

Peace, Power-Sharing and Citizen Inclusion: Lessons for and from Bosnia and Herzegovina

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University of Sarajevo – Faculty of Political Sciences

When international leaders oversaw the signing of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina – otherwise known as the Dayton Agreement – in December 1995, there were high hopes for an end of violence and a new era of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and across the Western Balkans.

Thirty years later, the results are mixed. Whilst Bosnia and Herzegovina has remained at peace, with no major outbreaks of inter-ethnic violence, its political transition has stalled. Strict power-sharing provisions in the central government and the high degree of decentralization have contributed to a political system characterized by political stalemate, elite state capture, citizen disaffection and a distinct inability to implement any major reforms.

The 30th anniversary of the Dayton Agreement represents a timely moment to reflect on the Agreement and its effects, both for Bosnia and Herzegovina today, its reform efforts in the future, and for ongoing peace mediation approaches around the globe.

Combining academic and policy insights, we are interested in evaluating what has worked, what has not, what should be reformed and what can be reformed after 30 years. Which institutions, processes and developments in post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina have been conducive for peace? What insights do they offer for other contexts, including places like Ukraine, Cyprus, Lebanon, Syria, Sudan, and Myanmar, where discussions on post-war democratization, power-sharing, reconciliation, state-building and peace-making are continuing at different speeds? Conversely, what insights from these other cases could help to inform constitutional reform efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina? We are especially interested in why, when and how citizens' preferences are included in these processes.

Situating the academic-policy lessons from 30 years of Dayton in a comparative perspective, we invite 300-word abstracts that engage with the themes noted above from academics and practitioners at all career stages. Proposals should include the contact details for authors along with a 50-word biographical statement. Proposals should be emailed to the workshop organizers at dayton30conference@gmail.com by May 15. Final policy papers should be 2-3,000 words in length.

The workshop will aim to produce a policy document that collates lessons from and for Bosnia and Herzegovina after thirty years of Dayton.

This workshop is supported by the Open Research Area 7 project, Inclusive Peace: Citizen Inclusion in Power-Sharing Settlement.

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