

Activity 2: Ethnic Homelands

Newsletter

There is a series of topics for the students to choose from that will cover many issues related to human rights in the West Balkans. Each student will research the issues that they need to write the content for their own newsletter. As the students complete their newsletter they have to explain why they choose their topic.

The newsletter should have minimum of a cover with a title, graphics, or photographs. There are at least two inside pages with content and a back page that will include the reason for their choice of topic. More graphics and photographs can be used. To completely deal with the topic the students have chosen they may have to add more pages, especially if the groups are using graphics and photographs that are taking up more space.

Once the participants are finished their newsletter it will be shared with others in their class. The students will have to write feedback for each of their classmates' work.

Focus

It can be argued that many ethnic leaders and groups in the former Yugoslavia wanted to have a republic or a land for their own ethnic group that excluded others. In this way they could share the same resources, religion, language, history, culture, and society. When one considers what ethnic sectors existed in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the hostilities ended, there were a number of ethnically defined regions. Strong protests met efforts to return people to their homes after the hostilities where they were not of the same ethnic group as the majority.

Explore the argument that there was agreement among the people of the West Balkans that each ethnic group should have their own region. Was this really the case? If there was an agreement that there should be a homeland for each group was there a way to attain this goal without conflict?

Issues to examine in the newsletter:

- If the various ethnic groups accepted the idea of voluntarily forming their own ethnic homelands, would this reduce the need to continuously find ways of getting along with each other?
- Were there too many animosities to find an effective and peaceful resolution to the desires of each group?
- What would happen to those individuals or groups that felt a strong tie to their home that may have to move to a different ethnic homeland?
- Could an ethnic homeland exist, that still allowed minorities of other ethnic groups to exist within its borders?
- Overall, is the idea of grouping together with those of the same ethnic group and effective way of fulfilling the needs of the individuals?
- Is isolation and separation what is really needed for different ethnic groups to be strong and prosperous?
- Regardless of how regions made up of single ethnic groups come to be, by conflict or cooperation, does this create a strong society?

The following is an example of the layout for a newsletter. It is simply a suggestion and students can present their information any way they like.

THE WEST BALKANS Lands and People	
Date	School
The Land By Tom Joe The land of the West Balkans ...	Picture: Mountains Of the West Balkans
	Origins Slavs are an Indo-European speaking people that arrived in the Balkans and other countries like Poland, the Czech Republic, the eastern section of Germany, parts of Russia and the Ukraine in the first century.
	People Interesting Fact The Illyrians are one of two different original peoples in the Balkans that can be dated back to about 1000 BC and occupied the western regions.