



European Workshop
on dealing with the violence burdened past of
Bosnia and Herzegovina
A contribution to dialogue and a culture of listening
and solidarity
13th till 19th July 2023



Idea of the workshop

The deep divisions in former Yugoslavia and especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina are an open wound to the body of Europe. The country's current problems are closely related to the European history of violence of the 20th century. From the shots in Sarajevo in 1914 to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, to World War II with its manifold armed conflicts that lead to the establishment of communist rule, which was transformed into nationalist rule and found its end in the bloody wars of the 1990s, many injuries and crimes left their marks in the societies affected that are decisively marked by these experiences. A history people are still trying to come to terms with and the lack of reconciliation are a severe challenge to the present and the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The importance of these challenges goes beyond Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region of former Yugoslavia. Even if the future of the different societies most of all depends on the responsibility of the people living there, the close and far neighbours are included in this responsibility in many ways.

A first step is to develop an understanding for the different perspectives and the underlying experiences. Truth and justice are indispensable components of every reconciliation process. The respect for all victims and their sufferings are as essential as addressing and understanding the fundamental experiences of the Bosnian, the Serbian and the Croatian population in an adequate way. We need to develop a culture of dialogue based on an attitude of listening and solidarity.

In order to contribute to building this culture of dialogue the MA Programme Inter-religious Studies and Peace Building (Catholic Faculty of Theology Sarajevo, Faculty of Islamic Studies Sarajevo and Orthodox Faculty St. Basil Foča) and the Maximilian-Kolbe-Foundation are inviting 30 young leaders from various European countries including Bosnia and Herzegovina to join an European Workshop on Dealing with the violence burdened past of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The workshop is going to provide the opportunity to learn from the experiences of the region, to make own experiences with the burdened history and its concrete effects on the present and get talking to one another about these experiences. Connected to this is the hope to deepen the own understanding for the present strain and to be able to make a modest contribution to the healing of the wounds. By visiting (symbolic) relevant places of suffering as **Potocari (Srebrenica), Bradina, Uzdol and Kruscica** and meeting representatives of different national, religious and civil society contexts the workshop will give a sign of solidarity with all those in Bosnia and Herzegovina who suffered from violence and who work today for healing and reconciliation.