Executive Summary

This executive summary highlights the recommendations and conclusions of the 2015 *Country Report for the Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina* concerning its religious, cultural heritage, arts and media policies, concluding that most of its policies fit within the nationalist-cultural model:

1. Bosnia and Herzegovina has had a long history of religious and ethnic tension that still plagues its country today in the form of its religious education policies. The nation should modify the Law on Religion under Article 4 of the section entitled “Freedom of Religion and Belief” so that it fosters more acceptance and understanding among its diverse population, specifically younger generations, to maintain peace and strive for innovation.

2. Bosnia and Herzegovina’s few cultural heritage policies, such as the Commission to Preserve National Monuments, lack effectiveness because they are given little authority to execute their mission and they often fail to address the underlying issue in preserving culture: Bosnians are struggling to define their own identity. Therefore, the nation should consider striving to unite its citizens by emphasizing shared cultural values before aiming to preserve monuments and landmarks of the past that may only hinder unity and the establishment of a collective identity.

3. The responsibility of executing the constitutional arts policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided between many different actors, such as the Ministry of Civil Affairs and various cantons, which has resulted in an overall lack of leadership and responsibility in fostering and growing artistic expression. The best recommendation to remedy this would be to create a new policy that distinctly defines the roles of each actor and provides incentives for artists, regardless of ethnic background.

4. While media literacy is finally a topic of discussion in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the passage of the policy and end of the dictatorship, the nation still faces many challenges in promoting media education because of a lack of support from the academic community, a complex state infrastructure and disinterest among political elites. The government should focus on the development of a local political culture to create a cultural and systematic change, which, when recognized by members of the international community, can be used as a tool to sustain its media policy efforts.
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Religious Policy
By Eric Clayton

A Brief History of Ethno-Religious Tensions

Though not a religious war in principle, the conflict that plagued Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in the early 1990s fractured the population along ethno-religious lines, giving voice to a cultural reality that had long been suppressed under the 45-year regime of the ruling Yugoslav Communist Party (United States Institute of Peace, 2009). Allowed to again practice their varying faiths, the distinct communities of BiH were reminded of perhaps their greatest distinguishing feature: religion (Popov and Ofstad, 2006). “[A] religious identity is also a social and cultural identity, and, in Bosnia, has an ethnic context, since a person usually ‘inherits’ his or her religious identity from his or her parents” (Johnston and Eastvold, 2004). To approach the religious landscape in BiH is to inevitably approach the many—and divisive—cultural issues underlying the different ethnic communities.

The population of Bosnia is estimated to be 3.9 million people (United States Department of State, 2014). Of that total number, 45 percent religiously identify as Muslim and ethnically as Bosniaks; 36 percent religiously identify as Serbian Orthodox Christian and ethnically as Bosnian Serbs; and, 15 percent religiously identify as Roman Catholic and ethnically as Bosnian Croat. One percent of the population is Protestant, and the final three percent identify with another religion, including Judaism. In addition to frequently correlating with ethnicity, religion also serves as a good indicator of geography. Bosnia is divided into the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina—which is further divided into ten cantons—and the Republika Srpska (RS) with a separate administrative district, Brcko (Popov and Ofstad, 2006). A majority of the Orthodox Christian community lives in the RS, while most Muslims and Roman Catholics reside in the Federation. Minority religions, too, tend to live together, meaning that “most young people no longer come into regular contact with their peers in other ethno-religious groups” (United States Institute of Peace, 2009).

The ethno-religious nature of BiH is a result of a long history. In the 16th and 17th centuries, BiH was under the “European political order whereby the people were expected to adopt the religion of the ruler” (Johnston, 2004). Then, under the “system of control within [the] Ottoman Empire ... the Turks, during their five hundred years of rule in the Balkans, gave local administrative authority to religious hierarchies in exchange for their loyalty to the sultan.” This bred a political arena in which, until 1945, permitted one religion to always be closer to the ruling elites—and able to take advantage of the privileges such proximity afforded (United States Institute of Peace, 2009). The religious makeup of the country continues to adhere to
ethnic traditions, passing down faith as a cultural artifact to be guarded by the local community and its leaders. Religion is important to the fabric of the people—for reasons not solely spiritual—and so when the communist regime fell, “religious leaders, emerging from decades of marginalization … were understandably anxious to play a larger public role” (Johnston, 2004).

In 1996, in the wake of a conflict that killed 100,000 people and left two million more displaced, religious leaders from the three dominant faiths of Islam, Orthodox Christian and Roman Catholic and Judaism—recognized for its long history and coexistence in the region—formed a working group to discuss the role religion would play in establishing peace (Lichtblau, 2015; Interreligious Council in Bosnia-Herzegovina (IRC) 2008). Though religion colored the violence, religious values, including social justice, forgiveness and empathy, were sought to form a good foundation for peace, and religious leaders in positions of authority were often admired and imitated where social relations were concerned (Clark, 2010). On June 9, 1997, the four religious leaders signed a “Statement of Moral Commitment,” jointly condemning “all violence against innocent persons and any form of abuse or violation of fundamental human rights” (IRC, 1997). The Statement also effectively established the—perhaps largely symbolic—Interreligious Council of Bosnia-Herzegovina (IRC), a national affiliate of the International World Council of Religions for Peace.

Most significantly for this discussion, the IRC’s Legal Expert Group submitted a draft of the “Law on Freedom of Religion and Legal Position of Churches and Religious Communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina” to the BiH Ministry of Human Rights (IRC, 2008). A final version of the Law was approved in March 2004 guaranteeing freedom of religion on paper.

**The Curious Case of Religious Education**

In the first multi-party election in 1990—still before the war—there was found to be a great demand for religious education (Popov and Ofstad, 2006). As any form of religious formation had been conducted in private under the communist regime, parents wanted for their children what they themselves had not been given: an opportunity to learn in public about their own traditions and culture.

This desire found its way into the Law on Religion under Article 4 of the section entitled “Freedom of Religion and Belief” (IRC, 2004). Specifically, the law stated that:

“Everyone shall have the right to religious education, which shall be provided solely by persons appointed to do so by an official representative of his Church or religious community, whether in religious institutions or in public and private pre-school institutions, primary schools and higher education which shall be regulated according to the specific regulations.”
Article 4 goes on to prohibit the teaching of prejudice against other religions or faith communities and specifically safeguards the rights of those with no religious affiliation.

In light of the recent conflict that saw the different ethno-religious populations of BiH bear arms against one another, approaching cultural policy on religion through the lens of religious education is particularly vital because it is the training ground for the next generation that will either perpetuate a violent, fractured society or work together to build peace. From that perspective, a problem already emerges in so far as the law calls only for training in one’s own religious tradition. And, while every citizen is supposedly guaranteed said training, the reality on the ground tells a different story.

Generally, public schools only provide religious education in the majority religion of that area (United States Department of State, 2014). Authorities say this is due to an inability to provide qualified teachers in minority religions to what amounts to a small number of students (United States Institute of Peace, 2009). In rural areas, there may not be an “official representative” of minority faiths that can teach in accordance with what the Law states as necessary for religious instruction—even if a minimum number of students are present (United States Department of State, 2014). RS, for example, provides religious education in minority religions when there are at least 30 students of that faith enrolled (Popov and Ofstad, 2006).

This elicits an important omission in the written law: religion classes may not be as optional as the writers intended. True, students are not compelled to attend religious instruction in a faith that is not their own, and, true, students can opt out of religion courses altogether, but is this practical? On the one hand, the law states that these students should not be placed at a disadvantage, but as an elective, religious education courses provide students with an additional—and reportedly, easy—grade (Popov and Ofstad, 2006). Few if any alternatives are provided to these students, and thus, they are usually pressured to take religion courses that they would otherwise avoid. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education in BiH has little influence over local politics, acting more as a liaison. This leaves control of education in the hands of religious communities, which, since they are in the local majority, have little motivation to enact policies that will change the status quo.

Interestingly, offering religious education in public schools was originally seen as a way of rectifying a human rights violation—discrimination against those people of faith by forbidding religion to exist as a school subject (Popov and Ofstad, 2006). Now, the human rights violation is on the other side, as those communities not in the majority religious group face the same problem. This is hardly a conducive environment for true interreligious peacebuilding efforts when “it seems that everybody is willing to work on interreligious dialogue and cooperation only in the areas where they are a minority” (United States Institute of Peace, 2009).
Teaching Religion for Peace?

The case of minority religious communities has already proven to be a large gap in the current policy toward religious education. What, though, can be said about the majority religious education courses that the law provides for?

Religious education by its very nature can be a divisive tool, and positioning it in a way that simply serves to reinforce and perpetuate a community’s unchallenged beliefs can be very dangerous.

“Every religion, especially every monotheistic religion, claims to possess the whole and universal truth. But in the situation of living in a religiously heterogeneous community such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, such claims and assertions cannot contribute to the establishment of a tolerant and humane society” (Popov and Ofstad, 2006).

A study of the content of the three faith’s textbooks proves troubling. Books used in courses on Islam, for example, focus exclusively on Islamic teaching, promote solely Muslim communities and hold up Islam as the perfect religion (Popov and Ofstad, 2006). Catholic texts, to the contrary, present a critical approach to the Catholic faith and stress dialogue and tolerance in an open society, but omit aspects of controversial periods in the history of the Catholic Church. Orthodox books, again, focus solely on Orthodox teaching, presenting very little on other religions and even condemning certain “sects,” including Jehovah’s Witnesses, Adventists and others.

Additionally troubling is how a religious perspective can taint and distort history. In Orthodox textbooks, for example, the “Kosovo battle is described not only as a military conflict, but also as a clash between Islam and Christianity” (Popov and Ofstad, 2006). Regarding more recent history, events are often told through the lens of a particular ethno-religious viewpoint. War crimes are downplayed or ignored by religious leaders, some who refuse to accept that there were victims in the war other than in their own community. “No one side in the war in BiH had a monopoly on victimhood, yet it would seem that some religious actors disagree” (Clark, 2010). Furthermore, though an effort has been made since 2000 to introduce a secular course entitled “Culture of Religions” throughout the country, none of the main religious communities have accepted it.

What impact does this distorted, religiously-infused version of history have on a younger generation that one day will be responsible for sustaining peace? The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, after reviewing religious education policies in BiH, proposes an answer: “Lack of knowledge of other people’s faiths and cultures breeds potential misunderstanding and conflict, which can be particularly detrimental in the post-war environment of BiH.”
A Way Forward?

What does all this mean for the future of a post-conflict society like BiH? In the first place, it points to a distorted public sphere (Venturelli, 2015a). The coming together of religious leaders from diverse traditions in the form of the IRC suggests that a true space for dialogue and consensus has been formed. In fact, the law on religion says as much. However, the radically different reality faced by those on the ground speaks to the fallacy of that. Religious leaders at the upper echelons may represent their community in theory, but in practice, those same communities will do what is most practical in their daily lives. Community leaders in the majority are hesitant to give up power, and it can likely be argued that those same religious leaders who come to the table for dialogue may sing a different tune behind closed doors with their own congregation.

The limited access to religious education for minority religious communities presents a real barrier to entry into the marketplace of ideas—and the State is helpless to change that (Venturelli, 2015a). Local religious leaders hold a monopoly on religious education over which the Ministry of Education has little control. Though the Law of Religion implies the promotion of a Liberal Market Model, such cannot be claimed based on the evidence. Indeed, the very lack of universality where religious education is concerned also negates the existence of the Public Service Model.

Of all the frameworks, the Nationalist-Cultural Model becomes the most relevant, but even that must be called into question. A post-conflict society like BiH, it could be argued, should be striving to create a common, national identity. Yet, in an effort to respect the various religion traditions, the State has decentralized its ideological influence to religious leaders, empowering them as “not merely the guardians of [the] nation’s religious identity, but also of its national identity” (Clark, 2010). It is within these religious communities that a better argument might be made for a nationalist conception of the Nationalist-Cultural Model, where a common identity is created, often at the expense of interreligious dialogue (Venturelli, 2015b).

What exactly are the threats to interreligious dialogue and, by extension, BiH’s national identity?

1. The first, and perhaps most obvious, is the lack of a global perspective in religious education. As the effects of globalization continue to stretch across the planet, individuals will need to be able to accommodate varying viewpoints to prevent future conflict and build a common humanity.

2. Recalling that the recent Bosnian conflict was fueled by ethno-religious tensions, it becomes especially necessary to introduce young people to those who are different than themselves. Only by mixing ethnicities and religions can a sustainable future be
built, yet, at present, those of different ethno-religious communities hardly have an opportunity to come together.

3. Finally, so many recent conflicts are fueled by a perverted religious imagination, as was noted in the Orthodox course’s presentation of the Battle of Kosovo. A more nuanced approach must be taught lest all students of religious education assume a sense of superiority and dominance over those of other faiths.

These three points, along with the discrimination faced by religious minorities, must be taken into account when addressing the cultural landscape of BiH’s religions.

A final note of a concern: in considering BiH’s religious policy against the Development Model, it must be asked if the BiH government is decentralizing religious concerns, hoping, instead, to focus on building up a fledgling tourism industry.

In recent decades, religion has been overlooked as a motivating force in international affairs. Such oversight is no longer possible. Realizing this, BiH should use its varied religious traditions to build the foundations of peace lest they instead again erupt into violence.

**Bibliography**


Cultural Heritage Policy
By Tara Schoenborn

**History of Cultural Heritage**

Going back to the time of the Ottoman Empire and the Middle Ages, the society of present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has always been complex and eclectic, with a mixture of cultures and religions from both the East and West, as has been stated in the previous chapter.

However, what was not mentioned is that, for many years before the conflict in the 1990s, Jews, Christians and Muslims lived and worked side-by-side, which is evidenced in the vast and varied cultural architecture and landmarks. For example, in Sarajevo, there is an Old Orthodox church that was built in 1539 within view of a grand mosque built in 1531. Riedlmayer (2002) notes that the placement of this architecture is “an intentional, thoughtful, political act” because people who cannot stand the sight of each other would not “build their houses and most important monuments of their religious and communal life in the shadow of those of the others.”

However, with the breakup of Yugoslavia in 1990, all of this changed. BiH held its first democratic and multi-party election, with the parties dividing among ethnic lines (Supple, 2005). By creating tensions that had not previously existed, the nationalist parties pitted groups against each other, prompting the three and a half year war that ravaged BiH. As previously mentioned, this war had little to do with traditional military, economic or political objectives, and instead was focused on targeting those of the “wrong” ethnicity and destroying valued cultural landmarks of other groups. As a result of the war, the National Library, which not only qualifies as architectural cultural heritage, but also contained valuable manuscripts of Bosnian history, was destroyed, along with Sarajevo’s Oriental Institute, the National Museum and many other important landmarks, monuments and property of BiH’s rich multicultural history. Riedlmayer (2002) argues that this “systematic assault on culture” serves as a way to eliminate the memory of a cohesive and cooperative multi-ethnic Bosnia with a shared history and heritage, thus posing as an obstacle to defining the nation’s cultural identity today.

**Policy to Preserve Cultural Heritage**

Since the war ended in 1995, the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina has only created one cultural heritage policy that applies to the entire nation (Pickard, 2008). Springing out of the Dayton Peace Accords, Annex 8 is the Agreement on the Commission to Preserve National Monuments.

The policy formed the five-member Commission to Preserve National Monuments, which “shall receive and decide on petitions for the designation of property having cultural, historic, religious or ethnic importance as National Monuments.” It defines national monuments as “movable or immovable property of great importance to a group of people with common cultural, historic, religious or ethnic heritage, such as monuments of architecture, art, history,
archaeological sites, groups of buildings as well as cemeteries.” Anyone can submit a petition and the policy explicitly states that the Commission shall take every effort necessary to protect the things that it deems as national monuments, specifically alluding to establishing rules and regulations.

**Nationalist-Cultural Model**

When analyzing the language of the policy, it is clear that its goal is to foster a cultural heritage and preserve landmarks that are important to BiH’s unique multiculturalism. Therefore, the best framework from which to analyze this policy appears to be the nationalist-cultural model. Consistent with nationalist-cultural characteristics of establishing the collective identity above all else, this policy attempts to solidify and define a Bosnian identity and emphasize that the collective preservation of Bosnian national monuments takes precedence over other rights (Venturelli, 2015). Furthermore, the fact that the state can create extensive regulations specifically to preserve national cultural heritage is consistent with the characteristics of the nationalist-cultural model.

**Other Framework Perspectives**

While primarily within the nationalist-cultural model, this policy also exemplifies hints of the public service model because the state is stepping in to act as the guardian of culture and protect Bosnian identity, which then also overlaps with some of the aforementioned elements of the nationalist-cultural model (Venturelli, 2015). Furthermore, there are also glimpses of the development model because as more and more landmarks are defined as “national monuments,” they are also being used for tourism, which asserts the idea that the public interest in actually tied to the economy (Venturelli, 2015).

**Challenges**

However, there is a gap in this policy in that, although it aims to establish cultural heritage, it ignores the effects that the war had on the definition of BiH’s identity. While before the war, Bosnian identity may have been defined as “multicultural,” the post-war sentiment has left Bosnians confused about who they really are. Simply preserving monuments and cultural landmarks that were not destroyed in the war does not reestablish what it means to be a citizen of BiH. Instead of fostering cultural heritage around something that is uniquely “Bosnian,” the policy aims to simply preserve the different ethnicities’ cultural and historical landmarks, and, therefore, does not define what “Bosnian” really means today. In this sense, the policy does not completely fit within the nationalist-cultural model because it actually fails to establish and define the collective identity that it aims to protect.

Furthermore, another flaw in the policy is that it only aims to *preserve* national monuments, which means that it does little to address all of the important and symbolic monuments and landmarks that were culturally destroyed during the war. This serves as an obstacle to determining the present-day definition of Bosnian identity because it eliminates the collective
tangible memory of BiH’s history of multiculturalism (Supple, 2005). If the citizens of BiH do not even know what has previously constituted as a national monument because many have been destroyed, how is the Commission supposed to effectively carry out its duty? Furthermore, if there is no effective public space with which to have these discussions, how will the definition of cultural heritage and the meaning of Bosnian identity ever be defined?

Another obstacle to the effective implementation of this policy is that, although the Commission exists, it is relatively powerless because it does not have the budget or staff to adequately make assessments (Pickard, 2008). Therefore, much of the job has been left to the decentralized local governments, which is largely ineffective and has further heightened ethnic differences. What is even more challenging is that these individualized cantons do not actually have any policies protecting cultural heritage or ways to implement them, which means that, while BiH has this policy, it has little practicality in the government because it has no relevance to the localized governments that are most affected by these cultural landmarks in everyday life (Pickard, 2008).

Having said all this, the policy does clearly provide a wide and encompassing definition of “national monument” that serves its purpose of protecting BiH cultural heritage. It is not too narrow in that it limits monuments to only physical structures and allows for other important accompanying aspects of the physical structures, such as manuscripts or art they contain, to aid in the reestablishment of a collective identity. However, at times, the language may also be too broad and contribute to discrepancies, which may serve as an obstacle to its execution, especially since, as mentioned, the elements of the present-day cultural identity of BiH are hard to define.

**Future Cultural Heritage Policy**

In 2008, UNESCO and the MDG Achievement Fund launched a Joint Programme to improve cross-cultural and reconciliation in BiH, while also promoting its multicultural identity (United Nations Education, Scientific, 2012). Specifically, it aims to foster the development of cultural policies and legal frameworks, improve community and low-level cross-cultural understanding and foster local economic development through cultural production, tourism and heritage. Some of the tangible outcomes of the program efforts were publication of handbooks, guides and surveys related to cultural diversity; debates on interculturalism in local communities; introductions to interculturalism in education; implementation of locally-driven cultural rehabilitation projects; the organization of over 60 cultural festivals and performances; the revitalization of an old medieval fortress; and an increase in the production of new cultural goods (United Nations Education, Scientific, 2012). However, as the program just ended in 2012, most of the long-term and meaningful results have yet to been seen.

Furthermore, in 2011, the BiH national government began implementing the “Strategy for Cultural Policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina” with an action plan that is expected to conclude at the end of 2015. The strategy’s objectives include promoting research into Bosnia’s multicultural past, reconstructing some of the cultural landmarks and making cultural rights a
reality for its citizens (Begagic, 2014). However, this plan meets the same challenges as the Annex 8 policy of the Commission to Preserve National Monuments in that it struggles to define Bosnian identity and fails to acknowledge that, due to a rich and varied history, the relationship between the nation and its culture actually transcends BiH boundaries (Begagic, 2014).

Therefore, much of the future success of cultural heritage policy in BiH appears to rely on international organizations or intervention from European governments, as seen in the two policies above. However, this may bring problems of its own. If BiH cannot even define its own culture, how can other nations offering aid do so? Furthermore, will international intervention take away some of the true cultural heritage of BiH and replace it with a new definition? If so, is this necessarily a bad thing?

**Recommendations**

Regardless, the first step to creating a more effective policy is to centralize efforts by finding a common ground amongst different ethnicities, religions, etc. Currently, having only one national cultural heritage policy within a decentralized, fragmented system is not only a poor use of economic resources, it can also further pit groups against each other depending on where each “national monument” is located or which group lays claim to it. BiH should consider starting by building a new collective identity in something else that is not rooted in emotionally meaningful cultural artifacts to find something that all Bosnians share. Only then, when the different groups and cultures of BiH can see and experience what they have in common, will they be willing to support protecting cultural heritage and national monuments and strides can be made at implementing more national effective policies. For Annex 8 to work, the government needs to cede some power to the Commission, because otherwise it will have no power or legitimacy with which to act and nothing it does will have any impact, thus leaving outside forces as the only hope for enforcing policies to preserve cultural heritage.

**Bibliography**


Art has been an important part of Bosnian culture and has helped to lift the country from many different wars. In the 1950s, the state showed understanding for modern art and its importance when it sponsored the premiere of abstract monuments, such as those devoted to the National liberation (Begacic, 2012). In 2003, after the tragic war that lasted from 1992 until 1995, the Ministry of Civil Affairs was developed in conjunction with the reconstruction and Article 17a. The Ministry of Civil Affairs covers a wide range of social activities as is explained in 17a and, in turn, has a complicated structure (Constitution, 2015). In the BiH constitution, there are two articles that relate to the arts in Bosnia, Article 2 and 17a.

**Article 2**

(1) *Each canton may confer its responsibilities to a municipality or city in its territory, or to the federal authority.*

(2) *Each canton may delegate functions concerning education, culture, tourism, local business and charitable and radio and television to a municipality or city in its territory, and is obliged to do so if the majority of population in the municipality or city is other than that of the Canton as a whole.*

**Article 17a**

**Vital national interests of constituent peoples are defined as follows:**

- *exercise of the rights of constituent peoples to be adequately represented in legislative, executive and judicial authorities;*
- *identity of one constituent people;*
- *constitutional amendments;*
- *organization of public authorities;*
- *equal rights of constituent peoples in the process of decision-making;*
- *education, religion, language, promotion of culture, tradition and cultural heritage;*
- *territorial organization;*
- *public information system,*
  - *and other issues treated as of vital national interest if so claimed by 2/3 peoples in the House of Peoples. (Constitution, 2015)*

Article 2 relates mainly to the fact that each canton is responsible for delegating within its borders the responsibilities, including that of culture. Article 17a mainly discusses what constitutes as the vital interest of the people of BiH, specifically the, “education, religion, language, promotion of culture, tradition and cultural heritage.” Additionally, it states that it is
the country’s responsibility to maintain vital interests to its people, for promotion of culture, tradition and cultural heritage and the arts fall under these three categories.

These two articles are the basis of the policies that are made in conjunction with culture and the arts. They are also the basis for the governing bodies like the Ministry of Civil Affairs. The Ministry of Civil Affairs has the “sole and full responsibility for the management of culture in the part of Bosnia” (Begacic, 2012). However, because of Article 2, many of the powers that are associated with the Ministry are delegated to the cantons. The cantons have attempted to uphold their part in creating and maintaining the cultural integrity of their provinces, yet many feel they have fallen short (Begacic, 2012).

The reason for the lag in the arts and culture mainly seems to be due to the disconnection between the state and the cantons. This division has resulted in a poor system of managing culture and an overall lack of leadership, creating lethargy in the art profession.

Another major reason that there is little attention paid to the arts is that there is a lack of media on the subject. Newspapers and other news outlets have not put a focus on this issue and, in many instances, ignored the problems of the lack of funding and government support for the arts, which means that the public may not be aware that this is even a problem.

The lack of appreciation and preservation of the arts is particularly sad because, as was alluded to in the previous chapter, BiH has had a rich culture of art and had been influential in the arts in the 1950s and even earlier. Slowly, but surely, as war and other issues arose, the arts lost priority and, in 2012, the National Gallery fell victim to budget cuts and lost its funding, forcing it to close after being open for 124 years (Hooper, 2012).

It is also ironic that the government’s tourism strategy has been to advertise travel to BiH in order to be enriched in the culture and attend the many cultural events, but the government is does not necessarily promote the arts that would be the substance of these events. For example, in an article in the Arts Manager, author Maria Roberts discusses the 60th anniversary of the signing of the European Convection on culture by launching major cultural events. She states that BiH is beginning a “new invigorated period of cultural development both in Sarajevo and across Bosnia (Roberts, 2015).” However, while BiH claims to be invigorating cultural development, the National Gallery remains closed. This disconnect between the different sections of the Ministry of Civil Affairs is a clear example of the gap between the different departments, as well as the lack of communication between the cantons.

**Future of the Arts: Recommendations**

Before being able to make any recommendations, it is important to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the current situation.

The major strengths within BiH’s arts policy are as follows. BiH has a current infrastructure that is in place, regarding the laws and institutions that already exist, that is already working. There
are also many trained employees within the current system that can be utilized to both inform on the current situation and work to make a stronger more effective policy. BiH also has a vibrant arts community that is producing new artists and can serve as a base for creating a new strengthened policy. These artists were trained at one of the many higher education institutions set in place to foster art, which is a strength because they can serve as experts in guiding the direction BiH could take in promoting a new reformed policy on art.

BiH is also rich in culture and can use this in a positive way in regards to promoting arts. Much of what it is doing to promote culture can cross over into the realm of the arts. There are also many civil actors that play a role in the promotion of arts within BiH. These civil actors can come in many forms, such NGOs specifically dedicated to fostering artistic expression. Finally, BiH has a strong democratic foundation when it comes to financing the arts and has the ability to create a dialogue to find the best way to promote a more innovative policy.

Some of the major weaknesses of the policy lay within the professional body, for instance in the competence, human capacity and lack of a single governing body. When speaking of the human capacity, there are not enough people overseeing, implementing and encouraging growth within the art policies due to lack of funding. The fact that there is no single governing body over the arts policy diminishes its level of importance, which is again demonstrated in the lack of funding, research and effective planning. Without an umbrella law to cover galleries and museums, the lack of communication between state cantons will continue until the development of a single national body for cultural development and implementation. This strategy must be written down to create a clear and concise action plan and discourse concerning the arts in BiH.

The most important recommendation to BiH would be to create a single body to govern and regulate cultural policy. The most effective way to do this would be to use what is already in place and build an umbrella policy to link the national government and cantons. The creation of this policy should take into consideration what the experts already in place, be it those from academia or those in politics, believe would be important in cultivating the arts in BiH. There should also be a higher level of networking with civil society that could allow NGOs to fill gaps where government cannot. BiH has the artists and the museums to have a thriving art community; what it needs is a single voice that can promote and create a sustainable model that links the state and the cantons.

Bibliography


Media Policy
By Akua (Kaye) Adoo

Brief History of Media Landscape

The media landscape in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is far from developed. As a post-war transition country, most press in BiH is characterized by diversity and politics (Udovicic et. al 2001). The media landscape in BiH has been very instrumental in political development and public opinion since the early 1980s (Udovicic et. al 2001). It was not until the late 1990s that Bosnians have become ethnically and religiously divided in the media landscape (Bieber, 2000).

With a population of about 4 million people there are 376 media groups: 138 newspapers and reviews, 168 radio stations, 59 televisions stations and 11 news and photo agencies, 11 daily newspapers, 100 different types of magazines, 71 specialized magazines, and 8 religious magazines (Udovicic et. al, 2001). Even with these promising and highly saturated figures, the media landscape is far from established. Most media is propaganda and aspects of a thriving national media landscape, such as fact checking stories, journalist security and limited government interruption in print and traditional media, are undervalued. Reporters are in a difficult position to report and write stories or news on particular political parties, and do not enjoy the “required” press freedom to do so (Udovicic et. al 2001). It has been reported that, after the war, ethnic and religious intolerance negatively affected the press even after a long history of dictatorship (Bieber, 2000). Though the BiH constitution enables a fairly free press, it is still controlled by a government and advertisers that do not support journalists or publications whose ideologies differ from theirs (Freedom House, 2013).

In 2013, Freedom House noted that the press status of BiH is Partly Free, which is a “good” position to be in considering the country’s political environment (23 out of 40; 40 being the worst). Though the constitution grants freedom of the press, politicians exert pressure on journalists so that media outlets are mostly skewed to particular parties (Freedom House, 2013). This in turn questions the legitimacy of the news being reported in the media. Since the signing of the 1995 Dayton Accords, which marked the end of the country’s civil war, BiH was divided into two semi-independent constituent entities the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnian Muslims & Croats) and the Republika Srpska (RS) (Serbs), these two constituents have had their own public broadcaster, private media and political parties, making it difficult for the nation to have a thriving media landscape (Udovicic et. al 2001).

The press in BiH has been negatively impacted by ethnic and religious bigotry and is “technically” still owned by the government, which has made it heavily influenced by political parties.
Media- State and Party Control

The media represents a society and its political system and often supports societal developments (Jusic & Ahmetasevic, 2013). The media were highly influential in public opinion in BiH during the country’s violent dissolutions. Religious divisions were evident in the media before the war and as a result of that, the media landscape in BiH became fragmented and permanent. Bieber (2000) posits that the structure of political parties (or lack thereof) had a role to play in the nation’s media and made communication between the political elite and its voters strenuous. New political parties lacked traditional channels of communication and, as a result, the media were forced to fill this gap in communication (Bieber, 2000). Most importantly, the media contributed to defining a national identity for BiH (Bieber, 2000). Many media outlets (radio, newspaper, television channels) only had legitimacy from their supporters.

Policy to Promote Media Education and Media Literacy in Bosnia Herzegovina

The post-conflict nature of BiH provides a very complex state structure, which in turn affects media education and policy (Udovicic et. al, 2001). Every canton within the Federation has its own designated Ministry of Education while the RS has one centralized Ministry of Education and Culture (Udovicic et. al., 2001). These different ministries within one country and the complex state structure make it very difficult to have one single media education and media literacy policy.

According to the Media and Information Literacy Policies in the Bosnia-Herzegovina official policy document, media education and media literacy have not been popular in BiH (Turcilo & Tajic, 2013). Up until 1991, when the country participated in the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, BiH did not have an abundant media system and media education was not taken into consideration. It is only recently that media literacy has become a major topic. This recent implementation of media literacy and education has been made possible by many international initiatives, BiH citizens and other national regulatory bodies (Turcilo & Tajic, 2013). According to the policy, media literacy in BiH is defined overall as “the ability to access the media, to understand and to critically evaluate different aspects of the media and media contents and to create communications in a variety of contexts (Turcilo & Tajic, 2013). The policy recognizes that the fundamental competence and understanding of media literacy (which includes television, radio, print and digital media, the internet, music etc.) is important for the younger Bosnian generation, the older generation and media professionals (Turcilo & Tajic, 2013).

Challenges

- The Communication Regulatory Agency of BiH advocates for the European approach to media literacy, but lacks the support and interest from the academic community in BiH.
- BiH does not have the necessary infrastructure or mechanisms to evaluate the level of media literacy among the national populations.
• With regards to media education, BiH lacks a proper systematic approach in solving this issue of unsatisfactory training of teachers, parents and media consumers.
• There is a strong lack of interest from BiH citizens and domestic BiH political elites to enhance media education in BiH; this is especially because the international community in the past has only consisted of groups that initiate education reforms in BiH (Turcilo & Tajic, 2013).
• Media education and media literacy are often combined and defined under the “information literacy” umbrella and, as a result, there are difficulties not only in implementing the idea of media education, but also defining it.

The policy does a tremendous job defining, explaining and describing the complex educational and media framework in BiH, but lacks sections where it proposes solutions to the problems or addresses issues in the media of BiH (Turcilo & Tajic, 2013).

**Media Education, Media Literacy and the Nationalist-Cultural Model**

The model that best fits the media education and media literacy policy of BiH is the nationalist-cultural model because it emphasizes the protection and solidification of the national-cultural identity (Venturelli, 2015). Additionally, the extensive government intervention and content regulation of the media landscape of BiH and the collective identity interests provide strong evidence that this policy follows the nationalist-cultural model (Venturelli, 2015).

**Development Model**

Some aspects of this policy also imitate the development model. The focus on new digital technology transfer to media professionals, old and young generations, teachers etc., as well as education of new media technologies to promote development in BiH, demonstrates the prevalence of the development model because it shows the nation wants to move forward (Venturelli, 2015). Furthermore, BiH dependency on foreign aid and assistance in the form of international bodies follows the development model (Venturelli, 2015). This media policy also indicates content regulations and censorship, ownership and extensive state oversight of most print and news media in BiH (Venturelli, 2015).

**The Way Forward for the Media Landscape in Bosnia Herzegovina**

The media reforms and policies in BiH have resulted from unknown external intervention and/or influence while facing local opposition (Jusic & Ahmetasevic, 2013). In the future, for BiH to introduce and have a successful media literacy and media education policy, the country must focus on the development of a local political culture, a cultural and systematic change which, when recognized by members of the international community, can be used as a tool to sustain media policy efforts in BiH and similar countries (Jusic & Ahmetasevic, 2013).
References


Conclusion

In summary, the group found Bosnia and Herzegovina to be a nation rich in cultural, religious and artistic history, but with a long history of ethnic tension that has prevented the effective execution of many of the policies. The religious education policy does not allow citizens to explore other religions nor does it address the root causes of religious tensions, making it hard for the nation to move forward and accept others. The task of implementing cultural heritage policy is divided among too many actors and does not define Bosnian identity and, therefore, fails to correctly preserve heritage. The arts policy is also divided among many actors, making it difficult to foster and promote artistic expression. Finally, the media policy, while existing, does not effectively advance media education, instead serving as an obstacle to achieving a truly free society. All of these policies share the characteristics of the nationalist-cultural model in that they aim to define and preserve Bosnian identity in order to benefit the collective community. However, what these policies fail to do is define this identity and promote ways to overcome the obstacles that were made prevalent during the war, thus prohibiting their effective execution. Therefore, it is recommended that the government amend these policies and create new policies to foster more of a cultural understanding and unity amongst its population to ultimately achieve political, social and economic progress.