

Abstract

With the help of field research, this thesis focuses on active young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, whom the work attempts to understand in two contexts. First, there is the complicated backdrop of a country after Dayton peace that is still characterized by its post-war state. At the same time, it is vital to consider the context of the current understanding of participatory trends studied in Western democracies. Especially then the departure from formal participation towards single-issue activism. The results suggest that active young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina participate for three main reasons: identification with like-minded community and development of friendships; the desire to contribute to a positive change; and the need for self-development. These reasons are indicational of the attitudes of studied young people. They perceive nationalism negatively, value the social aspects of their activities and realize the need to develop themselves. The latest aspect is stronger for women and may be behind their predominance in the active youth community. Except for that, participation does not differ much from what is studied in Western democracies. Only the tendency towards authoritarianism persists. Some actively participating young people see it as a solution to Bosnia and Herzegovina's problems. It is suggested that the difference in frustrations could explain this. Either way, even if active young people consider emigrating to study or work abroad, they share a strong connection to their country; they want to help it and ideally continue to live in it.