

**“Pushing the boundaries of peace research
– reconceptualizing and measuring agonistic peace” (PUSHPEACE)**

Funder: Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (Swedish Tercenary Foundation)

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Project description: This project aims to contribute novel empirical and conceptual knowledge to the field of peace and conflict research. The project’s conceptual contribution is its aim to *merge institutional and identity aspects* of conflicts into a single analytical framework aimed at increasing understandings of how peace accords can foster sustained peace. Departing from a conflict transformation approach PUSHPEACE aims to advance understandings of how peace can be forwarded through channeling antagonistic relations into agonistic ones, thus developing and substantiating the hitherto quite abstract literature on agonistic peace. Thus conflict is understood as a constructive force for societal change, if channeled into non-violent yet contestatory interactions.

The project has a multi-level approach, studying fluctuations from antagonistic to agonistic relations on grassroots-, mid- and elite levels in Colombia, Israel-Palestine and Northern Ireland in an attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. *To what extent have processes of identity change and institutional inclusion in the Colombian, Israeli-Palestinian and the Northern Ireland Peace Processes contributed to the creation of agonistic peace in respective society?*
2. *Which are the favoring and/or inhibiting conditions for the creation of agonistic peace in the Colombian, Israeli-Palestinian and Northern Ireland Peace Processes?*
3. *Do the findings pertaining to the agonistic peace from CPP, IPPP and NIPP apply to the broader category or protracted conflict?*

The conceptual cornerstones of the project are thus institutional inclusion centered on aspects of dialogue and contestation and identity change where recognition is one central aspect.

The three peace processes that will be studied in-depth are Colombia, Israel-Palestine and Northern Ireland. The project will also comprise a subproject which will investigate a larger sample of protracted conflict quantitatively in order to probe how identity and institutional dynamics interplay in the creation of sustainable peace.

Project participants are expected to contribute with knowledge on one or more of the empirical cases mentioned above. The project will employ quantitative as well as qualitative methods, suited to the particular aims of each subproject.

The project runs from 2019-2023 and is hosted by the Department of Political Science, Lund University.

