Resilient Citizenship in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Building Resilience against Radicalisation,
Civic Apathy and Intergroup Tension

The Centre for Sustainable Peace and Democratic Development

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SCORE BiH 2020 is a quantitative study of Social Cohesion, Reconciliation and Resilience in Bosnia and Herzegovina implemented by SeeD in partnership with the Bosnia and Herzegovina Resilience Initiative (BHRI), funded by USAID/OTI and implemented by IOM. The aim of SCORE BiH 2020 is to support BHRI in their efforts to strengthen positive political and social actors and discourses and provide meaningful alternatives to extremist voices and influences.

SCORE BiH was first implemented in 2014 by USAID in partnership with SeeD, making it possible to compare data between the two timepoints. Data for SCORE BiH 2020 was collected between October 2019 and March 2020, with a representative sample of 3637 respondents. A non-representative part of the sample was used to survey priority groups, namely: young citizens (18 to 35 years old) and respondents living in the beneficiary areas of the BHRI programme, resulting in a total sample size of 4570.

SCORE quantifies the levels of societal phenomena using indicators constructed from 3 to 10 survey questions, giving a statistically reliable measure of each phenomenon from different perspectives. SCORE is able to identify regional patterns in indicator expression, and can also be used to develop a profile of specific interest groups based on their levels of each indicator. Advanced analyses include the detection of subgroups within society based on indicators of interest, and predictive statistical modelling to discover the possible drivers and outcomes of an indicator.
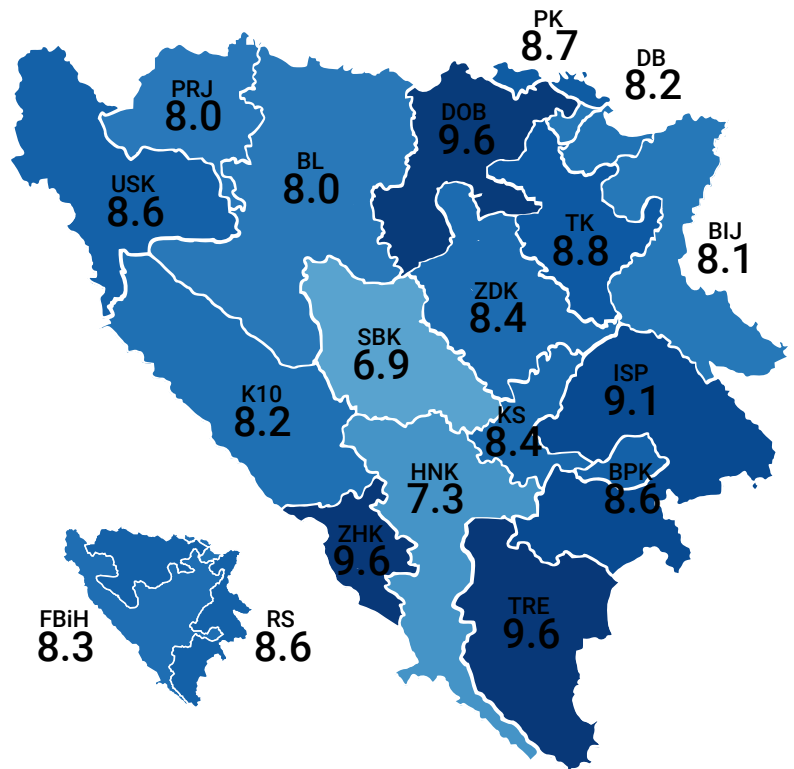
This document is a summary of the full SCORE BiH 2020 Report, showcasing ten key messages from the analysis of SCORE BiH 2020 about civic engagement, interethnic relations, divisive narratives and social cohesion in Bosnia and Herzegovina. More information about SCORE BiH, as well as results for all indicators can be found at www.scoreforpeace.org/en/bosnia.

How to read SCORE

SCORE quantifies the levels of societal phenomena using indicators based on 3 to 10 questions from the SCORE survey. Using several questions to create one indicator allows us to reliably[4] measure that phenomenon from different perspectives

For example, the indicator Political Security is measured through three questions:

1. Can you freely participate in the religious practices that are important to you?

2. Can you freely express your political views even when you disagree with the majority of your community or with influential leaders?

3. Do you feel free to participate in historical commemoration days?

PK **8.7**

DB **8.2**

PRJ **8.0**

DOB **9.6**

BL **8.0**

USK **8.6**

TK **8.8**

BIJ **8.1**

ZDK **8.4**

SBK **6.9**

ISP **9.1**

K10 **8.2**

KS **8.4**

BPK **8.6**

HNK **7.3**

ZHK **9.6**

TRE **9.6**

FBiH **8.3**

RS **8.6**

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Scores for each indicator are given a value **from 0 to 10**, where 0 corresponds to the total absence of a phenomenon in an individual, region or in society and 10 corresponds to its strong presence. The present report contains demographic disaggregations of indicators where demographic differences are significant or relevant. For demographic disaggregations of all indicators please visit www.scoreforpeace.org/en/bosnia.
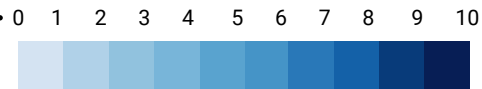
Heatmaps give the score achieved by each region in that indicator, which is calculated by taking the average of the scores that every individual achieved in that region.

Predictive models are a statistical technique used to discover the possible drivers and outcomes of an indicator. Relationships between drivers and outcomes can be positive (blue) and negative (red). They can be strongly (thick arrow) or weakly related (thin arrow) to the indicator.

Political Security - The degree to which respondents feel that they can freely exercise their political and civil rights, including participating in religious practices, expressing political views and participating in historical commemoration days.

Standardised beta weights give a measure of the number of standard deviations by which the outcome variable changes if the driver changes by one standard deviation.

[4] Cronbach's alpha measures of scale reliability were between 0.60 and 0.97 for all indicators and combined indicators (metascales).

Key message 1: Citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina have low Civic Engagement, with seven out of ten citizens never participating in online activism, public demonstrations or NGO meetings, and only one in ten participating in these activities often.

Percentage of respondents who report participating in these activities often or very often.
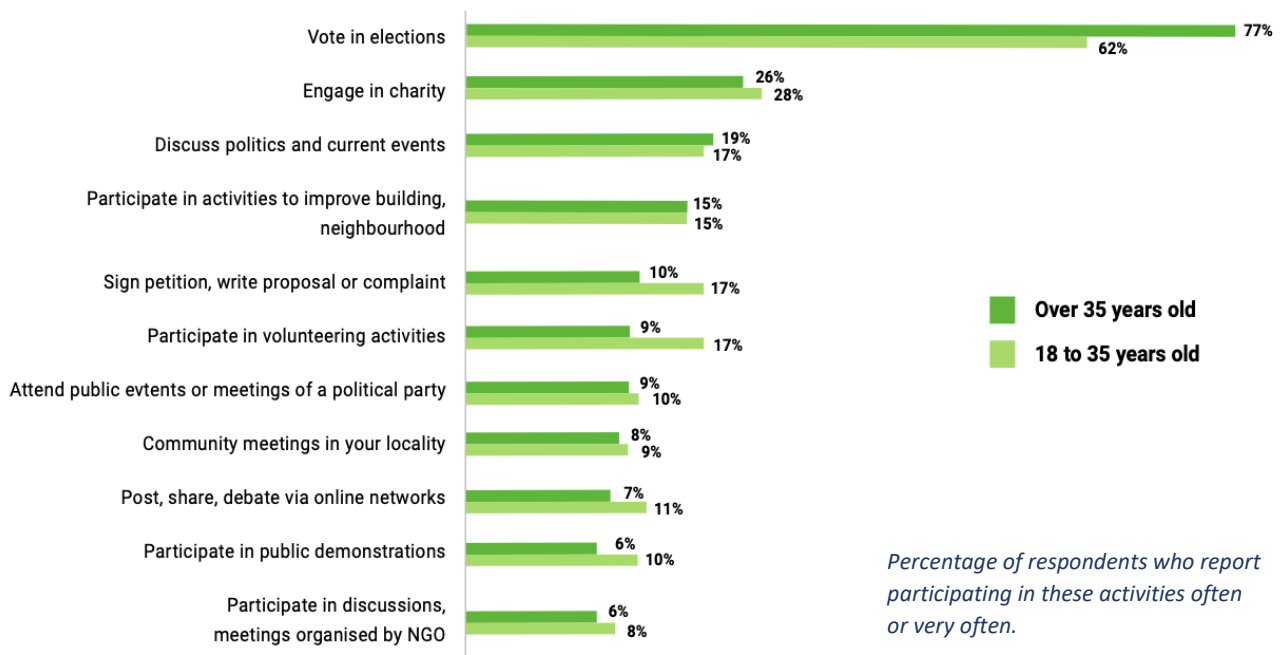
Voting is common, with 77% of older respondents and 62% of younger respondents voting often. Young people more likely to participate in most other forms of civic engagement, particularly volunteering, petitions, online activism and public demonstrations. Although respondents are often involved in charity work (27%), civic activism is low. Just 10% of respondents report that they often participate in public demonstrations or online activism, NGO or community discussions or meetings, while over 70% have never done so.

SCORE quantifies indicators such as Civic Engagement by combining the questions shown on the left of the chart above, and then calculates a score for each region as seen in the heatmap. Among the regions, Civic Engagement is higher in Prijedor which has an average score of 3.0 out of 10, and is very low in Trebinje, which scores 1.2 out of 10. Heatmaps can help pinpoint where to prioritise local interventions to boost civic engagement.

Mean scores of Civic Engagement across Bosnia and Herzegovina

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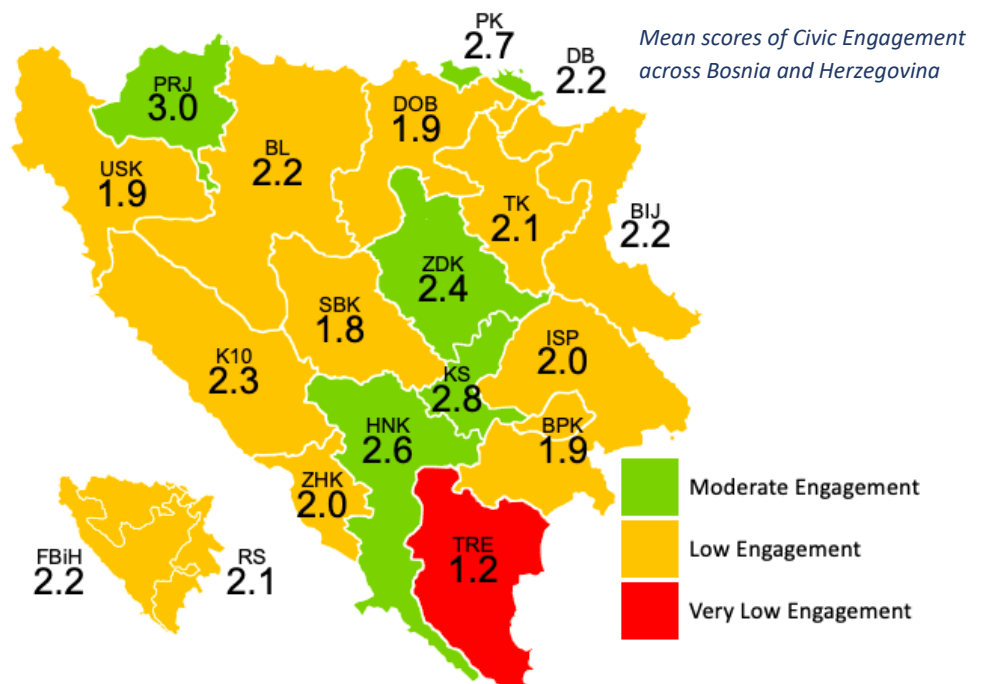
Key message 2: Although low, Civic Engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina has increased since 2014 and is at moderate levels compared to other countries.

Participation in charitable activities, neighbourhood improvement, volunteering, public demonstrations and NGO activities, meetings or discussions have all increased since SCORE last surveyed Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2014. Respondents in BiH report higher levels of participation in civic initiatives than respondents in Moldova (2017) and East Ukraine (2017) but less than respondents in Cyprus (2017).

Percentage of respondents who reported participation at least once in the following activities.

	Bosnia and Herzegovina 2014	Bosnia Herzegovina 2019-2020	Eastern Ukraine 2018	Moldova 2017	Cyprus 2017
Voting in elections		89%	82%		
Engaging in formal or informal charity deeds	42%	60%	27%		
Discussing politics and current events socially	72%	56%			
Signing petition, writing a proposal or complaint		43%	30%		
Participating in activities to improve apartment buildings, or the neighbourhood	35%	42%	55%		
Attending community meetings		39%	22%		
Participating in volunteering activities	13%	38%			
Attending events or meetings of a political party		33%		18%	39%
Participating in public demonstrations	12%	29%	14%	21%	57%
Participating in meetings or events organised by NGOs	10%	25%	25%	16%	49%

Note: In BiH 2019-2020, 4-point Likert response scales were: Never, Sometimes, Often, Very Often, with percentages above corresponding to all those who answered Sometimes to Very Often.

Although Civic Engagement has increased since 2014, respondents continue to report that a lack of time prevents them from being engaged (53%), with a lack of interest (50%) and negative perceptions about NGOs' motives following closely behind (48% perceive political motives in initiatives and 46% believe that civic initiatives are not effective).

Key message 3: The drivers of active, responsible, inclusive citizenship included Growth Mindset, Trust in Local NGOs, and Civic Awareness. Although Information Consumption also generates high Civic Engagement, it must be coupled with Critical Media Literacy if that engagement is to be inclusive and not divisive.

Growth Mindset captures the motivation for personal improvement and emerged as a key foundation of active, responsible and inclusive citizenship. Several common factors encourage Active Civic Behaviour and a Sense of Responsibility: Trust in Local NGOs, Civic Awareness and Civic Satisfaction, a higher education level and Critical Media Literacy are all important drivers of civic activism.

To ensure that activism is inclusive and not divisive, emphasis must be placed on reconciliation – particularly through Intergroup Harmony and Wartime Perspective Taking, which represents the extent to which one considers the position, opinion and feelings of other ethnic groups during the war in BiH. Fostering and maintaining inclusivity is particularly important given that respondents with higher Civic Engagement and Active Civic Behaviour tend to also have higher levels of Violent Civic Behaviour.

The full list of factors which influence active, responsible and inclusive citizenship tendencies are seen in the table below.

Citizens with high Information Consumption tend to be more active and have a stronger Sense of Responsibility, but high media consumption also leads to reduced perceptions of Inclusive Civic Identity, most likely due to divisive narratives that are often spread in mainstream media. Ensuring that citizens have Critical Media Literacy is important in countering this effect, enabling people to have both a higher Inclusive Identity and a stronger Sense of Responsibility.
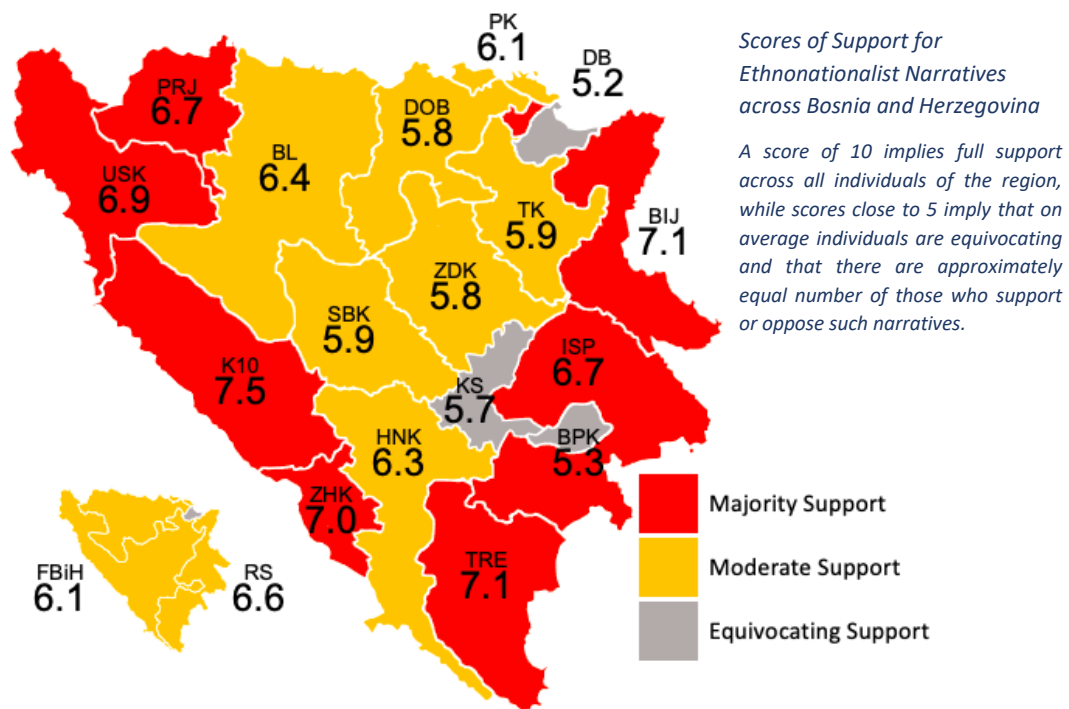
People are less active if they lack Access to Civic Spaces and if they experience high levels of Economic Stress. Resilience against these challenges is also cultivated in the presence of the civic and life skills that are important for driving active, responsible and inclusive citizenship. Resilience against challenges which disrupt Active Civic Behaviour is discussed in the full report.

Drivers of Positive Citizenship. Blue positive signs indicate that the driver leads to an increase in the outcome; red negative signs indicate that the driver causes a reduction in the outcome; symbols are proportional to the size of the effect.

Positive Citizenship Outcomes

Drivers	Active Civic Behaviour	Sense of Civic Responsibility	Inclusive Civic Identity
Growth Mindset	+	+	+
Trust in Local NGOs	+	+	
Civic Awareness	+	+	
Education Level	+	+	
Information Consumption	+	+	−
Critical Media Literacy		+	+
Intergroup Harmony			+
Wartime Perspective Taking	+		+
Economic Stress	−	−	
Lack of Access to Civic Spaces	−		

Key message 4: A majority within each ethnic group tends to support ethnonationalist divisive narratives spread by their own ethnic group, while Salafi narratives are not strongly supported.

Respondents were asked about their support for narratives typical of the ethnonationalists of their ethnic ingroup. The map shows the average regional level of support out of 10 for these ethnonationalist narratives. All regions have a score of more than 5, indicating that there is are more citizens who support rather than oppose the narratives. Areas with intense support for divisive ethnonationalist narratives, such as Bijeljina and Trebinje, Western Herzegovina Canton and Canton 10 may face social cohesion issues. Equivalent scores of Support for Salafi narratives among Muslim Bosniaks are much lower, with an average of only 3.3 in FBiH.

Scores of Support for Ethnonationalist Narratives across Bosnia and Herzegovina

A score of 10 implies full support across all individuals of the region, while scores close to 5 imply that on average individuals are equivocating and that there are approximately equal number of those who support or oppose such narratives.

The narratives that SCORE surveyed were: Bosniak Ethnonationalism, Croat Ethnonationalism, Serb Ethnonationalism and Salafi Narratives. These four indicators were surveyed by asking about several narratives which tend to be associated with these ideologies. A full discussion of these narratives is available in the full SCORE BiH report.

Key message 5: Higher levels of support for divisive nationalist narratives are rooted in four main drivers: economic strain, exposure to interethnic conflict both past and present, consumption of mainstream media and – most importantly – the spreading of ethnonationalist narratives in intimate personal contexts.

SCORE analysis shows that exposure to divisive ethnonationalist narratives in particular contexts is more effective at generating more support for ethnonationalist ideology. If exposure occurs among family and friends, in the workplace or at schools, at cultural events, then it is more much likely to lead to increased support for ethnonationalist ideology. The percent of citizens that reported that they have at least weekly exposure to ethnonationalist narratives from politicians was 41%, from TV 40%, from social media 29%, while less than 10% from friends, family, mosque/church, work colleagues and at school. Therefore, exposure from media and politicians is much more prevalent, but much less effective than exposure though more intimate contexts.

The four key stressors that generate support for Ethnonationalist Ideology are shown in the diagram, with the thickness of the arrows giving the strength of the association. Any strategy aiming to reduce support for Ethnonationalist Ideology must take into account the factors which may be the root causes of such ideologies. Furthermore, analysis has discovered that Ethnonationalist Ideology is a significant driver of Violent Civic Behaviour and Tension with Other Ethnic Groups, and it also undermines Active Civic Behaviour. This means that supporting ethno-centric divisive ideologies can lead to outbursts of violent activism and negative perceptions of other ethnic groups, proving that indeed such ideologies pose a threat to social cohesion.
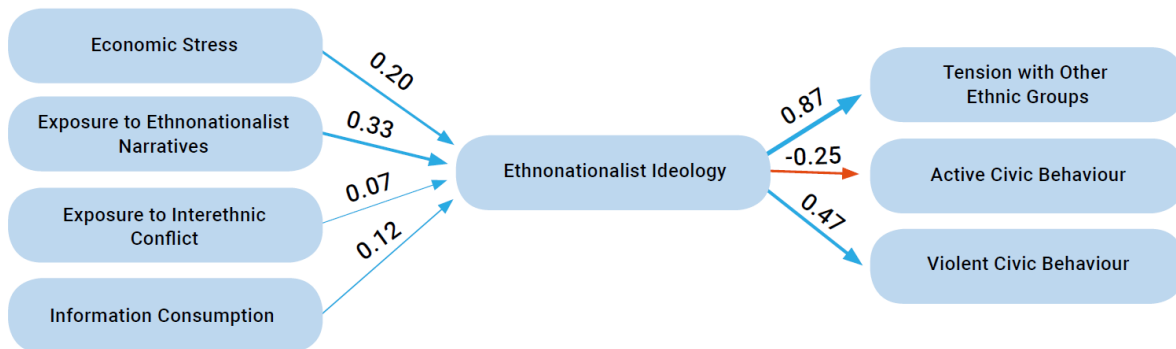
Predictive model showing statistically significant drivers and outcomes of Ethnonationalist Ideology

Key message 6: There is potential to build resilience among citizens to mitigate against Ethnonationalist Ideology and Violent Civic Behaviour, by focussing on certain psychosocial and attitudinal factors which were discovered by SCORE analysis.

SCORE analysis can measure and quantify resilience. We define resilience as the extent to which someone rejects Ethnonationalist Ideology and Violent Civic Behaviour despite having high levels of the four stressors that have been found to generate Ethnonationalist Ideology and Violent Civic Behaviour. In this way, each citizen obtains a resilience score representing their resilience capacity. Factors which are associated with resilient individuals should be integrated into programmes and interventions, particularly to support individuals who are strongly exposed to potentially radicalising stressors such as Economic Stress and Exposure to Ethnonationalist Narratives (in personal contexts). These factors are shown in the table below:

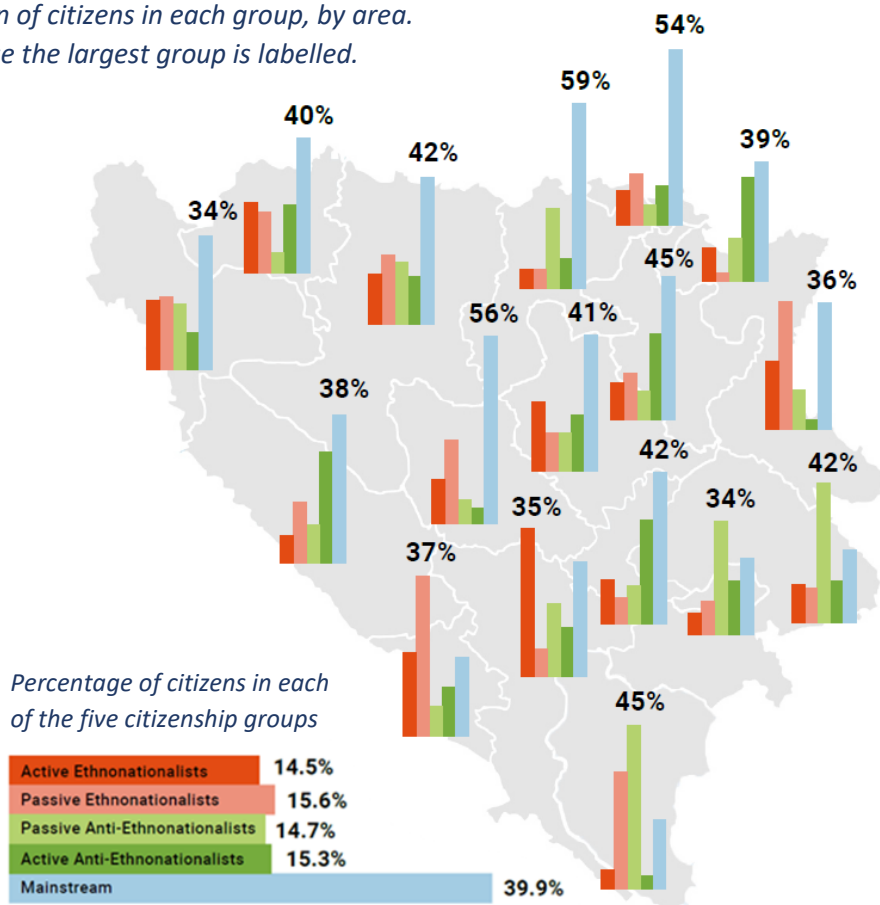| Factors associated with Resilience against **Ethnonationalist Ideology**	Factors associated with Resilience against **Violent Civic Behaviour**
Feeling a strong civic or regional identity, pride in one's city or region rather than in one's ethnic group	Healthy social relationships with friends, family, and neighbours
Frequent contact with other ethnic groups	Interpersonal skills like Cooperation, Negotiation and Gratitude
Tolerant ecumenical views on faith and religion	Tolerant ecumenical views on faith and religion
Mental Wellbeing	Mental Wellbeing
Balanced and empathetic views of the conflict	Access to place of worship
Social Tolerance to other ethnic groups, marginalised minorities	Feeling culturally similar to one's own ethnic ingroup, not being estranged from them
Feeling culturally similar to other ethnic groups	

Key message 7: Active citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina are not a uniform group, but can be separated into Active Ethnonationalists and Active Anti-Ethnonationalists. These groups have different characteristics and need support in different ways to resolve particular challenges.

Based on their levels of Active Civic Behaviour (how engaged a citizen is) and Ethnonationalist Ideology (to what extent they support ethnonatiaonlist narratives and policies) citizens were sorted into five groups: Active Ethnonationalists, Passive Ethnonationalists, Active Anti-Ethnonationalists, Passive Anti-Ethnonationalists, and the Mainstream plurality. Each of these groups have a unique combination of attidues, behavioural tendencies and visions of the future. To achieve a vibrant and harmonious civic space in Bosnia and Herzegovina the different challenges that each of these groups face must be addressed. The characteristics which stand out for each of the five groups are discussed below.
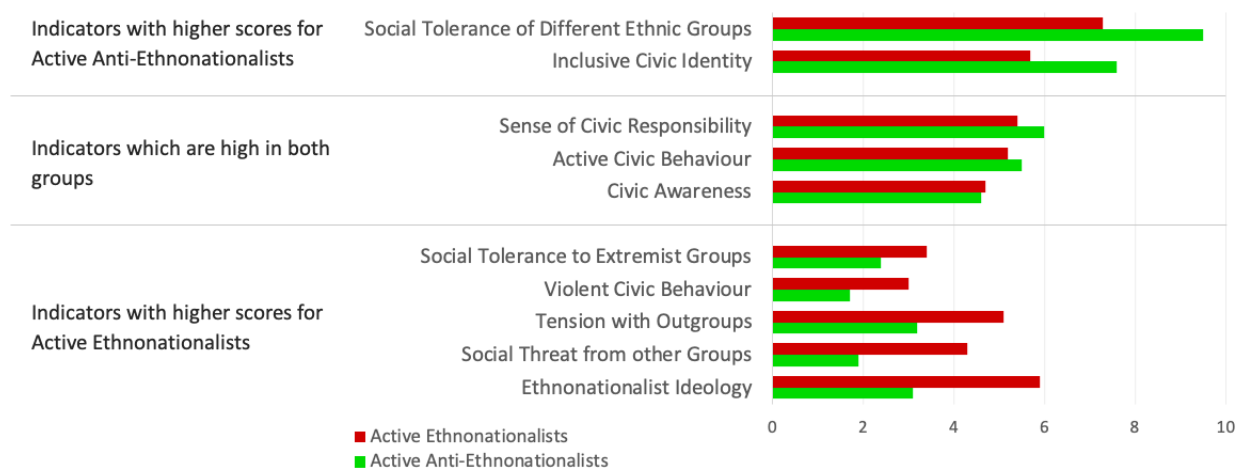
Active Anti-Ethnonationalists - **15.3%**
"Active citizens but not totally benign"

- High Sense of Civic Responsibility and Civic Awareness
- Resilient against ethnonationalism but not against violent citizenship
- Intermediate levels of Violent Civic Behaviour
- Support multi-ethnic politics and integration of RS- FBiH, and EU entry
- Resilient to challenges which obstruct civic engagement, can remain active citizens
- Tend to be younger, more urban
- Tolerant, progressive (gender, multi-ethnic)

Active Ethnonationalists - **14.5%**
"Fertile ground for recruitment"

- Violent Civic Behaviour, Aggression
- Fragile: develop Ethnonationalist Ideology & Violent Civic Behaviour easily
- Highest Trust in Political Parties and Religiosity
- Highest Information Consumption
- Highest Exposure to Interethnic Conflict
- Disagree with RS - FBiH integration
- Tend to be younger, more rural
- Higher tension with other groups, feel very threatened by other groups
- More tolerant of extremist groups

Passive Anti-Ethnonationalists - **14.7%**
"Progressive, but disengaged"

- Low levels of Violent Civic Behaviour
- Cooperative, empathetic, low Aggression Mistrust political parties and NGOs
- Lowest Civic Responsibility, and Information Consumption
- Harmonious with all ethnic groups
- High Support for separation of church-state, gender equality, multi-ethnic politics
- Resilient against Ethnonationalist Ideology
- Highest mental well-being

Passive Ethnonationalists - **15.6%**
"Disengaged and under strain"

- Low levels of Violent Civic Behaviour
- High levels of Economic Stress
- Disagree with RS - FBiH integration
- Low Civic Responsibility & Awareness
- Lowest Intergroup Contact, Social Tolerance, Inclusive Civic Identity
- More resilient to ethnonationalism manifesting into violence

Mainstream - **39.9%**
"The middle-of-the-road plurality"

- Average scores on most attitudinal, political and social indicators
- Neither tense nor harmonious with other groups
- Tend to perceive less Exposure to Nationalist Narratives in the Media
- Higher Trust in Government Institutions
- Less strongly held regional identity, lower European identity
- Lower Support for Inclusive Educational Reforms

As the mainstream majority has moderate scores on most political and attitudinal scales, it is likely that the more extreme groups dominate the socio-political space of a community, and set the tone in terms of activism and ethnonationalist tendencies. Therefore, it is useful to observe which are the second largest groups or smallest groups, and tailor local or regional strategies accordingly. Active Anti-Ethnonationalists have very high scores in civic and intergroup indicators, particularly Social Tolerance and Inclusive Civic Identity (9.5 and 7.6 out of 10). They are progressive on gender issues and inter-communal relations, and espouse a stronger identity based on their city than other groups. Active Ethnonationalists and Active Anti-ethnonationalists have many things in common: they are both active and responsible citizens, with higher scores than other citizens on Sense of Civic Responsibility (the feeling that one should take responsibility for community issues), Active Civic Behaviour and Civic Awareness.

Distribution of citizens in each group, by area.
In each case the largest group is labelled.

54%
59%
40%
42%
39%
34%
45%
36%
56%
41%
38%
42%
35%
34%
37%
42%
45%

Percentage of citizens in each of the five citizenship groups

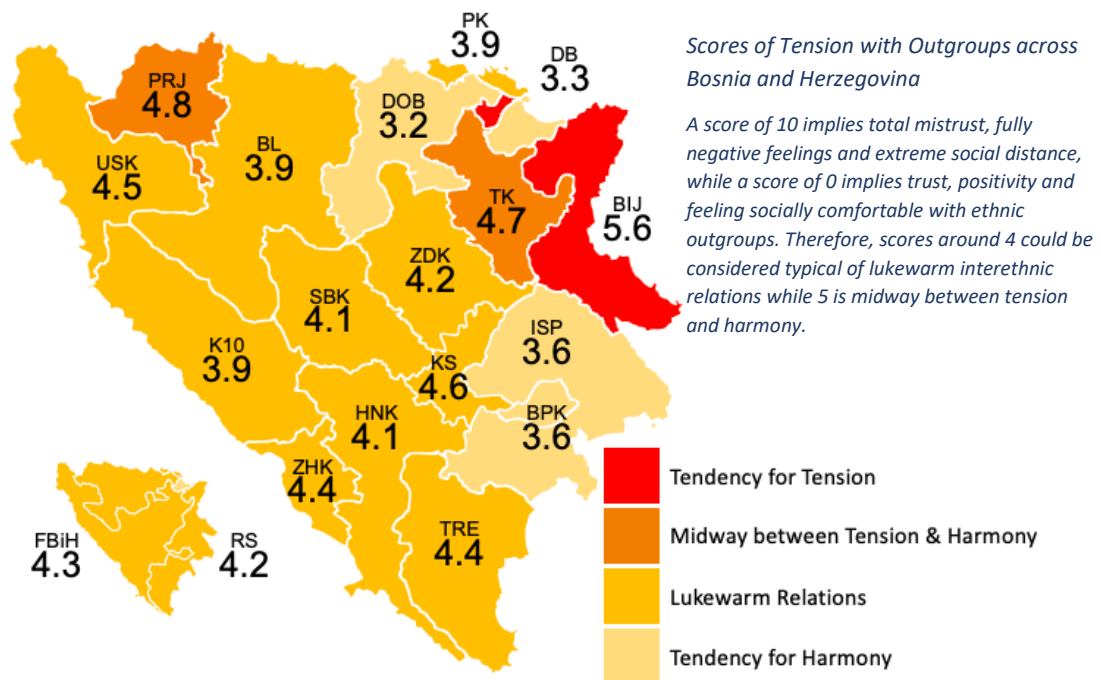|	
Active Ethnonationalists	14.5%
Passive Ethnonationalists	15.6%
Passive Anti-Ethnonationalists	14.7%
Active Anti-Ethnonationalists	15.3%
Mainstream	39.9%

Although they are just as active and aware as Active Anti-Ethnonationalists, Active Ethnonationalists are more tolerant of extremist groups (3.4 vs 2.4), more inclined to Violent Civic Behaviour (3.0 vs 1.7), feel more Tension with other ethnic groups and feel threatened by them, and strongly espouse Ethnonationalist Ideology (5.9 vs 3.1). This shows that not all citizens who are highly engaged in civic life are fully harmonious. This group also tends to have lower levels of Mental Wellbeing, Social Connectedness, and a perception that other ethnic groups are culturally very different. Therefore, interventions on Active Ethnonationalists should focus on overcoming perceived threats, resolving psychosocial challenges, and building upon cultural commonalities with other groups, and cultivating a sense of pride in city or regional identities, which can transcend ethno-religious lines.

Indicators with higher scores for Active Anti-Ethnonationalists
- Social Tolerance of Different Ethnic Groups
- Inclusive Civic Identity

Indicators which are high in both groups
- Sense of Civic Responsibility
- Active Civic Behaviour
- Civic Awareness

Indicators with higher scores for Active Ethnonationalists
- Social Tolerance to Extremist Groups
- Violent Civic Behaviour
- Tension with Outgroups
- Social Threat from other Groups
- Ethnonationalist Ideology

■ Active Ethnonationalists
■ Active Anti-Ethnonationalists

Key message 8: Across Bosnia and Herzegovina, intergroup relations are lukewarm, although there are some areas with alarmingly high levels of tension.

Regions like Bijeljina, Prijedor and Tuzla Kanton have the highest levels of Tension with Outgroups, meaning that residents in those areas have less trust, less positive feelings have more stereotypes and feel more social distance towards other ethnic groups. Given that their attitudes towards other ethnic groups are more negative, these areas should be priorities for resolution of interethnic tensions. Conversely, areas like Brčko District and Doboj were found to have lower levels of Tension with Outgroups and could serve as success stories of ethnic harmony for other areas.

Furthermore, some municipalities had high scores in Tension above 5.0. Three were ethnically uniform: Ilidža (7.2), Ilijaš (6.6) and Bosanska Krupa (5.9), and two were ethnically mixed: Zvornik (6.1) and Srebrenica (5.0).

Scores of Tension with Outgroups across Bosnia and Herzegovina

A score of 10 implies total mistrust, fully negative feelings and extreme social distance, while a score of 0 implies trust, positivity and feeling socially comfortable with ethnic outgroups. Therefore, scores around 4 could be considered typical of lukewarm interethnic relations while 5 is midway between tension and harmony.

Key message 9: Compared to 2014, interethnic relations are not much better today, with increases in some indicators and decreases in others.

The levels of trust, positive feelings, stereotypes, social distance, cultural distance and contact among the three main ethnic groups can be tracked over time by comparing the levels of these indicators in 2014 and in 2020, using the table below. We see that positive feelings of all groups towards all others has fallen, while trust is increasing, giving a mixed picture. Bosniaks and Croats have increased their feelings of Social Distance while for Serbs Social Distance has decreased. This means that Bosniaks and Croats are less willing to have other ethnic groups in their close social circles. For example, half of Bosniak and Croat respondents would not want to be relatives by marriage with other ethnic groups (up from one in three Bosniaks and one in nine Croats in 2014).

Alarmingly, stereotypes that other groups are violent have increased for respondents from all three constituent ethnic groups (from 15% of all respondents in 2014 to 27% in 2020) indicating that there are increasing fears about violence from ethnic outgroups. For Serb respondents, stereotypes that other groups are dishonest have also increased (from 24% to 32%), although this perception has decreased for Bosniaks (46% to 40%) and Croats (48% to 30%). Another negative trend is that Croats and Serbs increasingly feel that they do not share common values with other ethnic groups. Cultural Distance based on values has increased from 24% in 2014 to 58% in 2020 for Croats, and from 39% to 54% for Serbs. On the other hand, Contact between Croats and Serbs has increased since 2014. In 2020, 70% of Serb respondents reported contact with Croats at least once, up from 62% in 2014. For Croat respondents, this increased from 67% in 2014 to 81% in 2020.
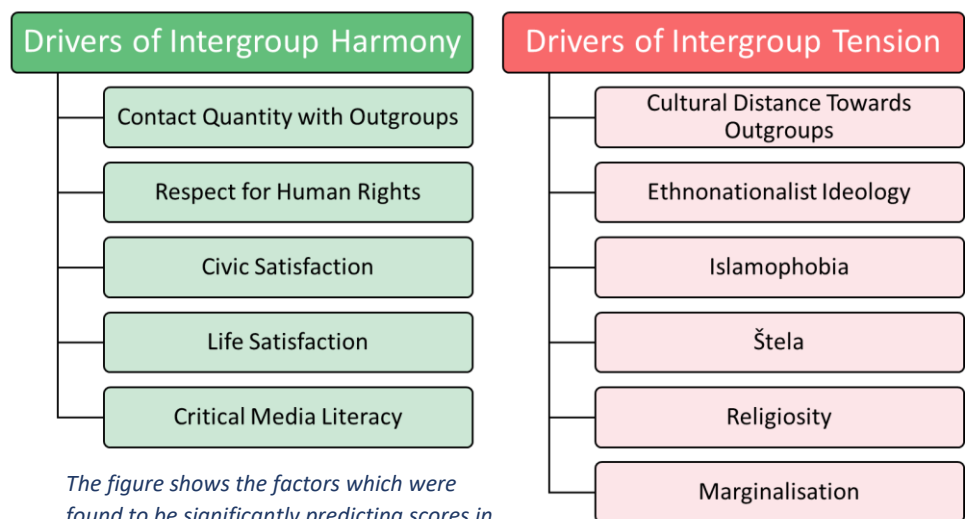
	Bosniaks	**Croats**	**Serbs**
Positive Feelings	Decrease	Decrease	Decrease
Trust	Increase	Increased towards Serbs	Increase
Social Distance	Increase	Increase	Decrease
Stereotypes	Increase towards Serbs as violent	Increase towards Bosniaks and Serbs as violent	Increase of all stereotypes
Cultural Distance	Small decrease based on culture	Increase based on values	Small increase based on values
Contact	Decrease with Serbs	Increase with Serbs	Increase with Croats

Key message 10: Interethnic tensions are driven mainly by Ethnonationalist Ideology, Islamophobia and a perception of cultural difference with other ethnic groups. The main prerequisite for harmony is frequent contact with other ethnic groups.

Using predictive modelling, SCORE can establish which factors are most closely associated with increased levels of tension or of harmony. The factors can also be prioritised by their impact, with the strength of the impact given in the table below. The most impactful factors are divisive narratives and ideologies, such as Islamophobia, Ethnonationalist Ideology, and a feeling of Cultural Distance. However, Contact with Outgroups reduces tensions.

Satisfaction with civic life (the course of the economy, interethnic relations, quality of education, delivery of healthcare, security, passing and implementation of legislature) also played a role in alleviating negative attitudes towards other groups, meaning that reconciliation cannot happen when citizens are still fundamentally unhappy with their current personal situation or the state of their community. Critical Media Literacy, which was also found to contribute to a more Inclusive Civic Identity, also reduces tensions, while feeling Marginalisation (exclusion due to ones gender, ethnic group, or social stigmas) can lead to the generation of interethnic tension.

The factors which lead to tension were found to be slightly different for the three constituent ethnic groups. Among Croats, not ethnonationalism but mainly Islamophobia was strongly related to higher levels of tension, while in Bosniaks and Serbs Ethnonationalist Ideology was more relevant. Critical Media Literacy was a more important driver among Bosniaks, and not so important among Serbs.

Drivers of Intergroup Harmony
Contact Quantity with Outgroups
Respect for Human Rights
Civic Satisfaction
Life Satisfaction
Critical Media Literacy

Drivers of Intergroup Tension
Cultural Distance Towards Outgroups
Ethnonationalist Ideology
Islamophobia
Štela
Religiosity
Marginalisation

The figure shows the factors which were found to be significantly predicting scores in intergroup relations. They are ranked from strongest impact to weakest.

Although tensions are still unresolved, there is a strong consensus among citizens in support of trying to forge a common ethnically inclusive identity. 76% of Bosniak, 71% of Croat and 55% of Serb respondents agree with this. There is also high agreement (74%) that political parties should ensure representation of all ethnic groups, not just one. There is, therefore, an overwhelming desire for the resolution of old tensions, even if that implies untangling a difficult history and planning a precarious future.