



This City Card is one of 13, which presents a very brief overview on the city. The information provided is not exhaustive, nor would it be possible encapsulate the entirety of the diversity of experience, outlook and communal identity of the population of any of these cities. Statements about political facts are not intended to prefer one perspective on those facts over another, the interest here is not in entering into political differences over the country's sensitive institutional arrangements. The political parties are categorized according to local voter base, although some parties with a pronounced mono-ethnic constituency also oppose what they see as the predominant forms of ethnic politics. Furthermore, the 1991 census: did not give individuals choices of how to describe themselves, and its categories confounded ethnic and religious identities; the categories also did not allow for a representation of individuals or families from mixed backgrounds, which the reader should keep in mind. In addition, the segment that captures "Voices" of citizens are not filtered or approved but presented as a reflection of local perspectives that have been raised by individuals that attended one of the events during this research process. Lastly this project involves a long-term engagement with the people in these cities, and our will involve going back to them to examine the perspectives of parties interested in further reconciliation or trust-building activity. For more details about the project and the research results please visit the our website: [Religion and Ethics in the Making of War and Peace](#) and the [Faktori pomirenja i izgradnja povjerenja](#) (B/H/S Languages)

Sarajevo is situated in Sarajevo plain, in the central region of BiH, surrounded by three mountains, Bjelašnica, Igman and Trebević. It is the capital and the largest city of BiH. Its historic commercial importance and political centrality have given Sarajevo a rich diversity of cultural landmarks. Its founding and growth are reflected in the architecture, with waves of building beyond the centre of the city under the Ottomans, then the Habsburgs, and further across the twentieth century, dominated by socialist style. According to the Dayton Agreement, 56.2% of urban areas and 98.5% of its population fell within FBiH territory, while 43.8% of urban areas and 1.5% of its population fell into Republika Srpska, which resulted in the creation of the Istočno Sarajevo municipality with a population of 11,477. In 2013, the population of the City of Sarajevo¹, on the FBiH side, was 299,422.² In 1991, the entire city's population had been 361,732. The decrease was due to changes to the city borders, to the war and to the city's changing age structure. The pre-war ethnic composition of the population was diverse, half of the population was Muslim/Bosniak, 26% Serb, 13% Yugoslav, 7% Croats and 4% Others. After Dayton, the Bosniak majority was estimated at 78.3% of the population.³ The population (274,526) had decreased more than 26%. A new category changed the population's structure – refugees. The percentage of the population native to Sarajevo was now 67.3%. The city's population was now older (14.4% were under 14, 67.9% were 15 to 64, and 17.7% were 65+). In the post-Dayton elections, the majority of the municipal assemblies were held by parties with a Bosniak voter base.

On 6 April 1992, following the recognition of BiH as a sovereign state, fighting broke out between the Yugoslav People's Army and non-Serb residents in Sarajevo. From May 1992 until December 1995, Sarajevo was besieged by Bosnian Serb forces. During these three and a half years, the citizens of Sarajevo were subject to blockades, day-to-day shelling and sniping, the killing and wounding of thousands of civilians and the devastation of the city's infrastructure and historic sites. Among civilian victims, around 30 of Serb ethnic origin were killed during 1992 and 1993 by a group of Bosnian Army soldiers in the area of Kazani.⁴

Sarajevo today is the administrative, cultural, and media center of BiH. Of 626 national monuments in BiH, 95 are on the territory of Sarajevo. There are four universities in Sarajevo (one public and three private), and the main public broadcasting systems (BHT, FTV) are based in Sarajevo, as are numerous other media outlets. The city's strategic development objectives focus on tourism and protection of historic heritage, adaptation of the city's infrastructure, and the development of entrepreneurship and an investment-conducive environment.⁵

¹ The City of Sarajevo consists of four municipalities – Centar, Stari Grad, Novi Grad, and Novo Sarajevo.

² 2013 Population Census.

³ City of Sarajevo, <http://www.sarajevo.ba/en/stream.php?kat=142>

⁴ Details are given in the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia trial transcripts: <http://www.icty.org/>.

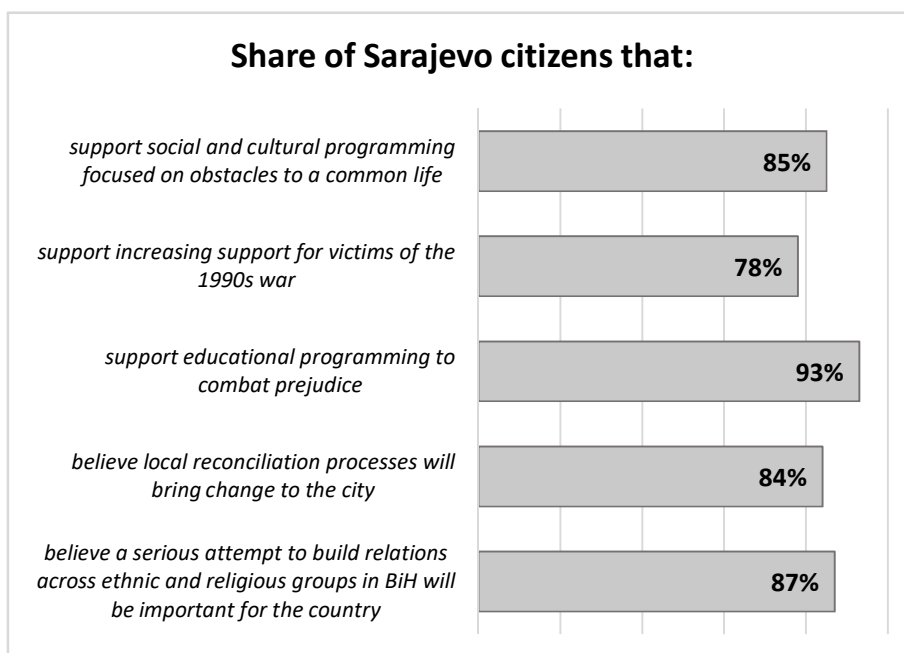
⁵ [City of Sarajevo Development Strategy 2012-2020](#).



Its central municipality – Centar – had the biggest average salary (1,224 BAM) and GDP per capita (32,822 BAM) of all municipalities in BiH, and one of the lowest unemployment rates – 16.8 % (the 7th lowest in BiH), according to data from 2013.⁶

In regards to reconciliation activities, some efforts have been made on the political level to increase institutional cooperation between Istocno Sarajevo in the RS and City of Sarajevo in FBiH (pre-war one City). The Survey findings show that Citizens in Sarajevo believe local reconciliation process would bring change to the city (84%), along with building relations across ethnic and religious groups (see graph for additional findings)⁷

VOICES FROM SARAJEVO⁸: At meetings in Sarajevo, participants suggested that its citizens are proud of their city's multicultural heritage and support the city's ambitions to remain so. At the same, reflecting on the recent past and on the war of the 1990s, the people of Sarajevo are bitter about the political and legislative framework that favors collective identities over individual, which acts as an obstruction to reconciliation efforts. Initiatives for a Commission for Truth in Sarajevo and for a truth commission covering all of the former Yugoslav states (RECOM), a civil society initiative, were not adequately supported at the political level. Prosecution of war crimes is too slow. In general, Sarajevo's people hold a negative view of the low level of care given for victims, refugees and war veterans. They fault the political echelon for this, particularly in view of the weak social position and inadequate integration and opportunity these groups enjoy, and they see this to be an important obstacle in the building of trust. In addition, the media is perceived as politicized and uncritical in its approach to the problems of the society, distorting the overall picture about the past and about interethnic relations, which creates only negative effects.



⁶ Available at www.mojemjesto.ba

⁷ For more details on Survey results please visit [Faktori pomirenja i izgradnja povjerenja](#)

⁸ This section is a summary of key points raised during the Focus Group and the Public Event in Sarajevo, held in October and November 2014.