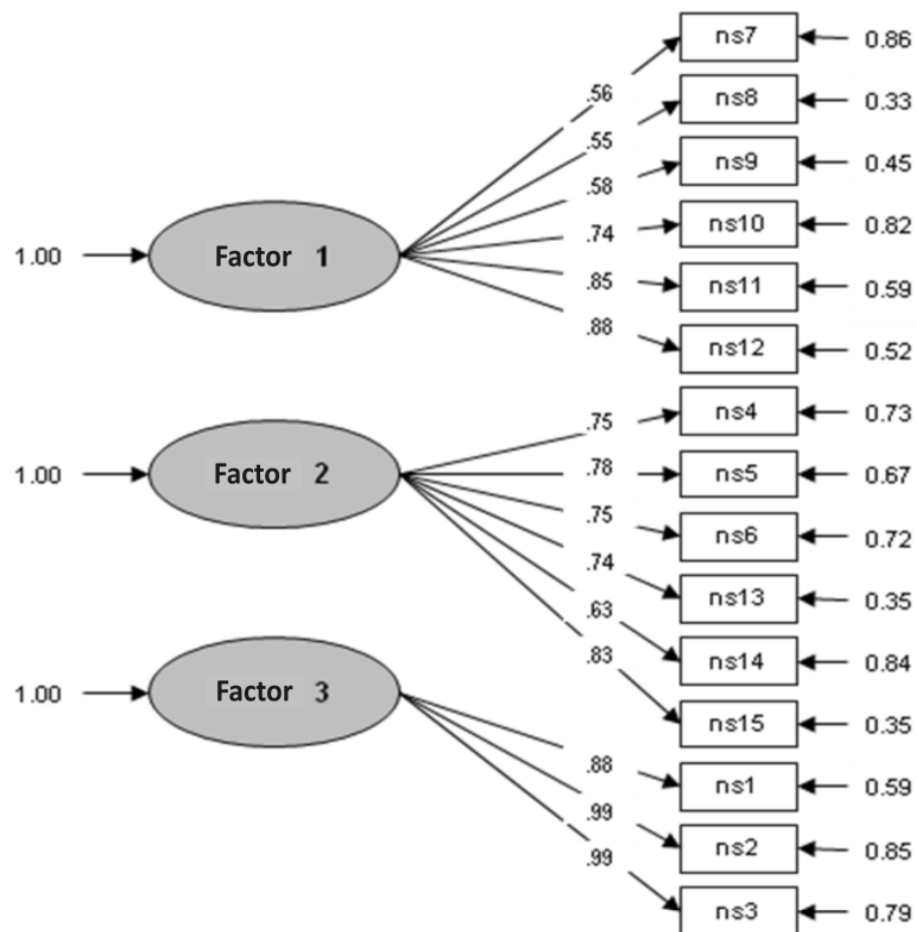
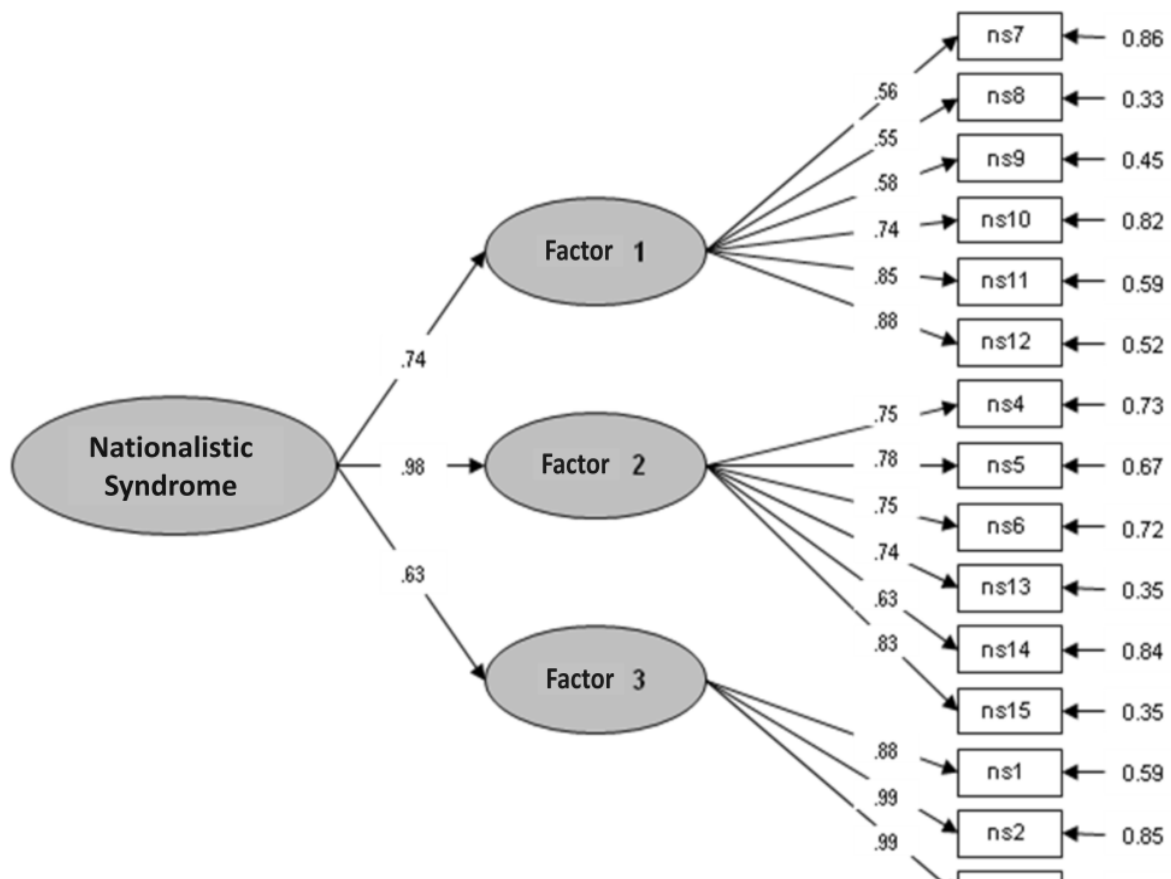


Figure 2

*Second-order confirmatory factor analysis of the Nationalistic Inclinations Scale*



### ***Reliability of the Nationalistic Inclinations Scale***

Based on the correlation matrix of 15 items of the Nationalistic Inclinations Scale, we also conducted the exploratory factor analysis (EFA), by using principal components analysis and promax rotation. We extracted three identical factors with significant eigenvalues of 6.17, 1.58 and 1.18, explaining 59.63% of the total variance. The inter-factor correlations (0.45, 0.50, 0.58) indicated that there is a common origin of the extracted dimensions of the nationalistic inclinations, i.e. that the individual differences have a very similar source. Second-order factor analysis confirmed the presumption about the existence of a more general dimension of nationalistic inclinations. Having also in mind the eigenvalue of the first principal component (6.17), the percentage of the variance it explains (41.14), and the range of factor saturation of its constituent items being between 0.78 and 0.85, we can consider the nationalistic inclinations scale to be an internally homogenous measure of an attitude.

Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the 15-item scale is 0.896, indicating a high reliability of the NSS-1. The high reliability of the scale is also indicated by other indicators in the item analysis, such as the discriminative validity coefficient or the item-total correlation, and the size of Cronbach's alpha without a particular item (Table 3).

The value in the column 'item-total correlations' represents correlations between each item and the total result achieved on the scale. Table 3 shows that all the items have substantial correlation with the total of the **NIS-1** (all the item-total correlations are between 0.49 and 0.63). The values in column 'Cronbach's alpha without the item' are total alpha values if a particular item was not taken into account in calculating the Cronbach's coefficient. Total alpha value is 0.89, meaning that all alpha values should be somewhere around this value. Table 3 shows that none of the items would significantly affect the scale's reliability if we would leave it out of the calculation of Cronbach's coefficient.

Table 3  
*Item-total correlation of NSS-1 and Cronbach's alpha without the items*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Item-total correlation</i>	<i>Cronbach's alpha without the item</i>
ns1	0.52	0.89
ns2	0.54	0.89
ns3	0.58	0.88
ns4	0.55	0.89
ns5	0.63	0.88
ns6	0.63	0.88
ns7	0.51	0.89
ns8	0.54	0.89
ns9	0.62	0.88
ns10	0.59	0.88
ns11	0.52	0.89
ns12	0.60	0.88
ns13	0.60	0.88
ns14	0.49	0.89
ns15	0.60	0.88

### Distribution of results on the Nationalistic Inclinations Scale

Based on the established homogeneity and reliability of the NIS-1, we can treat the nationalistic inclination construct as a composite variable obtained by summing up numerical values of the 15 items which constitute Nationalistic Inclination Scale. Even though the theoretical range of the NIS-1 is from 15 to 75, the obtained range of results is 15 to 65, while the mean is 35 (SD=10.71; Table 4). The skewness coefficient is 0.19, with the standard error of 0.13. This value indicates that the distribution of results on the NIS-1 does not show a significant skewness (values are near zero). The kurtosis coefficient is -0.56, with a standard error of 0.25, indicating that there is a certain tendency towards kurtosis of the distributions of results (Table 5). The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed that the distribution of results on the NIS-1 is not significantly different from normal (K-S  $z = 0.87$ ;  $p = 0.436$ ). Figure 3 shows the categorized version of NIS-1 from which can be seen that none of the respondents scored on the highest category of the scale (namely, none of them fully agreed with all 15 statements) implying that there is no record of the respondents with expressed nationalistic inclinations in its full extent. We can speak only in terms of tendencies in expressing nationalistic inclinations.

Table 4

*Descriptive statistics of total scores on the composite variable of the **nationalistic inclinations** measured by the **NIS-1***

	N	Min	Max	M	SD	Variance
Nationalistic inclinations	365	15	65	34.937	10.709	114.69

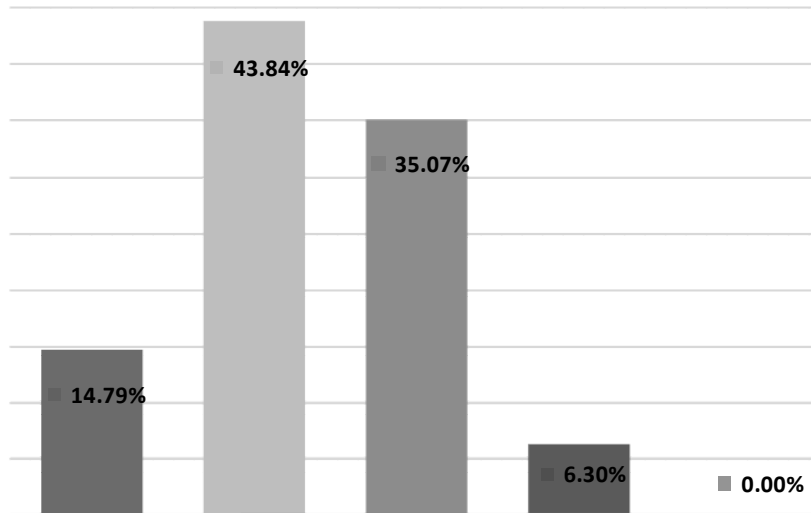
Table 5

*Descriptive statistics of skewness and kurtosis of results on the **NIS-1***

	N	Skewness coefficient	Standard error (skewness)	Kurtosis coefficient	Standard error (kurtosis)
Nationalistic inclinations	365	0.193	0.128	-0.560	0.255

Figure 3

*Frequency distribution of the categorized version of NIS-1*

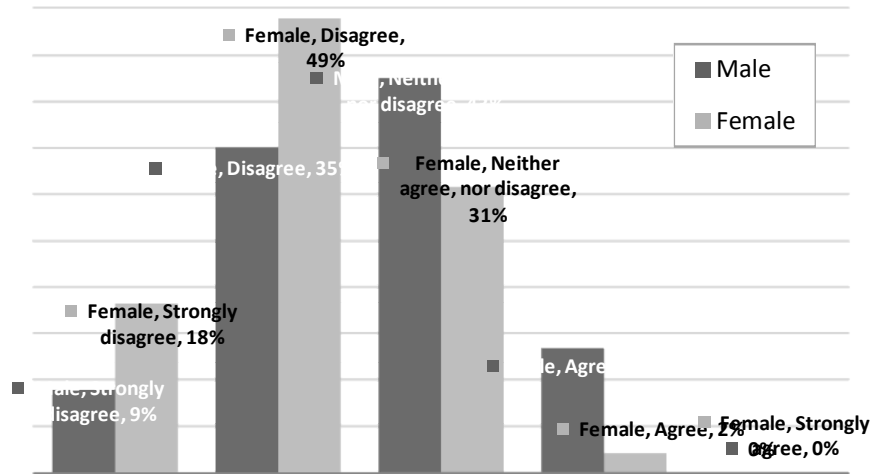


### **Influence of gender on the internalization of the nationalistic inclinations**

Examining the statistically significant gender differences, in terms of the level of internalization of the nationalistic inclinations, is also one of the aspects of nationalistic inclinations investigated in this study. For this purpose, we conducted a t-test on the composite variable of the nationalistic inclinations of male and female participants. We found that, statistically speaking, there is a significant difference in the sense of expressing the nationalistic inclinations between male and female participants ( $t=5.54$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $df=363$ ). This can also be seen in Figure 4 presenting the gender-specific distributions of the categorized version of NIS-1. Although we found that the male participants have largely internalized nationalistic inclinations, and that this difference is statistically significant, we still do not know the true effect size that participants' gender has on the presence of nationalistic inclinations. To compute the effect size, we had to convert the statistics of the t-test into Pearson's correlation (see Field 2009: 332). We found that the correlation is  $r=0.28$ , i.e. that the coefficient of determination is 0.078. This means that around 7.8% of the variance can be attributed to gender differences in terms of internalization of the nationalistic inclinations.

Figure 4

*Frequency distribution of the categorized version of NIS-1 by gender*



## Discussion

The results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) have shown that on the level of first-order factors, the nationalistic inclinations represent a multidimensional construct defined by three factors: *Xenophobia and anti-Semitism*, *Perception of threat to state and national security*, and *National emotional attachment*. The structure of the first factor not only confirmed some earlier findings about the relation of xenophobia and anti-Semitism (Bergman 1997; Fertig and Schmidt 2011; Krumpal 2012), but it also indicated that these two concepts have a very similar socio-psychological meaning and political-psychological background in social interethnic relations. Keeping in mind that the concept of xenophobia can be treated as an indicator of ethnic exclusionism (Raijman 2012; Scheepers, Gijsberts and Coenders 2002), and that the concept of anti-Semitism can be treated as a prejudice indicator (Golec de Zavala and Cichocka 2012; Kovacs 2010), we can conclude that the structural relation between anti-Semitic prejudice and ethnic exclusionism indicates a certain *cognitive-behavioural* component of nationalistic inclinations.

The structure of the second factor is defined by the perception of threat posed by some ethnic minority groups and the national siege mentality, that is, the presence of the perception of threat posed by some ethnic minority groups on the one hand, and the perception of threat

posed by other nations and countries on the other. The content and political-psychological meaning of the second factor indicate the presence of threat perception to the national security coming from the internal and external enemies, i.e. signify the *cognitive component* of nationalistic inclinations. This confirms the findings of the studies that found the relation between different types of threat perception, regardless if these are realistic or symbolic threats (Canetti-Nisim, Ariely and Halperin 2008; Golec de Zavala and Cichocka 2012; Šram 2010).

The third factor indicates the presence of a strong national identification in which the line between national collectiveness and own ego is erased, i.e. where national belonging and identification assume 'alter ego' characteristics. The isolation of the *National emotional attachment* on the level of first-order factors indicates the specific nature of the affective component within the composite variable of nationalistic inclinations and ethnocentrism, which is something that the findings of other studies also indicated (Bizumic et al. 2009; Šram 2008, 2010). In other words, this means that the affective component of ethnocentrism or of nationalistic inclinations do not necessarily have to form the internally homogenous single dimensional construct. Perhaps in some future version of the measurement scale for nationalistic inclinations we should exclude the affective component, and focus only on the dimensions of ethnic exclusionism and the perception of threat to national security. In that case, we would probably have a more reliable cognitive-behavioural model of nationalistic inclinations.

Although the model of nationalistic inclinations on the level of first-order factors failed to completely satisfy the set of goodness-of-fit indices, it still should not be completely rejected. In other words, this means that the construct of nationalistic inclinations can be located on two levels of conceptual width: (a) on the lower, three-dimensional level of expressing nationalistic inclinations, and (b) on the higher level of generalization, i.e. on the one-dimensional second order factor level. Namely, we have seen that on the level of second-order factor, the CFA yielded one-dimensional nationalistic inclination construct which had satisfactory goodness-of-fit. This confirms the theoretical model of nationalistic inclinations as an internally coherent system of ethnic exclusionism (potential behavioural component), threat perception (cognitive component) and national emotional attachment (affective component). Accordingly, nationalistic inclinations, like many other constructs in the social and political psychology, have a hierarchical structure that enables the prediction of results on a lower level by individual sub-dimensions, and on a more general level. Depending on the



problem and research goals, a multidimensional or one-factor concept can both be used. Apart from the confirmed model of the nationalistic inclinations as a higher order factor, measurement NIS-1 has proved to be a highly reliable measurement instrument that can be used in various political, sociological and psychological studies.

Taking into account the results obtained by confirmatory factor analysis and the high reliability of the NIS-1, nationalistic inclinations can be treated as a one-dimensional construct on a higher conceptual level. The political-psychological determinants of the nationalistic inclinations measured by the NSS-1 are: (a) national identification in whose affective background the border between ‘we’ and ‘me’ is lost, i.e. where the nation and national belonging have become an integral part of a person’s individual identification (alter ego); (b) existence of prejudice towards Jewish people in the sense of their moral and financial power in the business world, and the existence of stereotypes as a justification of these prejudices (Crandall et al. 2011); (c) potential exclusion of foreigners, i.e. migrant workers from the immediate social transactions; (d) lack of trust in certain ethnic minority groups that are perceived as a threat to national security; and (e) the feeling of a threat to the nation from other nations and countries that are perceived as a threat to national security. Therefore, this confirms the general theoretical notion that the perception of threat lies in the political-psychological background of a strong national identification and ethnic exclusionism (Cameron et al. 2005; Canetti-Nisim, Ariely and Halperin 2008; Falmoir-Pichastor and Frederic 2013; Stephan and Stephan 2001; Quillian 1995; Verkuyten 2009). In our actual case, the perception of threat to the security of the country and the nation lies in the political-psychological background of ethnic exclusionism and strong national identification, i.e. attachment.

The structural relation between the strong feeling of national identification with the concept of the threat perception does not always have to point to their cause-and-effect relation, although the perception of threat is most often placed in the position of ‘causal’, independent or explanatory, variable in defining structural models (Canetti-Nisim, Ariely and Halperin 2008; Halperin, Canetti-Nisim and Pedahzur 2008). However, a strong national identification can, in a given political and historical context, be a ‘consequence’ of perception of a realistic threat or conflict, but it can also be a ‘cause’ of threat perception, i.e. contribute in perceiving certain ethnic minority groups, Jewish people, immigrants and other states and nations as a threat to state and national security (Šram 2010). Accordingly, the strong national identification can be an antecedent of a perceived threat coming from external groups, but

also a consequence of the threat perception (Verkuyten 2009). In any case, we are inclined to accept the theoretical model within which it is postulated that the perception of threat, especially the type of threat that concerns state and national security, significantly contributes to the development and expression of the national identification, i.e. which implies the existence of a strong national emotional attachment (Falomir-Pichastor and Frederic 2013; Li and Brewer 2004). Expressing a strong national emotional attachment in the context of anticipated state and national threat indicates a national cohesion that is characteristic for the personal self-transcendence (Roccas, Schwartz and Amit 2010). Accordingly, apart from the usual agents of socialization, collective memory and historical traumas, the perception of threat that comes from the internal and external enemy can largely transcend the individual identity into national collective and bring conflictive potential to its actualization.

The established structural relation between the ethnic exclusionism (xenophobia and anti-Semitism) and the perception of threat to state and national security is in accordance with the findings of studies in which the concept of the perception of threat is treated as a key explanatory variable in forming and expressing anti-immigrant attitudes, xenophobia and anti-Semitism (Raijman 2012; Scheepers, Gijsberts and Coenders 2002; Golec de Zavala and Cichocka 2012; Schneider 2008; Watts 1996). We can therefore conclude that the concept of threat perception, especially the threat to state and national security, is the theoretical concept which largely contributes to the understanding of political and psychological dynamics of nationalistic inclinations. Although the nationalistic inclinations construct is defined in terms of ethnic attitudes and sentiments, this does not mean that it cannot, to a certain degree, indicate the presence of a particular nationalistic ideology, political conservatism, extremism, authoritarian political culture (Duckitt and Fisher 2003; Jost et al. 2007; Perrin 2005; Raden 1999) or the presence of psychopathic personality traits (Šram, 2015).

Testing of gender differences gave the expected results. Even though neither males nor females scored on highest level of NIS-1, males expressed significantly higher tendencies towards nationalistic inclinations. These results mirror the results obtained in many studies indicating that male respondents are more prone to express aggressiveness than female respondents (Bettencourt and Miller 1996; Burton, Hafetz and Henninger 2007, Šram, 2015).

In order to further investigate the ideological, political-cultural and psychological background of nationalistic inclinations, and verify the theoretical sustainability of the structural model, and the reliability of the NIS-1 as a measure, it is necessary to conduct a study on a more representative sample. In its design, the dimensions of political orientations,

social capital, authority and conative personality characteristics would be placed in the position of the predictor set of variables. In spite of the possible criticism that the research was carried out on a student population, we have constructed a reliable and efficient measure of nationalistic inclinations that is theoretically based on the threat perception concept. Since the distribution of results on the Nationalistic Inclination Scale is not significantly different from the normal distribution, we can conclude that nationalistic inclinations, measured with NIS-1, do not represent the sociological or political pathological phenomenon significant for the sample of Zagreb university students who participated in this research, especially taking into account that the highest level of the NIS-1 was not recorded. However, this could mean that the student population might have significant conflict potential, not directly connected to nationalistic inclinations, which, due to actual or imagined perception of a national threat, could lead to interethnic conflicts, xenophobia, political paranoia, collective narcissism and conspiracy.

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup> The construct of anti-Semitism as a sort of prejudice is primarily used for the sake of the fact that a great majority of respondents have no direct experience with the Jews as an ethnic group.

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