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# LESSONS (NOT) LEARNED: COUNTRIES' EXPERIENCES IN REINTEGRATING CHILDREN AND YOUTH.



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# INTRODUCTION

“Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.”

This phrase begins the UNESCO Constitution, which was adopted shortly after the end of World War II when a new order of global security and a new system of human rights protection was created. The experience of the totalitarian states of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including Nazi Germany, was mentioned during the adoption of key international human rights agreements (the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the 1966 Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights). This includes the use of education to incite inter-ethnic hatred and the use of youth movements to militarise children and young people (e.g. the militarist organisation Hitler Youth, which was supposed to educate German youth in the spirit of national socialism). International agreements and the newly created human rights protection system were supposed to prevent such practices from happening again in the future.

The current Russian-Ukrainian war and its consequences for children and youth show that existing instruments are ineffective in preventing these practices. Since 2014, the Russian Federation has deliberately and systematically violated the laws and customs of war by introducing its own educational standards in the temporarily occupied territories (hereinafter referred to as TOT), while simultaneously obstructing access to Ukrainian education. Such practices are also a violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which enshrine the right of the child to an education consistent with his or her cultural identity.

Education in the Russian-occupied territories is used as a means of destroying Ukrainian identity and replacing it with Russian identity.<sup>1</sup> In this way, the Ukrainian language and Ukrainian studies subjects (literature, history, etc.) are removed from public circulation, and “traditional Russian values” are systematically imposed, including “service to the Fatherland” and the willingness to sacrifice for Russia.<sup>2</sup> For this purpose, historical narratives are distorted, patriotic youth movements are created (which are the successors of the traditions of the Soviet pioneering and the Hitler Youth), and the population is actively prepared for an existential war against external enemies – including Ukraine and the so-called “unfriendly countries”, namely the EU and NATO.

Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion in February 2022, the geography of the territories occupied by Russia has expanded, and as of February 2024, Russia controls approximately 26% of Ukrainian territory.<sup>3</sup> The conditions of Russian occupation, in which access to alternative resources is limited and schools and educational institutions are the main agents of spreading Russian narratives through curricula,

1 Analytical report "Universal Soldier", CCE "Almenda", 2023, <https://almenda.org/en/analitychnyy-zvit-universalnyy-soldat-2022-2023/>

2 Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of 09.11.2022 N 809 "On Approval of the Fundamentals of State Policy for the Preservation and Strengthening of Traditional Russian Spiritual and Moral Values", [https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons\\_doc\\_LAW\\_430906/24f1a051389c864bb9c7af53538a2a674b0a5416/](https://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_430906/24f1a051389c864bb9c7af53538a2a674b0a5416/)

3 V. Zelensky: About 26% of Ukraine’s territory remains occupied by Russia. Ukrinform. 5.02.2024: <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-politics/3822910-blizko-26-teritorii-ukraini-poki-zalisautsa-okupovanimi-ros-ieu-zelenskij.html>

provide an ideal basis for the destruction of Ukrainian identity, especially for children, whose psyche is particularly vulnerable to external influences.

The liberation of all Russian-occupied territories and the restoration of internationally recognised state borders are a prerequisite for peace. However, the physical liberation of the territories from Russian occupation is only one component of restoring peace in Ukraine – and only the first step on this path.

More than 1 million Ukrainian children are now under Russian influence, which is quite effective for children’s underdeveloped psyches. A generation is now growing up in the occupied territories that has been exposed to systematic Russian propaganda from an early age. The mental or cognitive de-occupation of Ukrainian territories has already been identified as one of the main directions of state policy on the de-occupation of Crimea. However, this direction is relevant for all occupied territories.

Cognitive de-occupation is a set of strategic, operational and tactical measures to be planned and implemented by various actors to prepare, direct and assess long-term socio-political, socio-economic and socio-psychological processes of re-shaping the actual consciousness, social values, worldview and civic behaviour of many Crimean residents after the kinetic and/or diplomatic de-occupation of the peninsula, and, as a result, the full restoration of Ukrainian legislation and sovereignty over the territory.<sup>4</sup>

In this study, we want to contribute to the issue of cognitive de-occupation by analysing the successful and unsuccessful practices of states that have experience of wars and overcoming the consequences of separation – physical, linguistic and/or mental. This experience will help to understand how Ukraine should formulate its own policy of reintegration of children and youth from the occupied territories to make this process as atraumatic as possible for children and youth,<sup>5</sup> while contributing to peacebuilding and reducing the level of polarisation in society.

### The concept of reintegration in the post-war society

According to Article 39 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Ukraine is a party, States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote “physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts.” This process shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child and takes into account the interdependence of the general principles of non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, survival and development and respect for the views of children, as enshrined in the Convention.<sup>6</sup>

For the purposes of this study, we understand reintegration as “a complex series of interrelated processes through which people who have experienced different events and developed different conceptions and attitudes have to re-establish

4 Presentation of the Strategy of cognitive de-occupation of Crimea was held at the Mission, 16.06.2023, URL: <https://ppu.gov.ua/en/press-center/u-predstavnytstvi-vidbulasia-prezentatsiia-stratehii-kohnitynoi-deokupatsii-krymu/>

5 A child is a person under the age of 18, and “youth” is defined by the UN as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years

6 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, URL: [https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995\\_021](https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_021).

their identities and livelihoods”.<sup>7</sup> In this sense, reintegration has multiple meanings in post-conflict societies, including both the physical efforts for rebuilding states and the interpersonal and socio-cultural efforts for reconciling differences between different groups of people who have lived through different traumatic experiences. It can also involve a renegotiation, of values, norms and attitudes that may change during conflict and relationships between different age and social groups.<sup>8</sup>

The Kampala Recommendations on the Recovery and Reintegration of Children and Youth Affected by Armed Conflict provide the basic principles of post-conflict recovery:

- It applies to all children affected by war;
- It requires listening to and learning from children, involving them in consultations at the beginning of the initiative, as well as in the implementation and evaluation phases;
- It is essential to work with communities, taking into account local realities, and local capacities and respecting but not idealising local practices;
- It is essential to recognise the importance of mental and physical health;
- All interventions and activities shall be systemic and long-term;
- It should be remembered that conflict-affected communities are not homogeneous and reintegration is a highly context-specific process;
- It is essential to maintain a sustained and meaningful dialogue with both state and non-state actors on the reintegration of children affected by the conflict and/or involved in hostilities.<sup>9</sup>

Remember that all activities should be implemented with children and for children.<sup>10</sup>

As for youth, their participation in peacebuilding is also regulated at the international level. On 9 December 2015, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2250 on the role of youth (18-29 years old) in the maintenance of peace and security.<sup>11</sup> The resolution is an important milestone in recognising the positive role that young people can play in conflict and post-conflict settings, and provides a set of guidelines for Member States, the UN and civil society to develop relevant policies and programmes. According to the resolution, mechanisms should be put in place to promote a culture of peace and prevent young people from any acts of violence.<sup>12</sup> Reintegration in the context of this resolution is mentioned in the context of the post-conflict period and

7 Özerdem, A., Podder, S. (2015). Experiences of Reintegration. In: Youth in Conflict and Peacebuilding. Rethinking Political Violence Series. Palgrave Macmillan, London. [https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137314536\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137314536_3).

8 Özerdem, A., Podder, S. (2015). Experiences of Reintegration. In: Youth in Conflict and Peacebuilding. Rethinking Political Violence Series. Palgrave Macmillan, London. [https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137314536\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137314536_3).

9 The Kampala Recommendations on the Recovery and Reintegration of Children and Youth Affected by Armed Conflict, 26.09.2013, URL: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/kampala-recommendations-recovery-and-reintegration-children-and-youth-affected-armed>.

10 Ibid.

11 Security Council, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 2250 (2015), Urges Member States to Increase Representation of Youth in Decision-Making at All Levels, 9.12.2015, URL: <https://press.un.org/en/2015/sc12149.doc.htm>.

12 Youth, Peace and Security, URL: [https://unrcca.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unrcca\\_handout\\_yps\\_20201.pdf](https://unrcca.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unrcca_handout_yps_20201.pdf).

includes opportunities and policies in the field of education, employment, training to prevent the marginalisation of young people and promote a culture of peace.<sup>13</sup>

Youth should be represented in political negotiations, peace processes, transitional justice and reconstruction for at least four reasons:

- Because young people have always played an important role in conflict and struggle,
- Because young people have the right to participate in processes that directly affect their future;
- Because they also have important knowledge and ideas to contribute;
- Because long-term sustainable peace requires intergenerational healing.

Therefore, the ability to share power with young people and enable them to be involved in important processes should be implemented at the highest level.<sup>14</sup>

The reintegration of children and youth is one of the top priorities of the state in the post-conflict period, as children and youth, on the one hand, need special attention and care to overcome the consequences of hostilities on their mental and physical well-being. On the other hand, children and young people are a powerful resource for peacebuilding that should not be underestimated, and children can be the link that will facilitate intergenerational reconciliation.

### Goals and objectives of the study

The main goal of this study is to analyse the experience of countries that have gone through military conflicts and domestic divisions, to identify successful and unsuccessful measures for the reintegration of children and youth, and to systematise them in a matrix to assess their relevance in the Ukrainian context of overcoming the consequences of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The experience of foreign countries is used not to copy these practices in general, but to analyse what problems and challenges relevant to Ukraine existed in these countries and what measures have been applied to overcome them.

The study should contribute to building an effective and capable system of reintegration of children and youth, taking into account the successful and unsuccessful practices of other countries, with due regard to the Ukrainian context.

### Methodology

This study was conducted in the following stages:

**Stage 1** – selection of the target countries for the study: the Balkan countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia, Kosovo), Germany, Belgium, and Northern Ireland. The choice of these countries is based on the context that took place in a particular historical period:

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13 Ibid.

14 Siobhan McEvoy-Levy, Youth and the Challenges of 'Post-Conflict' Peacebuilding, 30.09.2014, URL: <https://www.unicef-irc.org/article/1067-youth-and-the-challenges-of-post-conflict-peacebuilding.html>

- Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Croatia, Kosovo – the war in Yugoslavia (1991-2001).
- Germany: 1) post-war reconstruction after the end of World War II and
- 2) the occupation of East Germany by the Soviet Union, the consequences of German reunification after 1989.
- Northern Ireland – the consequences of overcoming the internal crisis of the war between federalists and royalists (1968 - 1998), which is called “The Troubles”
- Belgium – a conflict on language grounds between French-speaking and Flemish-speaking regions.

**Stage 2** – desk research using open sources, scientific articles and reports of NGOs.

**Stage 3** – interviews with actors and experts involved in the reintegration of children and youth in the selected countries. A total of 10 interviews were conducted with actors from the Balkan countries and 4 interviews with experts from Germany. Based on the results of the interviews, the following areas were identified:

- Post-war challenges that were present immediately after the end of active hostilities: forced displacement, destroyed cities, difficult socio-economic situation, post-war infrastructure reconstruction.
- Challenges related to mental health and overcoming trauma for different population groups.
- Challenges related to preventing segregation, as well as the need to unite children from different communities and establish dialogue, create an inclusive society, and overcome discrimination.
- Challenges related to the curriculum in educational institutions.
- Challenges related to commemoration (memorialisation), especially in the context of the existence of diametrically opposed narratives or attempts to instrumentalise these narratives by specific political forces.

**Stage 4** – writing a report by experts on specific countries based on the collected materials.

**Stage 5** – compiling, summarising and creating a matrix of successful and unsuccessful practices.

## Limitations

Given that the reintegration of children and youth is a rather broad and complex issue that cannot be physically covered in one study, the authors had to limit the sample of countries under study to those located in continental Europe. Our respondents, in particular, recommended that we pay attention to the experience of African countries (Rwanda) and Middle Eastern countries (Syria) to address the issues we are studying. Time constraints did not allow us to include these countries in the study, although this experience could be relevant to the goals and objectives of the study.

In addition, the authors were not able to interview experts and actors directly involved in the topic in all of the countries under study. Therefore, the experience of Belgium and Northern Ireland is considered only through the prism of publicly available resources and scientific publications.

### Structure

The study is divided into country-specific chapters (countries of the former Yugoslavia, Germany, Northern Ireland, and Belgium) and is summarised in a matrix of successful and unsuccessful practices in the context of the following challenges: overcoming trauma, changing worldview, memorialisation, social and economic perspectives, segregation and discrimination. Aspects of changing information and cultural environments, as well as changing identities, although relevant in the context of Ukraine, are not addressed in this study due to a lack of applicable information.

### Reservation

The opinions of the invited authors reflect their position, which does not necessarily coincide with the opinion of the CCE “Almenda”.

# EXPERIENCE OF COUNTRIES OF FORMER YUGOSLAVIA



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interests include the contemporary literary process in the countries of the former Yugoslavia, as well as general issues of transition in contemporary Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the problems of reintegration and migration. Since 2020, she has been working in the diplomatic service at the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Serbia as Second Secretary for Consular Affairs.

## ■ HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In a very short period of time at the end of the twentieth century, events took place in South-Eastern Europe that radically changed its map. The change in the vector of the Southern Slavonic idea, the decline of communism, and the rise of nationalism led to a series of wars and the collapse of the powerful multinational federation of the Southern Slavs, Yugoslavia. The collapse of the union state was accompanied by wars, armed conflicts, ethnic cleansing, and rape, which was equated to genocide, cruelty and bloodshed of hundreds of thousands of people. This period went down in world history as the Balkan crisis of the 1990s. It was a traumatic experience for all participants in the conflicts that took place during the breakup of Yugoslavia. To better understand the context of our study, let us turn to a historical retrospective.

After the death of President Josip Broz Tito in 1980, the process of gradual disintegration of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), the so-called Second Yugoslavia (the first Yugoslavia was the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929-1941), which was formed in 1947, began. It consisted of six republics: Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and two autonomous regions – Vojvodina and Kosovo and Metohija.

The country’s power and ideological pedestal remained unoccupied for some time. The republican political elites began to fight for central power. At the same time, armed with nationalism, they began to build their own identities. Croatian writer and journalist, researcher of communism, evil and the history of the recent Balkan wars S. Drakulic notes: “After the fall of communism in 1989, Eastern Europeans received what they had hoped for – formal democracy and ‘wild’ capitalism, which, however, brought with it a sharp class divide.”<sup>15</sup> The rise of ethnic nationalism, fuelled by intellectual elites in the media, and the subsequent economic downturn soon led to large-scale conflicts and wars in the 1990s.

As a result of political strife, the country soon became generally destabilised. This was caused, on the one hand, by slow GDP growth and, on the other hand, by the rise of nationalism in some republics, especially Serbia and Croatia. The economic crisis and the absence of a strong and charismatic leader destroyed the trust and hope of Yugoslav citizens in their country.

However, let us now turn to the definition of the processes that took place on the Balkan Peninsula at the end of the last century. Scholars are mostly inclined to believe that “the concept of the Balkan crisis is determined by the collisions of events of 1990-2005 in the territory of the former Social Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (hereinafter referred to as SFRY), which were caused by domestic and foreign policy reasons, resulting in the collapse of the SFRY, the outbreak of civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the intensification of the confrontation between the regime of Serbian President Slobodan Milošević and the opposition in Serbia, the crisis in Kosovo and Metohija, and the fall of S. Milošević’s regime”.<sup>16</sup> That is, when we talk about the Balkan crisis of the 1990s, we must understand that it is a complex of conflicts, wars and clashes that covered almost the entire territory of the country, in which representatives of all the peoples of the former Yugoslavia took part. In essence, the phenomenon of the “Bal-

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15 S. Drakulić, *They would never hurt a fly. War criminals on trial in The Hague* / S. Drakulić; translated from English by Roksoliany Svyato. - Kyiv: Komora, 2018. 192 pp., P. 5.

16 Heletii M. M. *The Balkan Crisis (1990-2005) in the Context of Geopolitical Transformations in Europe*: PhD thesis ... Candidate of Political Science: 23.00.04 / Heletii Maria Mykhailivna ; Kyiv, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv – Kyiv, 2008. 16 pp., P.6

kan crisis”, which <...> unfolded at the turn of two world civilisations (Catholic Slovenia and Croatia; partially Muslim Bosnia and Herzegovina; Orthodox Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia) <...> in the context of a changing system of international relations, it became a turning point in the development of world history and the history of peace-keeping”.<sup>17</sup>

The events of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century in the Balkans might not have happened if it were not for the figure of the last president of Yugoslavia, S. Milošević. Slobodan Milošević (1941-2006) entered politics in 1983, and in 1987 became the leader of the Communist Party. A key moment in his political career was the incident that took place in Pristina (the capital of Kosovo), where he was sent on a party assignment in April 1987. Several thousand Serbs and Montenegrins had gathered in front of the House of Culture, trying to break through the police cordon to talk to S. Milošević and were shouting: “We are being beaten!”. When he learned about the riots, he came out to the people and in the presence of the media said a sentence that would make him famous throughout Yugoslavia: “No one dares to beat you!”. S. Milošević clearly understood what would help him stay in power for as long as possible – the power of the media and nationalism. After that, many rallies against Albanian separatism in Kosovo broke out in Serbia. The most important of which was the rally in Gazimestan on the occasion of the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo in 1389. According to historians, this event personified Serbian nationalism and turned S. Milošević into an untouchable leader. What S. Milošević started in Serbia was picked up by leaders in other republics.

The strength of a united Yugoslavia, which was initially advocated by all politicians (and the vast majority of citizens in all republics), was marginalised. This became especially evident after the Congress of the Union of Communists of Yugoslavia in January 1990, when it dissolved. This was followed by the first free elections since World War II. National-civic parties and coalitions came to power in all republics.

In Serbia, the rise of nationalism took place on the fertile ground of the “Serbian question” and the “question of national memory” – key concepts of Serbian identity that have been nurtured throughout the country’s history. The issue of Kosovo, Kosovo Serbs, and Serbian Orthodox monuments, which are full of this “cradle of Serbhood”, was again brought to the fore.

The point is that Kosovo has a special, even sacred value for Serbs. Kosovo is the birthplace of Serbian national identity. In 1389, the Battle of Kosovo took place, where the armies of the Ottoman Sultan Murad and the Serbian Prince Lazar clashed. Both leaders were killed. However, the Serbian army managed to stop the Ottoman army from advancing into Europe. Even though the Turks were stopped, the Serbian lands became part of the Ottoman Empire. This was the time when the so-called Kosovo myth began to be compiled, based on the belief in the “purifying power of sacrifice and revenge, the cycle and repetition of time”. In the 1980s, its newest awakening began.

The role of the church in the events of the 1990s in the Balkans should also be emphasised. It is worth noting that during more than 35 years of communist rule, the Serbian Orthodox Church was sidelined. Some politicians believed that after the death of J. B. Tito, it was time for the Serbian church to return to solving important state and political issues. Thus, in 1982, they signed the “Appeal in Defence of the Serbian Population and Their Shrines in Kosovo”, noting that “the Serbian people in Kosovo are experiencing a quiet, planned genocide”. Given the long-standing stories that Kosovo Serbs are threatened with genocide by Kosovo Albanians (the population

growth of Kosovo Albanians is 2.3%, being one of the highest in Europe),<sup>18</sup> the Kosovo issue has been reopened and will remain relevant in the twenty-first century. The NATO bombing of the territory of the FRY (Serbia and Montenegro) in 1999 and the declaration of Kosovo’s independence in 2008 played a major role in this.

In 1986, an important event took place: the Serbian Academy of Sciences signed a memorandum proclaiming a nationalist Greater Serbian programme under the slogan “All Serbs in One Country”. According to many researchers, this memorandum became the starting point of the state’s collapse, as the main events of the crisis began to take place in the early 1990s.

After months of negotiations on the future of the Yugoslav federation, Slovenia declared its independence in 1990. The Yugoslav leadership tried to preserve the state by force. The “Ten Day War” between the Yugoslav People’s Army (hereinafter referred to as JNA) and the Slovenian Territorial Guard began. The Slovenes put up serious resistance to the JNA, and the military conflict ended in their favour. Thus, Slovenia became the first independent country, and the SFRY no longer existed. Later that year, Macedonia also declared independence from Yugoslavia.

In contrast to Slovenia, Croatia had a large Serb minority (12% according to the census),<sup>19</sup> which lived compactly in the region of Eastern Slavonia with the administrative centre of Croatian Serbs in the city of Knin. In 1990, Franjo Tudjman (1922-1999), a former JNA general and leader of the Croatian Democratic Commonwealth, which supported nationalist movements, came to power in Croatia. On 22 December 1990, Croatia adopted a new Constitution, which proclaimed Croatia to be “the nation-state of the Croatian people and the state of other peoples and minorities who are its citizens”. In 1991, Croatia declared independence, and Croatian Serbs became a national minority in sovereign Croatia. However, not being ready to recognise themselves as a national minority, Croatian Serbs began to form their own republic, Serbian Krajina. Almost immediately, bloody clashes broke out between Serbs and the Croatian National Guard over the territory of Croatia inhabited by Serbs. These events went down in Croatian history as the Croatian War of Independence (1991-1995) or the “Domovinski rat”. This war was accompanied by fierce confrontations between the Croatian army and the JNA, during which two military operations took place that were particularly tragic and brutal. Thus, the Serbs virtually destroyed the Croatian town of Vukovar, and as a result of the Croatian “blitzkrieg” military operation “Oluja” (“Storm”) in 1995, ethnic cleansing took place, which resulted in the almost complete destruction of Serb settlements and the killing of thousands of Serbs. About 200,000 ethnic Serbs were forced to flee their homes and resettle in Serbia. After this operation, the war in Croatia ended.

In Bosnia, where Bosnian Muslims, Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs have lived together for centuries on the same territory, the situation was even more dramatic. According to the census, in the early 1990s, Bosnian Muslims dominated the population of Bosnia in terms of percentage constituting 43.7%, Serbs – 31.3%, and Croats – 17.3%.<sup>20</sup> The war here began in 1992, when Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence from Yugoslavia in March. Bosnian President and Muslim leader Alija Izetbegovic (1925-2003), together with Bosnian Muslims, sought separation from

18 H. Sundhaussen, *Istorija Srbije od 19. do 21. veka* / H. Sundhaussen, T. Bekić. – Beograd: Clio, 2008. – 579 pp., P. 423.

19 Popis stanovništva u SFR Jugoslaviji 1991, URL: <http://pod2.stat.gov.rs/ObjavljenePublikacije/G1991/pdf/G19914018.pdf>.

20 Popis stanovništva u SFR Jugoslaviji 1991, URL: <http://pod2.stat.gov.rs/ObjavljenePublikacije/G1991/pdf/G19914018.pdf>.

Yugoslavia, while Bosnian Serbs, on the contrary, wanted to remain in the federation at all costs.

This, in turn, exacerbated the situation: Bosnian Serbs, with the help of the JNA, began a siege of Sarajevo (1992-1995), and proclaimed an unrecognised Republika Srpska, led by Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic (born 1945) and General Ratko Mladic (born 1943), on the territory inhabited by ethnic Serbs. This was the beginning of one of the worst wars in the history of the Balkans, when, on the one hand, the Croatian army fought for the territory of Herzegovina, where ethnic Croats lived densely, and, on the other hand, S. Milošević and the leaders of the self-proclaimed Republika Srpska fought for “Greater Serbia”. In this way, Serbia and Croatia tried to divide the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina between them.

The terrible conclusion of this confrontation was the fall of the Muslim peaceful enclave in the city of Srebrenica, which was under the protection of UN forces. In a few days in July 1995, Serbian forces executed, according to various estimates, about 8,000 Muslim men. This was the largest act of genocide in Europe since World War II.

Since all these newly created states at war were led by openly nationalist leaders, it was clear that their main goal was not only independence, but also ethnically pure territories. Entire regions of Croatia and Bosnia, and later Kosovo, became the targets of “ethnic cleansing”, which was carried out to preserve or restore their homogeneity. Both Serbs and Croats wanted to divide Bosnia among themselves, leaving Muslims with small enclaves. The terrible war ended with the signing of the Dayton Accords in 1995 by Presidents Alija Izetbegovic, Franjo Tudjman and Slobodan Milošević.

After the end of the military confrontation in Bosnia, the war in southern Serbia, Kosovo, where Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs predominantly lived, was gaining momentum. Kosovo Albanians also wanted independence. S. Milošević concentrated all JNA forces on the southern outskirts of Serbia. As a result of this war, about 700 thousand Kosovo Albanians were forced to leave their homes. It was a huge humanitarian catastrophe. The war in Kosovo ended as a result of a military operation by NATO forces – the bombing of Serbia and Montenegro in 1999.

It is also worth mentioning the issue of international isolation of Serbia (FRY) in the 1990s, as the country was subject to various international sanctions for a whole decade: political, cultural, and economic, including an embargo, which led to hyperinflation. In 1992, hyperinflation reached 19,810.2%. By the end of 1993, inflation was 1,000,000%. In December that year, prices rose 1,790 times compared to November prices. In particular, food prices jumped 3,586 times. By January 1994, inflation had reached 313,000,000%.<sup>21</sup> The NATO bombing of Serbia and Montenegro in 1999 destroyed the country’s industrial and defence infrastructure.

During his political career, S. Milošević became president twice. From 1991 to 1997, he served as the head of state of Serbia, and since 1997, he has led the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) consisting of Serbia and Montenegro. In 2000, S. Milošević lost the election for the first time, but despite this, he did not recognise the results of the popular vote. Serbia was engulfed in protests and demonstrations. As a result of rallies gathering thousands of people that lasted for almost a month in the Serbian capital Belgrade, S. Milošević was forced to step down on 5 October, 2000.

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21 P. Petrović, Ž. Bogetić, Z. Vujošević, The Yugoslav Hyperinflation of 1992–1994: Causes, Dynamics, and Money Supply Process, URL: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4969125\\_The\\_Yugoslav\\_Hyperinflation\\_of\\_1992-1994\\_Causes\\_Dynamics\\_and\\_Money\\_Supply\\_Process](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/4969125_The_Yugoslav_Hyperinflation_of_1992-1994_Causes_Dynamics_and_Money_Supply_Process).

The opposition, led by politicians V. Kostunica and Z. Djindjic, came to power. These events went down in history as the "Bulldozer" or "democratic revolution", after the media replicated the episode of protesters storming the central television station. The main achievements of this revolution were free media, democratisation of the electoral process and Serbia's overall return to peace. In the same year, former President S. Milošević was arrested and transferred to the International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague. He was tried there for genocide in Bosnia and crimes against humanity during the wars in Croatia and Kosovo. S. Milošević defended himself, without the help of lawyers. In this way, he tried to prove to the world that he was not guilty of the Tribunal's charges. On 11 March 2006, S. Milošević died in his cell at the ICTY prison and his case was closed.

The issue of the Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia deserves special attention. Its establishment in 1993 was a kind of precedent. After all, it was the first Tribunal after the Nuremberg and Tokyo Tribunals to try crimes against humanity and violations of the rules of war. It was also the first tribunal where criminals were judged not by the victors, but by a third force, i.e. the international community. At the initiative of the UN Security Council, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY, full name - International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991) was established in the Dutch city of The Hague to establish justice, truth and punish perpetrators.<sup>22</sup> The need for the Tribunal arose when Europe realised that the new states that emerged from the war were unable or unwilling to try war criminals on their own. As the Tribunal stated, all parties to the conflict committed war crimes, but the vast majority of them were committed by Serbia.

In 2011, after 15 years in hiding, the Republika Srpska Chief of Staff, General R. Mladić, was arrested and transferred to The Hague. He was accused of genocide, crimes against humanity, and violations of the Geneva Conventions and laws and customary humanitarian law committed in Bosnia in 1992-1995. In 2017, he was found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment. R. Karadžić, the President of Republika Srpska, was also transferred to the Tribunal, where he was sentenced to 40 years in prison for genocide in Bosnia and crimes against humanity. The Tribunal completed its work that year.

The Balkan crisis of the 1990s and the wars that followed were certainly extremely destructive. Each of the participants was involved in crimes that violated international humanitarian law. During the Balkan crisis, a huge number of war crimes and crimes against humanity were committed by Serbs, Croats and Bosnians. In particular, the Croatian military operations "Thunder" and "Lightning" against Serbs (1995), the massacre of the Croatian population in Vukovar and Ovčar by JNA forces (1991), the extermination of Bosnians in Srebrenica by Serbian militarised units (1995), the siege of Dubrovnik by JNA forces (1991-1992) and the siege of Sarajevo, the longest in the history of modern warfare (1992-1996).

The wars on the territory of the SFRY were the largest military conflicts in Europe since World War II. More than 250,000 military personnel and civilians were killed and or reported missing. Almost 4 million more citizens of the former Yugoslavia were forced to leave their homes. There is no way to justify either Serbs, Croats or Muslims who committed atrocities during the war.

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22 Kamenetskyi M.S., International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia // Ukrainian Diplomatic Encyclopaedia: In 2 vols. Huberskyi (chairman) and others - K.: Znannya Ukrainy, 2004. - Vol. 2 - 812 pp.



As a result of the Balkan crisis of the 1990s, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Macedonia gained independence. Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a result of the 1995 Dayton Accords, was divided into two entities – the Bosnian-Croat Federation and Republika Srpska. In 1993, Serbia and Montenegro together formed the FRY or Third Yugoslavia (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), which in 2003 became the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. Later, in 2006, in a referendum in Montenegro, the majority of the population voted in favour of secession from Serbia and declared independence. In 2008, the Republic of Kosovo, which had been under UN protectorate for 10 years, became independent. Thus, for the first time since World War II, a new independent country appeared on the map of the Balkans and Europe. Slovenia joined the EU in 2004, followed by Croatia in 2013. In the same year, Croatia became a member of NATO.

## ■ CHALLENGES/SPECIFICS OF THE REGION

What distinguishes this crisis from others? The origins of this crisis should be sought earlier – in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. After all, for many decades, Serbs, Croats, and Muslims lived together, formed mixed families, and had children. “Yugoslavia seemed so reliable. The brotherhood and unity seemed so real. We grew up together, went to school together, made friends, got married, had children, and never thought that a national issue could divide us so much,” states Croatian writer S.

Drakulic who tries to understand and comprehend the causes of the catastrophe of the 1990s.<sup>23</sup>

These events were preceded by the destruction of the “heritage” of the Second Yugoslavia, first in Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia, and then in other republics. In particular, the cult of partisans ceased to be a taboo topic, the figure of J. B. Tito was demythologised, Chetniks and Ustašes were rehabilitated,<sup>24</sup> and Yugoslav monuments were destroyed. Nationalist rhetoric replaced Yugoslavian in the public discourse. The Serbian Orthodox Church once again came to the forefront of social and political life. All this was gradually destroying the foundations of Yugoslavia, which had been built by J. B. Tito for over 40 years.

According to the 1981 Yugoslav census, 1.2 million people identified themselves as Yugoslavs. This was the sixth largest “nation” in the country at the time, which indicated an active process of overcoming national and traditional differences. But Yugoslavia never managed to become a real “melting pot” of nations.<sup>25</sup> The republics that formed it chose the path of independence and “purity” of the nation.

The desire of Croats, Bosnians and Slovenes for independence, which had been lulled into sleep by the Yugoslav discourse for years, awakened, and the 1980s were marked by the strengthening of nationalism in all the former republics of Yugoslavia.

Philosophers have always considered nationalism to be a radical evil, because, unlike patriotism, it emphasises national exclusivity, leaving aside the universality of universal values; national consciousness in the case of nationalism is directed towards “its own” and against the “other” and “otherness” because it is alien.<sup>26</sup>

The revival of nationalism, according to S. Drakulić, is a consequence of fear of the “Other”, accompanied by political manipulation of this fear.<sup>27</sup> It is not necessary to have an external enemy to start a war, the writer says. This enemy is within, as in the past, for example, the civil war between Serbs and Croats during World War II. When bloodshed is recorded in history, it becomes easier to manipulate people. Serbs became enemies for Croats, Bosnian Muslims and Albanians, and Croats went to war not only against Serbs but also against Muslims. Whereas the Macedonians’ enemies were Albanians. Thus, each of the republics had its own “comfortable conditions” for the sprouting of nationalism.

Today, when many years have passed since the last armed conflict in the former Yugoslavia and peace has finally prevailed in the Balkans, many questions still remain about the nature, causes, course and consequences of this catastrophe. Political scientists, journalists, historians, economists, and philosophers from the Old and New Worlds are trying to comprehend and explain the phenomenon of such a violent disintegration of the former Yugoslavia. In his book *Balkan Ghosts* (1993), the American researcher, cultural critic and political scientist R. Kaplan reflects on the reasons for such a dramatic end to Yugoslavia: “I immediately realised that the counter-revolution in Eastern Europe would also include Yugoslavia. But because the pressure of discontent was horizontally applied, in the form of one group against another, rather

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23 S. Drakulić, *They would never hurt a fly. War criminals on trial in The Hague* / S. Drakulić; translated from English by Roksoliany Svyato. - Kyiv: Komora, 2018. 192 pp., P. 87.

24 Serbian and Croatian partisan units that fought during World War II.

25 S. Drakulić, *They would never hurt a fly. War criminals on trial in The Hague* / S. Drakulić; translated from English by Roksoliany Svyato. – Kyiv: Komora, 2018. 192 pp., P. 88.

26 M. Kangra, *Nacionalizam ili demokracija* / Milan Kangra. – Beograd: Razlog, 2002. P. 8

27 S. Drakulić, *They would never hurt a fly. War criminals on trial in The Hague* / S. Drakulić; translated from English by Roksoliany Svyato. - Kyiv: Komora, 2018. 192 pp., P.5.

than vertically against the communist authorities in Belgrade, the revolutionary path in Yugoslavia was initially winding and therefore more disguised. That is why the rest of the world did not notice it until 1991 when the fighting began.”<sup>28</sup>

One of the fundamental problems with the breakup of Yugoslavia and the wars that followed in the 1990s was the ambiguity of the perception of these events by the participants themselves. Indeed, the Tribunal, as a third force, helped to clarify the truth and punish those responsible, at least part of it. But, at the same time, each side of the conflict remained with its own truth. According to Croatia’s official doctrine, “their war” was defensive, they never attacked Bosnia first. Just as Serbia denies these wars at all, recognising NATO’s war against them and the war against terrorists in Kosovo. A stable and peaceful future, however, depends on understanding the true causes of this profound crisis and accepting the truth about ourselves.

## CROATIA

The war in Croatia began in 1991 in the territories of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium, and officially ended with the signing of the Erdut Agreement on 12 November 1995.<sup>29</sup> This agreement contains 14 points. Half of them relate to human rights, but the first paragraphs of the Erdut Agreement dealt with a period defined as a transitional administration lasting 12 months with the possibility of extension for another 12 months if requested by one of the parties. Thus, the transitional period in Croatia lasted from 15 January 1996 to 15 January 1998, and during this period all disputes that prevented the two warring parties from fulfilling all the obligations stipulated by the agreement were resolved.

The Erdut Agreement de facto became a key document and a turning point that symbolised the end of the war. It is believed that the peaceful reintegration of the Croatian Danube region was the most successful UN project under the UNTAES (United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium) in 1996-1998. Peaceful reintegration was undoubtedly the international community’s response to Operations “Thunder” and “Lightning”, which, in addition to their specific nature, led to the death, expulsion and exodus of a large number of Croatian citizens of Serbian nationality from the areas where the fighting took place.

In the early 2000s, the Republic of Croatia further regulated its national legislation by adopting a number of laws dealing with national minority issues, namely the Law on the Use of the Language and Script of National Minorities and the Law on Education in Languages and Letters of National Minorities, and in 2002 the Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities.<sup>30</sup>

Let us consider the results of reintegration in the field of education for representatives of national minorities on the example of the city of Vukovar, which has a powerful and emotionally charged symbolic meaning in Croatian national memory.

Since the completion of the peaceful reintegration process in 1998, the Serb minority has been studying in special classes with Serbian as the language of instruc-

28 R. D. Kaplan, *Balkan Ghosts* / R. D. Kaplan // *A Journey Through History*. – Macmillan, 2005. – 307 pp., P. 7

29 Predsjednici hrvatskoga sabora, URL: <https://vlada.gov.hr/UserDocsImages//2016/Sjednica/2014/174%20sjednica%20Vlade//174%20-%2036e.pdf>.

30 MIRNA REINTEGRACIJA HRVATSKOG PODUNAVLJA - ZABORAVLJENI MIROVNI PROJEKT? Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Europski dom Vukovar, URL: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/kroatien/11671.pdf>.

tion, exercising the right of national minorities guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia to education in their own language and script. Citizens of Croatian nationality, and especially local authorities, often declare this choice of the Serbian community to be deliberate and arbitrary segregation, without taking into account the fact that the Serbian minority, given its size in the local community, organises classes in exactly the same way as some other national minorities in areas where they are larger (e.g. Italians in Istria, Hungarians in Baranja, or Czechs in Daruvar, etc.).

In Croatia, members of national minorities still exercise their constitutional right to education through **three main models of education: A, B and C:**<sup>31</sup>

**According to Model A,** the majority of Serbian schoolchildren attend classes, provides for the teaching of national minorities entirely in their native language and script, with compulsory study of Croatian language;

**According to Model B,** education is bilingual: natural sciences are taught in Croatian and social studies are taught in the minority language;

**According to Model C,** education is conducted in Croatian with additional classes aimed at fostering the culture and language of the national minority.

However, in the early 2000s, there was an attempt to implement a radically different model of education. It was a project that began in 2003, which offered a “different” school where children of all nationalities would sit at desks. In such a school, children would learn about the differences, customs, and cultures of other nationalities. The project was implemented by the Nansen Centre for Peace and Dialogue (NDC),<sup>32</sup> whose mission<sup>33</sup> is formulated as social reconstruction and development of multi-ethnic communities. This includes establishing communication, developing dialogue, building trust, promoting cooperation and building peace in the community. The Centre promotes the development of communities of equal opportunities through the strengthening of personal and social potential and focuses on integrated intercultural education based on critical reflection on identity and prejudice, encouraging the process of dealing with the past and promoting a culture of peace and dialogue.

As part of the Danube School project, local political leaders initially travelled to Norway to study the experience of similar schools. At the beginning of the work, the consensus was that the idea was great and would help Vukovar and its residents after all the trauma and suffering of the war. The Kingdom of Norway provided 1.3 million Kuna for the project in Vukovar and 390 thousand Euros for the reconstruction and equipment of the school premises. However, the intercultural school never came to life, as politicians decided that there was no interest in such a school, as the city council rejected its implementation by the votes of several Croatian political parties. The creation of the Vukovar Intercultural School was stopped in 2013. At that time, the city council explained that the laws of the Republic of Croatia recognise three models of education for members of national minorities and that neither Vukovar nor Croatia needed a new model. After several years of struggle over the project, the school was finally founded in December 2016 and a principal was appointed. Interestingly, it became the first school in Croatia to be founded by a city rather than the state. However, this was also unsuccessful, as parents did not show interest in sending their children to such a school at the stage of founding the

31 Modeli nastave, 24.08.2021, URL: <https://i-nastava.gov.hr/vijesti/modeli-nastave/65>

32 Nova škola, Nansen dijalog centar, URL: <https://www.ndcosijek.hr/projekti/nova-skola/>

33 Projekti i aktivnosti, Nansen dijalog centar, URL: <https://www.ndcosijek.hr>

school. Eventually, the project was closed, and Croatia had to return 390 thousand Euros to the Kingdom of Norway.

In 2021, with the support of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, a group of researchers implemented the project “A City Captured by Politics. How do Vukovar residents see their city now?”<sup>34</sup> We have analysed the part of the survey that is relevant to the topic of our study and present the data obtained by the researchers. A total of 372 respondents aged 16 to 60 took part in the survey. The target sample was determined on the basis of the 2011 census of the Republic of Croatia. The ethnic structure of the sample deviates slightly from this, with a subsample of minorities intentionally overrepresented compared to the 2011 census (at that time, 57.37% of Croats, 34.87% of Serbs and 7.76% of other national minorities lived in Vukovar).

Let’s focus on the part of the survey that deals with education, formulated by the researchers as “Education as a problem in Vukovár”. In the survey, the researchers focused on two important areas: the assessment of existing models of school education and the Danube School. Overall, the survey showed that both Croats and Serbs generally agreed on the opening of the Danube School: 79% of participants (regardless of nationality) consider it an unfortunate fact that the school is not open.

When asked about the current models of education, both Croats and Serbs agree that special schools (model A) are the best way for children belonging to minorities to learn the language and culture of their people.<sup>35</sup> Representatives of the Serbian minority express a slightly more positive attitude towards Model A schools than Croats. In terms of percentages, 40.3% of Croats, 53% of Serbs and 48% of respondents of other nationalities mostly or completely agree with Model A.

Croats are the majority when evaluating model B (joint classes), but Serbs and representatives of other national minorities also show support for this model (79.6% of Croats, 73.2% of Serbs, 77.8% of others strongly agree). Similar results are demonstrated by the responses to model C.

The researchers note that the results of their survey coincide with the findings of a large-scale study of the integrative role of schools in all minority classes under model A, in which model B received the most support from schoolchildren (45.4%) and their parents (48%).<sup>36</sup>

Finally, as part of the attitudes towards education, citizens were asked to what extent they agree with the statement that, given that Vukovar is a multicultural city, it would be important to properly celebrate different holidays in the city’s schools (e.g. Catholic and Orthodox Christmas, Easter, etc.), which is not currently practiced and contributes to the preservation of Croat-Serb divisions.<sup>37</sup> Serbs agree with this statement somewhat more than Croats and other minority nationalities. Interestingly, the average scores clearly show that all groups agree with this statement, which is also confirmed by the percentages of mostly and strongly agreeing responses among Croats (76.8%), Serbs (93.3%) and others (83.9%). In addition, citizens clearly express

34 D. Čorkalo Biruški, N. Blanuša, I. Kapović, Kako građani Vukovara vide svoj grad danas?, URL: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/kroatien/17537.pdf>

35 Ibid., P. 8

36 D. Čorkalo Biruški Ajduković, (2007). Separate schools – divided community: The role of school in post-war social reconstruction. *Review of Psychology*, 14(2), 93-108, URL: <https://hrcak.srce.hr/25575>

37 Jelić, M., Čorkalo Biruški, D. i Rebernjak, B. (2020). If school walls could talk: A mixed-method study of physical space marking in promoting multiculturalism. *Current Psychology*, 1-15.

their readiness for different forms of education, thus showing a clear regret that the Danube Intercultural School has not really been able to operate in Vukovar.<sup>38</sup>

The prevailing opinion is that the Serbian political elite insists on the right to education in the mother tongue, without paying due attention to the fact that in the context of a general national split in the community, as also evidenced by the study “A City Captured by Politics”, the national division of children at school makes it impossible for them to contact each other to build normal relationships with their peers and develop friendships. Thus, from both sides’ perspectives, it is not possible to make a step forward in the organisation of education and find an obvious compromise, i.e. to reconcile both needs – preserving cultural identity and the possibility of moving forward in a healthy integrated environment and allowing children to have the right to coexist at school on the basis of common interests.

In 2022, with the support of the Goethe-Institut from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and North Macedonia, Serbian author Sanja Kosovic conducted a study with the focus on schoolchildren in Vukovar and their vision of education in Vukovar as part of the Media Incubator project to promote socially responsible journalism.<sup>39</sup> Her interlocutors from the Autonomija portal agree that the situation in Vukovar has changed significantly over the past 10 years in terms of inter-ethnic tensions, especially among young people. However, in their opinion, Vukovar still remains a city in a political trap in which certain factors prevent it from overcoming the past. It is interesting that after attending kindergartens and schools separately, both Croats and Serbs, members of the national minority, become adults who are pursuing higher education together.

Most of the well-known NGOs operate in Croatia, some of which at different stages after the peaceful reintegration of the eastern Danube region dealt with education issues. In the initial stages of reintegration, the focus was mainly on demilitarisation, readmission, documentation and general reconstruction of the region, and to a lesser extent on education.

This is primarily the Centre for Peace, Nonviolence and Human Rights Osijek,<sup>40</sup> a public association founded in 1992. The activities of its members are aimed at building peace, protecting and upholding human rights and freedoms, and promoting creative methods of conflict resolution at the individual, group and political levels. The Peace Centre has also conducted sociological research on the functioning of school models.

The Documenta<sup>41</sup> - Centre for Dealing with the Past conducts vigorous activities. Since its foundation, Documenta has been promoting individual and social processes of dealing with the past in order to build sustainable peace in Croatia and the region by deepening dialogue and initiating public debate on public policy. The organization has been working to mainstream the past, collecting data, publishing research on war events, war crimes and human rights violations, and monitoring war crimes trials at the local and regional levels as a contribution to improving judicial standards.

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38 D. Čorkalo Biruški, N. Blanuša, I. Kapović, Kako građani Vukovara vide svoj grad danas?, URL: <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/kroatien/17537.pdf>, P. 9

39 MLADI U VUKOVARU: SVI SMO MI GENERACIJA – ALI SE NE POZNAJEMO, 07.12.2022, URL: [HTTPS://WWW.GOETHE.DE/RESOURCES/FILES/PDF/291/MLADI-U-VUKOVARU\\_-SVI-SMO-MI-GENERACIJA---ALI-SE-NE-POZNAJEMO---AUTONOMIJA-V1.PDF](https://www.goethe.de/resources/files/pdf/291/mladi-u-vukovaru_-svi-smo-mi-generacija---ali-se-ne-poznajemo---autonomija-v1.pdf)

40 <https://centar-za-mir.hr/>

41 <https://documenta.hr>

One of the Centre’s latest projects is “Using Interviews with Former Concentration Camp Inmates in School Curricula and Work with Children” in 2023.<sup>42</sup> Documenta is working on research that aims to draw attention to the fact that for the healthy development of a nation, especially after the experience of war, it is crucial to teach children historical facts and an understanding of the cause and effect of historical processes.

The Documenta Centre has been actively advocating for the adoption of a law on reparations, implying reparations for all victims of the armed conflict. However, the adopted law did not take into account those who were children during the war. The Centre’s project “The Right of Civilian Victims of the War in Croatia to Reparations” (2013)<sup>43</sup> is interesting to study.

When studying and analysing the issue of reintegration of children and youth in post-war Croatia, we cannot but mention the Mrkopal Peace School of Croatian educator and peacemaker Franjo Starčević (Mrkopal). It is little known, but during the war in Croatia, Gorski Kotar was perhaps the only place out of all the regions of Croatia inhabited by Serbs and Croats that was not affected by military conflicts and violence. There is not much information about this school, but it is known that F. Starčević and a group of colleagues, who refused to be guided by the dictates of a time full of fear, prejudice, divisions and national hatred, dedicated their lives to creating an atmosphere of peace and trust between Croats and Serbs in this region. It is primarily thanks to the personality of Franjo Starčević and his individual approach to children that mental and other barriers between ethnic groups were removed, and the Mrkopal Peace School became synonymous with peace education in Croatia. Mrkopal is perhaps the only place in Croatia and one of the few in the Balkans where reconciliation has always existed, nurtured by children’s hands under the wise guidance of F. Starčević.<sup>44</sup>

Interestingly, in 2022, the school received a new impetus when a group of enthusiasts emerged who intend to reopen the school and continue teaching peace and non-violence and promoting humanistic values.

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The Dayton Peace Agreement (14 December 1995)<sup>45</sup> is a treaty signed between Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereinafter referred to as BiH), initiated by the United Kingdom and the United States, which ended the bloody war that took place in BiH from April 1992 to November 1995. The UN peacekeeping mission was replaced by a NATO peacekeeping mission in 1996. It is worth mentioning that the Ukrainian contingent was part of the mission, which guaranteed the security of Serbs, Croats and Muslims in the cities of Sarajevo, Travnik, Gorazd, Banja Luka and Tuzla, and remained in BiH until 1999, after which it was redeployed to Kosovo.<sup>46</sup> In 2006, NATO transferred responsibility for security in BiH to the Eu-

42 Korištenje intervjuja sa svjedocima vremena u nastavi i radu s mladima na temu fašističkih logora, 31.11.2023, URL: <http://surl.li/qzkhm>

43 Pravo civilnih žrtava rata u Hrvatskoj na reparacije, URL: [https://documenta.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/lzvjestaj\\_Pravo-civilnih-zrtava-rata-u-Hrvatskoj-na-reparacije\\_2013\\_Final.pdf](https://documenta.hr/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/lzvjestaj_Pravo-civilnih-zrtava-rata-u-Hrvatskoj-na-reparacije_2013_Final.pdf)

44 "Gradnja Dijaloga", URL: [http://www.hr.undp.org/content/croatia/hr/home/library/crisis\\_prevention\\_and\\_recovery/gradnja-dijaloga.html](http://www.hr.undp.org/content/croatia/hr/home/library/crisis_prevention_and_recovery/gradnja-dijaloga.html), Goran Božičević: Izgradnja mira kao izgradnja društva i države u kojoj želimo živjeti <http://surl.li/rbtyb>

45 15 years ago, Dayton Peace Agreement: a milestone on the path of NATO and the Balkans, 14.12.2010. URL: [https://www.nato.int/cps/uk/natohq/news\\_69290.htm?selectedLocale=uk](https://www.nato.int/cps/uk/natohq/news_69290.htm?selectedLocale=uk);

46 Kamenetskyi M. S. Dayton Accords of 1995 // Ukrainian Diplomatic Encyclopaedia: In 2 vols. Huberskyi (chairman) and others - K: Znannya Ukrayiny, 2004 - Vol. 1 - 760 pp.

ropean Union. The Dayton Peace Agreement became the basis for the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

According to the Agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina remained a single state consisting of two entities – the Muslim-Croat Federation (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Republika Srpska – with unified federal institutions. The city of Sarajevo remained part of the Federation, and the Brcko District was granted special status. Republika Srpska was created as a centralised mini-state that chose to develop much more intensive cooperation with its neighbour Serbia than with the rest of its country. Under this agreement, both Serbia and Croatia recognised the sovereignty and territorial integrity of BiH.

The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is essentially divided into ten mini-states (cantons), each of which has almost unlimited power in the field of education as well, in particular. In addition, there is a third part of BiH, the Brcko District, which has its own educational policy. Thus, as a result, the state of BiH has been left without any real responsibility in the field of education, because according to the Dayton Constitution of BiH,<sup>47</sup> the current institutional picture of education in BiH is a reflection of the organisation of the state as defined in its Constitution, the constitutions of entities and cantons, and the Brcko District Statute. Therefore, the full and complete competence in the field of education belongs to Republika Srpska, the ten cantons/districts in the Federation of BiH and Brcko District. Jurisdiction in the field of education is exclusively vested in eleven ministries of education and the Department of Education of the Brcko District Government of BiH.<sup>48</sup>

Given the complexity of the new political entity, the complete decentralisation of the newly independent country and the very multi-ethnic nature of BiH, it can be assumed that the war continued there, but in a slightly modified form, namely in the field of education, as the Dayton Peace Agreement and the BiH Constitution laid the foundations for total segregation.

Contemporary approaches to post-conflict transition recognise that education is not only an individual human right, but also an important aspect of reconciliation and transitional justice. The educational disparities in BiH can be partly explained by the fact that the Dayton Peace Agreement did not give education a proper attention. It is mentioned only in Article 1 of Annex 6 of the Agreement, which deals with “Fundamental Rights and Freedoms” and is limited to the right to education.<sup>49</sup> No international organisation had the mandate to monitor education reform in BiH. In the immediate aftermath of the conflict, the international community prioritised issues such as security, elections, property restitution, good governance and economic development, and the “soft” issue of education reform was sidelined.

However, in 2002, in accordance with its mandate and with the support of the OSCE Permanent Council, the OSCE Mission to BiH began to coordinate the work of the international community in the education sector. At a meeting of the Peace Implementation Council in November 2002, the Ministers of Education jointly presented the BiH Education Reform Strategy, developed with the support of the Mission. The Strategy included a commitment by the Entity and Cantonal Ministers of Education to “put an end to segregation and discrimination through education”.<sup>50</sup>

47 Ustav i važniji propisi, URL: <https://www.parlament.ba/Content/Read/175?title=Ustavivažnijipropisi>

48 Bosna i Hercegovina: Organizacija i struktura obrazovnog sistema, URL: <http://surl.li/rbtyw>

49 The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, URL: <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/e/0/126173.pdf>

50 Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities present Education Reform Strategy, 20.11.2002, URL: <https://www.osce.org/bih/58671>

In order to facilitate the unification of primary and secondary education, which had been completely separated during the war and post-war years, the OSCE organised the so-called **“two schools under one roof”**, an interesting invention for segregated schools in which schoolchildren of two ethnic groups, Bosnians and Croats, study in the same school building but are physically separated from each other, usually with separate entrances to the school building. Under this model, Muslims follow the federal curriculum, while Bosnian Croats follow the curriculum of neighbouring Croatia. The characteristics of “two schools under one roof” vary, but what they all have in common is that they separate children of two ethnic groups and, as a result of segregation, teach them that there are internal differences between them. In post-conflict Bosnia, this further fuels mistrust between different ethnic groups, hinders reconciliation and is a long-term threat to stability, security and economic growth. What was initially seen as a temporary solution has unfortunately become permanent, despite the efforts of the international community to ensure its transition to integrated education.

The practice of ‘two schools under one roof’ is in fact a violation of international conventions as well as national legislation. According to the model ‘two schools under one roof’, schoolchildren legally have the option of attending either of two adjacent schools, but the practical reality is that the school environment, including the curriculum, is only welcoming to one ethnic group. For example, there was a precedent when a national court found the practice of such schools in the towns Stolac and Chaplin to be discriminatory, but the court’s decision has not yet been implemented.<sup>51</sup>

To illustrate the existence of such segregation in BiH, let’s look at a few examples of real schools that operate under this model, according to an OSCE study (Two Schools Under One Roof. The Most Visible Example of Discrimination in Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018).

For example, in Central Bosnia Canton, there are 18 cases of “two schools under one roof” affecting 36 schools (20 central schools and 16 branch schools) in 18 locations in Bugojno, Busovača, Fojnica, Gornji Vakuf-Uskoplje, Jajce, Kiseljak, and Vitez. However, there are no cases of administratively and legally unified “two schools under one roof” or ongoing initiatives or processes for such unification. The most prominent examples of “two schools under one roof” can be found in this canton and the canton of Herzegovina-Neretva.

In Bugojno, three schools operate under this model. For example, the Third Primary School and the First Primary School follow Bosnian and Croatian language curricula, have a common entrance and common changes for schoolchildren, and partially share a gym and a courtyard, but are taught by separate teachers with separate classrooms. Joint extracurricular activities for schoolchildren are sporadic, usually initiated by the school or third parties.

There are two schools in the town of Busovača. The Busovača school and Busovača secondary school have two curricula and share a common entrance for schoolchildren, but they study in different shifts, schoolchildren have the opportunity to share the courtyard, gym, lobby and library, but they are taught by different teachers who have separate classrooms. The children participate in joint extracurricular activities such as games and events. However, in Fojnica, with the same model of school organisation, school children do not participate in any joint extracurricular activities. In Gornji Vakuf-Uskoplje, the school has two separate entrances: the Usko-

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51 “Two Schools Under One Roof”: The Most Visible Example of Discrimination in Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018, URL: <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/3/8/404990.pdf>

plje school operates a Croatian-language programme and occupies the ground floor, while the Gornji Vakuf school in the same building occupies the first floor. The schools have separate teachers with their own classrooms, but the schools work in one shift and schoolchildren can share a computer lab. In Vitez, the two schools use separate premises, study in the same shift, but with different curricula, have different teachers and do not have joint extracurricular activities.

An interesting case is that of the town of Jajce, where in one of the schools the schoolchildren themselves opposed segregation. In 2016-2017, there were a number of schoolchildren protests against the division of classes on a mono-ethnic basis. They managed to get the local authorities to cancel the decision, and the activists were awarded the Max van der Stoel Prize, which is awarded every two years for “extraordinary and outstanding achievements in improving the situation of national minorities” in OSCE member states, organised by the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Government of the Netherlands.<sup>52</sup>

In the Zenica-Doboj Canton, there are two cases of “two schools under one roof” (affecting four schools in two locations), three cases of administratively and legally unified “two schools under one roof”, and two other cases of divided schools teaching two curricula.

The two “schools under one roof” cover schoolchildren from four branch schools of two primary schools in Maglaj and Žepče. The schoolchildren are separated in the same school premises until the fifth grade, when they are fully separated and complete their education in the central primary schools in Maglaj and Žepče, respectively. The process of administrative and legal merger of “two schools under one roof” has been fully implemented in Žepče, one of the largest areas of return of internally displaced persons in BiH. The administratively and legally merged Vareš School in the town of Vareš is still the only school in the canton that teaches all its schoolchildren the same curriculum in Bosnian and Croatian languages, while other schools teach two different curricula.

In contrast to Central Bosnia, in Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, as of 2018, there were 8 schools “under one roof” (actually 16 separate schools), 1 school administratively and legally merged into “two schools under one roof” and two separate schools that operate under different curricula.

The history of the Mostar Gymnasium is interesting in the context of our study. During the 1992-95 war, the building of the famous Old Gymnasium was severely damaged, which forced it to shut down. At that time, schoolchildren attended either the First Gymnasium (“Prva gimnazija”), where classes were taught in Bosnian, or the Fra Dominik Mandić Gymnasium, with Croatian as the language of instruction, both of which were temporarily located in different primary school buildings. After partial renovation of the old gymnasium, the Fra Dominik Mandić Gymnasium moved into the building in 1999. Financial support for the reconstruction of the school building and ongoing efforts by the international community facilitated the return of schoolchildren from the First Gymnasium, leading to the subsequent administrative and legal (i.e. official) merger of the two gymnasiums into Mostar Gymnasium in 2004. In 2009, the two parent councils merged into one Parent Council of Mostar Gymnasium, but in 2014, this council was again divided into two councils, which still exist today. Since 2005, the building has also been home to United World College Mostar, an international secondary school with English language education. Currently, all schoolchildren of

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52 Učenci iz BiH dobili nagradu za njihovu borbu protiv segregacije, 20.07.2018, URL: <https://balkaninsight.com/sr/2018/07/20/učenci-iz-bih-dobili-nagradu-za-njihovu-borbu-protiv-segregacije-07-19-2018/>

Mostar Gymnasium attend joint practical computer science classes in the first grade. Schoolchildren attending the bilingual programme supported by the Institut Français attend joint classes in French, as well as world history and art. The school organises a variety of joint extracurricular activities for its schoolchildren.<sup>53</sup>

According to the EU Parliament’s resolution of 15 February 2017 on the European Commission’s 2016 report on BiH, the segregation and discrimination that exists in the “two schools under one roof” is a violation of domestic and international law and contrary to EU recommendations.<sup>54</sup>

In fact, the existing education system in multi-ethnic BiH not only fails to teach tolerance and promote European values in order to build a healthy society but does the opposite. The “two schools under one roof” continue to educate a generation of young people whose identity is based on the belief that differences between people are irreconcilable and that separation in all spheres of life is justified, instead of learning the benefits of living in a diverse society. All NGOs and international organisations involved in the reintegration process agree on this statement. The respondents to our survey also gave a negative assessment. Therefore, we consider this practice unsuccessful.

Unlike in the Federation, in Republika Srpska, education falls under the competence of the Ministry of Education and Culture and is regulated by the Law on Secondary Education and Upbringing.<sup>55</sup> It provides for the right to basic secondary education for all children and non-discrimination on any grounds. Article 11 of the Law states that the school is responsible for contributing to the creation of a culture in the environment in which it operates that respects the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all citizens, as established by the Constitution and other international human rights instruments to which BiH is a signatory. Secondary school education is conducted in the official languages of the peoples of the Federation, using the official Cyrillic and Latin scripts. This picture of secondary education in Bosnia demonstrates that it is crucial to start the process of solving the problem in schools and to put the interests of children above political interests.

Let’s take a closer look at the contribution of international organisations to the fight against discrimination and peacebuilding in Bosnia. The Helsinki Committee for Human Rights<sup>56</sup> is a non-governmental organisation founded in 1996 in Bijeljina (Republika Srpska, BiH), whose activities since its inception have been dedicated to the promotion, protection and monitoring of human rights in Republika Srpska, BiH and the region as a whole.

In the mid-2000s, the Helsinki Committee of BiH, in cooperation with the Norwegian Helsinki Committee and with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), implemented a project called Education for Peace, which aimed to reduce the impact of war crimes denial policies on local communities in order to prevent future conflicts and reduce the power of politics used by nationalism to gain and maintain power in local communities, at the regional and national levels.<sup>57</sup>

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53 “Two Schools Under One Roof”: The Most Visible Example of Discrimination in Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018, URL: <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/3/8/404990.pdf>

54 EU Parliament resolution of 15 February 2017 on the 2016 Commission Report on BiH

55 ZAKON O OSNOVNOM OBRAZOVANJU I VASPITANJU (Objavljen u “Sl. glasniku RS”, br. 74 od 12. avgusta 2008, 71/09, 104/11)

56 URL: <http://helcommrs.org>

57 Press konferencija - Obrazovanje za mir, URL: <http://surl.li/qzkkz>

In 2015 (the project lasted until 2020), they developed and prepared a textbook “Education for Peace”<sup>58</sup> for use in formal and non-formal youth education on human rights, intercultural dialogue, and meeting/coexistence with the past for schoolchildren in grades I to IV of secondary school. The specific objectives of the project were to influence educational institutions to change curricula to reduce the impact of war crimes negation on younger generations; to develop a permanent educational programme for youth in the form of a multimedia educational package that was available for use in the educational process after the project was completed; and to increase competencies in peacebuilding, intercultural dialogue and conflict prevention, skills and abilities of young people from the three regions of BiH covered by the project.

This project aimed to introduce 120 secondary school schoolchildren from three regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Podrinje, Herzegovina and Krajina – to topics that are not sufficiently covered or not covered at all in the formal education system in BiH. The topics raised in the travelling schools within the framework of this project were aimed at improving the level of knowledge and skills of schoolchildren about human rights violations during the war in BiH based on established facts and a humanistic approach to those events, peacebuilding theory, as well as the veracity of the testimonies of those who witnessed the events of the war.

As a result, the project team members created a unique educational toolkit that could be used in formal and non-formal education of young people on peacebuilding and dealing with the past based on the analysis of the quality of education in the field of democratisation and human rights, and in particular for the study of the subject of history (Serbian: istorija/Bosnian: historija/Croatian: povijest). The project also included trainings for teachers of the schools involved and representatives of the association “Witnesses of Your Time” from the regions covered by the project. The lecturers and facilitators hired to teach during the project activities are specialists in working with senior school children.

The most important activities implemented under the project included three Travelling Peace Schools for secondary school schoolchildren from three regions of BiH – basic and advanced levels; trainings for secondary school teachers; and independent activities of schoolchildren and teachers in their local communities, following the events.<sup>59</sup> The toolkit includes topics such as facing/coexistence with the past, intercultural dialogue, human rights, religion in modern society, and youth participation in the reconciliation process.

With the support of USAID and the PRO-Buducnost project, the basis for a broader follow-up in 2017 was the so-called “**Peace Platform**”<sup>60</sup> signed by the BiH education ministers, which opened the doors of schools in more than 30 municipalities.

As of 2022, the cantons of Central Bosnia and Herzegovina-Neretva and their ministries of education were the first to support and join the peace education programme. Subsequently, ministries and schools from the cantons of Una-Sana, Zenica-Doboj, Livanja and Sarajevo joined the programme.

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58 OBRAZOVNI paket : priručnik za primjenu u formalnom i neformalnom obrazovanju mladih ljudi o ljudskim pravima, interkulturalnom dijalogu i suočavanju/sučeljavanju sa prošlošću : za I, II, III i IV razred srednje škole / Adela Galešić ... [et al.]. - Bijeljina : Helsinški odbor za ljudska prava u Republici Srpskoj, 2015. - 181 str.

59 Ibid. pp. 8-9

60 Platforma za mir. Konkretna alat za spajanje razlicitosti, izgradnju povijerenja i postizanje sirokog dogovora u Bosni i Hercegovini. URL: [www.probuducnost.ba](http://www.probuducnost.ba)

In the context of BiH, we believe it is appropriate to add the positive experience of memorialisation through the activities of the War Childhood Museum,<sup>61</sup> which not only documents children’s memories of the war (and tries to collect these testimonies from all ethnic groups), but also organises excursions for children from different regions, including Republika Srpska.

Post Conflict Research Centre addresses the topic of peace education, among other issues essential to the post-conflict environment.<sup>62</sup> Its programmes promote the values of justice, peace, intercultural understanding and reconciliation among today’s youth, who will shape the historical narratives of the future. Operating at both local and regional levels, the Centre implements its youth-oriented peace education initiatives. The educational programmes are based on the expansion of historical memory and dialogue to prevent, mitigate and transform conflicts and post-conflict environments that result from ethnic, religious and political identity.

The Catholic Relief Service<sup>63</sup> is implementing a peacebuilding education project as part of extracurricular activities, officially introduced in some schools in BiH, but not in Republika Srpska (whereas in Republika Srpska they are implemented through individual consultations).<sup>64</sup>

The YIHR organisation is actively involved in youth exchange programmes, which will be discussed in more detail below.<sup>65</sup>

## SERBIA AND KOSOVO

The issue of the Kosovo crisis of 1998-1999 and its consequences is extremely complex and multidimensional. We will focus exclusively on those decisions that are directly related to the restoration of peace in Kosovo, education issues and the development of inter-ethnic dialogue, i.e. those that are relevant to the topic of our study. Our study focuses on the challenges of building a multinational society in Kosovo in the context of the historical confrontation between Kosovo Serbs and Kosovo Albanians and the possibility of the coexistence of these ethnic groups in the territory in the face of a dramatic change in the quantitative composition of ethnic groups, considering the partial recognition of Kosovo’s independence. We have tried to study the best practices of the international community’s efforts to restore peaceful coexistence between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo. We will consider the issue of youth reintegration in Serbia and Kosovo (in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1244) from the perspective of our country’s non-recognition of Kosovo’s independence. We recall that Ukraine respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia, just as Serbia has consistently respected the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Our country (along with a number of EU countries, such as Romania, Spain and Greece) does not recognise the independence of this territory and considers it part of the Republic of Serbia.

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61 <https://warchildhood.org/>

62 <https://p-crc.org/our-work/>

63 <https://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/where-we-work/bosnia-and-herzegovina>

64 SCHOOL AT THE HEART OF COMMUNITY: Preventing Violence through Critical Thinking and Values-based Education, URL: <https://2017-2020.usaid.gov/bosnia/fact-sheets/fact-sheet-school-heart-community-preventing-violence-through-critical>

65 <https://yih.org/>

After many years of the Kosovo crisis, which resulted in an armed confrontation between Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs, defended by the Yugoslav People’s Army, unsuccessful negotiations in Rambouillet on the last day of NATO’s Operation Allied Force, which became the final phase of the war in Kosovo, the famous UN Security Council Resolution 1244 was adopted on 10 June 1999.

Yugoslav President S. Milošević accepted the conditions of Finnish President M. Ahtisaari and other negotiators, which provided for the withdrawal of the Yugoslav army from the territory of the autonomous province, demilitarisation of the Kosovo Liberation Army and establishment of international administration and civilian presence of the Interim Administrative Mission to the United Nations in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Since June 1999, more than 245,000 Serbs and representatives of other national minorities (including Roma) have left Kosovo. Of the 437 settlements inhabited by Serbs before 1999, excluding the municipalities of Leposavić, Zvečan and Zubin Potok, 312 settlements have been completely ethnically cleansed. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, only 18,060 Serbs had returned to their homes in Kosovo by March 2008. However, the number of actual repatriates is much lower, and about 5% of Kosovo Serbs live in the territory of modern Kosovo.<sup>66</sup>

In June 1999, the UN mission in Kosovo, UNMIK, began rebuilding Kosovo’s institutions in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1244, with a key goal in education to lay the foundations for a complete and integrated system. However, even twenty years later, this goal has not been achieved.

In 2001, the President of the Coordination Centre for Kosovo and Metohija, N. Covic, as Special Representative of the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Government of the Republic of Serbia and Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Kosovo, Hans Hækkerup, signed a joint document between UNMIK and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.<sup>67</sup> It guaranteed, among other things, that the Serbian community in Kosovo would have the opportunity to study in their native language, from primary school to university. Whereas the educational programmes would ensure that the educational structures of Kosovo Serbs were properly compatible with the educational system of the Republic of Serbia and the needs of the labour market.

Already in 2007, the former President of the Republic of Finland, Martti Ahtisaari, a well-known diplomat, UN Special Representative, Nobel Peace Prize winner (2008), presented the “Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement” (2007).<sup>68</sup> The Proposal was presented as a temporary measure to stabilise the situation in the war-torn Western Balkans, but its fate was different, as while official Belgrade did not accept it, it became the basis for Kosovo to unilaterally declare its independence from Serbia on 17 February 2008 and to adopt its Constitution.

This Proposal provided for broad rights for the Serbian national minority, protection of their human and community rights, decentralisation and protection and pres-

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66 Art. 3, STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE EXISTENCE AND RETURN TO KOSOVO AND METOHIA On the basis of Article 45, paragraph 1 of the Law on Government (“Official Gazette of RS”, no. 55/05, 71/05-correction, 101/07 and 65/08), URL: [https://kirs.gov.rs/media/uploads/Migracije/O-migracijama/Strategija\\_odrzivog\\_opstanka\\_i\\_povratka\\_na\\_KiM.pdf](https://kirs.gov.rs/media/uploads/Migracije/O-migracijama/Strategija_odrzivog_opstanka_i_povratka_na_KiM.pdf).

67 Zajednički dokument UNMIK-a i Savezne Republike Jugoslavije, URL: <https://www.srbija.gov.rs/kosovo-metohija/?id=19942>.

68 Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement, URL: <http://pbosnia.kentlaw.edu/Comprehensive%20Proposal%20for%20the%20Kosovo%20Settlement.pdf>

ervation of cultural and historical monuments and religious heritage. In particular, the rights of national minorities and communities are formulated in Articles 2 and 3 of the Proposal. According to them, Kosovo must guarantee the protection of the national or ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of all communities and their members. Kosovo shall also establish the constitutional, legal and institutional mechanisms necessary to promote and protect the rights of all community members, and the highest authorities in Kosovo shall be guided in their policies and practices by the need to promote a spirit of peace, tolerance, intercultural and interreligious dialogue among communities and their members. All citizens in Kosovo are entitled to the recognition and enjoyment of their fundamental rights and freedoms without discrimination of any kind on the grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a community, property, birth or other status. All citizens in Kosovo are equal before the law and are entitled, without any discrimination, to equal protection of the law.<sup>69</sup>

In 2010, the Government of Serbia adopted the Strategy for Sustainable Existence and Return to Kosovo and Metohija (2010-2015).<sup>70</sup> This document stipulated that schools under school administrations and pre-schools in Serbian enclaves operate according to the plan and programme of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia and in accordance with local self-government. In the municipalities of Leposavić, Zvečan, Zubin Potok, Kosovska Mitrovica, Obilić, Kosovska Kamenica, Lipjan and Gračanica, pre-schools operate in accordance with the plan and programme of the Republic of Serbia and local self-government.<sup>71</sup> In total, there are 102 primary and secondary schools in Kosovo, which operate exclusively according to the plan and programme of the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Republic of Serbia. This right for the Serbian community was provided for in the Ahtisaari Proposal. The Kosovo Law on Education<sup>72</sup> states that municipalities have the authority to create conditions for education in the Serbian language and that curricula and textbooks issued by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia can be used in the education process.

This principle remains relevant today. In Kosovo, Serbian children do not study together with Albanian children, but attend their own schools and are taught exclusively by the system of the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Republic of Serbia, i.e., are as much as possible, taking into account the real conditions, integrated into the Serbian education system. Therefore, in Kosovo, we are talking not only about segregation in education, but also about the existence of two parallel systems that do not intersect with each other in principle. All primary and secondary schools located either in enclaves inhabited by Kosovo Serbs or in municipalities where they are the majority, use the curriculum of the Ministry of Education and Sports of the Republic of Serbia. This ministry provides textbooks and certifies diplomas.

The OSCE has stated in its reports that in the post-conflict period, there has been no evidence of tolerance or attempts to find common ground between the Koso-

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69      *Ibid.*

70      STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE EXISTANCE AND RETURN TO KOSOVO AND METOHIA On the basis of Article 45, paragraph 1 of the Law on Government ("Official Gazette of RS", no. 55/05, 71/05-correction, 101/07 and 65/08), URL: [https://kirs.gov.rs/media/uploads/Migracije/O-migracijama/Strategija\\_odrzivog\\_opstanaka\\_i\\_povratka\\_na\\_KiM.pdf](https://kirs.gov.rs/media/uploads/Migracije/O-migracijama/Strategija_odrzivog_opstanaka_i_povratka_na_KiM.pdf)

71      Article 3, STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE EXISTANCE AND RETURN TO KOSOVO AND METOHIA On the basis of Article 45, paragraph 1 of the Law on Government ("Official Gazette of RS", no. 55/05, 71/05-correction, 101/07 and 65/08), URL: [https://kirs.gov.rs/media/uploads/Migracije/O-migracijama/Strategija\\_odrzivog\\_opstanaka\\_i\\_povratka\\_na\\_KiM.pdf](https://kirs.gov.rs/media/uploads/Migracije/O-migracijama/Strategija_odrzivog_opstanaka_i_povratka_na_KiM.pdf)

72      ZAKON O PREDUNIVERZITETSKOM OBRAZOVANJU U REPUBLICI KOSOVO, URL: <http://old.kuvendikoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/Zakon%20o%20preduniversityskom%20obrazovanju.pdf>

vo Albanian and Kosovo Serb communities when it comes to consolidating the education system. For example, when members of the Kosovo Serb community living in the municipality of Peć were asked if they thought it would be useful for their children to learn Albanian in the future, the answer was simple: “There is no need for this because our children live in Serbia”. Furthermore, when the Kosovo Ministry of Education tried to encourage Kosovo Serbs to apply for school principal positions advertised through Serbian media, few candidates applied, despite the high unemployment rate in the Kosovo Serb community.<sup>73</sup>

Using the examples of Serbia and Kosovo, we will also focus on higher education, as it shows a real picture of the level of segregation between Serbs and Albanians that has been going on for decades.

The ethnic division between Serbs and Albanians at the university began in the 1980s and ended in complete separation and a parallel system in the early 1990s. The roots of the present-day segregation of Serbs and Albanians at the level of higher education go back far in history. During Yugoslavia, when the socialist principles of “brotherhood and unity” and decentralisation prevailed, Albanians and Serbs had the same educational institutions, but there was inequality in many ways. Serbo-Croatian was the main language of instruction in higher education until at least 1968. The establishment of the University in Pristina, which was a long-standing Albanian desire, allowed for greater equality between Albanian language and culture with Serbian language, as classes were offered in both languages. But education was the area where President Milošević began his fight for Kosovo Serbs. The deprivation of Kosovo’s autonomy in the late 1980s destroyed all prospects for integration. In the process, 6,000 Albanian teachers and professors lost their jobs, mainly because they had to abandon the Albanian curriculum and sign an oath of allegiance to the Serbian authorities.

After the end of the war, the University of Pristina split into two ethnically segregated entities: The University of Pristina was temporarily relocated to the north of Kosovo, to the predominantly Serb part of the divided Mitrovica, and became the University of Pristina Kosovo Mitrovica, which continues educate students according to the Serbian programme, while the University of Pristina in the city of Pristina operates under Kosovo law.

In the early 2000s, there were some shifts towards reforms and integration of Kosovo’s universities with the support of the international community and the EU. The number of faculties was even reduced from fourteen to ten, and then to six. But the reforms stopped there. The reforms envisaged the introduction of modular study programmes based on the Bologna system with the transition to student credits. All of this was interrupted in April 2004, just before the University of Mitrovica was to be integrated into the legal framework of Kosovo. Since then, this university has suffered the consequences of international isolation for political reasons, and this is the reality it still has to face today.<sup>74</sup>

Given the specificity of the issue, we consider it appropriate to conduct a brief analysis of projects implemented by international governmental and non-governmental organisations focused on the integration of Kosovo’s national minorities.

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73 Parallel structures in Kosovo, 2003, URL: <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/4/1/42586.pdf>

74 Visoko obrazovanje etničkih zajednica na Kosovu Mađunarodna diskusija održana u Prištini 18. maja 2006. Godine 11

One of the active participants in the process of reconciliation between Serbs and Albanians is the Advocacy Center for Democratic Culture (ACDC),<sup>75</sup> a non-governmental organisation founded and registered in 2011 and headquartered in North Mitrovica. The organisation’s goal is to uphold human rights, the rule of law, democracy and an open, tolerant and peaceful society in Kosovo and the region.

Their project “Dealing with the past and reconciliation in Kosovo by raising awareness on the issues of the missing persons” was implemented in 2022 within the sub-granting program “Support to Local Civil Society Organizations – Transitional Justice and Confidence Building Initiatives in the Western Balkans – RECOM Reconciliation Network” supported by the European Union. The aim of the project was to promote reconciliation in Kosovo by raising awareness of missing persons among representatives of all ethnic communities. It was intended to study the views of citizens on the issue of missing persons and the development of reconciliation processes in the region. The project was aimed at preserving the culture of remembrance of missing persons and involving all communities, civil society representatives, and local government representatives in a joint process aimed at reconciliation in Kosovo. Throughout the project, work on reducing the politicisation of the issue of missing persons was carried out with five focus groups involving representatives of civil society, media, academia and two mixed groups.<sup>76</sup>

The project “Community Integration beyond Barriers in Mitrovica” was implemented by the NGO ACDC with the support of the US Embassy in Pristina in 2019. It was designed for secondary school schoolchildren aged 16-18 and young people from Kosovo of all ethnic backgrounds. The project addressed the lack of a common educational programme for Serbs and Albanians. Its aim was to overcome barriers between Kosovo Serbs and Albanians in Mitrovica by restoring relations between the divided parties into a peaceful, well-functioning and prosperous society through building youth capacities in advocacy and lobbying their personal interest during European Integration processes.

During the project, from 1 November 2019 to 30 April 2020, a series of multiethnic meetings, creative workshops and lectures were held with the participation of representatives of municipalities, athletes, businessmen and other successful individuals, whose participation was intended to motivate young project participants to ensure a better future and a life together in Kosovo through advocacy and participation in process of European Integration.

During the project, young people were trained in the skills of advocacy and lobbying of their interests in a multiethnic society; workshops were held to understand the contribution of young people to transforming conflicts into dialogue, and a joint youth camp was organised where project participants had the opportunity to meet in an informal atmosphere.<sup>77</sup>

The current project, which is being implemented in 2023, is “Promoting Interethnic Dialogue in Local Government”, which aims to support good interethnic relations in the local administration in northern Kosovo. ACDC monitored any responses from municipalities, other government institutions and individuals to project activities, including training, research findings and recommendations.<sup>78</sup>

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75 <https://acdc-kosovo.org/sr-latn>

76 Suočavanje sa prošlošću i pomirenje na Kosovu kroz podizanje svesti o pitanjima nestalih, 28.02.2022, URL: <http://surl.li/rbuaw>

77 Integracija zajednica bez granica u Mitrovici, 06.12.2019, URL: <http://surl.li/rbuaz>

78 Promovisanje međuetničkog dijaloga u lokalnoj samoupravi 2023, 03.02.2023, URL: <https://acdc-kosovo.org/sr-latn/projekti/promovisanje-meduetnickog-dijaloga-u-lokalnoj-samoupravi-2023>

An active participant in the development of reconciliation between different ethnic groups in Kosovo is the Youth Initiative for Human Rights – Kosovo (YIHR KS).<sup>79</sup> Founded in 2004, the organisation has been successfully working for almost 15 years to protect and promote human rights and democratic values not only in Kosovo but throughout the region. In particular, YIHR KS focuses on the process of dealing with the past, protecting human rights and the rule of law, and empowering young people at the local and regional levels. In 2023, the organisation announced its third three-month paid scholarship programme for five students from Kosovo, the Peace Development Fellowship Programme. The programme enables young people from all ethnic communities in Kosovo to work in various civil society organisations across Kosovo, with a focus on human rights, peacebuilding, reconciliation and dealing with the past.

This programme is designed to support the professional development of young people and provide them with opportunities for in-depth work in non-governmental organisations that mainly work with members of other ethnic communities in Kosovo to build bridges of communication and cooperation between them.

At the same time, the activities of the Youth Initiative for Human Rights – Serbia (YIHR SRB)<sup>80</sup> focus on societies and citizens, especially young people, who are least aware of the events and war crimes committed in the 1990s, where nationalist ideologies that led to the wars still prevail and where all sides consider their war criminals to be “heroes”. More than 15,000 secondary school schoolchildren, lawyers, artists, journalists, human rights activists, filmmakers and writers have participated in exchange programmes organised by the Youth Initiative for Human Rights since its inception in 2003.

YIHR SRB, as the leading voice of youth in the region, has so far organised four youth summits in Belgrade, Pristina, Sarajevo, Zagreb and Skopje. These summits have brought together thousands of regional and international young civil and political activists to share experiences and initiate the process of democratic reforms. The Youth Summits encouraged and led to the establishment of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), an intergovernmental office for Serbia, Kosovo, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Montenegro.

Therefore, it can be stated that a small number of NGOs led by conscious and progressive youth are active players in the field of reintegration in Kosovo.

## ■ CONCLUSIONS

Having analysed the experience of the countries of the former Yugoslavia, we can state that the international community, namely the UN and NATO, played an important role in the process of establishing peace in the territories affected by war, inter-ethnic conflicts, hatred and death, in the face of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons from all sides of the conflicts. Direct intervention in the post-war administration of independent states had both positive and negative consequences. Undoubtedly, we can note that each country at some stage regulated its legislative framework, harmonised it with the EU, adopted laws on national minorities, education and their rights, and ensured equal rights for representatives of ethnic groups, which became the starting point for peaceful coexistence of once warring ethnic groups.

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79 <https://www.yihr-ks.org/sr/istorijat/>

80 <https://www.yihr-ks.org/sr/istorijat/>

However, we can note that each of these countries, which are inherently multi-ethnic, chose the path of segregation. Adopted initially as a temporary measure, segregated schools still exist today, almost thirty years after the establishment of peace in the Balkans. Time has shown that segregation in education in a multi-ethnic society only helps to lay the foundations for future ethnic conflicts, and that mediation by the international community contributes to the loss of control over its own state. At the same time, it has been clearly demonstrated that education is one of the main areas for manipulation and speculation by politicians who, seeking power and control, use younger generations for their own purposes. A healthy and peaceful society is possible only if the economic well-being of each individual citizen is sustainably improved.

It is believed that it is only with the passage of time that one can clearly see and evaluate whether certain steps have been successful. In the former Yugoslavia, time demonstrates the impossibility of creating a new “melting pot”. The former socialist ideas of “brotherhood and unity”, which are now formulated as an integrated society capable of tolerating and accepting the “other”, obviously have no place in segregated schools.

We assess the experience of states in addressing the issue of reintegration of children in post-war Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia as generally unsuccessful. However, the example of Croatia’s reintegration is generally considered positive, and their model of education, despite its opponents in both ethnic groups, eventually proved to be effective. Despite accusations of discrimination, the “two schools under one roof” model in BiH, at a certain stage, solved the issue of security of education for Bosnian Croats and Muslims who were eventually able to return to their homes after years of wandering in refugee camps. Yes, this practice remains sustainable and acceptable in BiH, but on the other hand, it is controversial from the point of view of human rights and the prohibition of discrimination. The complex political and geographical division of Bosnia and Herzegovina still has a direct impact on the daily lives of its citizens and the education system as a whole. The realities of local communities, which are predominantly mono-ethnic, continue to have a negative impact on young people who have already seen death, experienced violence, refugeeism, fear and hatred. This is a generation that no longer knows that ethnic and religious differences may not be so important, and that there was a time when neighbours lived in peace and harmony. The example of Serbia and Kosovo demonstrates the fundamental segregation at all levels of life in these territories. Serbs consider these territories to be theirs, as do Albanians, so there is no end in sight to the dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina.

Undoubtedly, we positively evaluate the work of international governmental and non-governmental organisations that continue to make efforts in all the countries under study to overcome the split in the younger generation, and raise issues of peace, tolerance, human rights, historical truth, etc. through training and exchange projects. And although their activities do not have much impact on the overall picture on a global scale, the example of BiH demonstrates that an NGO initiative has the potential to be adopted at the state level, so we can talk about this experience as successful. We also positively assess the unimplemented project of the multi-ethnic Danube School in Croatia.

An issue that was not in the focus of our analysis and deserves a separate in-depth study is the work with post-war childhood mental trauma. Unfortunately, even a cursory analysis shows that this issue is still neglected in the countries we studied.

But behind any projects, schemes, and models are the fates of thousands of children and adolescents from different sides of the border. In a post-conflict society, the issue of education is equivalent to transitional justice – by learning about peace, tolerance, the importance of historical truth, and the need for intercultural dialogue, today’s youth build historical narratives for the future. Education and reconciliation are areas where no progress has been made in either country. It seems that generation after generation is doomed to be trapped in a system and narrative of division, mistrust and fear. Genuine reconciliation and reintegration of the state and its society is not only desirable but absolutely necessary, and any division and segregation of society is not the way to achieve a healthy development in any country.

# EXPERIENCE OF GERMANY



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## ■ HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### **Post-war divided Germany (FRG and GDR) since 1945 and united Germany (FRG) after 1989**

With the end of World War II came the surrender of the German army (Wehrmacht) and the collapse of the Third Reich, the German state with the totalitarian regime of A. Hitler and the National Socialist German Workers’ Party (NSDAP). Post-war Germany did not exist as a single state entity, and the control of the territory occupied and divided into zones between the members of the Anti-Hitler Coalition – the United Kingdom, the United States, France and the USSR – was exercised by the military leadership of these countries, special military administrations, and a joint body, the Allied Control Council. The three zones under the control of the US, UK, and France became the basis for the formation of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), and the zone under the control of the USSR – the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Berlin was also divided into four sectors. The 4D principles were proclaimed: demilitarisation, denazification, democratisation, and decartelisation.

In the western part of the German territory, there were no state bodies until 1949, and social and economic life was regulated by special legislation. In the territory controlled by the three Allied powers, the reconstruction and recovery were supported by their financial assistance and the Marshall Plan (initiated by the United States in 1947 for the comprehensive post-war reconstruction of Europe). The formation of the economy, industry, banking, and financial system was regulated by the Allied powers. Industry and its branches – mechanical engineering, chemical, coal, processing, etc. – were completely reassigned from military to civilian use.

In the state-political dimension, after the dismantling of the Third Reich and the complete ban on Nazi ideology, a multi-party system was gradually launched, with elections at the local level (Landtag) in 1946 and at the national federal level to the parliament (Bundestag) in 1949.

At the same time, in the post-war years after the ban on Nazi ideology, the transition to a multi-party system was not spontaneous and was strictly controlled. Thus, in the US zone, permissive licensing procedures were introduced for parties and associations to obtain the right to conduct activities.<sup>81</sup> Similarly, permits and licences were required for the print media. In this way, movements and parties that could potentially reproduce elements of Nazi ideology, as well as any revanchist sentiments with an appeal to previous periods of German history, were filtered out. The task of denazification of social and political life required control of content in the print media, radio, cinema, etc. The activities of parties and trade unions were gradually allowed. In addition, the activity of religious and confessional organisations was encouraged as they could contribute to social recovery after the inhumane Nazi regime.

The new Constitution and legislation set out the principles for the establishment of democratic institutions, a social state governed by the rule of law, and the federal structure of the FRG. The new model of government balanced power and provided for safeguards against its concentration. Legislative power is vested in the federal parliament, the Bundestag, whose members are directly elected by citizens through general elections. The Bundesrat, a state legislative body, is established to represent the Länder (federal states) at the federal level and is composed of members appointed at

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81 A. Kudriachenko, *The Federal Republic of Germany: the foundations of democratic ascent: a monograph*. Kyiv: Phoenix, 2020. 656 pp., P.512.

the level of the Länder governments. Executive power is exercised by the government (cabinet) and the Chancellor, who is elected by the Bundestag and has a broad range of powers. The Federal President has mainly representative functions and is elected by the Federal Assembly, a special constitutional body.

Governments were formed on a coalition basis, and the key parties were the Christian Democratic Union and Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU) and the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD). Federalism and the application of the principle of subsidiarity, i.e. the distribution of powers and responsibilities between the federal government and the Länder, formed the specifics of the FRG with a centralised state policy and, at the same time, its different implementation in each of the federal units.

Konrad Adenauer became the first Chancellor of post-war Germany, elected in 1949. The effective functioning of his government and especially the implementation of reforms by Minister of Economy Ludwig Erhard launched the German “economic miracle”. The development of industrial production, the free market, construction, the labour market, etc. led to rapid economic growth and the achievement of high social parameters in the post-war reality. It was important to abandon monopoly and centralisation in the economy, and to limit state regulation of pricing, which was preserved only in the areas of housing and food supply. A key role was played by the development of industries and a focus on technical modernisation, rapid establishment of foreign economic relations and production, the formation of large industrial concerns, etc. At the same time, the free market, liberalisation, and preferential taxation fostered the development of small and medium-sized enterprises.

In 1955, Germany joined NATO and became a member of economic international organisations, primarily the European Coal and Steel Community, which became the basis for the formation of the European Union. In a short period of time, Germany demonstrated a high rate of financial, industrial and social development and eventually quickly gained a significant foreign economic position in Europe.

In 1949, the GDR was established on the territory controlled by the USSR, which had a different structure of financial and economic assistance and algorithm of changes, as a centrally planned economy close to the Soviet version was built, industry and infrastructure were immediately nationalised, cooperatives were forced to be established, etc.

The state-political system was replaced by another authoritarian version, and the GDR’s foreign policy activities were controlled and restricted by the USSR. With the spread of communist and anti-fascist (anti-Nazi) ideology, the government system underwent a massive personnel replacement with activists of communist and anti-fascist parties and movements. The ideological field was quickly cleared and the dominance of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), formed by parts of the Communist and Social Democratic parties, was established. Consequently, all power was concentrated in the SED and its leaders, who had been in the highest state positions for many years. For a short period until 1950, the GDR had a president, Friedrich Wilhelm Pieck. Between 1950 and 1970, Walter Ulbricht was the sole leader of the GDR and the SED, and from 1971 until the fall of the regime in 1989, Erich Honecker was this leader.

It should be noted that the uprising of Germans in the eastern territories against the dictates of the USSR and the presence of its military contingent in 1953 was brutally suppressed. In general, as a result of a series of reforms in the 1960s, the economic and social situation had some liberal features compared to the USSR, but contrasted with FRG. That is why Germans fled massively from East Germany to West Germany even after the border between them was closed in 1961. Since 1972, under E. Hone-

cker, the regime was cemented by the authoritarian power of the party and nomenklatura, with the Ministry of State Security (Stasi) playing a key role and a repressive and punitive system. The economic system retained its centralised character and full control over pricing, industry, labour and social relations, which led to stagnation and deepening problems in all spheres and a deep crisis in the 1980s.

Significant differences between the FRG and the GDR also demonstrated opposite social models, with different levels of civil liberties and civil rights. Social processes and, in particular, social and youth policy in the FRG were aimed at mental recovery and withdrawal of children and youth from the effects of ideology, overcoming the burden of wartime. While in the GDR, youth and children were again subject to the influence of ideological narratives and were forcibly involved in state-imposed organisations and practices. The lives of children and youth under the authoritarian regime were limited and utilitarian.

In the post-war period, the USSR quickly moved to a position of fierce confrontation with the United States and Western Europe. The Cold War was unfolding and, accordingly, the border of the Iron Curtain began to pass through German lands, dividing the FRG and the GDR and Berlin into two parts. As a counterbalance to NATO, the Warsaw Pact Organisation (WPO) was formed, consisting of the USSR, the GDR and other Central and Eastern European countries.

The strict border regime established between the GDR and the FRG, bans on crossing and harsh measures against violators led to casualties among the Germans of East Germany.

Therefore, the issue of German reunification was not raised for a long time. The FRG was wary of and avoided reunification with the GDR in the context of risks from the USSR. There was no unified approach and no unambiguous attitude to relations with the GDR and the prospects for reunification at different times among the leaders of the FRG and the leading parties that formed the governments.

Thus, the peculiarities of the processes that took place in both parts of West and East Germany in the postwar period acquired opposite vectors of development. The long period of severance of relations between the two parts of Germany and the division of the nation eventually ended in the actual loss of the historical version of East Germany compared to West Germany.

Thus, it was only in 1972 that the Treaty on the Fundamentals of Relations between the FRG and the GDR was signed,<sup>82</sup> which laid the foundation for diplomatic relations and cooperation between the two German countries. This document mutually recognised the inviolability of borders and territorial integrity, commitment to peaceful means of resolving disputes, independence of representation at the international level, promotion of disarmament in Europe, limitation of nuclear weapons, etc.

Moreover, the goal of German reunification was not the dominant one for both elites and Germans in the FRG and the GDR. The largely spontaneous nature of the mass protests in the GDR, which by the end of the 1980s, even in the wake of perestroika and a slight weakening of regimes in other countries of the socialist camp, remained a closed authoritarian system, accelerated the end of the regime and ultimately contributed to German reunification. The driving force was the society of East Germany itself, where deep discontent grew into resistance to the GDR re-

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82 Treaty on the Basis of Relations between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic (21 December 1972) URL: [https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/1999/1/1/3b9b-9f0d-6910-4ca9-8b12-accfcb91d28e/publishable\\_en.pdf](https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/1999/1/1/3b9b-9f0d-6910-4ca9-8b12-accfcb91d28e/publishable_en.pdf).

gime, its leadership, the SED, and especially the punitive state security agency (Stasi). The reunification of Germany in 1989 was the result of peaceful bilateral agreements reached by the leaderships of the FRG and the GDR. The international legal basis was a multilateral agreement between the FRG, the United Kingdom, France, the GDR and the USSR – the Treaty on the Final Settlement with respect to Germany.<sup>83</sup> The reunification was enshrined in the Unification Treaty between the FRG and the GDR,<sup>84</sup> which was preceded by the adoption of a set of agreements on economic, monetary, social unions, etc.

After reunification, the FRG extended the Constitution and legislation to the territory of the GDR, carried out political and legal transformations, introduced a multi-party system, and implemented judicial, monetary, tax, pension, educational, and other reforms. Relying on its administrative, financial, economic, industrial, and technological resources, West Germany achieved visible results after dismantling ineffective elements of the economic, legal, and social models in East Germany, which was stagnating.

In this sense, there is a certain similarity in that the post-war FRG developed rapidly and became a mature democratic country under the strong influence and direct intervention of the Allied powers, which shaped the strategy of state and society development, and the FRG, in turn, after reunification, determined all state policy in the GDR, the directions of change, and was able to implement it in a short time.

## ■ CHALLENGES/SPECIFICS OF THE POST-WAR REALITY AND DIVIDED GERMANY

Post-war Germany, after its defeat in World War II, left a horrific legacy – the extermination of millions of people in concentration camps, millions of casualties as a result of warfare, and enormous destruction across Europe.

Prior to that, in Germany itself, the Nazi regime neutralised the political and civil opposition, the resistance movement, and carried out repressions against Germans. The curtailment of civil liberties in 1933 was marked by the Enabling Act, which led to the rapid establishment of the Nazi dictatorship. The expulsion of all other parties (communist, social democratic, etc.) from political and public life led to the gradual entry and forced involvement of a considerable part of the adult population (about 8 million) in to the NSDAP and other organisations under its control.

One of the crimes of the Nazi regime against German society was the forced participation of children and youth in specially created organisations and mass indoctrination of young people through propaganda and military practices. The coverage of the age group of children and youth gradually became absolute and was divided into boys aged 10-14 and 14-18 (Hitler Youth) and girls aged 10-14 and 14-18 (League of German Girls). The activities of young people were strictly regulated and fully subordinated to the tasks of militarisation and Nazi propaganda of the entire German society. Young people trained in the Hitler Youth were actively used during the war, especially at the end of the war in 1945, conscripted for “youth service”, but in fact for the Wehrmacht.

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83 The Treaty on the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany. 1990. September 12. URL: <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%201696/volume-1696-I-29226-English.pdf>.

84 The Unification Treaty between the FRG and the GDR (31 August 1990) URL: [https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/1997/10/13/2c391661-db4e-42e5-84f7-bd86108c0b9c/publishable\\_en.pdf](https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/1997/10/13/2c391661-db4e-42e5-84f7-bd86108c0b9c/publishable_en.pdf).

Since the Hitler Youth was founded in the 1920s (back in Weimar Germany) as a wing of the NSDAP, during the 1930s it gradually extended its power to all young people. All other youth movements were suppressed, and there were widespread violent acts against those who did not share their ideology and had anti-war sentiments. The activities of the Hitler Youth extended to youth policy, sports, culture, and leisure for young people. Educational policy was fully determined at the governmental level in accordance with the tasks of propaganda and militarisation.

Thus, such massive and deep indoctrination of young people in Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945 determined their worldview. Due to active socialisation and strict orders, it was impossible for children and young people to resist the system, and an additional burden was the fact that their family and friends were supporters or accomplices of the regime and its crimes. Among the adult population, loyalty to the Nazi regime was widespread until its defeat, and Nazi indoctrination was deeply rooted.<sup>85</sup> In addition, the desire to survive and conformity were widespread in German society under conditions of repression and coercion.

Therefore, after the defeat in the war and the collapse of the Nazi regime, when denazification and demilitarisation defined as mandatory by the Allied powers, the awareness of the need to reveal the truth, establish justice, and process the past could not mature within German society and instead provoked resistance. At the same time, Germans took the financial assistance provided by the Allied powers, as well as support for economic and social reforms, for granted.

In German society in the post-war realities, the frustration and moral burden of military defeat was felt more strongly than the feeling of guilt for the catastrophe caused to other nations and states.

Such a problem in the collective consciousness as “psychological silence”, a massive and widespread reaction inherent in the entire German society and youth, was observed during the 1950s and 1960s, despite the policy of denazification, demilitarisation, and democratisation. In addition, both some young people and adult Germans remained loyal to the ideas of Nazism and rejected the new reality, did not accept the control of the United States and other countries and had openly hostile anti-American views.<sup>86</sup>

Both parts of Germany shared common problems: the territory destroyed after the war, the complete collapse of the state, political and economic systems. Germany suffered demographic losses in the war it unleashed: about 7.7 million<sup>87</sup> German military and civilian casualties and a large number of wounded (the pre-war population was about 69 million<sup>88</sup>). The United States, Great Britain, France, and especially the Soviet Union interned hundreds of thousands of German prisoners of war in forced labour camps.

At the end of the war and after the defeat of the Third Reich and the loss of part of the historical German territories, a significant number of ethnic Germans, as a

85 A. Kudriachenko, *The Federal Republic of Germany: the foundations of democratic ascent: a monograph*. Kyiv: Phoenix, 2020. 656 pp., P. 515.

86 Fox E. *Rebuilding Germany’s Children: The Nazi Indoctrination and Postwar Reeducation of the Hitler*. *Furman Humanities Review*. Volume 27. 2017. URL: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/214289185.pdf>

87 Estimated number of military and civilian fatalities due to the Second World War per country or region between 1939 and 1945. Statista. URL: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1293510/second-world-war-fatalities-per-country/>

88 Germany: historical demographic data of the whole country. URL: [https://web.archive.org/web/20150222153839fw\\_/http://www.populstat.info/Europe/germanyc.htm](https://web.archive.org/web/20150222153839fw_/http://www.populstat.info/Europe/germanyc.htm)

result of the war and the system of international post-war treaties, were relocated or deported from a number of countries where they lived – from Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, the Baltic states, and the USSR. Out of a total of 12 million, the distribution of resettled Germans was as follows: 8 million in West Germany, 4 million in East Germany.<sup>89</sup>

This changed the socio-demographic structure of German society, which was divided into two parts. The general context for both German territories was defined by territorial losses, destruction, poverty, mass unemployment, high inflation, shortages of most goods, etc. The volume of destroyed housing and infrastructure was large, and industrial production was only a third of the wartime levels. There was a disparity in living standards between different regions, depending on the consequences of the war, and between cities and villages, where the situation with supplies was better.

The massive resettlement of Germans from other territories as a result of the war and the division of Germany created an additional factor of tension in society and practical problems with the resettlement and employment of a large number of people. Although the process of re-emigration of Germans from other territories representing different social and professional groups (industrialists, intellectuals, workers, etc.) partially solved the shortage of personnel in the postwar period.

Children and young people, some of whom became orphaned, suffered the war, resettlement and deportation, prolonged militaristic and ideological indoctrination, witnessed mass crimes, and thus gained traumatic experience.

Thus, German society after the Nazi regime was distorted by the totalitarian legacy, the war, and participation in the mass murder of representatives of other nations. Therefore, one of the cornerstones of the Allied powers' post-war policies towards Germans to break with the Nazi past was a course of complete denazification and demilitarisation. In post-war West Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom, and France established a clear list of implementation requirements aimed at creating new political, legal, judicial, economic, and educational systems. These countries also made it mandatory to punish those responsible for the most brutal crimes of the Nazi regime and to pay reparations to states and victims.

Strict denazification measures were carried out in the first postwar years. The practice of forced visits by the Germans to the burial sites of those killed in concentration camps and presence at the exhumation of bodies, mandatory viewing of documentary chronicles of the crimes of the Nazi regime were a condition for obtaining ration cards, further employment, registration of residence, etc.

In addition, compulsory questionnaires were introduced for the adult German population, covering about 25 million people, to establish the degree of involvement in crimes and subsequent payment of fines by most of them. However, only 1% of the respondents were prosecuted and sentenced to prison on the basis of these questionnaires, which required significant organisational resources to process and verify.<sup>90</sup>

The set of measures in the US-controlled part was the most severe and consistent, with widespread arrests of NSDAP members and bans on employment for this

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89 Z. Walter, Refugees and Expellees. URL: [https://www.historisches-lexikon-bayerns.de/Lexikon/EN:Refugees\\_and\\_Expellees](https://www.historisches-lexikon-bayerns.de/Lexikon/EN:Refugees_and_Expellees)

90 T. Kupriy, Successes and Problems of "Re-education": on the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Completion of German Denazification, URL: [https://elibrary.kubg.edu.ua/id/eprint/24337/1/T\\_Kupriy\\_Skhid\\_\(156\)%20\\_4\\_2018\\_IFF.pdf](https://elibrary.kubg.edu.ua/id/eprint/24337/1/T_Kupriy_Skhid_(156)%20_4_2018_IFF.pdf)

category of people. In parts of the UK and France, similar methods were also used, but were less severe or incomplete. Since 1949, the intensity of these measures has decreased.

In Soviet-controlled East Germany, the policy of denazification and demilitarisation was also carried out, but with a slightly different content. Active measures lasted until 1947, and a significant number of former members of the NSDAP, the SS military police, and its Gestapo secret police unit were imprisoned or interned in camps. At the same time, in the GDR, the issue of guilt and responsibility for the genocide of Jews and mass murder of representatives of other nations and social groups was transferred to the plane of inter-class struggle, the class of industrialists, monopolists, owners against workers and peasants. Such manipulative justifications served the task of building a communist model in the eastern territories modelled on the USSR.

The social atmosphere in both parts of Germany was saturated with the mood of defeat in the war, the painful perception of the collapse and destruction caused by the Allied bombing at the end of the war, and, most importantly, the obviating of the necessity to comprehend the scale of the horrors caused to millions of people and many countries.

In FRG, this trend continued in the postwar years and even in the first decade. At the same time, democratic and anti-fascist sentiments and movements grew stronger. It was only in the 1970s, with the change of generations, that memory policy measures began to be fully implemented, and organisations, events, and discussions were held at the public and academic levels to comprehensively cover the period of the Nazi regime and assess its consequences. The issue of guilt and responsibility became a cross-cutting one, and a discourse was formed about the degree of collective guilt and collective responsibility of Germans. Disputes between various scholars, journalists, and cultural figures gradually became heated, as some of them preferred to remain silent. The other part, on the contrary, revealed the scale of the crimes and pointed to those public and influential persons who were involved in the crimes but managed to avoid responsibility and eventually regained influential positions in the state-administrative, financial, economic, and academic hierarchies.

A major concern was that a significant number of Germans worked in the structures created by the Nazi regime and participated in its crimes. The lack of human and organisational resources and the inefficiency of the judicial system made it impossible to bring to justice a huge number of crimes. Therefore, the restoration of justice through punishment of the perpetrators was unsystematic, and direct participants in the most serious and massive crimes avoided responsibility through amnesties, as well as various legal and procedural gaps. In addition, internal sabotage and resistance within the system of government, and especially in the judiciary, by personnel who were members of the NSDAP or sympathisers of the Nazi regime, was an obstacle. As a result, such persons worked in the post-war government system in large numbers in Germany, as well as in the GDR, where former Nazis staffed the Stasi and other repressive bodies.

New models of the political system in both parts of Germany were formed, among other things, in the inertia of the inherent traditions, namely, overregulation, formalism, and bureaucracy, which in a modified form filled the new ethics. The flip side of conflict avoidance was the widespread practice of denunciation.

In the FRG, with the ban of the Nazi ideology and party, the party system gradually recovered, and the system of state bodies was formed in a democratic way

through elections. However, former members of the remnants of the NSDAP parties created parties in the 1960s, modifying them to meet the requirements of the times and legislation. For example, the right-wing ultra-conservative German Imperial Party and its successor, the right-wing radical National Democratic Party of Germany, even had minor success in local elections. Moreover, these parties included former functionaries of the NSDAP and punitive bodies (e.g. O. Hess, W. Meinberg).

After the reunification of Germany, on the one hand, there were rapid democratic transformations and a break with the communist regime, and on the other hand, there were inertial processes. The period of isolation of parts of Germany and antagonistic relations between them were evident, which was clearly manifested in the mental division into “Wessi” and “Ossi”, i.e. West and East Germans. It is also important to note that, as in the post-war period, during the 1990s and 2000s, despite the fully implemented policy of memory, there was a tendency in public sentiment and public discourse to focus not on the scale of the Nazi regime’s crimes, but on the fact that Germany and Germans suffered from the war, suffered human losses and the destruction of the country and its partition.

The consequences of the long totalitarian and authoritarian past are still felt even after more than 30 years of democratic experience of the united Germany. In Germany, any manifestations of public support for the Nazi ideology and the dissemination of Nazi and xenophobic ideas are prohibited by law. However, in the political and ideological discourse and activities of a number of organisations and parties that emerged from the wreckage of non-democratic parties, imbued with left-wing or right-wing radical ideology, antagonism to Germany’s democratic and Euro-Atlantic path is evident.

The biggest problems of disproportions between the western and eastern parts of Germany are still the difference in the development of the territories in economic and industrial dimensions, the difference in the level of salaries, pensions, and the level of representation of western and eastern Germans in senior and administrative positions. In the public mood of East Germans, who are more vulnerable to frustrations, phobias and other problematic phenomena of the collective consciousness, the following sentiments are observed: anti-Americanism, anti-Euro-Atlanticism, nostalgia for the times of the GDR and the USSR and, as a result, pro-Russian sympathies.<sup>91</sup>

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91 C. Stelmakh, *Skeletons in the German Closet: Fear, Eastern Nostalgia and Anti-Americanism*. IQ. 22 May 2023. URL: <https://iq.net.ua/skielieti-v-nimietskii-shafi-strakh-skhidna-nostalghia-i-antiamerikanizm/>



## ■ SUCCESSFUL MEASURES AND PRACTICES IN THE EXPERIENCE OF POST-WAR DIVIDED GERMANY AND UNITED GERMANY SINCE 1990

### Changes in public administration and the establishment of justice

First, the NSDAP and its branches were dissolved, all its property was confiscated, and all Wehrmacht, SS, police, etc. were liquidated. The break with the historical past of Nazi Germany meant the complete dismantling of the political system, the state-administrative hierarchy, and the rejection of political and legal “culture”. The historical context left no room for continuity and set the logic for building a new system on other ideas, values, principles, ethics, etc.

Differences in approaches and methods to restructuring the public administration system were immediately apparent between East and West Germany. The implementation of the policy had its own peculiarities in the zones of control of the United States, Great Britain, and France in West Germany, according to their democratic foundations. The USSR immediately chose the strategy of further subjugating East Germany and imposing the communist model.

In West Germany, amidst the ban on Nazi and fascist ideologies and movements, a transition to multi-party democracy and pluralism was taking place, creating a completely new political landscape. New constitutional and legislative changes, a renewed form of government, a multi-party system, and institutional reforms all combined to create a different context for public administration. The division of powers, tasks, and responsibilities between the federal government and the authorities in the federal units (Länder) was being developed. Thus, a centralised strategy was laid down at the federal level, but the implementation of economic, social, educational, and cultural policy tasks was carried out at the level of federal units.

With the outbreak of the Cold War and the subsequent split between the FRG and the GDR, the FRG began to fill the political system on its own, as it did not have the full influence of the winning countries. The official position of the FRG was only being formed and consisted of condemning the Nazi regime and placing blame and responsibility on the top, the NSDAP and its military-police organisation, the SS, rather than on all Germans.

Since one of the tasks of denazification was to prevent those who directly created the Nazi regime and committed its crimes from holding leadership and other important positions, the total number of cases was significant. There were about 8 million members of the NSDAP, and up to 500,000 members of the SS. The problem was that there was no way to process the huge number of court cases, which reached millions, so the trials took a long time and were constantly postponed. Another problem was that in 1948-1949, the forced denazification policy was actually coming to an end.

In addition, in 1949, a law was passed on amnesty, in particular for young people and those who were not on the list of war criminals and were not active participants in the regime. At the same time, the wave of amnesties made it possible for a significant number of former Nazi sympathisers and members of the Nazi Party and accomplices to return to the structures of state administration, the financial and economic sphere, and educational and scientific institutions.

The key problem was the lack of sufficient number of Germans who had not been part of the Nazi regime’s structures to work in the federal and Länder governments, police, courts, etc., as all opposition centres had been destroyed. The post-war waves of mass dismissals throughout the hierarchy of state authorities and at the level of Länder resulted in a shortage of personnel that could not be filled in a short time. Similarly, in industry and enterprises, while former active members of the NSDAP and the regime were not allowed to take up senior positions in the postwar years, over time, there were more and more of them in this sector.

Therefore, this was replaced by the reverse trend of returning personnel who had worked under the Third Reich regime, were members of the NSDAP, and were able to return to work in the postwar period in the face of chaotic prosecutions, amnesty, and the curtailment of the denazification policy.

However, in the FRG, the fact that they did not influence the formation of state policy was decisive. The biggest changes in the system of public administration and reforms in post-war Germany were introduced by people who were not associated with the Nazi environment, who were repressed or in exile, and therefore they are considered to be the creators of the democratic FRG. First of all, these are Konrad Adenauer – the first post-war Federal Chancellor, leader of the CDU (under the Nazi regime, he was dismissed from his public office, went into hiding, and was arrested), Ludwig Erhard – Federal Chancellor, Minister of Economy, leader of the CDU (econo-

mist and scientist, who did not work for some time because of his disagreement with the Nazi regime), Willy Brandt – Federal Chancellor, Minister of the FRG, leader of the SPD (was repressed under the Nazi regime and was in exile), Kurt Schumacher – one of the leaders of the SPD (was in opposition to the Nazi regime and spent many years in concentration camps).

At the same time, the first post-war federal government and subsequent governments and Länder repeatedly appointed people with troubled reputations and links to the Nazi past, which caused public conflicts.

In the Soviet-controlled eastern zone of Germany, after short judicial procedures, about 150,000 people were sent to special camps, and some former Nazis, especially from the SS and assault brigades, were later sent to forced labour in the USSR.

Since 1949, in the territory of the newly created GDR, the formation of government bodies, judicial bodies, and educational institutions, after the mass dismissal of former members of the Nazi Party, also lacked new personnel with the appropriate qualifications.

In fact, the GDR replaced a totalitarian regime with another authoritarian one, unlike FRG, where a democratic system was gradually established after the collapse of the totalitarian regime. Since East Germany remained under the control of the USSR at the end of the war and in the postwar reality, the possibility of the influence of collective international mechanisms to fulfil the requirements of denazification, demilitarisation, and reparations payments in these territories was fundamentally different. The trials and sentences handed down to the perpetrators acquired a different meaning, as ideological, class, and geopolitical expediency prevailed, rather than legal humanitarian motives.

Justice and accountability for the organisers and perpetrators of mass crimes were established primarily through criminal justice at the international level, and then at the national level.

In 1946, the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg was held. This special judicial body, organised by a number of countries to punish the top of the Nazi regime for war crimes, crimes against humanity, crimes against peace, military aggression, etc., relied on a comprehensive collection of materials, documents and consideration of testimonies of victims and witnesses of mass crimes (mass murder, torture, medical experiments in concentration camps, deportations, etc.) The categories of crimes such as “crimes against humanity” and “crimes against peace” were introduced into international legal practice for the first time. Civilians of various ethnic origins (Jews, Slavs, Roma, etc.) and age groups (children, youth, women, and the elderly) made up the majority of the dead and victims of these most brutal crimes. Estimates of the total number of war victims in Europe and beyond vary from 53 million (38 million civilians, 15 million military)<sup>92</sup> to 70 million<sup>93</sup> or more.

As a result, on the basis of court decisions on the established responsibility of the political and military leadership of the Nazi regime, a number of representatives of

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92 World War II. Defense casual analysis system (DCAS). URL: <https://dcas.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/app/conflict-Casualties/ww2>

93 Estimated number of military and civilian fatalities due to the Second World War per country or region between 1939 and 1945. Statista. URL: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1293510/second-world-war-fatalities-per-country/>

the Third Reich regime, the top leadership of the NSDAP, the SS, the Gestapo and the Wehrmacht were either executed or sentenced to prison terms.

A. Hitler (Führer, Reich Chancellor), J. Goebbels (Reich Minister of Public Education and Propaganda, the main creator of the NSDAP and Third Reich propaganda, Chancellor of the Third Reich), and H. Himmler (one of the leaders of the NSDAP and the SS, organiser of the Holocaust) committed suicide.

In addition to the Nazi political and military elite, the trials concerned officials, doctors, lawyers, and industrialists who directly worked for the concentration camp supply system and used forced labour.

However, the number of those brought to justice was extremely low compared to the actual number of people involved in this inhumane system of destroying millions of lives. It should be considered that some of the perpetrators escaped legal responsibility and punishment by hiding outside German territories.

High-profile trials were also held in German courts against those who organised the most horrible crimes and were leaders of concentration camps (the Frankfurt Trials of 1963-1965 against dozens of Nazis who committed mass murder in the Auschwitz concentration camp). This trial exposed the scale of the crimes, drew the attention of German society and sparked debate, as some of the perpetrators were sentenced to life imprisonment, while others received short sentences.

Outside of Germany, the trial of Adolf Eichmann, a Gestapo and SS officer responsible for the genocide of Jews and other crimes, who was transported from Argentina to Israel by Israeli intelligence services in 1961 and executed by court order, was a high-profile case.

At the same time, the tendency of selective justice has from time to time alarmed the active public and the community. An example is the short imprisonment and avoidance of responsibility for her activities of the film director L. Riefenstahl, who cooperated with A. Hitler, J. Goebbels and played a significant role in the propaganda exalting of the NSDAP and the Third Reich through the artistic means of cinema (*Triumph of the Will*, *Olympia*), especially during the 1930s, the time of the rise of the Nazi regime.

Responsibility for the crime of forced participation of children and young people in specially created organisations during the rise of the Nazi Party and the Third Reich was also uneven. For example, Artur Axmann, one of the leaders of the NSDAP and the Hitler Youth during the war years, was sentenced to a short prison term in 1949 by an American court and was later able to work in the financial sector. Baldur von Schirach, one of the leaders of the NSDAP and the Hitler Youth, who was responsible for maximising the recruitment and training of young people into the army, was convicted after the war and served a long prison sentence.

In the FRG, in the zones controlled by the United States, Great Britain, and France, the denazification measures, the functioning of special commissions, and the procedures for checking for complicity with the Nazi regime differed. The most stringent and thorough measures were taken under the leadership of the United States.

Thus, in the American zone, special commissions were set up to identify war criminals and compile lists of those involved in the actions of the Nazi regime (such lists included up to 1 million people). Tribunals were also established to determine the degree of guilt in these crimes. The total number of cases of involvement in various

crimes of the Nazi regime in the national courts in the western territories of Germany controlled by the United States, Great Britain and France amounted to 3.6 million by 1949, although only a small part of them ended in trials. The judiciary was unable to process a large number of cases, so prosecuting and punishing were unsystematic and chaotic.

The circle of accused with the remarkable title “automatic arrest” included heads of SS, Gestapo, assault units, heads of units of the Nazi youth organisation Hitler Youth, guards of concentration camps, etc. Their total number was about 90,000 in the British occupation zone, about 100,000 in the American zone, and about 120,000 in the Soviet zone.<sup>94</sup>

In addition to the international jurisdiction to bring perpetrators to justice for mass crimes, trials were also held at the national level, i.e. in the judicial system of post-war Germany. At the state level, the Central State Justice Office was established in FRG to investigate the crimes of the National Socialist Party.

In united Germany, after 1990, with the accession of the GDR, there was also the problem of a complete restructuring of the public administration system, the application of lustration measures against the leadership and assets of the SED, the Stasi, etc. The issue of bringing to justice a significant number of people who were participants and accomplices in the crimes committed under the brutal SED regime in East Germany was also acute.

The biggest problem was that even with the complete dismantling of the GDR regime, the leadership of the SED, the Stasi and others actually managed to avoid responsibility for actions that were clearly criminal, and there were few trials and sentences.

However, abuse of gaps in legislation and inconsistent application of laws were common. Another manifestation was the use of the fact that limitation periods under statutes of limitation were expiring, as well as the use of numerous appeals. This resulted in a significant disproportion between the number of open proceedings and cases and the low number of actual sentences, as suspended sentences prevailed. The following were actively used in court proceedings: blurring the classification of crimes, the impossibility of identifying the perpetrators and those responsible for decisions that resulted in criminal acts.<sup>95</sup>

In the trials and in the general socio-political discourse, the approach dominated that crimes committed in the GDR under the SED regime, in conditions of pressure and coercion on German citizens, could be considered unintentional. As this applied to Germans who worked in the government, military, and border services, with a rigid hierarchical structure, responsibilities for the execution of criminal orders were blurred. An additional problem of proving guilt in court was the destruction of archival, operational, and other necessary documents.

The opening of the archives and the preserved data partly contributed to the disclosure of the truth and also helped to implement lustration policy measures.<sup>96</sup>

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94 T. Kupriy, Successes and Problems of "Re-education": on the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Completion of Denazification of Germany, URL: <http://surl.li/nsgsy>

95 S. Romaike, Transitional Justice in Germany after 1945 and 1990 / International Academy of the Nuremberg Principles. Special report. Issue 2. 2016, URL: <https://www.nurembergacademy.org/publications/>

96 Documents of the Communist secret services in Europe: a guide to the network of archives / edited by R. Leskevych, P. Zhachek; O. Isayuk (Ukrainian ed.) ; Centre for Research on the Liberation Movement. Lviv: Chasopys, 2016. P. 16, 50.

Lustration measures, restriction of access to positions for persons who worked or cooperated with the GDR internal security agencies, in the system of state authorities, procedures of special checks on persons applying for senior and middle management positions were partially successful. For example, the practice of mass checks based on a group of criteria, termination of employment contracts and exclusion from a certain group of positions based on the results of such checks was effective. An additional method was the non-recruitment of former regime officials on the grounds of insufficient qualifications, professional incompetence and other grounds for the proper performance of functions in accordance with the new requirements.

The Allied powers considered the payment of reparations and compensation for damage to the victims of the war and the totalitarian regime to be the responsibility of post-war Germany. In the FRG and the GDR, the payment of reparations, restitution of property, and payments to states differed significantly.

The proclamation of demilitarisation meant the dismantling of the military-oriented economy, and reparations to states were compensated by seizing technical equipment, transport, etc. from Germany and exporting them to the allied countries of the United States, Great Britain, and France. It is noteworthy that the actual responsibility at the state level for crimes and reparations was mostly borne by the FRG. Under foreign policy pressure from a number of countries, but with the political will and decision of K. Adenauer, who signed an agreement with Israel in 1952 to pay reparations. It was a huge amount of money – about \$1.5 billion, which was a specific part of the financial resources the FRG received under the Marshall Plan. The GDR and the USSR ignored Israel’s initiatives to reach a similar agreement.

The GDR and the USSR actively and manipulatively used the narrative of “anti-fascism” in relation to East Germany as opposed to West Germany. Mass murders (genocide of Jews and other killings, forced labour, etc. based on nationality in the concentration camp system), which also took place in the eastern German Länder, were to some extent silenced, and there was no talk of rehabilitation measures, reparations payments and compensation to citizens of other countries.

Therefore, in the GDR, compensation and reparations for the crimes of the Nazi regime became compensation to the USSR and Poland. The USSR, having subjugated the GDR and collected significant reparations payments and large amounts of material resources (plant equipment and various technical equipment, merchant ships, transport, museum valuables, etc.) for the needs of the state, did not demand payments to citizens who suffered the most from war and other crimes against humanity. Separate individual payments in the GDR were intended only for citizens residing on its territory.<sup>97</sup>

Since its reunification with the GDR in 1989, the FRG has actually taken over the obligations of reparations and compensation, including the property of victims confiscated during the Nazi regime. In addition, it initiated the process of individual payments to victims of the regime outside the former GDR, which had been categorically rejected throughout the post-war period.

In united Germany, the policy of reparations concerned both compensation for victims of the Nazi regime and compensation in the form of material payments and pensions to those who suffered most from the GDR regime. The restitution mechanism provided for compensation payments to those citizens who were illegally deprived of their property in the GDR. Solving of property issues after the restoration of

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97 S. Romaike, *Transitional Justice in Germany after 1945 and 1990* / International Academy of the Nuremberg Principles. Special report. Issue 2. 2016, URL: <https://www.nurembergacademy.org/publications/>

private property in eastern Länder required financial resources, so the mechanism of paying material compensation through a special compensation fund was chosen.<sup>98</sup>

After the collapse of the USSR and the dismantling of the socialist camp and Warsaw Treaty Organization, reparations payments were resumed. Thus, in the 1990s, such payments were extended to citizens of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and later Ukraine and Belarus who suffered from the Nazi regime (as prisoners of concentration camps, victims of forced deportation and labour on German lands).

One of the crimes of the Nazi regime was the massive robbery of representatives of the Jewish community in Germany and the occupied countries, the massive confiscation of property, the export of money, gold, cultural and other valuables in all countries where the German army and Nazi punitive bodies invaded. All of this was included in the public and private housing stock and settled in banking institutions, public and private museums in Germany. Therefore, the problem of restitution and return of cultural property has been acute since the post-war period and has not been resolved to this day, and negotiations with a number of countries are ongoing to return it.

Before and after the unification with the GDR, the FRG created special institutions and introduced mechanisms for verifying the origin of works of art in public museums and private collections, but only a small part of the stolen property was returned.

### **Educational, cultural and youth policy**

In the post-war years, the restoration of the education system in the German territories faced challenges common to all spheres, the destruction of infrastructure and a lack of human, material and financial resources. The problem of recruiting school teachers, university and college professors was that they mostly shared the ideology and supported the war effort and crimes of the regime, and were members of the Nazi party, which was a consequence of the Nazi regime’s establishment through repression and personnel selection.

Therefore, in the first postwar years, there were waves of mass dismissals of teachers and lecturers and their replacement with younger personnel or, conversely, representatives of the older generation who were not associated with the Nazi environment.<sup>99</sup>

In higher education institutions, staffing was somewhat easier at natural science faculties, while philosophy, history, law, and socio-political faculties needed to be completely renewed. This problem was partly solved by older Germans who were not involved in Nazi structures, as well as by German migrants from other territories and re-emigrants who had fled the Nazi regime and returned to Germany after the war.

In the FRG, a complete revision of the content of textbooks, fiction and developing content for new school curricula, as well as other educational policy measures, was carried out in line with the goal of denazification and demilitarisation. Special military training lessons that had previously served the Third Reich’s military ideological propaganda were removed from the curriculum. Propaganda accents were removed from school and university curricula and relevant chapters of history textbooks, which

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98 Ibid.

99 This trend in the appointment of schoolteachers was pointed out by V. Ammer in an interview.

covered previous historical facts, events, and epochs in the key of the “greatness” of Germany and the German nation, and new interpretations were introduced.

There was a shortage of textbooks and the complete unsuitability of those that served purely propaganda purposes. The public burning of Nazi symbols, propaganda books, textbooks, newspapers, posters, and leaflets was widely practiced. Young people and children witnessed such actions and often participated in them.

Especially in the first postwar years, all new textbooks and books of fiction were subject to verification and censorship procedures. The presentation of elements of national culture and identity also required caution, as it was sometimes difficult to completely separate them from what the Nazi ideological system was built on.

The component of religious education and enlightenment in education was immediately increased. In their activities, religious organisations partially compensated for the functions of upbringing, education, socialisation, and integration of children and youth that other social institutions could not fully fulfil. It should be noted that the system of Christian values, the ideas of uniting Germans (Catholics and Protestants) on an interfaith basis, social responsibility, equality, priority of education, etc. became the ideological basis of one of the ruling parties – the Christian Democratic Union, which influenced the displacement of the Nazi ideological heritage.

To a certain extent, it was about restoring the importance of traditional social institutions such as the family, the church, education and their influence on children and young people, in contrast to the Nazi period when these institutions were controlled or supplanted.

This general socio-political background shaped life for children and young people. At that time, the ideas of pacifism, anti-militarism, reconciliation, cosmopolitanism, European unity, and others were gradually spreading. At the same time, there were also opposite trends and waves of popularity of left-wing radical and, on the other hand, right-wing radical ideas and movements.

Changes in youth policy and the environment of youth movements after the war were set by the vectors of demilitarisation and denazification, democratisation in the context of “re-education of German society”. After the dissolution of such structures as the Hitler Youth, the League of German Girls, etc., there was a need to establish other youth structures. The Allied administrations of the United States and Great Britain in West Germany contributed to the creation of new organisations of German youth, social space for young people through youth clubs, organisations, and unions.<sup>100</sup> In the first postwar years, the activities of such organisations were controlled by administrations and social services. In the 1960s and 1970s, under the influence of European processes, mass movements and protests with distinct tendencies towards independence and influence on social processes emerged in the German youth environment. Due to denazification and demilitarisation, the public space of the western part of Germany was cleared of ideological press as much as possible.

In the GDR in the post-war years, as socio-political processes were directed towards centralised governance, one-party rule and Soviet-style communist ideology, the youth organisation “Union of Free German Youth” for young people aged 14-25 and the children’s pioneer organisation “Ernst Thälmann” (a German communist figure) for children aged 10-14 were formed.<sup>101</sup> These organisations were fully subordinat-

100 Schwab M. Youth NGOs in Germany: problems of periodisation and categorisation.

101 German Democratic Republic: Youth Movement. URL: <https://histclo.com/youth/youth/org/pio/pioneerg.htm>

ed to the state authorities in their activities and gradually covered the vast majority of German youth in East Germany, influencing the spheres of education, culture, sports, and leisure.

In the post-war years, such organisations had a certain social component, helping children and young people who were left without parents or were homeless and in need of support and socialisation. However, in fact, the youth sphere in this part of German territory was still strictly regulated by the state vertical, and young people were again subjected to ideological indoctrination, communist instead of Nazi.

The activities of other youth movements were banned, and youth centres, as well as adult organisations (human rights, religious, opposition, subcultural), were severely suppressed and repressed by state punitive bodies. It was on the basis of these underground movements and organisations, whose influence would spread in the 1980s, that a mass protest against the dictatorship in the GDR emerged and eventually brought down the Berlin Wall in 1989.

As the FRG was more open than the GDR and in interaction with the socio-political processes in the Western European space, German youth and schoolchildren were influenced by the general trends of the 1960s. At that time, there were mass gatherings, the rise of student and youth movements as a protest against the Vietnam War, the Cold War, and a kind of rebellion against older generations and the shortcomings of the political and economic systems, and social vices. It culminated in 1968. Among the universities of West Germany, this movement had a component of the struggle for a certain autonomy of universities, improvement of the quality of education and funding.

At this time, the issue of the crimes of Nazism, the Holocaust, the war, and the guilt and responsibility of previous generations for all of this also became acute. The mood in the expert discourse was set by new philosophical and historical visions, and in particular by such figures as Karl Jaspers (whose most famous work, *The Question of Guilt*, dealt with collective guilt and responsibility) and later Jürgen Habermas, whose ideas have remained influential in German public consciousness. Active discussions were generated by literary works of a number of authors (T. Mann, H. Grass, H. Böll, I. Bachmann and others).

Publicity and scientific research filled the print media, newspapers, and magazines of social and political humanitarian direction, which became a guideline for young people in shaping their values.

It was important to convey the truth through documentaries and feature films, which were watched by a large number of Germans. For example, the American series “The Holocaust” in the FRG has been broadcast on television since 1979 and has been viewed by about 20 million people – adults, children and youth – and has had an unexpectedly powerful impact, although special programmes, documentaries, theatre plays, and published documents had been broadcast for 30 years before.<sup>102</sup>

The development of cinema, theatre, fiction, art, and music provided space for the creation of new meanings, values, and ideas. In the new cultural space, some authors inevitably addressed the issues of the Nazi past in their works. Visits to places of memory, memorial complexes, and museums in places where mass crimes were

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102 T. Axelrod, TV series “Holocaust”, that have changed how Germans saw their history, airs again. The Times of Israel. 02.02.2019. URL: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/us-made-holocaust-series-that-changed-how-germans-saw-their-history-airs-again/>

committed became a mandatory component of the FRG educational curriculum from a certain point on, and thus extended to the age group of children and youth.

In the GDR during the 1980s, youth became one of the main categories in the active opposition to the authoritarian order, the dictates of the party and ideology, collectivism, legal oppression and punitive methods of the security forces, bans on border crossings, economic restrictions, compared to the pluralistic model in Germany, individualism, legal and economic freedom.

In the GDR, social, cultural, and youth policies were subordinated to the ideology, the communist and socialist version of the ruling party. The burden of ideological pressure and the involvement of children and young people in indoctrination practices through organisations narrowed, as in any closed society, the space for development and freedom for this age group. In this part of German society, organisations with a different ideology and trade unions also played a decorative role.

After the reunification of FRG and the GDR, the issue of updating and regulating youth policy and, in particular, youth organisations, some of which were radical and destructive, arose again. Therefore, social, cultural, and educational policies dictated the task of creating space for children and youth through cultural, sports, environmental, and other activities, in formats within and outside the education system. In Germany, there is constant cooperation between schools and social workers, as well as a combination of activities in the school system and informal activities.<sup>103</sup> In general, in addition to federal and state-level youth policy, NGOs and youth, charitable, religious, and other associations have had an impact.

Educational policy played a key role in the re-education of children and youth, but the broader context of changes in the democratisation of post-war West Germany aimed at the moral re-education of society after the long Nazi indoctrination should be taken into account.

As national dignity changed to collapse, shame and guilt, German national consciousness and national identity were modified and displaced, giving way to other forms of identity – social, professional, and regional. The activities of cultural organisations and various initiatives and cooperation activities at the local and international level became widespread.

Intergovernmental and international relations and contacts were facilitated by the practice of choosing twin cities, which to some extent had a superficial declarative content, but nevertheless promoted relations at the interethnic, intercultural, and interpersonal levels. Moreover, while for Germany it covered the space of the free part of Europe, for the GDR it was limited to the USSR and other countries that were members of the Warsaw Pact or the socialist camp.

In conjunction with the reform of social institutions in Germany, the directions of educational policy were determined in accordance with the ideologies of the CDU/CSU and SPD parties, which formed a number of governments at the federal and Länder levels.

In the educational area, changes in historical and social studies did not occur overnight and reproduced the widespread tendency in German society to conceal the scale of Nazi crimes and assessments of this phenomenon. Gradually, the coverage of

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103 Schwab M. Youth NGOs in Germany: problems of periodisation and classification / Scientific Bulletin of Volyn National University. Series: international relations. - Lutsk: "Vezha", 2012. - Issue 20 (245). - P. 32-37.

military aggression, territorial conquests, occupation, genocide of Jews, mass crimes against other European nations and the USSR as a cross-cutting theme of World War II was formed, as well as the formation of narratives about non-repetition, overcoming and mastering the past.

Changes in school and university curricula after the break with the Nazi past also required balanced interpretations of historical events and warnings about their content to prevent revanchist sentiments.

Reforms in the education sector were centralised, but also specific to the level of federal units, which have a significant degree of autonomy and capacity to formulate educational policy, regulate higher education institutions, their financing, curriculum variability and the ways the educational process was organised.

The demographic growth factor in the decades following the war put education and youth policy in an important position, as the number of schoolchildren in schools, higher education institutions and universities grew rapidly.

In higher education and the university network, since 1948, centralised changes at the state level have been regulated by a specially created body, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Culture Affairs of the Federal States,<sup>104</sup> which defines strategies for the educational process, research, cultural policy, international cooperation, etc. This format was modified and expanded after the reunification of West and East Germany, but it still functions successfully today.

In general, the idea of democracy was not popular in German society immediately after the war. Some of the structural changes in the education system implemented by the United States and other allies included elements of their democratic models of education, which was not accepted by the Germans.<sup>105</sup> Thus, in 1952, the National Education Agency was established, one of the tasks of which was to promote democratic ideas, rules, mechanisms, participatory policies and civic education.

In the system of school and higher education, both centralised and Länder-level policies in the formation of social, historical, and political science programmes are coordinated by the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Culture Affairs, which influences the formation of recommendations for political and civic education and training.<sup>106</sup>

In the FRG, the 1950s and 1960s were marked by the rapid development of university education, and the foundations were laid for the transformation of small universities into powerful educational institutions and research centres.

Legislation to reform the school, higher and vocational education systems has been actively developed since the 1970s.<sup>107</sup> Since the 1980s, reforms and modernisation of education have been the impetus for the rise of the German education system, and with integration into the European space (Bologna Process) for more active international cooperation in the higher education system.

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104 The standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Culture Affairs (KMK) URL: <https://www.kmk.org/kmk/information-in-english/standing-conference.html>

105 E. Fox, *Rebuilding Germany’s Children: The Nazi Indoctrination and Postwar Reeducation of the Hitler Youth*. *Furman Humanities Review*. Volume 27. 2017. URL: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/214289185.pdf>

106 Civic Education in Germany after World War II. URL: <https://www.bpb.de/system/files/pdf/F4FDUD.pdf>

107 Moskalkenko A.M., *Trends in the Development of Classical Universities in Germany*. Thesis for the degree of Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University. Kyiv: 2016. 225 pp., P.37.

By the 1980s and 1990s, the university education system in the FRG (universities in Munich, Trier, Cologne, Heidelberg, etc.) had achieved significant success, attracting a large number of students and researchers, and establishing it as one of the most successful models in Europe. After the reunification of the FRG and the GDR, rapid reforms spread to the East German Länder, new universities were established (e.g. in Potsdam, Frankfurt, etc.), and integration with European standards and requirements was underway. To date, the German higher education system is governed by the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Culture Affairs of the FRG Länder and the Conference of Rectors of Educational Institutions. At the level of each of the Länder, through specialised bodies, issues of culture and education, peculiarities of the educational process, conditions, programmes, etc. are determined.

After the reunification of West and East Germany, the restructuring of the educational system was a priority, comparable to the personnel renewal in the system of state bodies. Accordingly, employees of educational institutions (schools, higher education institutions, universities) were also subjected to procedures for checking their involvement in the GDR regime and crimes against citizens. At the same time, the checks were aimed at confirming the appropriate qualification level in accordance with a set of criteria clearly established by law.

In both general and civic education, the issues of the Nazi dictatorship, the Holocaust, etc. are mandatory to include in the teaching and learning processes. In addition, there is a well-developed network of institutions that provide civic, legal and political education. Moreover, since 1990-2000, part of the educational programmes and educational activities have been based on an interdisciplinary approach, combining history, literature, art, law, social sciences, and ethics.

At the same time, educational and cultural policy was focused on the rehabilitation of classical German culture. Thus, “cultural preservation” after World War II included rebuilding cultural infrastructure, preserving historical monuments, and actively working to revive the cultural image of “classical” Germany through an emphasis on German poets and thinkers.<sup>108</sup> Since the 1970s, this approach has been complemented by the expansion of cultural infrastructure and activities for a greater reach of the German population, which was reinforced by state funding.

It is worth mentioning that the Goethe Institute played a positive role in the development of education since the post-war period, starting in 1952 as a non-governmental organisation that provided proper training for schoolteachers in the German language in the FRG, and after the unification with the GDR, implemented educational projects in this part of Germany. In addition, the Goethe Institutes network has rapidly expanded its branches and activities outside Germany in many countries with programmes to teach the German language and promote German culture around the world.

## Social policy

The first post-war government of Konrad Adenauer managed to: launch economic processes, balance the market economy and state regulation, rebuild industry and, at the same time, be socially oriented, quickly resolving problems with social benefits, wages, and pensions.

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108 Culture in the process of decentralisation: the experience of Germany. Goethe Institute. URL: <https://www.goethe.de/prj/lek/uk/dos/kul.html>

The general background and processes in society shaped the lives of children and young people. Social and economic problems, single-parent families, widespread frustration, and other factors complicated their lives.

Changes in the social and professional structure were inevitable as many Germans lost their old social statuses and roles after the war. The transition of the economy and industry from military to civilian use was painful, but it also opened up prospects for industrial development. Finally, the system of military conscription was completely revised, and its duration was reduced.

In social policy, significant expenditures were made on special needs and payments to categories of the population in need of assistance – orphans, the disabled, Germans who had moved from other territories, and those who had lost all their property. Special programmes partially provided social housing and employment. Individual support measures were also in place for former prisoners of war and military personnel (demobilised). At that time, a set of socially oriented legal and regulatory changes were adopted, and significant expenditures were allocated from the federal and Länder budgets.

Monetary reform and tax policy (e.g. differentiated taxes according to property value) were also effective. Another positive factor was the development of balanced labour legislation and attention to relations between employees and employers and trade unions (social partnership), which contributed to the timely resolution of conflicts and avoidance of protests. Trade unions in the FRG played an important role and had subjectness in economic, social and labour processes and relations.

It should be borne in mind that the implementation of social and economic policies and their priorities varied depending on the governments formed by the CDU/CSU and SPD and coalition combinations, whose election victories reflected the mood in society caused by objective phenomena, and the reaction to the trends of stagnation, excessive social benefits, unemployment, underfunding of industries, etc. There was a constant search for a balance between the priority of industrial development and reconstruction and, at the same time, social policy for each social group and category.

The launch of social policy was initiated by the first government and Chancellor K. Adenauer, one of the founders and leaders of the Christian Democratic Party, whose priorities included a socially oriented economy, assistance to workers, the unemployed, children, pensioners, provision of education and employment, etc.

A contribution to overcoming the consequences of social relations deformed by the Nazi regime was the infusion of a new ethic, a shift in emphasis to social responsibility and justice.

The post-World War II reconciliation policy also had a broader context of German relations with other nations and countries in Europe and beyond. Reconciliation of the German nation with other nations and European states was important for Germany. At the same time, the national was not emphasised, the German national identity was being replaced by the European one, and the achievements of the German state and its economy were becoming important.

The integration process at the national level was aimed, among other things, at overcoming the legacy of the totalitarian past, the deep problems of collective memory and consciousness.

There was also a shift in emphasis to federalism and the development of the Länder.

In the German public consciousness, the traditions of federalism and historical regional differences were manifested in differences in regional and local identities, stereotypes, etc. Also, an additional factor of tension between social groups was the massive resettlement of Germans from other territories. However, it was precisely to avoid any social conflicts that social and other policies were built. In general, the social model demonstrated the inclusion of various social groups. Emigrant Germans, including educated professionals and workers of various specialities, were able to engage in labour relations to compensate for the shortage of personnel in government, educational institutions, and industry.

The state policy priority aimed in particular at the age groups of children and youth was implemented through systemic changes in various areas and tasks that collectively had a positive impact on their lives. These include the expansion of rights and freedoms, high standards of legal protection and enforcement of laws, social change and economic development.

Youth policy for children and young people promoted the ideas of unification, dialogue, and interaction, and the practice of exchanges, trips, cultural, sports, and other events was widespread. This was done through both state-initiated programmes and civil society organisations.

The lives of children and youth were affected by changes in the position of the German family, and greater involvement of women in the labour market and social activity, which contrasted with the pre-war and wartime period and the restriction of social roles.

A kind of compensation mechanism for the West German state was its active foreign policy, dynamic economic and industrial development, and rapid entry into the European and Euro-Atlantic community, which enabled Germany to constructively implement its aspirations for state development.

In East Germany, other processes were taking place and the difference with the FRG was growing, where there was a high level of rights and freedoms, and the development of economic, social, and cultural spheres. In the GDR, on the other hand, stagnation and crisis trends in these aspects became more noticeable.

An additional factor was the accumulation of conflictual experience of the split between the two parts and sharp ideological confrontation. Young people were actively involved in the processes of deepening the split through propaganda practices. Separated families were unable to see each other for years, and for the vast majority of citizens it was impossible to safely leave for the FRG, and those who did mostly did not return to the GDR.

Nevertheless, in the later period of the GDR in the 1980s, the segment of civil society that was subjected to pressure and repression by the state security agencies played a positive role, especially the human rights movement and religious organisations that actually conducted underground activities. A small space of freedom against the backdrop of total pressure from the regime and its punitive bodies was formed by civic and cultural activists, youth culture, etc. These civil society organisations and young people became the driving force and played a major role in the collapse of the GDR regime.

## The Memory Policy

The direction of deployment of the memory policy was set in the package of measures for denazification and demilitarisation in the post-war period, a policy controlled by the United States, Great Britain, France, and the USSR. It should be borne in mind that the birth of the state of Israel and its subsequent strategy of restoring historical justice also had a special impact on its content.

The establishment of memory policy in the areas under the control of the United States, Great Britain, and France encountered obstacles and took place in a public atmosphere of silence and displacement from public consciousness of the scale of the Nazi regime’s crimes. Denazification and demilitarisation measures took place also in the Soviet-controlled zone, but the issue of mastering the past was not among the priorities in the context of the rapid communist ideological offensive.

Since 1949, when the FRG and the first post-war government were formed, the position of K. Adenauer on the need to pay reparations to the victims of the Nazi regime has been primarily decisive. Thus, in 1952, under the agreement between Germany and Israel on reparations, it was a matter of a huge amount of money – about \$1.5 billion from the financial resources that Germany received under the Marshall Plan.

The mechanism of reparations payment was seen as a higher priority than measures of memory policy. In terms of mass re-education of German society through systemic practices, the German leadership was more reserved. At the same time, in the 1950s and 1960s, trials of the organisers of mass murder continued.

Therefore, we can rather speak of a full-fledged memory policy, as the conscious position of the state, and its results, in the chronological period from the 1970s onwards. To a large extent, the mastering of the past was implemented in German society, where generations of those who massively and directly participated in the regime’s crimes changed. In the new generations, the mastering of the past took place without the resistance and sabotage that prevailed in the postwar years. Thus, this policy became extended over time, and the results were largely due to the change of generations when most of the generation of Germans who were part of the Nazi regime and accomplices died or ceased to influence socio-political processes.

It was the younger generations who were the age group of society that embraced the measures of memory policy initiated at the state level and to which they were involved through educational and awareness-raising components, visits to museums and memorials, literary works, journalistic investigations, cinema, and theatre. Whereas among the older generation of Germans, there were many who were former government officials of the Nazi regime, participants and accomplices in crimes, and therefore were silenced, denied or even justified. The influence of the family circle on children and young people is naturally decisive, so they were influenced by opposing interpretations and assessments of the historical events of the war period.

Dissemination of information and explanations about historical events took place at the level of schools, universities and a network of civic and cultural education institutions, scientific and academic institutions. In this way, it made it possible to reach different age groups and categories of citizens. At the same time, museums and memorial centres were opened or reconstructed, and visits by children and young people became a mandatory component of the educational and awareness-raising dimensions.

In the cultural sphere, the understanding of the historical past in the FRG was expressed in works of fiction, feature films and documentaries, theatre performances, etc. In the scientific and academic sphere, there was also active research and educational activity. The commemoration of memorable dates, such as the Day of Remembrance for the Victims of National Socialism and others, was significant. A network of commemorative sites has been created at places of remembrance for Nazi victims on the territory of former concentration camps of Dachau, Buchenwald, Bergen-Belsen, Sachsenhausen, Ravensbrück, Flossenbürg, and others, as well as memorial complexes, museums, and monuments (e.g., the Holocaust Memorial in Berlin, the monument to the victims of the Warsaw Uprising, and many others). This process was active in the FRG and resumed with a new wave after German reunification.

It should be emphasised that a noticeable breakthrough in the political plane and in society occurred in the 1960s. High-profile trials took place that resonated in Germany and beyond (the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials), as well as the trial and execution of A. Eichmann in Israel. Public trials and their media coverage also kept German society focused on the historical past and its horrors.

A landmark and turning point in 1970 was the public expression of remorse by Chancellor Wilhelm Brant, who knelt at the monument to the victims of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Such a gesture was not approved by a part of German society, but it was of great importance for the FRG and its leadership, which drew a clear line to avoid repeating the past.

After the reunification of Germany, there was also a wave of increased attention to revealing the truth about mass crimes against humanity (the genocide of Jews, concentration camps, medical experiments on children and adults, deportations) and nations, the destruction of other countries, and the forced deportation of people.

After gaining unity, the FRG extended traditional measures in the memory policy to the territory of the former GDR. The creation of museums, places of commemoration of the victims of the Nazi regime and the victims of the Soviet period in East Germany, as well as educational and awareness-raising initiatives continued throughout the 1990s and 2000s. A network of institutions and specialised memorial centres and documentary centres was formed, which were engaged in the disclosure and research of archival and other documents from the Nazi period and the GDR period.

In East Germany, after the reunification with West Germany, the memory policy began to be fully developed after 1989, in line with the policy already implemented in the FRG, with the aim of levelling out the imbalances in this area of public life. East Germany also faced the need to revise the past of the GDR regime, to comprehend the crimes committed and massive human rights violations, the victims of repression by the regime and due to the bans on crossing the border with the FRG.

The opening of access to archives and documents, and thus the criminal and illegal actions of internal security officials against German citizens (surveillance, torture, imprisonment) of the GDR regime, was led by the FRG, but under increased pressure from civil society. Resistance to this was noticeable both in the system of government and security agencies that were being dismantled and reformatted and in parts of German society, as the GDR was characterised by extremely wide involvement of citizens in the practice of denunciation and widespread membership of the SED party.

Another tool for implementing the uncovering of the truth and truth-telling was the functioning of special commissions, which are classified as truth commissions.

Special truth commissions were set up to disclose relevant data and to make the crimes of the SED regime known to the public. The Bundestag had the Study Commission for Working Through the History and the Consequences of the SED Dictatorship in Germany (1992-1994) and the Study Commission for the Overcoming of the Consequences of the SED Dictatorship in the Process of German Unity (1995-1998).<sup>109</sup> The information gathered by the commissions was used to make recommendations to the federal government on the development of memory policy and measures to master the past.

For example, a special institution, the Federal Foundation for the Study the Communist dictatorship in Eastern Germany,<sup>110</sup> which cooperates with a network of museums and memorial centres, archives, educational and awareness-raising institutions, organisations of victims of the regime, etc., continues to perform the same function.

## CHALLENGES AND FAILURES OF THE ACTIVITIES

In the context of Germany’s experience, as opposed to examples of successful policies, practices, and activities, one should rather talk about their incomplete, untimely implementation, and lost time. In the context of the distinction between successful and unsuccessful practices, it is more obvious to assess the effectiveness of state policy measures in various areas and aspects, in particular in educational policy, cultural and social policy, as contributing to social processes and overcoming the consequences of mass indoctrination of German society, especially children and youth, in the postwar period.

In the FRG, the implementation of state policy in the sphere of economy, education, and culture has led to fundamental state and legal transformations. Social transformations took place at different levels. However, the construction of a new social consciousness was slower. It should be borne in mind that the consequences of the Nazi past, mass participation and complicity of citizens in serious crimes in German society in both West and East Germany left ethical and value deformation and moral relativism in the collective consciousness.

The biggest challenges in the social and political life in the postwar period in Germany were:

- massive silencing and displacement from the memory of the horrific events of the pre-war and wartime periods, denial of the truth in the collective consciousness of Germans and, at the same time, rejection of the denazification policy;
- the curtailment of the systemic denazification policy in 1949, which was associated with the formation of the FRG and the GDR, the decline in the influence of the Allied powers on German politics, and the beginning of the Cold War;
- non-systematic implementation of the policy of establishing justice, incomplete and chaotic prosecution of those responsible for mass crimes, due to the

109 Truth Commission: Study Commission for Working Through the History and the Consequences of the SED Dictatorship in Germany (1992–1994). URL: <https://www.usip.org/publications/1992/05/truth-commission-germany-92>

Truth Commission: Study Commission for the Overcoming of the Consequences of the SED Dictatorship in the Process of German Unity (1995–1998). URL: <https://www.usip.org/-commission-germany-95>

110 The Federal Foundation for the Study the Communist dictatorship in Eastern Germany. URL: <https://www.bundesstiftung-aufarbeitung.de/de/foundation>

flawed process of forming the legal and judicial system on the remnants of the totalitarian past and its inefficiency;

- uneven and inconsistent personnel policy, from massive dismissals to massive re-employment of people who had links to the system of state, party and punitive bodies under the Nazi regime;
- the use and abuse of the amnesty mechanism, legal and procedural loopholes, etc. that allowed the perpetrators of mass crimes to avoid responsibility;
- a significant lag in the pace of implementing a consistent policy of remembrance in contrast to the rapid implementation of other policies (social, economic, educational).

The biggest problems in the socio-political life after 1990 in the united Germany were:

- failure to bring to justice the top state, party and punitive authorities under the GDR regime, which did not meet the demands of society for the restoration of justice;
- only partial implementation of the lustration policy and avoidance of responsibility of most persons from the party and state structures and punitive bodies that committed mass crimes against citizens;
- implementation of institutional changes, reforms in public administration, memory policy, educational and other reforms in the eastern territories under the full control of the FRG and, accordingly, the algorithms built in it, caused reactionary moods in the society;
- disproportion between the western and eastern parts of the German territories, differences in economic and industrial development, socio-economic parameters, socio-demographic structure and human capital;
- differences between eastern and western Germans, manifested through political and legal specifics and electoral preferences, at the level of identity and value systems, as right-wing and left-wing radical parties and movements, anti-democratic, anti-European and anti-American sentiments are more popular in the eastern part.

In the FRG, the transformation experience was generally successful and efficient, thanks to institutional changes in public administration, the construction of an effective economic and social model, educational reform, etc. Political, economic and social reconstruction outpaced the changes in the collective consciousness and the recovery of German society.

At the same time, the issue of public awareness of the scale of the evil and destruction caused by the Nazi regime to other nations and states, the establishment of responsibility and the achievement of justice and “atonement” did not mature in society itself. In the FRG, it was a deliberate policy of the United States and its allies to move away from everything inhumane. In the GDR, the focus shifted to Germany’s military defeat and the victory of the USSR and communist (socialist) ideology. Therefore, after reunification, East Germany followed the proven and effective practices introduced by the FRG.

In the GDR, the system of state bodies, the legal system, the economic system, educational, cultural and youth policies were imbued with ideology and limited by strict authoritarian orders. Therefore, a part of German society, in particular children and youth, found themselves in conditions of suppression of rights and freedoms for a long time. The layering of the experience of the previous periods of the authoritarian Nazi regime from 1933, which quickly turned into a totalitarian regime, and the continuation of the authoritarian regime in the GDR with comprehensive state propaganda and deep indoctrination of children, youth, and adults, for several generations of Germans in East Germany has resulted in massive social entropy and a worldview crisis.

Thus, even after more than 30 years since the reunification of Germany, the full reintegration of the country and society is still ongoing, which is proof that restoring normal social life after its destruction has a long inertia.

The example of Germany also illustrates the persistent phenomenon of a segment of society with a low level of integration and rejection of changes and achievements. For example, after the reunification of Germany, the category of citizens with nostalgia for the GDR, anti-European and anti-American attitudes, and, on the other hand, pro-Russian sentiments, has remained for many years despite the highly effective state policy of the FRG. Parties and organisations that actively exploit nostalgic and other sentiments of a part of German society are more common in Eastern Germany. Such parties are popular among young people because of their radicalism and populism.

The question of the complete “recovery” of society and the change in the collective national consciousness requires a wider involvement of interdisciplinary research and studies of ethnic and social psychology, as well as anthropology regarding the deep processes in a society that has one of the most brutal regimes in human history.

## ■ CONCLUSIONS

In international practice, the example of Germany is one of the exceptional “historical experiments” of reunification of a country and reintegration of a society divided for a long time. At the same time, the example of the post-war FRG is valuable in the rapid transition from a totalitarian to a democratic system. The post-war FRG with a democratic system and the GDR with an authoritarian regime are seen as different historical trajectories of parts of the country and the nation.

The FRG’s contrast with the previous era was ensured by its emphasis on the development of industry, science, technology and innovation, and, at the same time, a strong social component. It was rational to use external (Marshall Plan) and internal resources, part of which was used to pay reparations. On the one hand, the practice of paying reparations, memory policy activities, and, on the other hand, the FRG’s gradual inclusion in economic relations and the system of international institutions contributed to positive transformations in the perception of Germans outside their country.

The experience of united Germany demonstrates the consistent and structural building of democracy, significant achievements for society and the state artificially divided for a long historical period, and the results of reintegration. After the reunification of the state, German society was not burdened by civil conflict or military operations, though had its “fault lines” and a high level of tension between different parts and social groups.

Comparing the examples of Germany and Ukraine provides a wide range of possible approaches and practices and, at the same time, a number of warnings.

An important difference from the FRG is that Ukraine should be focused on military sectors of the economy as a guarantee of security against Russian aggression, while at the same time developing other sectors.

The fundamental difference is that war crimes in Germany during the war (mass murder, concentration camps, deportations, etc.) were directed at other nations and states. In Ukraine, the Russian Federation uses similar methods, relying only partially on collaborators and forcing some Ukrainian citizens to be complicit in its crimes. In this way, the line between complicity in crimes and forcible coercion to commit them is blurred.

Ukraine is the object of military aggression and suffers from the actions of the aggressor state of the Russian Federation, which causes huge destruction and human casualties, as well as needs to go through the process of ending the war and post-war reconstruction.

Today, the conditions of existence in the occupied territories of Ukraine are close to a totalitarian regime. There occur massive illegal removal of children and adolescents from their families and subsequent deportation to the territory of the Russian Federation (and sometimes Belarus), indoctrination of children, forced mobilisation of Ukrainian male citizens, and forced passportisation with Russian documents. The total subordination of social institutions (education, culture, medicine, church, family) to the occupation authorities is proceeding rapidly. After the seizure of state and administrative institutions, educational institutions (schools, colleges, institutes, and universities) are taken under full control. Civil society organisations, including cultural, religious and other associations, trade unions, actually cease all activities due to bans and high risks to the physical safety of people at mass events. The Ukrainian language, culture and identity are being systematically destroyed.

Military actions, repressions against citizens with a strong pro-Ukrainian position and the social and psychological atmosphere have an extremely destructive impact on children and youth.

Additional risks are associated with the consequences of changes in the demographic, ethnic, and socio-professional structure of the population, its increased marginalisation, and the high level of anti-social phenomena, crime, marginalisation, and moral degradation, including among adolescents and young people. In addition, the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine are being entered from the Russian Federation by their citizens (from national republics) and citizens of a number of Central and East Asian countries. Thus, the colonial policy of the Russian Federation is rapidly changing the ethnic composition of the population in the occupied territories.

That is why, for example, the reintegration of children and young people as part of society in post-war and reunified Germany is seen as a partially similar experience to Ukraine in terms of the depth of destructive policies and consequences for the collective consciousness.

In the context of Russia’s full-scale war against Ukraine, the example of Germany is particularly relevant, as it is about successfully overcoming the heavy historical legacy of one of the most brutal regimes in human history. Whereas the collapse of the USSR was not accompanied by a similar path, there was no establishment of truth

and justice regarding the full extent of the regime’s crimes against people, nations, states, and the inhumane policy against entire generations. It was this unpunished evil that matured in the revanchist regime of the Russian Federation and led to a full-scale war against Ukraine, war crimes and neocolonial policy towards the occupied part of the territory.

The proportions of territory and population should also be taken into account when comparing Germany and Ukraine. East Germany had about half the territory and population of West Germany. In Ukraine, currently, the part of the occupied territory is about 26%, the population of the occupied parts has significantly decreased, and the duration of the occupation varies (10 years for Crimea and parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, almost 2 years for the newly occupied parts of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions). It should also be borne in mind that these parts of Ukraine’s territory were less integrated before the war, with low rates of use of the state language, civic and legal culture, etc.

As human resources are the most precious and cannot be restored quickly, children and young people, who suffer the most from the consequences of war, should be at the centre of policy in every sphere and sector. Today, Ukrainian society enjoys a significant level of unity and strength, a consensus on fundamental values that extend to the age groups of children and youth.

Given the experience of post-war Germany in overcoming the post-totalitarian legacy, it is advisable to use the policies that formed the model of transitional justice in the post-war FRG and in the reunited FRG and the GDR. Immediately after de-occupation, it is important to simultaneously implement policies in all spheres and implement all components of transitional justice (institutional development, memory policy, justice, etc.)

# EXPERIENCE OF NORTHERN IRELAND



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## ■ HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The conflict in Northern Ireland dates back to the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century when England formally conquered the independent Irish kingdom of Ulster. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, England established control over the entire territory of Ireland, and modern Northern Ireland became part of the province of Ulster, where Protestantism took root during the Reformation, while Catholicism prevailed in the rest of Ireland.<sup>111</sup> Thus, the country was effectively divided along religious lines.

For a long time, the entire island of Ireland was part of the British Empire, but the population did not give up trying to fight for national liberation. After World War I, the Irish struggle for independence intensified, and in 1920, Ireland was divided into Northern and Southern Ireland as self-governing dominions of Great Britain.<sup>112</sup> In 1921, Ireland became a dominion of Great Britain, and after World War II, in 1949, it declared independence and became a republic, while Northern Ireland remained part of Britain, subordinate to the central government in London. The division of the Irish people by the state border and differences in religion have been the cause of many years of confrontation. The social inequality between the Catholic and Protestant communities was an additional contentious issue. Protestant Britons mostly worked in the industrial sector and earned higher incomes than Irish Catholics engaged in agricultural work. Confrontation between the two communities grew at the household level.<sup>113</sup> After its separation, unrest and conflict continued in Northern Ireland.<sup>114</sup>

The modern period of conflict in Northern Ireland (The Troubles) began in the late 1960s as a civil rights movement, with Catholics protesting against discrimination by the Protestant-dominated government of Northern Ireland. The protests soon turned violent, involving paramilitary groups on both sides and the arrival of the British army in 1969. The conflict involved mainly loyalist Protestants who wanted to remain part of the United Kingdom, and Catholic Republicans who wanted to unite with the Republic of Ireland.<sup>115</sup>

### Peace: The Good Friday Agreement

On 10 April 1998, the British and Irish governments signed the Good Friday Agreement, which was approved by the majority of political parties in Northern Ireland. According to this agreement, a complex multi-stage formula for overcoming the crisis was to be implemented. It envisaged the creation of a system consisting of three elements of governance – in Northern Ireland itself, between Ulster and the rest of Ireland, and between the UK and the Republic of Ireland. For this purpose, the Good Friday Agreement, or Belfast Agreement, provided for the election of a Northern Ireland Assembly with legislative powers. The Executive Committee with governmental functions was also to be formed, consisting of 12 ministers of both major denominations,

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111 V. Krushynskyi, A. Blair and the Problem of Peaceful Settlement in Northern Ireland, Vol. 1 No. 123 (2014): TOPICAL ISSUES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

112 Conflict in Northern Ireland – since when and why police officers are maimed, 13.04.2021, URL: [https://gazeta.ua/articles/history/\\_konflikt-u-pivnichnij-irlandiyi-vidkoli-i-za-scho-kalichat-policejskih/1025832](https://gazeta.ua/articles/history/_konflikt-u-pivnichnij-irlandiyi-vidkoli-i-za-scho-kalichat-policejskih/1025832)

113 V. Havryliuk, Conflict in Northern Ireland: Experience of Settlement to be Used by Ukraine, 2020, URL: <https://enpuir.npu.edu.ua/bitstream/handle/123456789/34134/Havryliuk.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

114 Conflict in Northern Ireland – since when and why police officers are maimed, 13.04.2021, URL: [https://gazeta.ua/articles/history/\\_konflikt-u-pivnichnij-irlandiyi-vidkoli-i-za-scho-kalichat-policejskih/1025832](https://gazeta.ua/articles/history/_konflikt-u-pivnichnij-irlandiyi-vidkoli-i-za-scho-kalichat-policejskih/1025832)

115 C. Landow and J. McBride, Moving Past the Troubles: The Future of Northern Ireland Peace, 2023, URL: <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/moving-past-troubles-future-northern-ireland-peace>

and ministries of the Inter-Irish Council were to be established as part of the cooperation between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Considerable attention in the agreement was paid to the disarmament of Northern Ireland’s paramilitary groups, such as the notorious Irish Republican Army (IRA).<sup>116</sup>

The agreement provided for the transfer of powers in certain policy areas from the UK Parliament to the newly created Assembly in Belfast. This compromise allowed for the disarmament of paramilitaries.<sup>117</sup> This Assembly, now known as Stormont, consists of 108 members and deals with economic and social issues, while the defence, foreign policy and finance are managed by London.<sup>118</sup> The two Irelands began to cooperate through the North-South Ministerial Council.<sup>119</sup>

After the end of the armed clashes, a number of measures were taken to establish the truth. These included the establishment of special commissions of inquiry to establish the truth about the bloody events of 30 January 1972 (the Bloody Sunday Inquiry), when British soldiers used weapons against protesters in Londonderry, and the Historical Enquiries Team, which reviewed the circumstances of 3,268 fatalities between 1969 and 1998. On 23 January 2013, the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, after receiving an additional £10 million budget over the next six years, announced the launch of historical enquiries into public complaints and deaths relating to the events of 1969-1998.<sup>120</sup> However, according to experts, in society there is still a sense that nobody has been held accountable for the sheer number of deaths.<sup>121</sup>

Even after the end of active hostilities, Northern Ireland remains symbolically divided by the so-called “peace walls”. The first peace walls were built in 1969 following a series of religious riots that rocked Belfast to separate republicans and loyalists. Initially, they consisted of barbed wire and corrugated fencing placed between abandoned buildings that separated Protestant and Catholic neighbourhoods. They were designed to be easily and quickly removed once the fighting between the two communities ceased. However, over time, as ethnic and religious differences became more entrenched in both communities, the “peace walls” took on a more permanent status. They were increasingly modernised with durability in mind, and this was reflected in the use of brick, concrete, iron railings and open wire mesh. They were also built to blend in with their surroundings and actually become part of the local topography.<sup>122</sup> While most of the walls were constructed in the early years of the Troubles, approximately one-third came up after 1994, when the IRA declared an effective ceasefire.<sup>123</sup> In September 2017, the Northern Ireland Department of Justice announced that all

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116 V. Krushynskiy, A. Blair and the Problem of Peaceful Settlement in Northern Ireland, Vol. 1 No. 123 (2014): TOPICAL ISSUES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

117 C. Landow and J. McBride, Moving Past the Troubles: The Future of Northern Ireland Peace, 2023, URL: <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/moving-past-troubles-future-northern-ireland-peace>

118 A recipe for reconciliation. Northern Ireland, URL: [http://www.ucipr.org.ua/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=176&catid=9&Itemid=213&lang=ua](http://www.ucipr.org.ua/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=176&catid=9&Itemid=213&lang=ua)

119 O. Kraev, The New "War" Between Catholics and Protestants: What is Really Happening in Northern Ireland, 21.04.2021, URL: <http://prismua.org/21-04-2021/>

120 Transitional Justice: The Experience of Northern Ireland, 15.02.2018, URL: <https://www.helsinki.org.ua/blogs/perehidne-pravosuddya-dosvid-pivnichnoji-irlandiji/>

121 Troubles in Northern Ireland, URL: <https://www.studysmarter.co.uk/explanations/history/modern-britain/troubles-in-northern-ireland/>

122 Peace walls: ‘a temporary measure’, 2009, URL: <https://www.historyireland.com/peace-walls-a-temporary-measure/>

123 The Story Behind Northern Ireland’s Peace Walls, URL: <https://theculturetrip.com/europe/united-kingdom/northern-ireland/articles/the-story-behind-northern-irelands-peace-walls>

“peace walls” should be removed by 2023 in line with the “Together: Building a United Community” strategy.

However, despite plans to remove all the walls, experts predict that most are likely to remain in place beyond 2023, while new data shows that 21 structures are not even included in the demolition programme.<sup>124</sup> As of 2023, Belfast has 30.5km of walls with 97 different barriers and forms of defensive architecture, including walls, fences, gates and closed roads. These are predominantly working-class communities in the north, west and east of the city. There are more walls in Belfast today than there were before 1998. They serve not only as physical barriers separating groups with different political, cultural or religious beliefs, but also as psychological reminders of the deep-rooted sectarian divisions that have long existed in the city.<sup>125</sup> In Belfast, gates and walls are often seen as a means of solving problems, but their presence divides opinions. A survey prepared for the UK Ministry of Justice in 2020 found that 42% of people want the walls to remain in place for security reasons. The same study found that 37% of respondents had never spoken to anyone living on the other side of the nearest peace wall. Indeed, research has shown that for communities living with such a history of violence, barriers create a sense of security, and people worry about the consequences of removing them.<sup>126</sup> It is worth noting that some people consider peace walls to be a major tourist attraction.<sup>127</sup>

Therefore, despite the fact that active hostilities ended 25 years ago, society in Northern Ireland remains divided on a number of grounds.

### Consequences of the conflict

According to official figures, 3,600 people died between 1969 and 1998.<sup>128</sup> In a study conducted by O’Reilly and Stevenson, 21.3% (361) of respondents said that the conflict had a significant impact on their lives or the lives of their families, and 25.1% (418) reported a similar impact. Overall, according to the researchers, the mental health of the population of Northern Ireland has been significantly affected by the Troubles.<sup>129</sup> In addition, the economic impact of the violence persists in a number of areas, including mental health care and brain drain. Examples of direct economic impacts include damage to business premises and equipment, economic infrastructure, and loss of human capital due to injury or death. Examples of indirect economic impacts include the diversion of government and business spending to enhance safety and security, including any impact on the cost of doing business and on attracting or retaining business investment in the affected region. Examples of behavioural changes are relocation of business investment away from the conflict area, migration of workers and changes in household spending patterns, such as reduced tourism.<sup>130</sup>

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124 Flaws exposed in plan to remove Northern Ireland’s peace walls, URL: <https://www.nicva.org/article/flaws-exposed-in-plan-to-remove-northern-ireland-s-peace-walls>

125 T. Alcaraz, Belfast has more peace walls now than 25 years ago – removing them will be a complex challenge, 2023, URL: <https://theconversation.com/belfast-has-more-peace-walls-now-than-25-years-ago-removing-them-will-be-a-complex-challenge-203975>

126 Ibid.

127 H. Forsgren, Troubles in Northern Ireland, URL: <https://ballardbrief.byu.edu/issue-briefs/troubles-in-northern-ireland>

128 <http://prismua.org/21-04-2021/>

129 O’Reilly, D, and M Stevenson. “Mental health in Northern Ireland: have “the Troubles” made it worse?” *Journal of epidemiology and community health* vol. 57,7 (2003): 488-92. doi:10.1136/jech.57.7.488

130 G. Brownlow, What is the economic legacy of Northern Ireland’s Troubles?, 2023, URL: <https://www.economicobservatory.com/what-is-the-economic-legacy-of-northern-irelands-troubles>

## Social processes

Inter-confessional contradictions (50.6% of Northern Ireland’s residents are supporters of the Anglican Church (unionists), and 38.4% are Catholic (republicans) are only one of the many causes of the conflict in Northern Ireland. It is Catholicism that has been and remains the banner of the Irish national movement, as belonging to a religious community determines the national and even social status of an individual.<sup>131</sup> Old disputes still exist between Catholics (who mostly want independence and reunification of Ireland) and Protestants (who mostly want to remain part of the Kingdom). Historically, the Protestants were the ruling minority, receiving all the privileges from the crown and holding the coercive apparatus, while the Catholics were the oppressed autochthonous Celtic population.<sup>132</sup>

Northern Ireland, according to some researchers, also remains an ethnically divided country, where the two groups are divided on the basis of religion, sport, language, territory, education, and political party organisation. The power-sharing system actually consolidates this division and incentivises the big parties to preserve it.<sup>133</sup> Young people in Northern Ireland are segregated not only by the schools they go to but also by the languages they speak and the sports they play: where some schools offer rugby or cricket, others provide Gaelic football and hurling. Communities are predominantly peaceful, equal, but still apart. Segregation disproportionately affects working-class families and only fuels hostility and harms young people.<sup>134</sup>

Fewer than 10% of pupils in Northern Ireland attend religiously integrated schools or those that are not predominantly affiliated with one faith. Social interaction between the two main religious communities remains limited. Parades and marches often have religious overtones, as do flags and emblems displayed by all sides on lampposts and buildings. In addition, Northern Ireland’s leaders have never developed a comprehensive approach to the legacy of past violence, as some other post-conflict societies have done. Efforts to prosecute those responsible for the killings and other initiatives have been uneven, which analysts say has hindered reconciliation.<sup>135</sup>

Also in Northern Ireland, armed groups still have significant influence (the Ulster Defence Association and the Ulster Volunteer Force). They cause “countless damage” to the community and intimidate neighbourhoods, according to local police. Children and adults are often forced to participate in illegal activities. It was these organisations, loyal to London, that called on Boris Johnson to withdraw his support for the 1998 Agreement during the 2021 protests.<sup>136</sup>

The UK’s withdrawal from the European Union was perceived differently by residents of Northern Ireland, which is part of the kingdom. According to the agreement, no border controls will be established on the border with the Republic of Ireland. However, control over the maritime border between Ireland and Britain will be strength-

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131 V. Krushynskiy, A. Blair and the Problem of Peaceful Settlement in Northern Ireland, Vol. 1 No. 123 (2014): TOPICAL ISSUES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

132 O. Kraev, Holding on to Belfast: Why Britain is finding it increasingly difficult to keep Northern Ireland, 2020, URL: <https://www.euointegration.com.ua/articles/2020/03/6/7107129/>

133 Belfast’s peace walls: potent symbols of division are dwindling – but slowly, 2023, URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/apr/07/belfasts-peace-walls-potent-symbols-of-division-are-dwindling-but-slowly>

134 A. Wallace, Integrated education in Northern Ireland is urgent – why can’t our leaders see that?, URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/dec/02/integrated-education-northern-ireland-school>

135 C. Landow and J. McBride, Moving Past the Troubles: The Future of Northern Ireland Peace, 2023, URL: <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/moving-past-troubles-future-northern-ireland-peace>

136 <http://prismua.org/21-04-2021/>

ened. All goods from Britain will be subject to customs control. Loyalists believe that Northern Ireland’s economy will suffer, that this will weaken its ties with the UK and lead to increased separatism.<sup>137</sup>

## Children and young people in conflict

Children and young people as a social group have been among those who have suffered the most and disproportionately from conflict-related violence. Between 1969 and March 1998, an estimated 257 children under the age of 18 died as a result of the conflict,<sup>138</sup> 40 % of the total number of people killed were under the age of 25. Between 1969 and 1998, 23 children under the age of five, 24 children between the ages of 6 and 11 and 210 children between the ages of 12 and 17 died as a result of the conflict.<sup>139</sup> Children and youth have been subjected to additional violence in the form of attacks by paramilitary groups.<sup>140</sup>

Young people were not always passive observers of the antagonisms of the conflict between 1969 and 1998, but their relative vulnerability was in many cases consistently overlooked or exploited by adult combatants. Youth were subjected to violent interference by security and paramilitary forces, physical harm and forced displacement, and experienced the loss of relatives and friends to violence or imprisonment. Although the peace agreement ended active hostilities in 1998, images of the ‘troubled generations’ continue to be strongly embedded in contemporary cultural perceptions in Northern Ireland.<sup>141</sup>

Children living in areas of high deprivation are the most affected, as highlighted by the Bamford Review, which noted “the impact of religious division and related violence on children and young people” and emphasised that ongoing social and economic hardship, combined with poor parental mental health, has a negative impact on children.<sup>142</sup> In 2015, the Commission for Victims and Survivors for Northern Ireland (CVSNI) highlighted the intergenerational impact of trauma, as parents who have been psychologically affected by the conflict carry these effects into the lives of young people.<sup>143</sup>

Noting the clear link between high levels of poverty and the impact of the conflict, the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) said segregation continues to be part of children’s daily lives. “The impact of the ‘Troubles’... continue to significantly impact on the lives of our children and young people, all of whom were born after the Good Friday Agreement. The communities most deeply affected by the Northern Ireland conflict are also those in areas with the high-

137 Conflict in Northern Ireland – since when and why police officers are maimed, 13.04.2021, URL: [https://gazeta.ua/articles/history/\\_konflikt-u-pivnichnij-irlandiyi-vidkoli-i-za-scho-kalichat-policejskih/1025832](https://gazeta.ua/articles/history/_konflikt-u-pivnichnij-irlandiyi-vidkoli-i-za-scho-kalichat-policejskih/1025832)

138 McAlister, S., Scraton, P., & Haydon, D. (2014). Childhood in transition: growing up in ‘post-conflict’ Northern Ireland. *Children’s Geographies*, 12 (3), 297-311

139 Children & Young People, URL: <https://peaceplatform.seupb.eu/en/story-of-peace/key-themes/children-and-young-people/>

140 McAlister, S., Scraton, P., & Haydon, D. (2014). Childhood in transition: growing up in ‘post-conflict’ Northern Ireland. *Children’s Geographies*, 12 (3), 297-311.

141 L. Newby, *Troubled Generations? (De)Constructing Narratives of Youth Experience in the Northern Ireland Conflict*, University of Brighton, UK

142 A vision of a Comprehensive Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS) - July 2006, URL: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/dhssps/Camh%20Vision%20Comprehensive%20Service%20Report.pdf>

143 O’neill, S., Armour, C., Bolton, D.A., Bunting, B.P., Corry, C., Devine, B., Ennis, E., Ferry, F., McKenna, Á.E., McLafferty, M., & Murphy, S. (2015). *Towards a better future: the trans-generational impact of the Troubles on mental health*. 8

est rates of mental ill-health and child poverty, and the lowest levels of educational attainment.”<sup>144 145</sup>

These trends can also be seen in interviews with young people born after the end of the hostilities. Conlon, a 22-year-old Irish-speaking activist, told CNN that growing up in a segregated society, attending an Irish primary and Irish Catholic secondary school, and being exposed to a closed environment had a negative impact on her perception of Protestants. History at school, her parents and murals in her neighbourhood that portrayed a negative image of Protestant, which persisted until the respondent started attending the cross-community Rainbow Factory performing arts school, which helped her make friends of other faiths. As Conlon says, “The older generations have not healed, and that’s why it keeps getting passed on to the younger generation.” But Keys, a Protestant, also grew up in a closed, homogeneous environment, and for most of his life he thought that “all Catholics were evil, scary, and wanted to kill us.”<sup>146</sup> In other words, the unhealed traumas of generations continue to affect the lives of children and young people in Northern Ireland.

## Education

Since its foundation in 1921, Northern Ireland’s education system has largely consisted of state-controlled schools (mainly attended by protestant pupils) and catholic maintained schools (almost exclusively attended by catholic pupils). Although sectarian segregation was largely inherited after the partition of Ireland in 1920, it was not until the 1970s that education researchers began to consider the potential links between segregated schools and social conflict.<sup>147</sup> The first attempt to break the established mould of education was the formation of the campaigning group All Children Together, established by parents in the 1970s whose vision was one whereby existing schools could transform to integrated status. When no existing schools succeeded in transforming this led directly to the establishment of Lagan College, the first planned Integrated school in Northern Ireland, in 1981.

The Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) was established in 1987 as a coordinating body to provide advice and guidance to schools and parent groups. The Education Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 gave the Department of Education statutory responsibility to encourage and facilitate integrated schooling. Whilst immediate recurrent funding could be given to new schools that met stringent enrolment and growth criteria, there was no provision for capital funding until the schools had demonstrated their viability over time.<sup>148</sup>

Michael Wardlow, director of the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education, says that even though all school curricula must include cross-curricular themes – such as Education for Mutual Understanding and the Study of Cultural Heritage – there is also a «hidden curriculum» implicit when schoolchildren of different religions

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144 Statement on Children’s Rights in Northern Ireland (SOCRNI 1) – 2018, URL: <https://www.niccy.org/what-we-do/statement-on-childrens-rights-in-northern-ireland-socrni/statement-on-childrens-rights-in-northern-ireland/>

145 Children & Young People, URL: <https://peaceplatform.seupb.eu/en/story-of-peace/key-themes/children-and-young-people/>

146 C. Magee, Northern Ireland’s ‘peace babies’ say sectarianism lives on, thwarting progress, 2023, URL: <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/04/09/europe/good-friday-agreement-peace-baby-intl-gbr/index.html>.

147 C. McGlynn, Education for Peace in Integrated Schools: A Priority for Northern Ireland?, *Child Care in Practice* 10(2), 2002, pp. 85-94.

148 The History of Integrated Education, URL: <https://www.ief.org.uk/integrated-education/the-history-of-integrated-education/>

are separated. Young people might live their whole childhoods never meeting a student from another religion, and peace and reconciliation are unlikely to come about when schoolchildren cannot study together.<sup>149</sup>

## Memorialisation

In general, some scholars have criticised the hegemony of the Northern Ireland government in the creation and dissemination of collective memory.<sup>150</sup> There are ongoing disputes over the erection of memorials, especially those erected by groups of combatants. Certain memorial projects in Northern Ireland have not only failed to promote reconciliation but have themselves acted as a catalyst for more violence, such as James McCurrie Robert Neill Memorial Garden (dedicated to victims of IRA violence, including those killed in the 1970 shooting at St Matthew’s Catholic Church), which has been repeatedly targeted by vandals.<sup>151</sup>

In September 2023, the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act came into force. The law establishes an independent reconciliation and truth commission, restricts criminal investigations, court proceedings, police investigations and complaints, and expands the prisoner release scheme. This legislation ends all Troubles-related criminal investigations, civil remedies, inquests and Police Ombudsman investigations, and replaces them with a new Independent Commission on Reconciliation and Information Recovery. The Commission will have the power to review serious Troubles-related offences, to offer conditional immunity for those offences, and to make recommendations on oral history and memorialisation. The legislation is opposed by victims and their families, all political parties in Northern Ireland and the Irish government.<sup>152</sup> Part 4 of the Act relates to “memorialising the Troubles” and facilitating an ‘academic report’ of the conflict. Many commentators and academics have already questioned how fair and open such a process and outcome can be in terms of commemorating the past.<sup>153</sup>

## ■ SUCCESSFUL ACTIVITIES

### Institutional success

In Northern Ireland, the government’s response to recognising the impact of the conflict on children and young people included the establishment of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) in 2003 “to safeguard and promote the rights and best interests of children and young people” and the development of a ten-year strategy for children and young people in 2006, which was subsequently replaced by the current ten-year strategy for 2019-2029.<sup>154</sup>

149 C. Tell, In Northern Ireland / Schools of Reconciliation, 1999, URL: <https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/schools-of-reconciliation>

150 Rolston, W. (2020). Ambushed by Memory: Post-Conflict Popular Memorialisation in Northern Ireland. *International Journal of Transitional Justice*, 14 (2), 320-339. <https://doi.org/doi: 10.1093/ijtj/ijaa004>

151 <https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/582318/2/BARBER%20At%20Vision%27s%20Edge%20.pdf>

152 Taking the UK to court might be awkward but it’s the right thing to do morally , 22.11.2023, <https://www.qub.ac.uk/Research/GRI/mitchell-institute/news/22112023-KieranMcEvoyarticle.html>

153 Troubles Legacy Bill 'It's almost as if the UK is writing itself out of the North's history', 08.09.2023, <https://www.thejournal.ie/readme/northern-ireland-troubles-legacy-bill-6162581-Sep2023/>

154 Children and young people’s strategy, 2019-2029, URL: <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/2019-2029%20CYP%20Strategy.pdf>

Under the 2007 Education (Curriculum Minimum Content) Order (2007 No. 46), citizenship education became a statutory requirement in the curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 to 4 (ages 5 to 16). According to the Council for Curriculum, Examination and Assessment (CCEA), the rationale for this was: the importance of young people understanding how they are governed, and how they can participate in the democratic process to improve life for themselves and others; and the responsibility of education to support peace and stability in Northern Ireland.<sup>155</sup>

The Northern Ireland Assembly has also partnered with CCEA to develop resources for teaching citizenship education. The website<sup>156</sup> includes interactive multimedia games and activities, as well as teacher notes and lesson plans. Annual teacher conferences provide up-to-date information about the Assembly, lesson ideas and opportunities to meet with MPs. Special projects allow young people to research issues and express their views. Regular “Let’s Talk” events bring together schoolchildren from different schools to discuss issues with elected representatives, helping to develop knowledge of issues, understanding and communication skills.<sup>157</sup>

The Education Service also works with Assembly committees to gather young people’s views on legislation and issues. During the 2011-16 mandate, using focus groups and online surveys, young people were consulted on the Road Traffic Bill, Anti-Bullying in Schools and Co-Education Bills; and on inquiry topics including school inspections; Co-Education and Integrated Education, the Together Building United Community (TBUC) strategy and school boards.

The context of the Northern Ireland Assembly and its curriculum and activity-based resources also help to develop cross-curricular skills such as literacy (e.g. debating skills and democratic terminology); numeracy (e.g. through understanding the budget); communication; thinking; problem solving; working with others and using information and communication technology. Overall, the programme is designed to ensure that all young people leave school with an understanding of the importance of government and how to influence government decisions.<sup>158</sup>

## Informal initiatives

The peacebuilding process in Northern Ireland has also been characterised by a number of successful informal initiatives. The Children’s Friendship Project for Northern Ireland, Inc. (CFPNI) was a peace and friendship programme that promoted mutual understanding and interaction between Catholic and Protestant teenagers in Northern Ireland, their families and friends between 1987 and 2007. Teenagers in Northern Ireland who demonstrated the potential to be future leaders were selected and placed in intercultural teams to spend several weeks together over the summer in an American home where they could become friends in a neutral environment and focus on their commonalities rather than their differences. CFPNI sponsored numerous reunions in Northern Ireland, both before and after the summer, to build and maintain friendships between the pairs, as well as to expand cross-cultural contacts with other teens in the programme, other family members and friends. More than 2,000 teenagers who participated in the CFPNI programme came from all six counties of

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155 M. McConville, The Northern Ireland Assembly and the School Curriculum, 17:10.2016, URL: <https://www.assemblyresearchmatters.org/2016/10/17/the-northern-ireland-assembly-and-the-school-curriculum/>

156 <https://education.niassembly.gov.uk/>

157 Ibid.

158 Ibid.

Northern Ireland and from all socio-economic groups.<sup>159</sup> This project has its origins in the many “vacation schemes” of the 1980s, which allowed children from both Catholic and Protestant communities to travel to the United States for several weeks during the summer months. Activities varied but included participation in community service and volunteer programmes, cultural events, and team-building activities focusing on leadership and conflict resolution. However, the main focus was on building friendships, and a key requirement was that both participants from the two main religious groups in Northern Ireland had to share a room for the duration of their stay with an American host family.<sup>160</sup> The programme received strong positive feedback.

Youth initiatives include the Youth Network for Peace (YNP), a cross-border youth initiative to build an active movement of 10,000 diverse young people aged 15-25 across Northern Ireland and the Irish border regions, resulting in meaningful, focused and sustainable contact between young people from different communities.<sup>161</sup> Thus, the Youth Democracy Hub will bring together 10,000 young people from diverse backgrounds who come together to address common concerns and issues. To discuss these issues, Radio YNP is working to unite and engage young people on both sides of the Irish border and to raise awareness of the issues faced by young people and their regions today. YNP Radio is playing live music, political debate and blockbuster reviews, where all shows are created by or featuring young people.

## Memorialisation

“Healing Through Remembering” is an independent initiative made up of diverse members with different political views working towards a common goal of dealing with the legacy of the conflict in Northern Ireland.<sup>162</sup> One of the good practices worth of noting is the extensive consultation process undertaken by the Healing Through Memory project on methods and strategies for memorialisation and subsequent healing. 108 submissions provided recommendations for the memorialisation process.<sup>163</sup> Although these recommendations were not incorporated into a formal memorialisation policy (which, at the time of writing, is not available at all), such consultations can be a useful tool for developing such strategies.

## ■ UNSUCCESSFUL ACTIVITIES

### Segregated education

In 2021, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland delivered an address to the British Parliament in which he stressed that not all of the consequences of the Troubles have been effectively addressed. He highlighted the impact of the intergenerational trauma of the past conflict, which is passed down through generations and re-establishes divisions between communities, and the response system has failed to find answers to these challenges.<sup>164</sup>

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159 2023 – Reconnecting CFPNI, URL: <https://friendships4peace.org/childrens-friendship-project-for-northern-ireland/>

160 Ellison, Christine Smith (2014) "The Role of Youth in Post Accord Transformation in Northern Ireland," Peace and Conflict Studies: Vol. 21 : No. 1 , Article 2. DOI: 10.46743/1082-7307/2014.1001, Available at: <https://nsu-works.nova.edu/pcs/vol21/iss1/2>

161 Youth Network for Peace, URL: <https://www.youthaction.org/youth-network-for-peace>

162 <https://healingthroughremembering.org>

163 <http://healingthroughremembering.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/HTR-Report-2002.pdf>

164 Addressing the Legacy of Northern Ireland’s Past, URL: <http://surl.li/qzlkka>

The document makes specific reference to education, which remains divided and could contribute to the reconciliation and peacebuilding process by expanding integrated education, using technical and vocational education to improve educational outcomes for children across the community, and through improving Northern Ireland’s university provision.<sup>165</sup>

Integrated education, which is certainly a positive practice, remains inadequately implemented in the Irish context. The Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement (1998) places integrated education in the context of reconciliation, stating that “an essential aspect of the reconciliation process shall be the promotion of a culture of tolerance at all levels of society, including initiatives to promote integrated education and mixed housing”.

Integrated Education is defined in the Integrated Education Act of 2022 as education together in an Integrated school of:

- those of different cultures and religious beliefs and none, including reasonable numbers of both Protestant and Roman Catholic children or young persons;
- those who are experiencing socio-economic deprivation and those that are not; and
- those of different abilities.<sup>166</sup>

However, the fact that the reform was driven by community action is a testament to both the urgency of integrated schools and the negligence of political leaders. The Integrated Education Foundation (IEF) has helped several schools achieve this status since the integration of Northern Ireland’s first school in 1981. None of these 68 schools were integrated through a state organisation. According to Tina Merron, IEF Chief Executive: “Every integrated school has come into existence by parents’ groups setting one up or by an existing school transforming to integrated status ... the end result is a testimony to months, if not years, of hard work by parents, teachers and governors.”<sup>167</sup>

In 2014, a High Court judge ruled that the Department of Education needed to be “alive” to its statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of Integrated Education at a strategic level. Justice Treacy also clarified that the term ‘integrated education’ cannot apply to a school with just mixed enrolments but rather to formally constituted Integrated schools where integration includes staffing and governance.<sup>168</sup>

In 2023, there are 71 integrated schools in Northern Ireland (out of a total of 976) with over 27,000 schoolchildren.<sup>169</sup> This means that only 7% of schools are integrated and the majority of schoolchildren attend segregated schools: “maintained” schools, which are affiliated with the Catholic Church, and “controlled” schools, which are state-run and include mostly Protestant schoolchildren. Thousands of young people also attend selective “grammar” schools, which are typically segregated along sectarian lines.<sup>170</sup> While researchers can measure how many people are enrolled in

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165 Ibid.

166 Integrated Education, <https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/integrated-education>.

167 A. Wallace, Integrated education in Northern Ireland is urgent – why can’t our leaders see that?, URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/dec/02/integrated-education-northern-ireland-school>

168 The History of Integrated Education, URL: <https://www.ief.org.uk/integrated-education/the-history-of-integrated-education/>.

169 Ibid.

170 L. Butterly, ‘Indisputable’ demand for integrated schools but challenges remain 25 years after Belfast Agreement, 2023, URL: <http://surl.li/qzln>.

integrated schools, there is no accurate way to determine whether schoolchildren are interacting with people outside their community and how effective the interactions are in achieving the desired programme goals. There are also other potential factors affecting the outcomes of these schools, including the likelihood that parents who send their children to integrated schools already support integration, and that those who are the biggest opponents of integration are likely to not enrol their children in these schools.<sup>171</sup>

In the context of Northern Ireland, it is not the idea of creating integrated educational institutions that should be considered unsuccessful, but its implementation, namely the low level of state support. The experience of Northern Ireland confirms that significant changes in the education system require state support, primarily institutional, but also material. Segregated education is not a solution to the issue of divisions and differences in society, but instead only deepens them and becomes an obstacle to peace in the post-conflict period.

### **Lack of psychological support**

A 2011 study by the University of Ulster found that 8.8 % of people surveyed met the criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder. Siobhan O'Neill, Professor of Mental Health at the university, emphasises that people in Northern Ireland were not offered support and services. People started seeking psychological help around the end of the 2010s. She also notes that despite the prevalence of mental illness (the highest in the UK), funding for mental health is significantly lower than in other regions.<sup>172</sup>

A study on child trauma in Northern Ireland confirmed that children and adolescents are affected by violent armed conflict. Stress can manifest itself in children in the form of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, phobias, behavioural problems, and can affect the child's growth and development. According to Dr Karen Treu, a professor of psychology at Queen's University Belfast, the psychological trauma of children affected by violence during the conflict has not been addressed for many years. Children were believed to be very resilient, even when they witnessed direct violence such as murder, so they were not given psychiatric counselling. Furthermore, in a 2003 report, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety of Northern Ireland (DHSSPS), found that victim assistance services were usually developed as a response to a specific tragedy and randomly selected services. Fear for personal safety, mistrust of the government, lack of or unavailability of specialised services for children, inadequate funding for services and inadequate training of service providers were the most common barriers faced by the Northern Ireland population to addressing mental health issues.<sup>173</sup> Because the Northern Ireland government has not allocated sufficient funds to mental health services (in fact, funding for mental health services in Northern Ireland is the lowest in the United Kingdom), counselling and access to services are not as widespread as they could be.<sup>174</sup>

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171 H. Forsgren, Troubles in Northern Ireland, URL: <https://ballardbrief.byu.edu/issue-briefs/troubles-in-northern-ireland>.

172 Troubles trauma - the hidden legacy of violence, 2019, URL: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-4e749357887>.

173 Ghigliazza, Lisa A. (2008) "Children, Trauma, and the Troubles: Northern Ireland's Social Service Response," *McNair Scholars Research Journal* : Vol. 1 , Article 9.

174 H. Forsgren, Troubles in Northern Ireland, URL: <https://ballardbrief.byu.edu/issue-briefs/troubles-in-northern-ireland>.

## ■ CONCLUSIONS

The experience of Northern Ireland is quite interesting in relation to the Ukrainian context. The country has experienced more than 30 years of active violence, as well as physical separation by the barriers of the so-called “peace walls”. For 25 years since the ceasefire and the end of the violence, these walls continue to divide people, both physically and mentally. Even a well-thought-out and gentle strategy to overcome the consequences of the unrest, which was supposed to reduce polarisation in society and promote unity, has not fully worked. Religious affiliation still continues to be a marker of identity and political loyalty, and even young people from different groups who grew up after the end of the Troubles have few chances to meet other than at rare integration platforms or civil society initiatives. For Ukraine, Ireland’s experience is valuable in that it proves the need to bring representatives of different groups closer together and identifies the key role of the state in managing and supporting these processes, including material support. This cannot be replaced by any, even the most high-quality and successful private events, and will work best in synergy.

# EXPERIENCE OF BELGIUM



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## ■ HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Kingdom of Belgium was created in 1830 when its provinces seceded from the Netherlands as a result of the national revolution. Since then, antagonism between French and Dutch speakers has intensified.<sup>175</sup> Prior to that, the Belgian territory was under the influence of Spanish (1585-1714), Austrian (1714-1794) and French (1794-1815) protectorates, and onwards it was part of the Netherlands from 1815 to 1830.<sup>176</sup>

Since 1830, the only official language of Belgium, including the language of education, has been French – until 1883, there were no secondary schools in the country where Flemish (local dialect of Dutch) was taught. In 1898, Belgium passed a law on the equality of the Flemish and French languages. During World War I, German authorities that aimed at a permanent dissolution of Belgium, again divided it into two administrative blocks: Flanders with Brussels and Wallonia with Namur as capitals.<sup>177</sup>

For almost 150 years, Belgium was dominated by the French-speaking elite, including the royal family. The situation changed dramatically in the mid-20th century due to the closure of businesses and the decline of farming, and today Flanders is much more economically powerful than Wallonia. Therefore, according to French-speaking Belgians, Flanders wants to take revenge for the past by demanding more power and independence from the Walloons.<sup>178</sup>

Today, three main communities are separately represented in the country: Flemish, French and German-speaking. Due to the lack of consensus on linguistic issues, there are no unified official statistics on the use of the three official languages or their dialects. According to various sources, it is estimated that about 59% of the Belgian population speaks Dutch, while French is spoken by about 40% of residents.<sup>179</sup> Bilingualism in Belgium does not mean that both languages can be used everywhere. They are certainly used in the capital Brussels and its environs, and also in matters of justice. But you can’t bring registration documents in French to the mayor’s office of a Flemish town – the law prohibits it.<sup>180</sup>

Wim Winckelmans, a columnist for the Dutch-language newspaper *Het Nieuwsblad*, explains that: “In reality, they (the languages) do not coexist. They live next to each other, but not together. We have clearly defined linguistic boundaries: each community has its own language and territory. However, there are areas where languages are mixed – Brussels and the surrounding area. And this is where things are very bad. We, the Flemish, cannot agree with the Walloons on many things, from the division of territory to the state system. There are particular problems with French-speaking settlements around Brussels, which flatly refuse to speak Dutch, even though it is the territory of Flanders.”

175 Separatist sentiment in the heart of Europe: is there a threat to the existence of a united Belgium?, 2019, URL: <https://adastra.org.ua/blog/separatistski-nastroyi-v-serci-yevropi-chi-isnuye-zagroza-isnuvannyu-yedynoyi-belgiyi>

176 B. Marusiak, Language Policy in Belgium: Lessons for Ukraine, 07.11.2020, URL: <https://www.promoteukraine.org/uk/movna-politika-v-belgii-uroki-dlya-ukraini/>

177 G. Gupta, How can Belgium overcome its regional linguistic conflicts?, URL: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/socialpolicy/2021/03/18/how-can-belgium-overcome-its-regional-linguistic-conflicts/>

178 V. Yeremitsa, Bilingual coexistence in Belgium: An "artificial" country, real problems, 01.07.2008, URL: <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/1182238.html>

179 Separatist sentiment in the heart of Europe: is there a threat to the existence of a united Belgium?, 2019, URL: <https://adastra.org.ua/blog/separatistski-nastroyi-v-serci-yevropi-chi-isnuye-zagroza-isnuvannyu-yedynoyi-belgiyi>

180 I. Melnyk, Belgian bilingualism: emerging from separatism, ending in a split, 26.11.2009, URL: [https://text.org.ua/articles/9945/Belgijska\\_dvovnist\\_vynykla\\_z\\_separatyzmu\\_zavershujetsa\\_rozkolom-9945/](https://text.org.ua/articles/9945/Belgijska_dvovnist_vynykla_z_separatyzmu_zavershujetsa_rozkolom-9945/)

Belgian society is characterized by three main divides: socioeconomic, philosophical-ideological and linguistic. This combination of coinciding fault lines has made for a divided state, but it is essentially the latter that has shaped Belgian federalism. The linguistic divide is strongly reflected in the institutional arrangements and various public policies of the country.<sup>181</sup>

## The Belgian Compromise

The transformation from a unitary to a federal state, which began with the constitutional reform of 1970 (the so-called first reform) and continued with the most recent reform of 2014 (the so-called sixth reform), was intended to satisfy two distinct demands. First, the Flemish movement’s battle for the recognition and advancement of the Flemish culture and language led to the creation of communities with jurisdiction over cultural matters. In turn, the second demand, the Walloons’ desire to control actions to respond to the economic decline of Wallonia since the 1960s, led to the creation of regions with jurisdiction over economic matters.<sup>182</sup> Under the present constitution (article 2), Belgium comprises three communities: French, Flemish and German-speaking. Basically, the communities have jurisdiction over culture and education as well as matters involving “person-to-person relationships” – for example health care, youth protection and social assistance. The territorial area of the German-speaking Community corresponds to the German-speaking linguistic region.

The French and Flemish communities each have their own separate territory – corresponding to the Dutch-speaking linguistic region for the Flemish Community and the French-speaking linguistic region for the French Community – but they also share a common territory that corresponds with the bilingual Brussels linguistic region. Both communities can enact laws that apply to the Brussels territory, but only for unilingual institutions such as those in the cultural field.

The question of language has been central to the evolution of the Belgian Federation. The compromise is based on three components or pillars: linguistic freedom, the distribution of competences on language policy and the principle of territoriality.<sup>183</sup>

## Confrontations

Confrontations between the French- and Dutch-speaking communities over language issues have repeatedly affected Belgian political life, with economic and social problems mostly being transferred to the political and linguistic plane. This tense atmosphere between the language communities should be seen in the context of the historical legacy of the political, economic and cultural dominance of the French-speaking elite in Flanders and Brussels, whose representatives have always seen any changes as a threat, viewing them through the prism of the “defeat-victory” stereotype.

The subsequent negotiations gave birth to a complex and lengthy process of state reform. This painful evolution was based on romantic ideals of monolingual areas. A key element of this policy was the principle of territoriality, meaning that the official language does not depend on who speaks it, but on where that “who” is located. In Belgium, three languages are recognised as official: Dutch, French and German.

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181 Sébastien Van Drooghenbroeck and Patricia Popelier, *The Belgian Linguistic Compromise: Between Old Battles and New Challenges*, 2022, URL: <https://forumfed.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/OPS-55-Language-Policy-Belgium.pdf>.

182 Ibid.

183 Ibid.

The official language of each of the respective municipalities is clearly defined in the Constitution of the country. Most municipalities have only one official language, and all relations between citizens and the government are conducted in that language.

In this sense, the Brussels-Capital Region is one of the few exceptions. It is the only officially bilingual region in the country, with both Dutch and French having official status. Its residents are officially recognised as members of the Flemish or French-speaking community, while the rest of the Belgian citizens are considered members of only one of the communities, namely Flemish, French or German-speaking, depending on the official language of their place of residence.

These three “communities” live in three “regions”. Excluding municipalities with language institutions, only the Flemish region is purely monolingual; the Wallonia includes French- and German-speaking municipalities, and 19 municipalities in the Brussels-Capital Region are bilingual.

Both regions and communities have their own powers, electoral system, legislative and executive bodies, as well as their own administrative apparatus and services. The competence of the communities extends to cultural and educational matters, as well as the so-called welfare affairs (e.g. health care, social security, youth and minority affairs, etc.).

Thus, the position of the Flemish Community in Brussels and of the Dutch language, in general, is determined not only by the number of speakers of the latter but also by its position in the country. A disturbance of this precarious balance at the national or regional level would automatically affect the links and interaction between the respective communities at both levels.<sup>184</sup>

According to the country’s constitution, 49 of the 150 members of the House of Representatives are from Wallonia, 79 are from Flanders, and 22 are from the bilingual central constituency of Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde. Analysts emphasise that the external dominance of the Flemish is not important for solving problems between linguistic communities. For Belgium, it seems imperative to reach a compromise between the political majority in both parts of the country. The division of the Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde district into French-speaking Brussels and a belt of Dutch-speaking suburbs has become a bone of contention that has led to a deep political crisis. The Flemish demand that the constituency be divided into two parts - French-speaking Brussels should become a separate constituency, and its suburban belt of 35 Dutch-speaking communes should be merged into the constituency of the province of Flemish Brabant, where the Belgian capital is located.<sup>185</sup>

After the 2007 elections, Belgium remained without a government for six months due to disagreements and strife between Dutch-speaking Flanders in the north and French-speaking Wallonia in the south. Three years later, the same conflict felled the government again.<sup>186</sup>

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184 Territorial distribution of languages and linguistic geostrategy: a textbook / edited by Anisimova A.I., Popova I.S. - D.: LIRA, 2016. 211 p.

185 Belgian parliament split over language issue, 2010, URL: <https://news.obozrevatel.com/ukr/abroad/43526-belgijiskij-parlament-rozbivsvya-pro-movne-pitannya.htm>

186 I. Traynor, The language divide at the heart of a split that is tearing Belgium apart, 2010, URL: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2010/may/09/belgium-flanders-wallonia-french-dutch>

## Education

To finally resolve the long-standing tensions, the government resolved to create virtually independent education systems in Dutch, French and German. This is precisely the point of independence, as there is very little overlap between them because the “second” language is taught very late in the schools of each language community. This leads to the fact that a significant part of the population of Flanders and Wallonia has a poor command of the second official language.<sup>187</sup>

Although the three languages have official status, Dutch is not always part of the compulsory curriculum in schools in Wallonia, French is taught to a limited extent in Flanders, and German is not considered compulsory in Flanders and Wallonia. Of course, it depends on the specific location of the school and the choice of the parents, but in general, it is quite common for Belgians from Wallonia to not speak Dutch and for Flemish people to have a lower knowledge of French than two decades ago, and as a result, they have difficulty understanding each other.<sup>188</sup>

There are two independent education systems in Brussels: for the Flemish and the French communities. Residents of Brussels can freely choose between the two, so education is mostly monolingual. Nevertheless, most schoolchildren leave school at the age of 18 (compulsory school age) with knowledge of two or three foreign languages. They usually start learning another national language (Dutch or French) in the third year of primary school. A second foreign language, usually English, is taught at the beginning of secondary school. Schoolchildren can choose to study a third foreign language in the final years of secondary school, and the choice really depends on the school.<sup>189</sup>

## Attempts to unite

The Belgian Secretary of State for the Civil Service, Hendrik Bogaert, proposed that all civil servants, at least those of the highest rank, should be fluent in two official languages – French and Dutch. However, Secretary of State Hendrik Bogaert’s initiative did not receive much support, although it had legitimate grounds.

Among the incentives is the monthly so-called “linguistic bonus” for possession of a certificate of knowledge of a second state language, but this applies only to bilingual Brussels, and not, for example, to the east of Wallonia. Flanders has previously tried to make linguistic selection for civil servants, even at the regional level, more stringent and mandatory. However, the last such initiative in 2011 was stopped by the European Commission, which called it discriminatory and forced the Flemish authorities to relax the language requirements for candidates.<sup>190</sup>

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187 Sysoieva S.O., Krystopchuk T.E. Educational systems of the European Union: general characteristics: a textbook / S.O. Sysoieva, T.E. Krystopchuk; Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University - Rivne: Ovid, 2012. – 352 pp.

188 B. Marusiak, Language policy in Belgium: lessons for Ukraine, 07.11.2020, URL: <https://www.promoteukraine.org/uk/movna-politika-v-belgii-uroki-dlya-ukraini/>

189 Language and education, URL: [https://www.ucl.ac.uk/dutchstudies/an/SP\\_LINKS\\_UCL\\_POPUP/SPs\\_english/brussels/onderwijs.html](https://www.ucl.ac.uk/dutchstudies/an/SP_LINKS_UCL_POPUP/SPs_english/brussels/onderwijs.html)

190 V. Yeremitsa, The language test in Belgium is passed by... the Prime Minister, 17.01.2013, URL: <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/24843887.html>.

## ■ CONCLUSIONS

Some researchers, in their works on solving language problems in Ukraine, use the example of multilingual countries, particularly Belgium. In some of the occupied Ukrainian territories, the Ukrainian language has not been officially taught for almost 10 years, and Russian has been actively introduced instead. Therefore, after de-occupation, the issue of language will arise, because part of the population from the TOT may never have learned Ukrainian outside the home, and in the territory controlled by the Ukrainian government, Russian is perceived as the language of the enemy and an instrument of colonial policy. Therefore, the issue of language will be one of the main issues after de-occupation.

However, the Belgian experience seems to have little positive inherent value – the country has remained divided along linguistic lines for several centuries, and this division has resulted in a literal lack of understanding between French- and Flemish-speaking Belgians. Therefore, attempts to separate specific regions with Russian as the “regional” language will not lead to long-term peace and reintegration within a single country, but will lead to even greater tensions and segregation – and even potentially to another conflict on linguistic grounds.

# Lessons (not) learned

The experience of the countries studied clearly demonstrates that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to the challenges faced by polarised societies, especially in the post-war period. Most importantly, however, the unresolved problems of the past can have a significant impact on the present, and the unlearned lessons of other countries are essential to understanding how to build a more successful reintegration model, tailored to the local context.

According to expert opinions, as well as interviews with stakeholders from the Balkan countries and Germany, it can be argued that all the challenges we have identified as key in the context of the study (post-war recovery, overcoming trauma, segregation, curriculum development, memorialisation) are complex and interrelated. Ignoring or insufficiently addressing one of the challenges can lead to an increase in the negative impact of the others. For example, insufficiently addressing trauma can lead to increased polarisation of society, which in turn increases segregation, and segregation leads to discrimination. Therefore, reintegration policies should be viewed as systematic and comprehensive activities in different areas that are inextricably linked. This is the understanding that was lacking in the countries studied, and according to a respondent from one Balkan country: *“the war that ended more than 20 years ago continues in people’s minds”*.

## Socio-economic challenges

Armed conflicts lead to devastating consequences, including the forced migration of people from the war zone, the destruction of infrastructure (and sometimes entire cities), and a decline in the socio-economic well-being of the population. Typically, countries exhausted by war lack the resources to recover quickly, and sometimes countries that have long since recovered from the shock of war also lack such resources, which is relevant in the context of German reunification. Despite the economic stimulus, the former East German territories are still less attractive from an investment and economic point of view, and there is still a gap in the size of pensions, which are higher in the former West German territory. Respondents from the Balkan countries also stressed the importance of restoring the economic capacity of the population, as the economic consequences of the war are still generating migration from the region, a brain drain, and an outflow of people from rural and remote areas in search of material prosperity. Therefore, creating the conditions for improving socio-economic well-being, jobs, and career guidance programmes is a crucial part of successful reintegration, which will ultimately reduce the level of marginalisation in the long run.

## Psychological interventions

According to our respondents, reintegration work should begin even before the end of active hostilities, as well as working directly with the affected population. In the context of BiH, it was noted that professional psychological assistance was provided in a non-centralised manner, mostly available in large cities (and did not reach small towns and villages) through numerous charitable and non-governmental organisations that depended on external funding from abroad, which quickly ended followed by the cessation of interventions. Whereas, the absence of systematic and long-term psychological assistance has led to traumatising of the population, which

passes on old traumas to the younger generation, as the experience of Northern Ireland clearly demonstrates. The importance of psychological interventions was also mentioned by respondents from Croatia, who said that unhealed traumas of the past affect the present, including the segregation in society that exists in Croatia today.

## Segregation

Segregation is a logical but extremely negative consequence of war, especially in ethnically divided countries. The Erdut Peace Agreement, which ended the active phase of the war in the Balkans, enshrined de facto segregation within BiH society at the legislative level. Once multi-ethnic areas became mono-ethnic and the concept of “two schools under one roof” became popular in mixed areas, where children of different ethnic backgrounds do not cross paths. In the Vukovar region of Croatia, where the Serbian minority lives, a similar model was chosen: Serbian children, with their parents’ permission, were allowed to study the Croatian curriculum, but in the Serbian language, separately from Croatian children. According to local NGO experts, although this practice helped to resolve some disputes in the post-war period (e.g., Croats who returned from Serbian concentration camps did not want their children to go to school with ethnic Serbs), in the long run, it failed to resolve any disputes, but only deepens divisions in society. Therefore, the priority should not be to divide but to bring people together, no matter how deep the divisions may be, especially in the early post-war years. This highlights the role of adequate and coordinated psychological interventions to help reduce polarisation in society. The experiences of segregated schools in BiH, Croatia and Northern Ireland show that the path of separation rather than constructive dialogue and attempts at unification is a failed practice that deepens divisions in society in the long run. Also, a long history of segregation creates additional obstacles to attempts at unification, as demonstrated by the experience of the Danube School in Vucovar, which was never implemented due to political reluctance and obstacles from representatives of political forces that benefit from the segregated status quo. The creation of segregated linguistic areas, as in Belgium, leads to the fact that citizens of one state literally do not have the main tool for understanding – a common language, which also leads to numerous disputes and disagreements within society.

State policy should be aimed at preventing and counteracting segregation in society, and various instruments should be used to do so. Respondents from the Balkan countries were very positive about non-formal education practices, such as trips and exchange programmes for children and young people between different regions, which can broaden their horizons and help to overcome prejudices that may exist between different groups if they spend time together and learn to coexist peacefully during this period. Such programmes can also have a positive impact on other groups, such as parents and other members of the community, where children return after the programme with new experiences and possibly a changed perspective on prejudices. Two problematic aspects of this practice may be the lack of resources and the absence of a sustainable follow-up programme, which should be beard in mind in future. Representatives of the public sector who have been directly involved in organising such programmes and exchanges (in particular, in Croatia, BiH and Serbia) have emphasized that their resources for organising these programmes are extremely limited and that state support, including financial support, is necessary to make it sustainable programmes rather than short-term interventions. On the other hand, as the experience of Northern Ireland shows, it is also important to have follow-up programmes – the involvement of programme graduates in various joint projects is an extra bonus that also has a positive impact on the overall effectiveness of the programme. The

experience of Northern Ireland with integrated schools (which exist mainly on the initiative and with the support of parents) also demonstrates the importance of state support in the context of education integration, as it is impossible to create truly inclusive education on the basis of parental and NGO activism alone.

## Education

Both respondents in BiH and Croatia emphasised that, despite any differences, children from different groups should study together. But an important aspect is what exactly they will learn in educational institutions. Education plays an important role in the post-war period, and the curriculum must meet the challenges that arise after the end of hostilities. This includes overcoming psychological trauma, the increasing polarisation of society, and possible challenges related to discrimination on any grounds. In the context of Ukraine, a separate challenge is to overcome the destructive effects of Russia’s education policy on the TOT, including indoctrination and militarisation of children and youth. In this regard, respondents from Germany noted that after the end of World War II, there was no policy to address the narratives disseminated by National Socialist propaganda, and textbooks and curricula were simply replaced with other ones. However, working through these narratives in a way that is as atraumatic as possible for children’s psyches is crucial for successful reintegration into society. It is extremely ineffective to silence problematic events (as happened in post-war Germany in relation to the National Socialist era) and to establish moratoriums on the study of specific periods (such as the events of the 1990s in Croatia, as mentioned by experts from NGOs). Silence in the public sphere leads to children and young people being more influenced by parents and communities, who can promote their negative attitudes to the younger generation. It is important to present information about such events in as balanced and neutral a way as possible. Thus, a good strategy is to work through problematic narratives not through direct experience of the last war, but through the Holocaust, as is done in the manual “Holocaust & Peace: Lessons from the Past for the Future”,<sup>191</sup> which will be used in formal education in the Sarajevo Canton of BiH.<sup>192</sup>

It is also important to introduce peacebuilding, media literacy, and conflict resolution programmes in the formal education system, since, after all, non-formal initiatives are voluntary, and as experts have noted, it is also important to reach those who would be unlikely to apply for such a programme or training on their own. Formal education, on the other hand, can reach this very target group and make a positive contribution to social processes. This can be done not only through “classical” methods, such as the creation of textbooks and other learning materials but also through more child-friendly methods, such as the use of games, debate models and other forms of non-formal education in school classes.

## Memorialisation

Another aspect is the issue of memorialisation, as children and young people have their own unique experiences that should also be taken into account when developing relevant policies. It is therefore important to document children’s experiences in the most atraumatic way possible, as successfully done by the War Childhood

191 <https://p-crc.org/app/uploads/2022/01/pedagogical-manual-holocaust-peace-eihr-pcrc-forumzfd.pdf>

192 Post Conflict Research Center influences the formal education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina through Holocaust manual, 22 February 2023, URL: <https://www.sigrid-rausing-trust.org/story/post-conflict-research-center-influences-the-formal-education-system-in-bosnia-and-herzegovina-through-holocaust-manual/>

Museum in Sarajevo, which collects stories of child survivors. These testimonies serve as a powerful tool not only to honour the experiences of the respondents but also to help the current generation see the history of the war through the eyes of their compatriots, not through a political prism, whereby from a purely human perspective. The history of war should honour the memory not only of military victims but also of civilian victims from all sides of the conflict, which remains a problematic aspect in the Balkan countries. When there are diametrically opposed narratives or attempts to instrumentalise these narratives by specific political forces, it is very important to have an inclusive and sensitive policy of commemoration and to avoid nationalistic narratives, as in the context of Croatia, where the process of commemorating war victims is generally rather Croatian-centric and relies mainly on the image of the victorious country, which did not commit any crimes.<sup>193</sup> Court decisions, and especially those of international judicial bodies such as the ICTY, play an important role in challenging such narratives. Court decisions are used to refute nationalist narratives in the context that they set out a specific version of events that has been established by an independent judicial body and therefore has a high level of credibility. However, even the decisions of an international judicial institution are not perceived positively in all countries, especially when the decision refutes nationalist narratives that are successfully instrumentalised by political forces. However, the importance of these decisions in the memorialisation process was also emphasised by the UN Special Rapporteur on Reparations in his final report after his visit to Croatia in 2022,<sup>194</sup> as an important tool for building a fact-based memorialisation process and countering falsifications and revisionism. Therefore, memorialisation should be primarily based on facts, be inclusive of different population groups, and take into account the experiences of children and young people.

The main lesson to be learnt from the experiences of the countries under study is that reintegration policies require joint efforts by the state, the non-state sector and society as a whole, that have to work in synergy to achieve a common goal. Only by working together, with resources available, and with the understanding that all measures should be aimed at preserving the best interests of the child, can we ensure the most child-centred and atraumatic reintegration possible – and learn our lessons from it.

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193 Ivana Polić, OPINION, Three Decades On, War’s Legacy Still Overshadows Croatia, 2021, URL: <https://balkaninsight.com/2021/03/31/three-decades-on-wars-legacy-still-overshadows-croatia/>

194 Visit to Croatia, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence, Fabián Salvioli, A/HRC/51/34/Add.1, 19 July 2022

# MATRIX

OVERCOMING MENTAL TRAUMA		
	Successful practices	Unsuccessful practices
<b>BALKAN COUNTRIES</b>	Work with psychologists in the post-war years (at the same time, it is important to note the limited duration of this practice and its availability mainly in large cities).	Lack of focus on a programme for working through mental trauma, especially for children and young people.
		Lack of long-term psychological support programmes.
		Limited access to programmes for residents of small and remote villages and towns.
<b>GERMANY</b>	The study did not collect enough information to identify successful practices in this area. At the same time, the authors do not exclude the existence of such practices.	Lack of comprehensive work to overcome mental trauma in the post-war years and after reunification.
<b>BELGIUM</b>	Irrelevant to the context of the study	Irrelevant to the context of the study.
<b>NORTHERN IRELAND</b>	Availability of short-term interventions for victims of specific incidents.	Lack of comprehensive psychological support programmes (focus on short-term interventions).
CHANGING IDENTITY		
IRRELEVANT IN THE COUNTRIES UNDER STUDY		
CHANGING THE WORLDVIEW		
	Successful practices	Unsuccessful practices
<b>BALKAN COUNTRIES</b>	Conducting extracurricular activities to teach peacebuilding, human rights, etc. (mainly by NGOs).	Lack of consistency: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. peacebuilding, human rights and similar programmes are not mandatory at the national level;</li> <li>2. exchange programmes have been conducted as part of private initiatives and have not been supported at the national level.</li> </ol>
	Use of non-traumatic and indirect topics to address sensitive issues, for example, through the prism of the Holocaust.	
	Availability of exchange programmes to overcome harmful narratives and broaden the worldview.	

<b>GERMANY (in the post-war years and after German reunification)</b>	Separate policies on the denazification of the population have been developed.	Policies were different in the FRG and the GDR, as they were influenced by different powers.
	In the FRG, the content of textbooks and fiction was completely revised, and new school curricula was developed to meet the goals of denazification and demilitarisation.	
	A policy of denazification (rejection of the Nazi ideology, complete dismantling of the political system) was implemented.	
	Comprehensive work was carried out to overcome the narratives of national socialism, in particular through the introduction of changes in the educational sphere	Lack of restoration of justice and low level of justice in the post-war period
<b>BELGIUM</b>	Irrelevant to the context of the study.	Irrelevant to the context of the study.
<b>NORTHERN IRELAND</b>	Irrelevant to the context of the study.	Irrelevant to the context of the study.
<b>MEMORIALISATION</b>		
	<b>Successful practices</b>	<b>Unsuccessful practices</b>
<b>BALKAN COUNTRIES</b>	Covering the events of the war through personal stories, without political colouring (in particular, the approach developed by the War Childhood Museum in Sarajevo).	Covering the suffering of only one side of the conflict while demonising the other.
	Creation of memorial complexes to commemorate significant events.	Covering the events of the war from the perspective of the winner.
<b>GERMANY</b>	Based on the information gathered by the commissions, recommendations were made to the federal government on the development of memory policy and measures to address the past.	Postponing the discussion of the Nazi past for 20 years after the end of the war (1960s).
	An up-to-date and comprehensive strategy for memory policy.	Massive silencing and displacement from the memory of the horrific events of the pre-war and war period, denial of the truth in the collective consciousness of Germans and, at the same time, rejection of the denazification policy.
<b>BELGIUM</b>	Irrelevant to the context of the study.	Irrelevant to the context of the study.
<b>NORTHERN IRELAND</b>	Consultation with various actors on memorialisation policy (informal initiative).	Lack of a comprehensive and inclusive memorialisation policy.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVES		
	Successful practices	Unsuccessful practices
<b>BALKAN COUNTRIES</b>	Irrelevant to the context of the study.	The fragmentation of the country (in the context of BiH), which, in particular, has a negative impact on economic development.
		Lack of programmes to return IDPs and refugees to their home communities, resulting in population decline and multi-ethnic regions becoming mono-ethnic.
<b>GERMANY</b>	Large investments in the GDR after reunification.	Insufficient financial support, which led to migration from the former East Germany.
	Effective support for youth through social, economic, and educational policies in Germany after reunification. <i>(At the same time, information on programs aimed at overcoming the consequences of indoctrination was not found in the study)</i>	
<b>BELGIUM</b>	Irrelevant to the context of the study.	Irrelevant to the context of the study.
<b>NORTHERN IRELAND</b>	Irrelevant to the context of the study.	Irrelevant to the context of the study.
DISCRIMINATION AND SEGREGATION		
	Successful practices	Unsuccessful practices
<b>BALKAN COUNTRIES</b>	Development and implementation of joint educational trips for representatives of different ethnic groups: exchange programmes, joint visits to memorials, recreation, etc.	Separate education for representatives of different ethnic groups has been established at the state level, including the concept of "two schools under one roof" in BiH.
<b>GERMANY</b>	Development and implementation of exchange programmes between schools in East and West Germany after reunification.	None were identified.
<b>BELGIUM</b>	Irrelevant to the context of the study.	The existence of regional divisions along linguistic lines and strict regulation of the use of only the regional language, which leads to misunderstandings of people from different regions due to language barriers.
<b>NORTHERN IRELAND</b>	Development and implementation of travel programmes to a third country, during which representatives of different religious groups lived together.	Low effectiveness of state policy in relation to the curriculum of the integrated schools.



## **Our mission**

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We are approaching the reintegration of the population of the de-occupied territories and laying the foundations for guarantees of non-repetition.

