

**MAPPING THE BOSNIAN-HERZEGOVINIAN DIASPORA**  
**(BiH migrants in Australia, Austria, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Slovenia,**  
**Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States of America):**  
**Utilizing the Socio-Economic Potential of the Diaspora for Development of BiH**



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**Sarajevo, 2018**

The study is the result of research performed by an international and interdisciplinary team of researchers including Dr. Hariz Halilovich, Dr. Jasmin Hasi , Dr. Dfeneta Karabegovi , Dr. Ajlina Karamehi -Muratovi , and Dr. Nermin Oru under the coordination of the International Organization for Migration, Mission to BiH and the Ministry of Human rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, within the framework of the project "Mainstreaming the Concept on Migration and Development into Relevant Policies, Plans and Actions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH): Diaspora for Development (D4D)". The project aims to strengthen the role of BiH diaspora in development processes in BiH.

The Diaspora for Development (D4D) is a project of the Government of Switzerland and the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH, in partnership with UNDP BiH and IOM BiH.

The content of this publication, including the findings presented in this report, do not necessarily reflect the views of the the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH, the Government of Switzerland, the UNDP in BiH and the IOM in BiH.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study is the outcome of a large effort of data collection and analysis to which many individuals, communities, and organisations have contributed in different but equally important ways. The authors would like to convey their sincere thanks to the representatives of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia-Herzegovina, represented by Isma Stani and Ai-a Telalovi ; the International Organisation for Migration to Bosnia and Herzegovina, represented by Alma Tunje and Aleksandar An u-i and Tanja Dedovi at the Regional Office of International Organisation for Migration in Vienna; the colleagues at the UNDP BiH; and the Government of Switzerland for providing funding for the project.

We would like to thank the most active individuals who supported our research in various capacities: Murat Muratovi (in the USA); Sead Omerovi (in Australia); Ajla Borozan and Edin Hajder (in Denmark); Nenad Stojanovi , Anita Vasi , and Taner Ali ehi (in Switzerland); Kerim Dizdar, Admir Balti and Jasmina Im-irovi (in Slovenia); Aziz Omersofti and Azra Merdflan (in Austria); Tatjana Sekuli (in Italy); Lejla Papovi , Haris Halilovi and Sadija Klepo (in Germany); Goga Sari and Naida Ribi (in the Netherlands); and Emina Pa-i and Zlatko Avdagi (in Sweden).

Moreover, we would like to thank Professor Amila Buturovi (York University) for her constructive comments and intellectual inputs included in the report, to Bakir Durakovi (University of Sarajevo) for technical assistance in creating maps of the demographic distribution of BiH diaspora, to Alisa Mujki and Ensar Meki for assistance with statistics and to Dr Adis E. Fejzi for creating the illustration on the cover of this publication.

Our gratitude also goes to HE Mirza Hajri , the BiH Ambassador to Australia; HE Haris Hrle, Emin ohodarevi , Amra Hadflovi and Milenko Mi-i (BiH Embassy in Washington D.C.); Berislav Vujeva, Darija Bugarin and Elzin Go obija (BiH Consulate General in Chicago); Mirsad Muhovi (BiH Embassy in Ljubljana); Selma Ufli anin and Davorka Samardfija (BiH Embassy in Vienna); Jasna Martin evi (BiH Consulate General in Milan) and Vesela Planini (Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Rome); Azra Popovi (BiH Embassy in Bern). Moreover, the BiH Consulate General in Munich and in Stuttgart; HE Ambassador Haris Ba-i and all of the staff at the BiH Embassy in Copenhagen; the BiH Embassy in The Hague; and the BiH Embassy in Stockholm provided useful information and assistance throughout this research. Numerous staff at the Danish Statistics Agency, the Swedish Statistics Agency, the Dutch Statistics Agency, and the German Statistics Agency provided help in gathering data on the BiH diaspora in the respective countries. Finally, Miho Sepec (National Institute for Employment of Slovenia); Enisa Kurpojevi (Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection of Austria); Bernadette Zsoldos and Simon Zirkowitsch (Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria); Silvio Ziliotto (Acli Milanese Area Sviluppo Associativo), who also provided invaluable input for these reports.

The authors would also like to thank all the participants in the focus-group discussions, group interviews and individual interviews as well as to those who anonymously completed the online survey in all the countries where the research was conducted.

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## **Executive Summary**

This report is based on results of a mixed method study involving comprehensive mapping of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora in ten selected destination countries: Australia, Austria, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States of America. The overall objective of the mapping exercise was to provide an overview of the socio-economic profile of the BiH diaspora in the selected destination countries, including demographic, sociological, economic and socio-cultural data. A specific focus was put on mapping the socio-economic and professional aspects. Moreover, the mapping also examined diaspora members' attitudes towards BiH and BiH institutions; their migration history and patterns; their path towards and current level of integration in the destination countries; and their past and current connections with BiH.

Based on the diaspora mapping findings, a set of recommendations was produced to be used by relevant BiH policy makers to improve interactions and cooperation with the BiH diaspora and create policies and conditions that will make it attractive and favourable for the BiH diaspora to contribute to the development of their home country and their local communities.

The mapping was conducted by four international consultants who conducted field visits to selected destination countries assigned to them. During the field visits, a wide range of qualitative and quantitative research methods and techniques were utilized including focus groups, face-to-face individual and group in-depth interviews, and ethnography/participant observation. The qualitative research methods were complemented by an online survey for members of the BiH diaspora. In addition, several interviews involved representatives of the BiH diplomatic missions and relevant migrant services in the countries of settlement. The diaspora mapping exercise also included producing a report on current youth emigrating trends in BiH.

As a whole, the study involved over 2,000 migrants from BiH out of which about a half completed the online survey and another half participated in focus-groups and in-depth expert interviews in the ten selected countries. The mixed-method multisided research design allowed a more comprehensive picture of the BiH diaspora than previous studies, conducted in either in one or a smaller number of countries.

The study provides comparative profiles of the BiH migrant communities in a range of different socio-cultural, political and geographical contexts. In most of these contexts spread over three continents, BiH migrants are not considered 'visible minorities' and their level of integration is relatively high compared to migrant groups that migrated under similar circumstances. About two thirds of them, foremost long-term and second-generation migrants, will not return to BiH. A potential of return migration mainly refers to young circular migrants (a more recent migrant wave) and the first-generation migrants of retirement age.

Overall, the study confirms that the key drivers of migration from BiH have changed from the push factors, during the 1990s, to pull factors, involving family reunions, marriage, study, facilitated job opportunities, and other forms of chain migration in recent years. It also reveals that the great majority of migrants from BiH have succeeded in their objectives to improve their personal and family welfare. There are slight differences across the countries in the kind of jobs and industries BiH migrants work in, but overall they include almost every possible profession and industry – from highly sophisticated engineering and academic jobs to positions in construction, transport, health and social services to hospitality, tourism and gastronomy.

Although remittances have declined over the years, money transfers from the diaspora form a significant part of many family budgets in BiH. Remittances are used in BiH for both consumption and development: to increase the household's budget, house building and repairs, procurement of home appliances as well as for financing health and social care of older and education of younger relatives, running small businesses and supporting community projects and local communal infrastructure. The investments of migrants differ from investing in real-estate, hospitality, tourism and agriculture to construction, IT, training, and education. Many of the investments have local and trans-local rather than ethnic patterns, with a majority of investors investing in their places of origin. Return migration and investments in BiH could be promoted and enhanced by reforming the institutional environment and improving the political and economic climate in the country.

## INTRODUCTION

### **Bosnians and Herzegovinians Abroad**

There are large migrant communities of Bosnians and Herzegovinians living in almost every European country as well as throughout North America and Australia. In many countries they resettled in, they have been regarded as role-model immigrants.<sup>1</sup> A majority of the BiH expatriates who represent BiH diaspora today left their homeland as forced migrants and refugees during and in the aftermath of the 1992-95 war.<sup>2</sup> According to the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the BiH worldwide diaspora numbers about 2 million people spread across more than 50 countries.<sup>3</sup>

Most members of these expatriate communities have retained strong family and other informal social ties both with fellow compatriots in other countries and with those living in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Even though they are context dependent, such ties focused on the preservation of the performance of distinct local identities and cultural memories form the basis of the global networks of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora and its link with the original home(land).

Migrants from BiH who settled in different countries and formed their distinct deterritorialised and transnational communities are seen and see themselves as part of a diaspora. They are sometimes referred to as *emigracija*, *iseljenišvo*, *izbjeglištvo* the categories referring to temporary forms of mobility and absence from real home.<sup>4</sup> In reality however, migrants from BiH have come represent one of the most widely dispersed communities from the Balkans, meeting the criteria of the commonly accepted definitions of the term diaspora.<sup>5</sup>

What emerges from the debate on diaspora is that diasporic identities are not static but, rather, a constant work in progress over time many diasporic groups change, adapting to new contexts. Indeed, as described in this report, many former refugees from BiH have become recognised businessmen, traders and artists in their adopted countries, while many BiH humanitarian and refugee relief organisations in diaspora have turned into cultural associations. Moreover, both forced and voluntary migration are very often present in the one diaspora; and an initial wave of forced migration might be followed by voluntary migration or vice versa. All these variations can be identified within the global Bosnian and Herzegovinian diaspora, as exemplified in this report.

### **Conceptual Apparatus**

Most diaspora scholars agree that mobility and migration do not necessarily result in the formation of a diaspora as a distinct form of collective identity of a deterritorialised group of people.<sup>6</sup> Throughout history, there have been many examples of temporary displacement and migration as well as complete assimilation of migrants into the mainstream culture of the host country. Many theorists of migration have attempted to define what exactly constitutes a

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ramet, S. and Valenta, M. 2011; Halilovich, 2013a; Efendic, A., Babic, B. and Rebmann, A. 2014; Barslund, M. et al, 2016; Brochmann, G. 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Valenta, M. and Strabac, Z. 2013; Halilovich, H. 2013a.

<sup>3</sup> MHRR, 2016: 67-75.

<sup>4</sup> Filipovi, M. 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Ramet, S. and Valenta, M. 2011; Halilovich, H. 2013

<sup>6</sup> cf. Clifford 1997, Cohen 1997, Gilroy 1995, Gonzalez 1992, Hall 1990, Safran 1991, Sheffer 1986 and Vertovec 1999, Halilovich, 2013a



‘diaspora’<sup>7</sup> Safran’s taxonomy, for instance, defines diaspora as a community with some of the following characteristics:

i) the original community has spread from a homeland to two or more countries; ii) they are bound from their disparate geographical locations by a common vision, memory or myth about their homelands; iii) they have a belief that they will never be accepted by their host societies and therefore develop their autonomous cultural and social needs; iv) they or their descendants will return to the homeland should the conditions prove favourable; v) they should continue to maintain support for the homeland and therefore the communal consciousness and solidarity enables them to continue these activities.<sup>8</sup>

Safran’s second and third characteristics of diaspora may be irrelevant to many contemporary diasporic communities. Even if there is a firm acceptance of migrants in the ‘host’ country, many migrant communities opt to maintain stronger or weaker ties with their original culture, language, and homeland. In most cases this does not, however, mean that ‘they or their descendants will return to the homeland should the conditions prove favourable’ The majority choose to stay in their ‘adopted’ homelands and successfully negotiate their ‘new’ identities and differences created as a result of their diasporic experience.

Cohen broadens the definition of diaspora to include both voluntary migration and migration as a result of fleeing aggression, persecution or extreme hardship.<sup>9</sup> He also defines different types of diaspora in relation to the main reasons behind migration as the ‘victim’ (e.g. Jews, Africans and Armenians), ‘labour’ (e.g. the Indian), ‘trade’ (e.g. the Chinese and the Lebanese), ‘imperial’ (e.g. the British) and ‘cultural’ (e.g. the Caribbean) diasporas. However, as Tsagarousianou points out, there may be many limitations to such prescribed typologies, as they ‘do not take into account the diversity of diasporic experience and do not really take on board late modern transnational mobility that takes significantly novel forms’<sup>10</sup> Similarly, Skrbic – argues that ‘late modern transnational mobility’ in combination with economic, cultural and political factors coupled with globalisation processes ‘is directly linked to rapid diaspora formation, challenging the traditional notions of diaspora.’<sup>11</sup> The new global context of living ‘including new technologies of communication as well as the availability and affordability of international travel’ has redefined the notion of ‘homeland’ which can no longer be apprehended as only a physical, territorial category. As Hall put it, ‘diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference’<sup>12</sup>

While it would be hard to find any displaced group that meets all the criteria for the different definitions of diaspora, displaced Bosnians and Herzegovinians display many of the elements of diaspora as defined by Safran and Cohen. They have ‘spread from their homeland to two or more countries’ in fact to more than fifty countries across the globe. As this report describes, members of the BiH diaspora are ‘bound from their disparate geographical locations by a common vision, memory or myth about their homeland’ However, the concept of homeland does not necessarily refer to the BiH existing state structure (i.e. the political entities in BiH), but more often are linked to a quite specific place and local community, a place of departure

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<sup>7</sup> See, for instance, Brahm, A. 1996; Cohen, R. 1997; Clifford, J. 1997; Hall, S. 1990; Safran, W. 1991; and Barkan, E. and Shelton, M. 1998.

<sup>8</sup> Safran, W. 1991:83684.

<sup>9</sup> Cohen, R. 1997.

<sup>10</sup> Tsagarousianou, R. 2004:56.

<sup>11</sup> Skrbic, Z. 1999:5.

<sup>12</sup> Hall, S. 1990:235.

and imagined return. Probably the most cohesive factor in displaced groups of Bosnians and Herzegovinians is their 'communal consciousness' and 'solidarity' that foster a sense of collective identity and shared responsibility to maintain support in the new countries for their original communities. Many of those we interviewed in the ten selected diaspora destination countries described in this report express the desire that one day they or their descendants will 'return to the homeland should the conditions prove favourable'. Articulation of such desires, and in most cases an imagined or planned future return, is very often contrasted with setting a footprint in the new soil: building or buying houses in the countries of settlement, participating in the labour force, setting up their own businesses, and to varying degrees actively engaging or showing interest in political processes in the adopted countries.

The social mobility of the 'former' BiH refugees, who form the bulk of the worldwide BiH diaspora, has in most cases been seen as a measurable indicator of successful 'integration' into their 'host countries'. Those 'who made it' have been regularly recognised, and their success celebrated, by their diasporic community as well as by the 'mainstream' in both their adopted and home countries<sup>13</sup>. The process of integration had also included the 'adjustment' of political identities of 'former' Bosnians and Herzegovinians who acquired citizenship of their adopted countries, even if this, in some cases such as in Austria and Germany, meant that they had to choose between their 'old' citizenship and the 'new' one. As described in this report, in the process of successful integration, the 'former' Bosnians and Herzegovinians have become 'new' Americans, Australians, Austrians, Danes, Dutch, Germans, Italians, Slovenes, Swedes and Swiss. The adoption of new political identities (not just the passports) is present not only in these, but also in most other countries where migrants from BiH have settled.

The trend of changing and adjusting identities clearly suggests that over the last 25 years the BiH diaspora has moved on from a 'victim' identity, increasingly showing many aspects of 'labour', 'trade' and 'cultural' diasporas as outlined by Cohen.<sup>14</sup> For many former refugees from BiH, the main reason for continuing to live outside their country of origin has moved beyond the 'well-founded fear of political persecution'<sup>15</sup> to economic necessity, as post-war BiH does not provide sufficient employment opportunities or match the living standards that most BiH migrants have been enjoying in their 'host' countries. From disorganised groups of refugees dispersed across many different countries, in less than two decades displaced Bosnians and Herzegovinians have evolved into a global web of well organised, interconnected deterritorialised communities in which a rich variety of social, cultural and economic exchanges takes place. A lot of this potential has remained unrecognised and underutilised in regards to the development of BiH. Demonstratively, pointing to this huge potential is, in part, an aim of this report and the overall project.

Like any other migrant community, Bosnians and Herzegovinians in diaspora are a heterogeneous group of people with all the attendant social variables very often reflecting the local culture and the dominant values of the countries they settled in. What is commonly shared between most of its members, however, is the experience of migration, emplacement in a new country, living away from homeland and feelings of nostalgia for what was left behind. Many of these shared feelings, memories and nostalgia are nourished and disseminated in social clubs, associations, cafes, restaurants and at various cultural events

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<sup>13</sup> There stories about 'successful Bosnians' are frequently published in the Bosnian diasporic media as well as in the 'homeland' media in BiH.

<sup>14</sup> Cohen, R. 1997.

<sup>15</sup> UNHCR 2017, Who is a refugee?, <https://www.unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/what-is-a-refugee/>

(*zabave*) organised by one of many BiH associations and clubs as well as on the internet and via social media.

Apart from many country-specific associations, clubs, hubs, websites, blogs and Facebook groups addressing common needs and representing Bosnians and Herzegovinians in different countries, many migrants from BiH choose to meet their social needs outside the B-H diaspora associations through informal networks of likeminded fellow countrymen and women, as well as within the mainstream culture of their new homelands. In this context, identification with the BiH diaspora is not so much identification with a monolithic global community as with 'Swedish Bosnians', 'American Bosnians' or 'Australian Bosnians' among others, as described in the report.

### **Local-global Connections**

As described in the growing literature on the BiH diaspora and illustrated in the report, the BiH diaspora has been consolidated around a shared migrant experience rooted in both social reality and the social imaginary, which provide a basis for a distinctive group identity of Bosnians and Herzegovinians abroad. The BiH worldwide diaspora is also recognisable by its many trans-local groups that have reconstructed and sustained at least some of the aspects of their pre-migration local identities, dialects and cultural practices.<sup>16</sup>

These 'trans-local' factors and migration patterns are evident in many diasporic places. For instance, the largest number of former residents of the municipalities of Zvornik and Višegrad today live in Austria, mainly in and around Vienna and Linz.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, on the other side of the globe, in Melbourne, is to be found the largest 'deterritorialised' Brčko community.<sup>18</sup> Banja Luka's strongholds are in the Swedish cities of Malmö and Norrköping, while St Louis in the USA is called by some 'little Sarajevo' due to the large number of immigrants from Sarajevo and eastern Bosnia.<sup>19</sup>

These migration and settlement patterns have been created due to social networks usually based on family, friendships and local communities from original homeland, a phenomenon described as 'chain migration'. The deterritorialised Bosnian communities maintain strong links with their 'sister' communities in many other host countries as well as with their 'matric' the original hometown and homeland. This connectedness gives the 'trans-local' networks a transnational and global character.

When researching and engaging with the 'trans-local' diaspora groups and their economic potential, it is important to understand their history of migration. Namely, not all Bosnians and Herzegovinians left the country 'in one go' or by some random misfortune. While the first refugees to reach the neighbouring and European countries came from towns like Zvornik and Prijedor, in the course of the 1990s war many more refugees from almost every place in BiH, but largely from the western, northern and southern part of the country, joined them in exile. Towards the end of the war, thousands of refugees from eastern Bosnia crossed the borders of many European countries or migrated under special refugee programs to USA, Canada or Australia. The trend continued in the years after the war and slowed down in the early 2000s. All this affected how and where trans-local diaspora communities from BiH were established.

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<sup>16</sup> Halilovich, H. 2011, 2013a.

<sup>17</sup> Franz, B. 2003, 2005; Halilovich 2013c.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid*

<sup>19</sup> Wai, H.C. et al, 2010.

## METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLING APPROACH

This study is based on quantitative and qualitative research conducted between August and November 2017 in the ten aforementioned countries. Each of the two sets of research methods involved a sample of about 1,000 people directly participating in the research.

### Quantitative Research

The quantitative data were collected via an online survey, implemented through *Survey Monkey*, between September and November 2017. The survey was comprised of 71 questions and was accessible through an online link in the selected countries. The questions were developed by the research team made up of a group of interdisciplinary scholars from the disciplines of anthropology, sociology, economics, political science, and international studies. The responsible coordinators from IOM, MHRR and UNDP provided valuable inputs, comments and suggestions in the process of devising the survey, which was tailored to capture the main characteristics of the BiH diaspora, including their attitudes, behaviours and positioning towards BiH. The goal of the questionnaire was to provide an overview of demographic, sociological, economic and socio-cultural factors related to BiH diaspora, and development in particular. The questionnaire included a series of short-answer and multiple-choice questions, and was administered in one of the official languages of BiH (i.e. Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian), and in English. The questionnaire was translated into each language by a qualified and trained translator.

The sampling method used for the online survey was purposive sampling, implemented in ten aforementioned destination countries. Purposive sample is a non-probability sample where respondents are selected based on characteristics of the population and the objective of the study. The sample is representative of the entire population of BiH diaspora since the ten selected countries cover the majority of the BiH diaspora worldwide. The number of respondents who completed the survey was at just under 1,000 individuals (n=973). Statistically speaking, this is a solid representative sample for the size of the population, which is estimated at anywhere between 1.6 million to 2,4 million, when considering the second and third generation. In fact, based on these figures, when standard confidence level of 95% and margin of error of 5% are applied, a representative sample can be calculated at 385 individuals, which is significantly lower than the actual survey sample used in the study.<sup>20</sup>

As described in chapter one, the sample is also representative of age and gender and was inclusive in terms of other group identifications such as ethnic, regional, social, and professional backgrounds. To inform members of the BiH diaspora about the 'Diaspora for Development' (D4D) project and invite them to participate, the survey was widely advertised on diaspora media channels, diaspora associations, religious organizations, social media, and on the official portals of the main BiH diaspora organisations of each country as well as on the websites of BiH Embassies, IOM, and MHRR. The participation in the survey was anonymous, voluntary, based on self-selection, and completed online at the convenience of the respondents. This sample can be considered representative as the survey questionnaire

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<sup>20</sup> See <https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/sample-size-calculator/>

was not directly solicited by the researchers nor involved convenience or snowball sampling method. We are confident that the demographic characteristics in terms of sex and age in particular reflect the distribution commonly seen in the overall population. More details about the quantitative research, including sampling and the actual data can be found in chapter one.

The quantitative data, representing a comprehensive statistical profile of the BiH diaspora in the ten selected countries, are thoroughly described, analysed and interpreted in chapter one of the report.

### **Qualitative research**

The qualitative data were collected through focus groups, group interviews, individual face-to-face in-depth interviews, and ethnography/participant observation. Most of the qualitative research was conducted through face-to-face by the individual researchers, while some interviews were conducted online (via Skype, Zoom, Facebook and other media) in each of the ten countries. Between one and eight focus groups per country (ranging from 5 to 16 participants) were conducted across the ten countries (except Italy). In addition, participant observations in Australia and the USA also included events attended by several hundred members of the B-H diaspora. The participants involved in the qualitative study came from some 200 different diaspora organisations and the research took place in 26 different cities. About one quarter of the participants did not have any formal affiliation with diaspora organisations. The participants come from a range of ethnic and ethnically mixed backgrounds. They also came from different local and regional backgrounds in Bosnia-Herzegovina and included representatives of different migration waves. A relatively equal number of men and women were included as well as different age groups. The interviewees and focus group members represented cultural, business, academic, youth, women and general diaspora organizations. Most individual interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes, while the focus groups took between 1.5 and 3 hours.

### **Australia**

The research sites for face-to-face interviews and focus groups in Australia included Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, the cities with the largest numbers of BiH migrants in this country, while members of the B-H diaspora in Adelaide and Perth were engaged through digitally mediated research. In total, five separate focus groups comprising of 8 to 16 people were conducted. The focus groups included: 1) youth, 2) business people, 3) academics and professionals, 4) mixed community group, and 5) women. These were complemented by two individual interviews with the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Australia, Mr. Mirza Hajric and an interview with Mr. Hakki Suleyman, chairperson of the Migrant Resource Centre North-West Region, in Melbourne. In addition, some 60 individual interviews (ranging from short conversation to two-hour interviews) were conducted as well as participant observation of two community events attended by some 500 people.

### **Austria**

The research site for the BiH diaspora in Austria was Vienna, where the largest number of migrants from BiH live, work and/or study. Two focus groups/group interviews and ten individual (face-to-face and online) interviews were conducted. Focus groups included between 4 and 8 participants, whereas the group interviews included 2 to 4 individuals. One focus group involved mixed cohort of the members from the BiH diaspora organizations and those who were not affiliated with any diaspora association. Another focus group was with BiH businessmen and women in Austria. An individual interview was conducted with staff at

BH Embassy in Vienna. Also, an interview was conducted with an official representing the Austrian Office for Bilateral Cooperation and Labour policy (Bilaterale Zusammenarbeit in der Arbeitsmarktpolitik, Sozialministerium).

### **Denmark**

The majority of face-to-face interviews were conducted in Copenhagen where the umbrella BiH diaspora organization is located as well as the BiH Embassy, generally considered the hub of BiH diaspora activity. One focus group (BiH businessman, diaspora organization leadership, diaspora community members) was organized in Copenhagen with four individuals. An additional six in-depth interviews were conducted face-to-face. Shorter interviews, over the phone conversations, and email exchange were also conducted with another ten individuals.

### **Germany**

The majority of face-to-face interviews were conducted in Stuttgart and Munich, where large BiH diaspora communities reside but also formal diaspora associations exist. Two focus groups were conducted: one focus group (academic, mixed diaspora community, recent migrant, student) was organized in Munich with four individuals and another focus groups with four individuals was organized via Skype as the participants came from various parts of Germany (mixed diaspora community, religious organization, business person) with another four individuals. In terms of face-to-face interviews, 10 in-depth interviews were conducted. Shorter interviews, over the phone conversations, and email exchange were also conducted with another dozen individuals.

### **Italy**

Nine in-depth face-to-face and online interviews were conducted with members of the BiH diaspora living in Milan, Bologna, Verona, and Rome. Interviews were also conducted with Jasna Martin evi , Vice Consul, Consulate of BiH in Milan, and Vesela Planini , former Minister Counsellor at the Embassy of BiH in Rome. Six participants were women and three men. They came from a variety of ethnic groups and locations in BiH.

### **Netherlands**

Ten face-to-face in-depth interviews were conducted in Amsterdam and The Hague, including Sarajevo as a BiH diaspora business owner was in BiH. Each interview lasted between one to two hours. Shorter interviews, over the phone conversations, and email exchange related to the project were also conducted with ten other individuals. One focus group including five individuals (BiH diaspora organization members, business people, academic, and recent migrant) was organized at the BiH Embassy in The Hague.

### **Slovenia**

The qualitative research involving two focus groups, four group interviews and four individual face-to-face in-depth interviews were conducted in Ljubljana and Velenje. Moreover, two in-depth online interviews were conducted with representatives of BiH diaspora in Maribor and with one in Ljubljana. The focus groups included 5 to 7 people, while the group interviews involved 2 to 4 people. The interviewees and focus group members represented cultural, youth, and general diaspora organizations. In addition to members of the BiH diaspora, a group interview with a high-ranking staff member at the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Slovenia and an individual interview with an official of the Employment Office (headquarters) in Ljubljana, Department for Employment of Foreign Citizens, were conducted.

## **Sweden**

The majority of face-to-face interviews were conducted in Stockholm, Malmö, and Motala, where large BiH diaspora communities and diaspora associations exist. One focus group (BiH diaspora women's organization, business people, academic, and a mixed diaspora community group) was organized in Malmö with eight individuals whereas another was organized in Motala (BiH diaspora women's organization, businessmen, and a mixed diaspora community group) with five individuals. In terms of face-to-face interviews, 10 in-depth interviews were conducted. Shorter interviews, over the phone conversations, and email exchange related to the project were also conducted with another dozen individuals.

## **Switzerland**

The research sites for focus groups, group interviews, and individual interviews were Zurich and Bern. The two focus groups included nine and six participants representing cultural associations and a Bosnian diaspora business network respectively. Moreover, ten individual interviews and a participant observation of the first *i-dijaspora* meeting of expert group on culture (9 participants) were conducted. The interviewees and focus group members represented cultural, business, academic youth and general diaspora organizations. An equal number of men and women were included as well as different age groups.

## **The United States of America**

The majority of face-to-face interviews and focus groups were conducted in St. Louis, MO, Atlanta, GA, and Chicago, IL, where large BiH diaspora communities reside. Between the three cities, a total of 8 focus groups (youth, BiH diaspora women's organization, businessmen, and a mixed diaspora community group) were run. Each focus group consisted of 6-10 individuals. In terms of face-to-face interviews, 33 in-depth interviews were conducted. Shorter interviews, over the phone conversations, and email exchange related to the project were also conducted with another 35 individuals. Additionally, participant observation and conversations about the project were carried out at several community events including a Bosnian Festival attended by several thousand BiH diaspora members, a community picnic, and a book promotion event. Also, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 3 staff members of the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Washington D. C., 3 staff members of the Consulate General of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Chicago, and 2 staff members of the Advisory Council for Bosnia and Herzegovina (ACBH) in Washington, D. C.

The individual country reports (chapters 2 to 11) draw heavily upon the qualitative data collected in each country. The reports describe the key features about the BiH diaspora in the respective countries. Due to different demographic and socio-economic data being collected by the government agencies in each of the country, there are variations in terms how some aspects of the BiH diaspora are profiled and described in the country reports. However, all the reports follow the same structure, making them comparable with each other.

## CHAPTER I

### Counting (on) the BiH Diaspora

#### Introduction

This chapter is based on quantitative data collected via an online questionnaire comprised of 71 questions and accessible through an online link in select ten countries, including Australia, Austria, Sweden, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Germany, Denmark, Switzerland, and the United States. The questionnaire assessed demographic, social, cultural, and economic indicators among the BiH diaspora, as well as some of the relevant attitudes, behaviours and perceptions, as related to BiH and migration.

The study, first of this scale and scope, proved to be a challenging task in many regards. Similar challenges and limitations, when collecting quantitative data about migrants from BiH, have been reported in previously conducted, smaller-scale studies on the BiH diaspora. For example, a study in Sweden, exploring reconciliatory attitudes of diaspora members and comparing them to local populations in BiH, was based on in-country samples focused on individuals' last names.<sup>21</sup> A recent research project funded by the European Research Council conducted a large-scale survey of different diaspora groups in five different countries in Europe and demonstrated difficulties in collecting data among diaspora groups, in particular those that include second and third generation individuals.<sup>22</sup> Similar issues affected the studies on the BiH diaspora in Switzerland, which, in order to capture a variety of BiH migrants' affiliations, had to be extended to cover some segments of the Serbian and Croatian diaspora in that country.<sup>23</sup>

Studies such as these often point to difficulties in quantitatively surveying the BiH diaspora. For instance, there are often two or three generations of Bosnians and Herzegovinians living in each resettlement country, with varied relationships to the homeland, requiring a different set of questions to be explored depending on the generation. Secondly, as this project was the first attempt by the BiH state to do such an exercise, there are questions of trust by diaspora individuals at stake. Thirdly, there are few effective ways of disseminating information about the survey to diaspora individuals as the number of individuals who are involved in diaspora organizations and associations is low in comparison to the actual size of the BiH diaspora.

The quantitative and qualitative data obtained for this project, nevertheless, are, at the time of writing, representative of the most comprehensive data exploring the BiH diaspora across

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<sup>21</sup> Hall, J. and Kostic, R. 2009.

<sup>22</sup> The project, "Diasporas and Contested Sovereignty," funded by the European Research Council, was conducted at the University of Warwick between 2012 ó 2017. While the cross-national survey initially planned to include the BiH diaspora, due to a number of factors, the final survey did not. Publications based on the survey data are still pending.

<sup>23</sup> Iseni B. 2012 and Iseni, B. et al. 2014.



three continents and ten countries. To the authors' best knowledge, there is no recent and nationally-representative data to date on BiH diaspora's public opinion, especially as related to development. The comprehensive questionnaire used for the project covered a wide range of political, cultural, economic and social questions, including institutional and interpersonal attitudes of the BiH diaspora towards present day issues in the country and local communities of their origin, as well as the perceptions of and experiences in host countries; our data set is cross-sectional in nature and allows for comparative analysis. There is no reason to believe that recorded attitudes are not stable, and thus could be interpreted as general trends for the last few years.

A limitation that potentially affects the reliability of the findings is the relatively short time during which data was collected. Provided that data was collected in less than 70 days, it is likely to have captured only those respondents who are well connected to either diaspora organizations or BiH media, and/or had knowledge about this project. It is less likely that the online questionnaire, in particular, reached older generations of diasporans or individuals who do not keep regular contact with BiH or with relatives who still may reside in BiH, as noted above. A longer period during which the survey data was collected would have potentially allowed for depth and breadth in data collection, which in turn would have resulted in more observations, and raised the validity and reliability of the research findings.

Additionally, due to limited previous data on BiH diaspora public opinion as related to BiH and development in particular, this pioneering survey data lacks full comparison to previous similar data. Nevertheless, the survey provides a cross-sectional view of BiH diaspora assessed in ten different countries. Some important conclusions can be drawn from the data collected with the intent of improving future such studies which, in connection to the rest of the final report, can help provide guidance for diaspora strategy development, and increase the understanding of BiH diaspora dynamics.

### **The Survey Questionnaire**

The survey questionnaire, devised by a group of interdisciplinary scholars specialising in BiH diaspora studies and in consultation with IOM, MHRR and UNDP, was tailored to capture the main characteristics of the BiH diaspora. The goal of the questionnaire was to provide an overview of demographic, sociological, economic, and socio-cultural factors related to BiH diaspora, and development in particular. The questionnaire included a series of short-answer and multiple-choice questions, and was administered in one of the official languages of BiH (i.e. Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian), and in English. The questionnaire was translated into each language by a qualified and trained translator.

### **Sampling**

The sampling method used for the online survey was purposive sampling, implemented in ten aforementioned destination countries. Purposive sample is a non-probability sample where respondents are selected based on characteristics of the population and the objective of the study. We expect that the sample is representative of the entire population of BiH diaspora since the ten countries selected cover the majority of the BiH diaspora worldwide, and the countries with the highest numbers of BiH diaspora. The number of respondents was at just under 1000 individuals, which denotes a statistically representative sample of the overall size of the BiH diaspora. The size of the BiH diaspora has been estimated to be 2M by the BiH Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees including second and third generation individuals. Thus, a representative sample is 385 individuals when a confidence level of 95% and a

margin of error of 5% are applied; significantly lower than the actual survey sample collected.<sup>24</sup>

Given the sample size, we calculated a margin of error for a population of 1.5 million diaspora members to be 3.16. This means that if 50% of the sample picked a particular answer (yes or no), we can say with a confidence level of 95%<sup>25</sup> that if we surveyed the entire BiH diaspora population, their actual answers would be in the range between 47% and 53%.

This sample can be considered representative as the survey questionnaire was not directly solicited by the researchers nor involved convenience or snowball sampling method. Instead, it was anonymous, voluntary, based on self-selection, and completed online at the convenience of the respondents. To inform members of the BiH diaspora about the 'Diaspora for Development' (D4D) project and invite them to participate, the survey questionnaire was widely advertised on diaspora media channels, diaspora associations, religious organizations, social media, and on the official portals of the main BiH diaspora organisations of each country as well as on the websites of BiH Embassies, IOM, and MHRR. The research team ensured that the BiH diaspora of various ethnic, regional, social, and professional backgrounds were included by contacting diaspora professional organizations and networks who were asked to relay information about the survey questionnaire among their networks.

Between September and November 2017, the survey was implemented through Survey Monkey. Broadly speaking, we are confident that the demographic characteristics in terms of sex and age in particular reflect the distribution commonly seen in the overall population. For example, it includes an equal number of men and women, as well as a standard shape of the population pyramid.

However, we acknowledge that our sampling method, as with any study, is not without limitations. The first limitation is connected to the nature of an online survey itself – it tends to be used by respondents who are proficient users of technology and who have access to the Internet, and may miss those with limited access such as the elderly. In order to minimize this bias, we distributed a printed questionnaire to the elderly at premises of various BiH diaspora organizations in each country surveyed. In some cases, the questionnaire was also administered face-to-face to help those with access and proficiency limitations. We also made recommendations that computer literate family members assist those lacking computer skills. Several community organisations offered volunteers to assist those seeking assistance with the Internet. The share of the elderly in the sample (167/973, or 17%), who we presumed to be less skilled in using online tools confirms that they are sufficiently included in the sample and that the possible coverage bias does not affect the overall results considerably.

Another limitation of an online survey is related to non-response bias and selection bias. Online surveys are based on 'open recruitment' meaning that one cannot control not only who is taking the survey, but also if the respondent providing answers is the person matching the demographic data provided. While this is an effective way of increasing the number of respondents, it can result in selection bias where individuals with more interest in the topic are more likely to participate in the survey, or where one person may submit multiple responses. Therefore, a BiH diaspora member who may be more connected to BiH and have a vested interest in contributing to development of BiH, would have been more likely to

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<sup>24</sup> See <https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/sample-size-calculator/>

<sup>25</sup> Confidence level of 95% is the most common level used in determining sample size.

complete the questionnaire. However, despite the fact that such a selection bias may result in a sample less representative of the general population of people of BiH origin residing abroad (wider definition of diaspora), such bias can also make the sample more representative of the target diaspora population (more narrow definition of diaspora), or individuals who identify themselves with the country and are interested in contributing to its development. In this case, the sampling of these individuals provides more detailed insight for the continuation and implementation of this project.

Finally, with online surveys, there is always a possibility of "stakeholder bias" or the tendency of individuals and organizations that have a vested interest in the survey results completing the survey multiple times, as well as influencing or encouraging others to complete the survey so as to influence the results. Since the majority of BiH diaspora organizations surveyed were contacted through mailing lists of the MHRR, BiH embassies, IOM, BiH diaspora organisations and the lists generated by the country researchers (i.e. project stakeholders), stakeholder bias may be a limitation of the project. Future surveys of BiH diaspora could potentially benefit from longer periods researching and contacting diaspora organizations that do not have established contacts with key BiH institutions. Alternatively, the MHRR and embassies around the world could have a continuous call on their web sites for all BiH diaspora organizations and individuals to provide and update their contact details in order to reduce such a bias in the future.

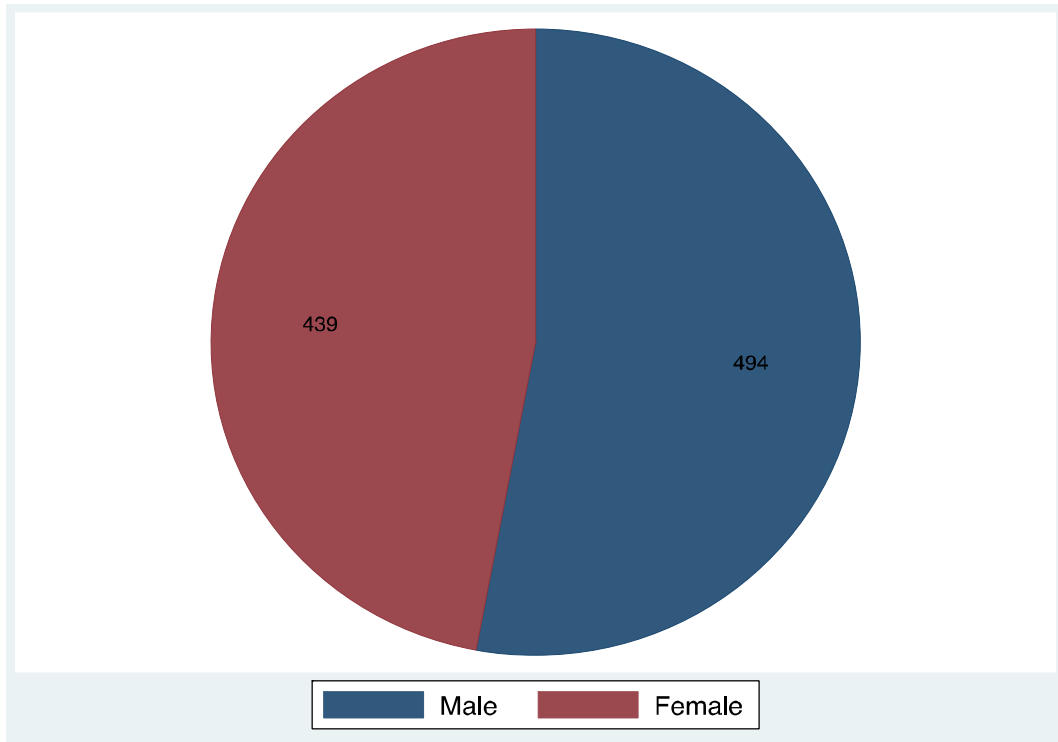
### **Analysis**

The data analysis was conducted using Stata 14 statistical software, and descriptive analyses as well as cross-tabs were run to explore the data. To examine whether there were significant associations between variables, the Chi square test was run. ANOVA was also run to examine differences among different group means. Questions with a low response rate were particularly noted during data analysis, and in cases where the reliability of the question was threatened by a low response rate, results were not interpreted or presented in the report in order to avoid bias. Our quantitative analysis consists of descriptive interpretations of demographics and other general characteristics of the respondents, mapping of the current patterns, interpretation of results, and discussion.

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

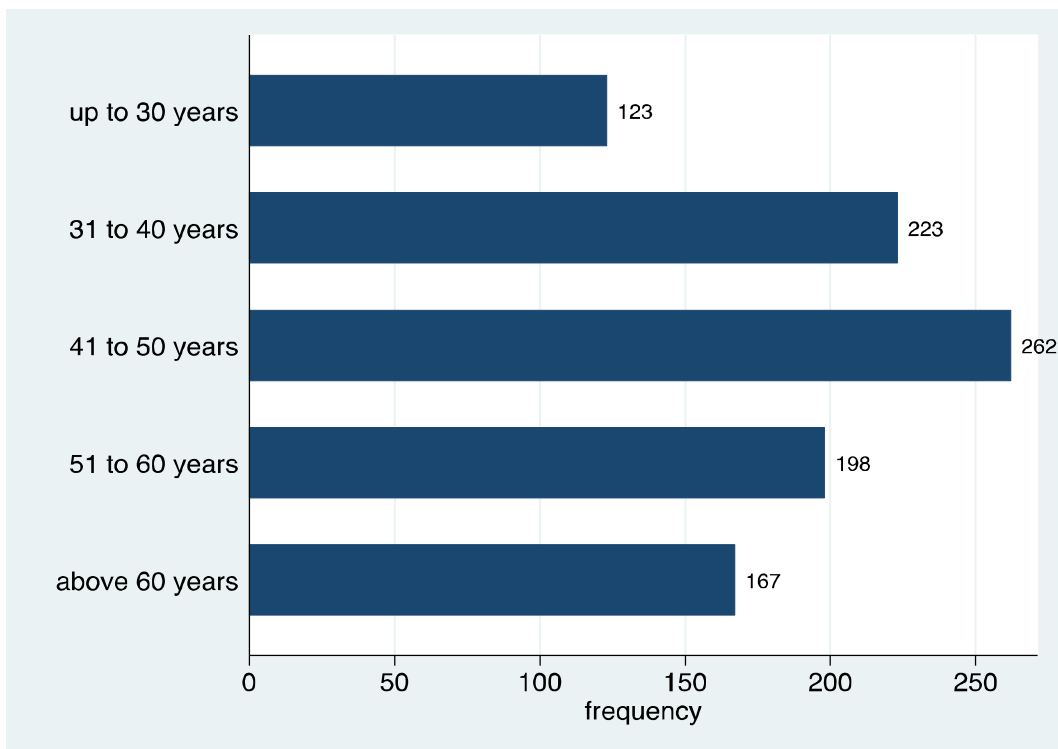
### **Gender**

The total project sample size is 973 respondents, all of whom are BiH diaspora members living in the ten countries in which the BiH diaspora was mapped by the Diaspora for Development project. Of these, 50.8% (n=494) were male, which is quite consistent with 2017 BiH estimates of overall male and female population.



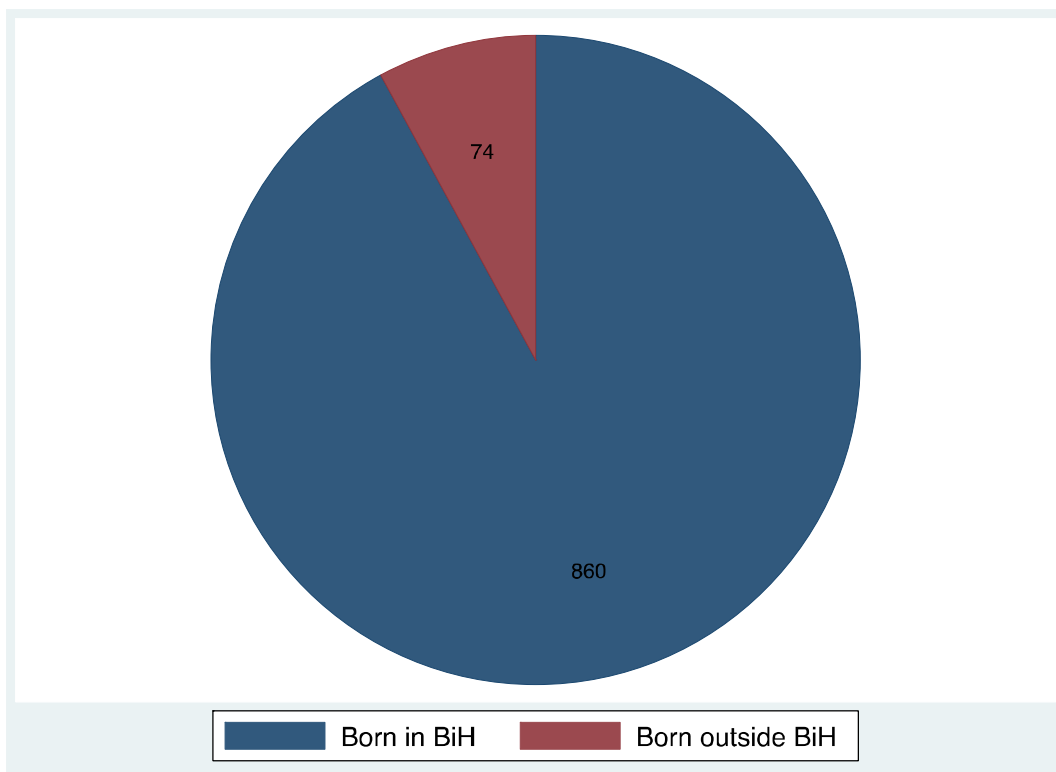
### Age

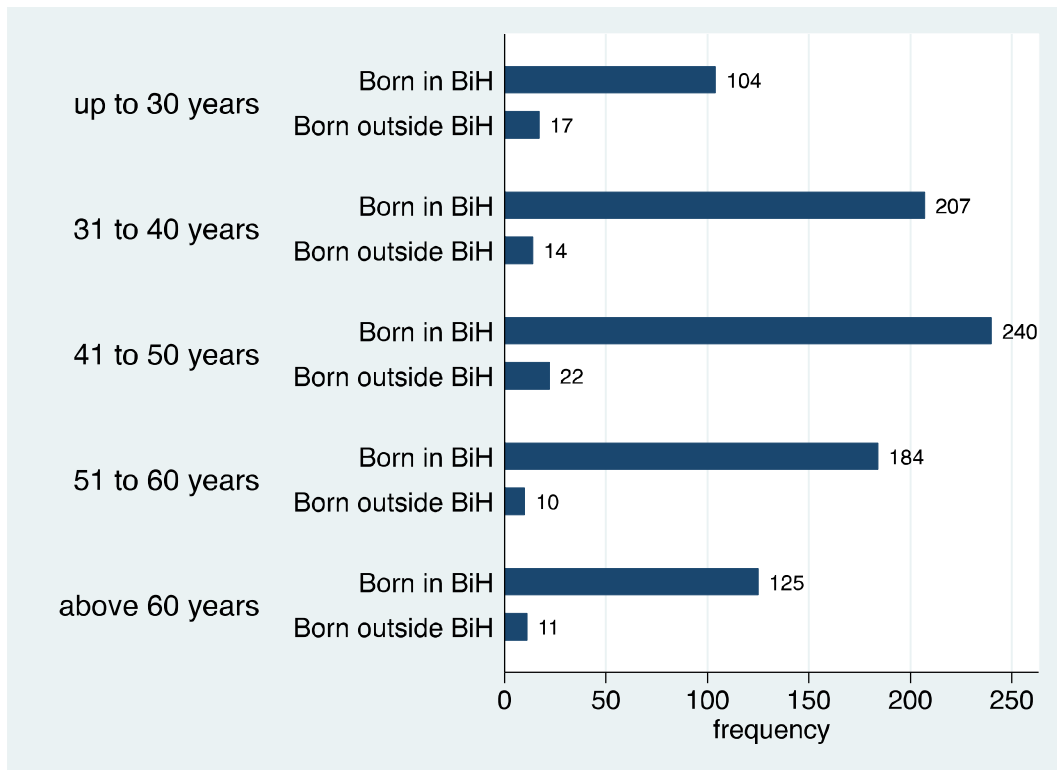
The sample of BiH diaspora is also representative in terms of age and consists of mostly middle-aged individuals. Specifically, 13% of the sample were 30 and under, 70% were between 30 -60, and 17% were 60 and above. The wide age distribution of the sample, along with a significant percentage of middle aged adults who are employed, suggests a window of opportunity for engagement and investment within all age groups of the BiH diaspora, and the working adults in particular.



### Place of Birth and Age by Place of Birth

Ninety two percent of the 934 individuals, who responded to the question of place of birth, reported being born in BiH, whereas the rest were born outside of BiH. It is also interesting to note that for each age group, there was a much higher participation of individuals who were born in BiH than those who were not, especially among the middle-aged (31 to 50 years). Considering that much of the BiH diaspora is conflict generated as the result of conflict in the 1990s, it is not surprising that this is the case. As reflected in the qualitative data collected, first generation BiH diaspora also seems to feel more connected to and vested in BiH than second and third generation Bosnian and Herzegovinians, and may therefore be more likely to participate in projects such as this one that relate to their homeland.

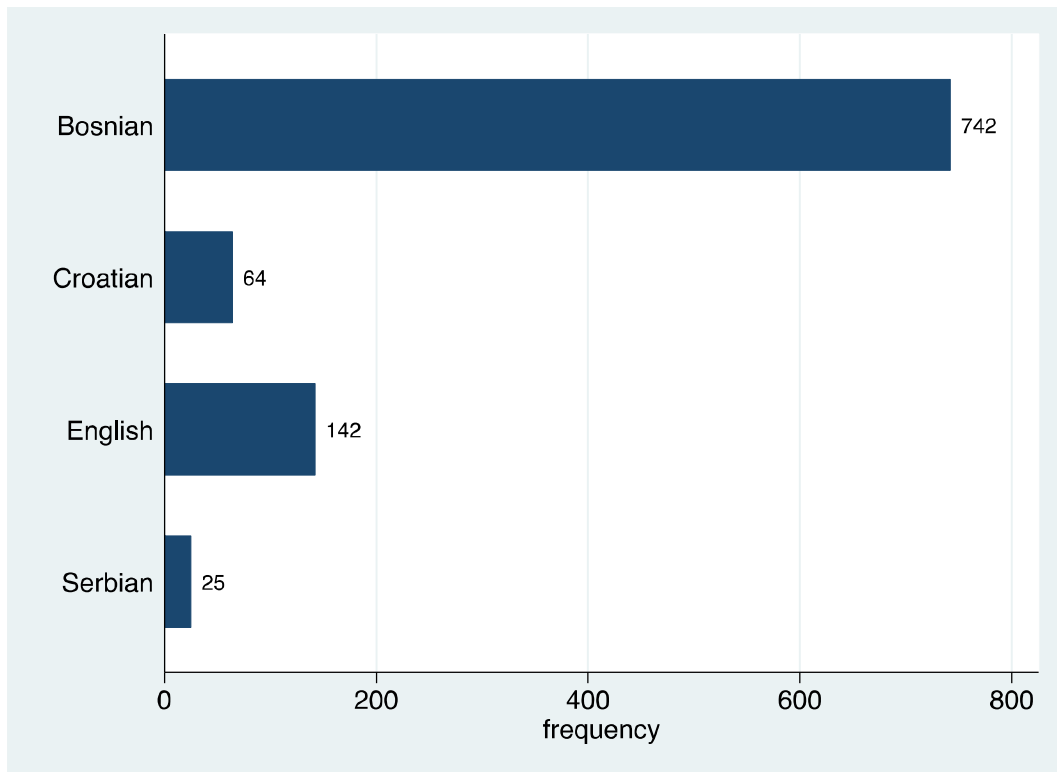




### Preferred Language

The preferred language for the respondents was by far Bosnian (76%), followed by English (14.5%), Croatian (6.5%), and Serbian (3%). In other words, the majority of respondents preferred Bosnian version of the questionnaire, and nearly 85% responded in Bosnian, Croatian, or Serbian, indicating the importance and preservation of native language among the BiH diaspora. The native language preference likely also has a connection to the fact that the majority of the respondents, as discussed earlier, were middle aged, and therefore first-generation Bosnian and Herzegovinians whose first language is Bosnian. The commitment and preservation of ethnic language was also echoed throughout qualitative research and is elaborated on further in respective country reports.

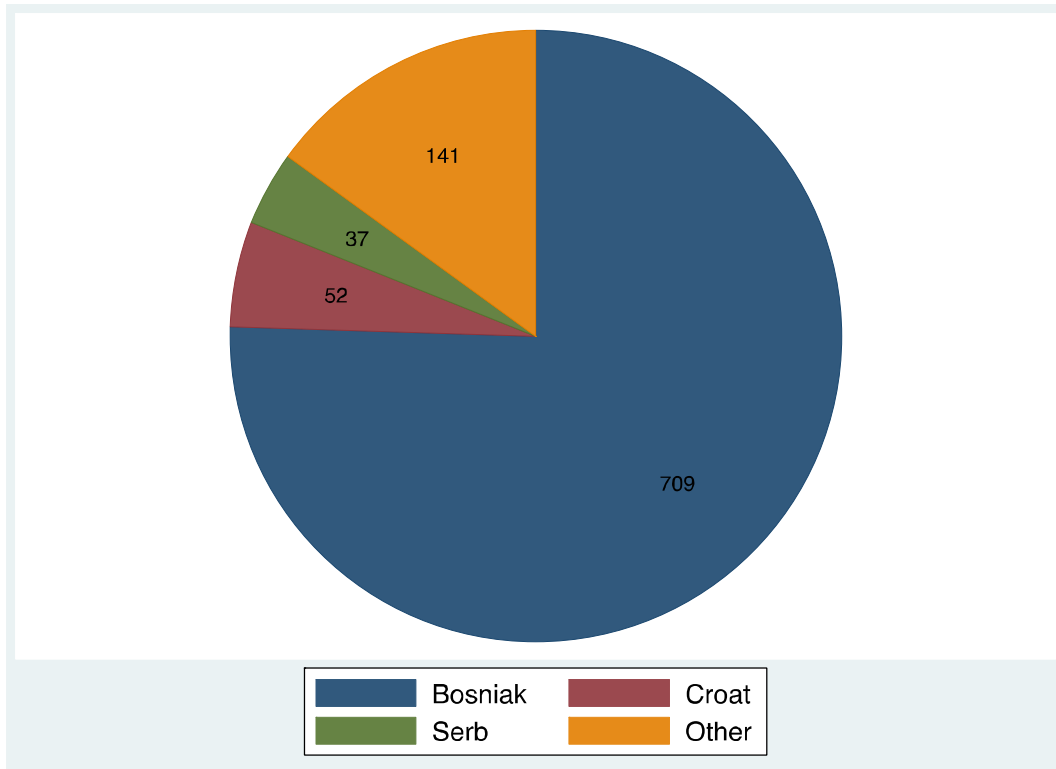
Additionally, it is noteworthy that 14.5% (n=142) of respondents indicated English as the preferred language, instead of official BiH languages. This preference could be interpreted in two ways: that the respondents were more comfortable with using their daily working languages than Bosnian, Serbian or Croatian (for instance, respondents living in the US and Australia), or that respondents under 30 (n=123 or 30%) prefer using English and might not have developed their language competencies in Bosnian, Serbian or Croatian.



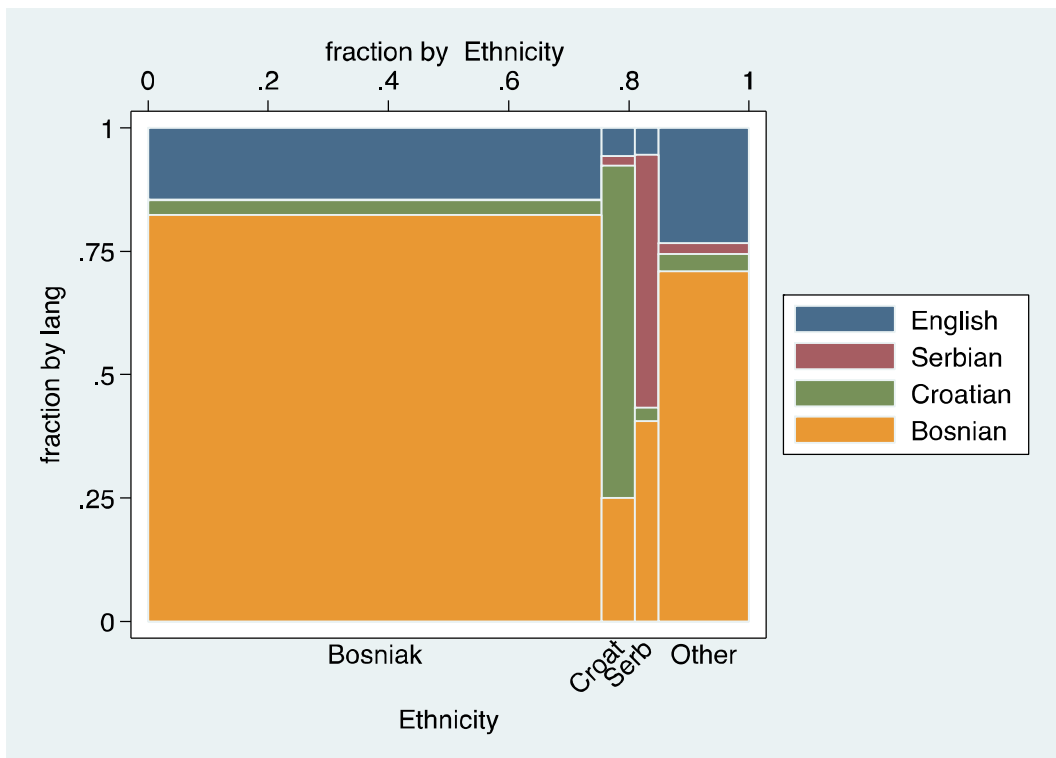
### Self-reported Ethnicity

The majority of the respondents surveyed indicated Bosniak ethnicity (75%), with 6% identifying as Croat, 4% as Serb, and 15% as other. The high number of Bosniaks reflected in the sample is not surprising and is quite consistent with several other reports on the number of Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs who migrated from BiH. The largest migration wave occurred in mid and late 1990s, characterized by an influx of refugees from BiH to several European countries, the United States, and Australia, with the majority of refugees being of Bosniak ethnicity. It is also interesting to note that a good percentage of BiH diaspora chose to identify as “Other,” suggesting reluctance on the part of some diaspora members to identify themselves with one of the three major ethnic groups. In fact, many BiH diaspora individuals prefer to identify as simply “Bosnian,” and some even as “former Yugoslav,” in the spirit of old country. Finally, it is likely that someone from a mixed ethnic background may choose to identify as “Other.” A large number of refugees who left BiH in the 1990s and early 2000s were families where mixed marriages were common, particularly those coming from urban settings.<sup>26</sup> This trend was also echoed throughout qualitative work in certain countries examined and is elaborated on in each of the respective country reports.

<sup>26</sup> Toal, G. and T Dahlman, C.T. 2011.



Responses in different languages by ethnicity

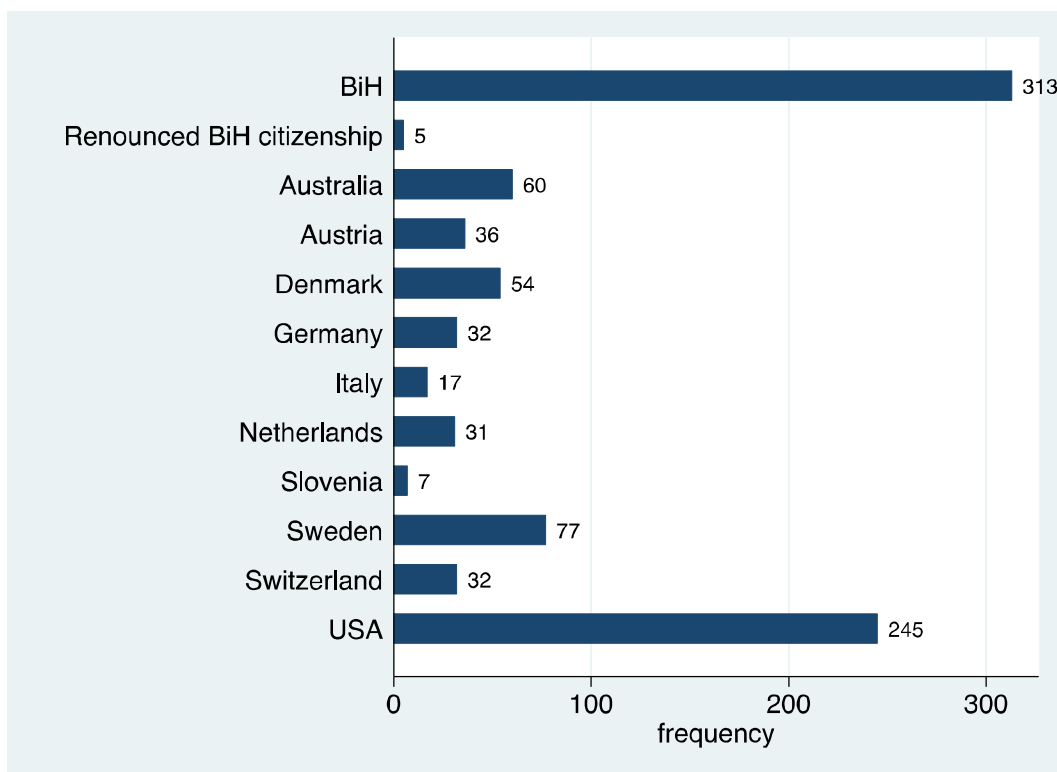


### Citizenship

While the consideration of citizenship is relative in that it requires taking into account the total number of individuals who responded from each of the ten countries, it is clear that a large number of respondents (34%) who did provide citizenship reported having BiH citizenship. This is encouraging when thinking about diaspora for development, as the high



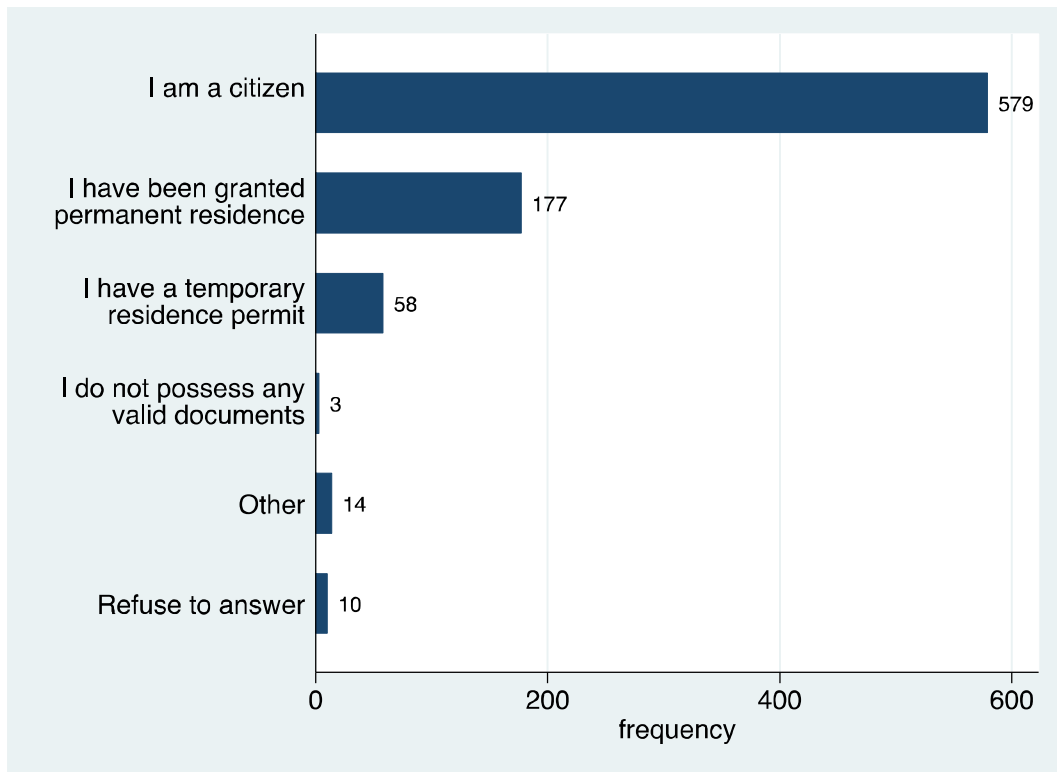
number speaks to the connection that many in the BiH diaspora have to BiH. On the other hand, a number of respondents also indicated having citizenship of the country they migrated to, suggesting long-term commitment to their host country as well, and intention to stay for a longer period of time or permanently. Of the ten countries surveyed, several of the citizenship regimes allow for dual citizenship whereas other countries, primarily Germany and Austria, do not. The lack of bilateral agreements between these countries regarding dual citizenship for individuals with BiH background is likely reflected in the graph below. Each of the qualitative country reports elaborates on dual citizenship policies in more detail.



### Status in Host Country

The majority of BiH diaspora surveyed reported having citizenship (69%) or permanent residence (21%) in their host country (or country of residence), which supports the earlier claim that many intend to stay in the respective countries for a longer period of time, or permanently. It also suggests that these individuals are relatively well integrated and enjoy the same rights as the natives—economically, politically, and socially. With citizenship also comes responsibility towards the host country and this is important to keep in mind when weighing BiH diaspora’s commitment to BiH, development in BiH, and their overall contribution. At the same time, high levels of citizenship engagement in host countries could be interpreted as potential for the development of BiH, as diaspora has been known to attempt to transfer values and engage in public diplomacy programs in countries such as the United States, for example.<sup>27</sup>

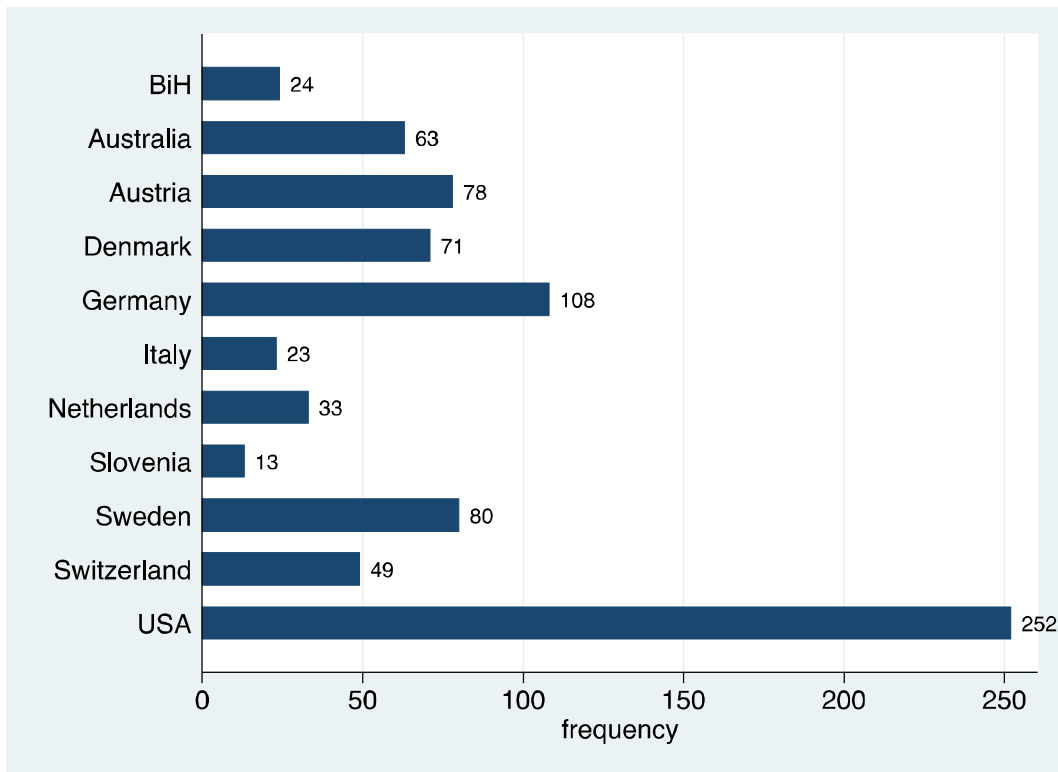
<sup>27</sup> A prominent example is the International Diaspora Engagement Alliance sponsored by the US State Department.



### Place of Residence for the Majority of the Year

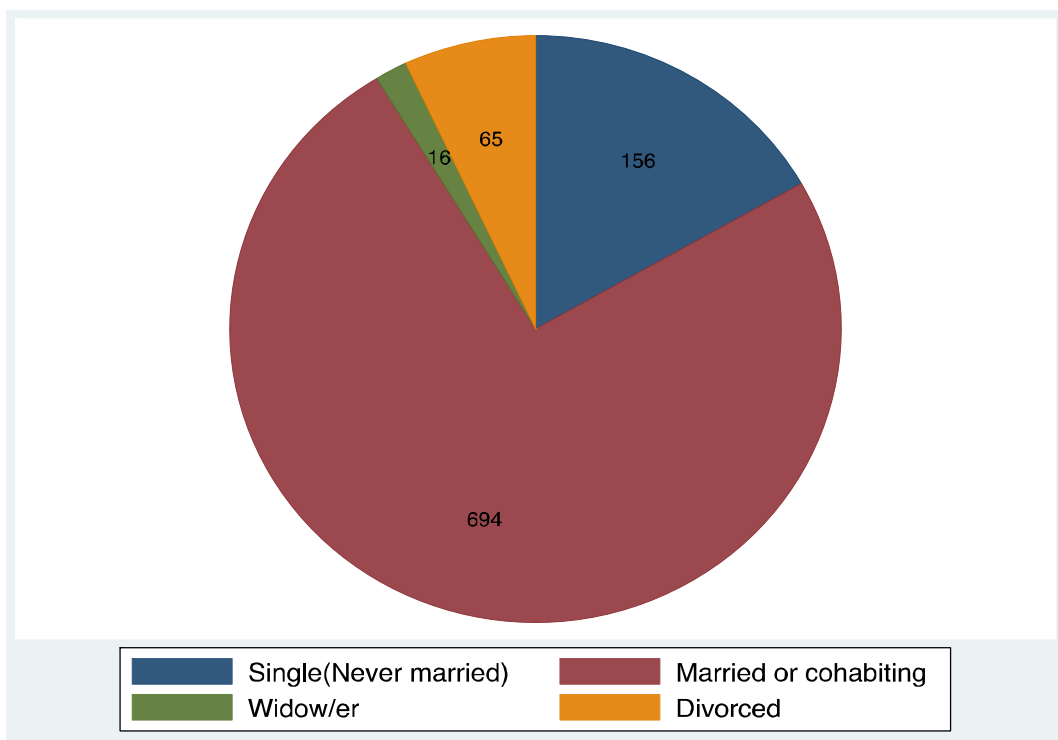
Similar to citizenship, the consideration of place of residence for the majority of the year should be interpreted as relative to the total number of individuals (794) who responded from each of the ten countries. Nevertheless, it is clear that the majority of BiH diaspora respondents live in the respective host country during the year, and it is of secondary importance which host country. Of primary importance is that most, if not all, do not live in BiH for the majority of the year. This finding supports the qualitative data discussed in each country report and the concept of “diaspora tourism,” and how the majority of BiH diaspora visit BiH as a vacation spot during the time they are allowed off from work in host countries, typically during the summer. Findings such as this offer an opportunity for development in that diaspora members are more likely to contribute financially to local economy when travelling to their country of heritage versus when traveling somewhere else. This includes most prominently medical tourism, particularly dentistry, as evidenced by academic research elsewhere and supported by qualitative research conducted.<sup>28</sup> BiH diaspora, moreover, is less likely to travel elsewhere.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Scheyvens, R. 2007.



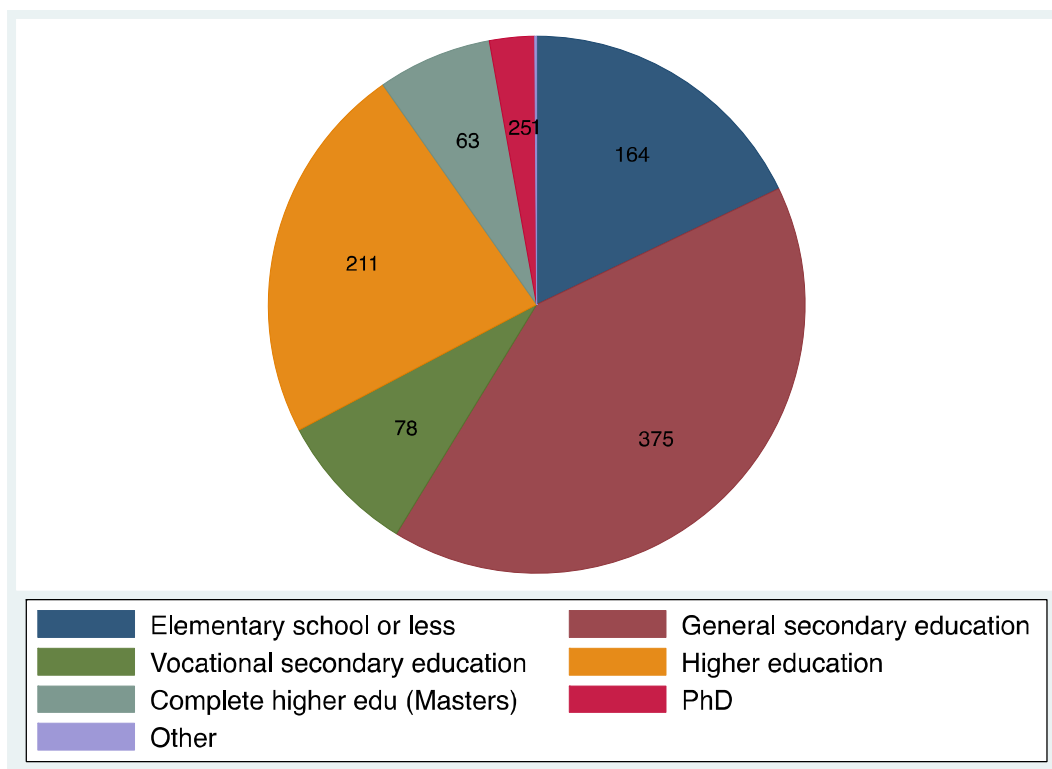
### Marital Status

Out of 931 respondents who provided marital status, the majority (74%) indicated being married or cohabiting (=de facto relationships). This is consistent with the majority of sample being middle-aged individuals, who are by nature more likely to be married or cohabiting. Approximately 17% indicated being single, followed by 7% who were divorced, and 2% who were widowed. Respondents' distribution of marital status suggests diversity of the sample included in the project.



### Highest Level of Education Completed in BiH

Of the 916 respondents who provided an answer to the highest level of education completed in BiH, the majority reported having secondary education (40%), followed by higher education (23%) such as a university degree, elementary school or less (18%), vocational school (8.5%), complete higher education (7%) such as Master's degree, and PhD (3%). This finding suggests that most BiH diaspora migrated from BiH with very basic education, with a relatively low number who had obtained some level of post-secondary and university-level education. Additionally, the findings point to the diversity of the sample in terms of education, and likelihood that the respondents in the sample come from a varied socio-economic background. The finding further implies that when the BiH diaspora arrived in their host country where they eventually resettled, they were, on average, less educated than the comparable and average local individual.

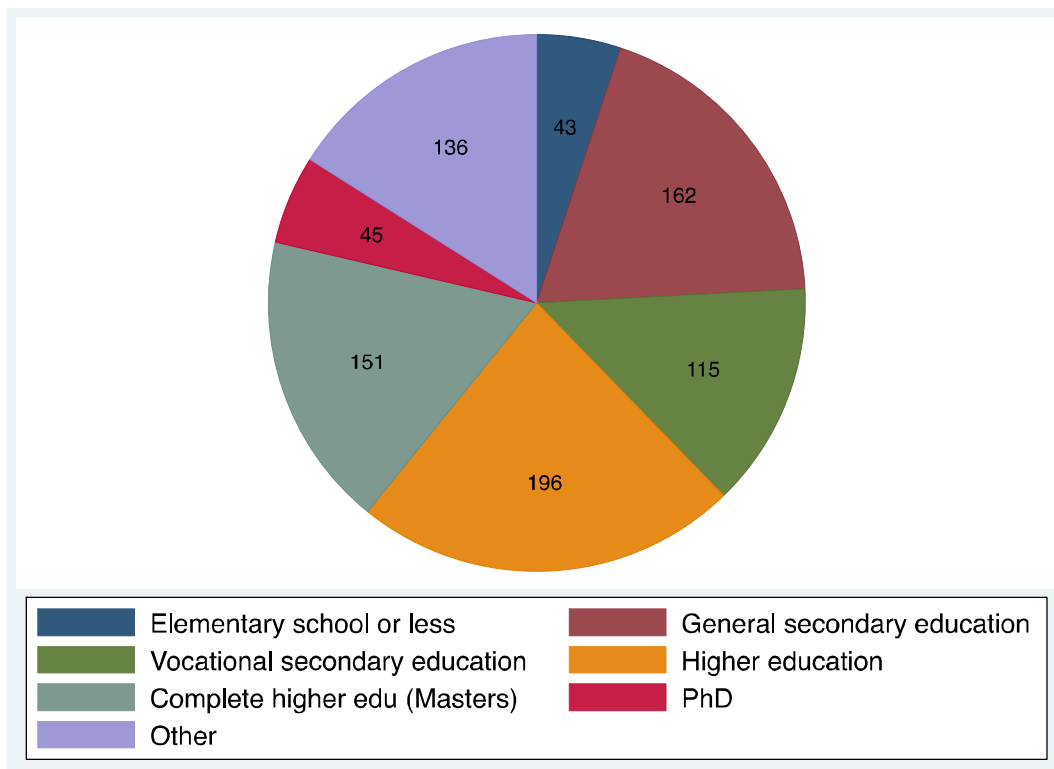


### Highest Level of Education Completed in Country of Destination

A total of 848 individuals responded to the question about the highest level of education completed in country of destination. The findings indicate that 23% reported having higher education such as a university degree, 19% have secondary education, 18% have completed higher education, 16% indicated other, 14% have vocational school, 5% have a PhD, and 5% have elementary school or less. Compared to the highest level of education completed in BiH, it is clear that the level of education somewhat increased among BiH migrants as they migrated to the host country. In fact, in terms of the number of people with the highest education (doctorate), 5% of people with PhD within the BiH diaspora significantly exceeds the percentage for the overall US and Australian populations, estimated to be between one and two percent.<sup>29</sup> It is also clear that the majority of BiH diaspora is relatively well educated, and that most opted to continue their education in their respective host country. At the same time, this likely also indicates that a majority of them migrated to the countries of

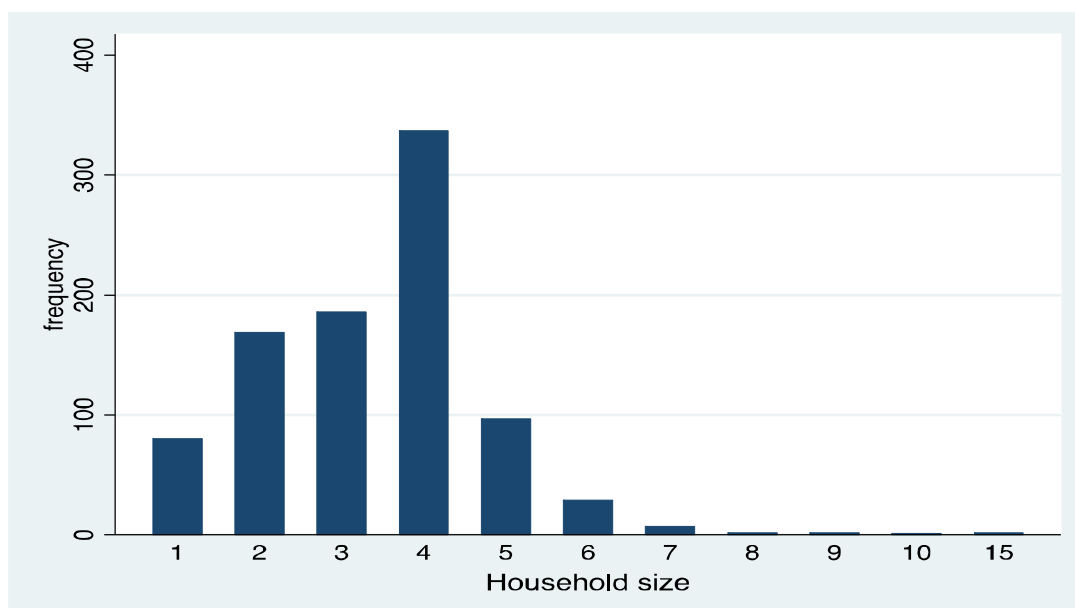
<sup>29</sup> According to the US Census Bureau (2010) and Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016).

destination when they were younger and had the opportunity to continue their education. It bodes well for levels of integration in the countries of destination as well, and is supported throughout the qualitative country chapters.



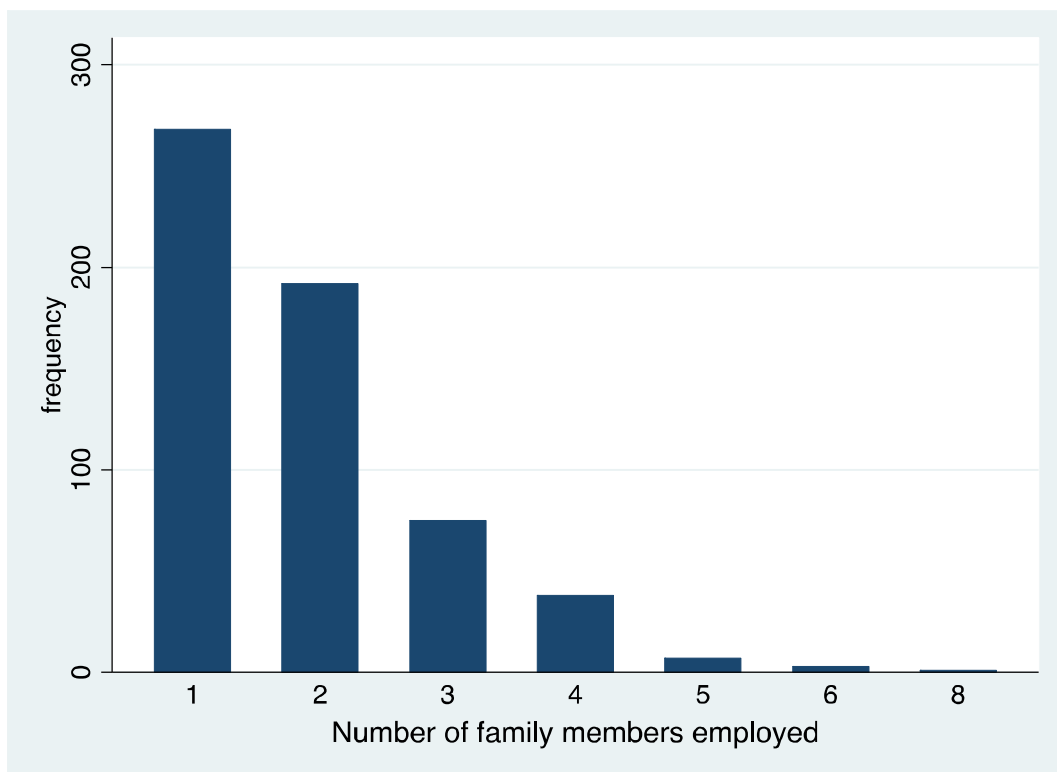
### Household Size

Most BiH diaspora households consist of 4 family members, followed by 3 family members and 2 family members. Only about 15% of household have 5 or more family members, suggesting that BiH diaspora families are average families and generally comparable in size to an average family in the respective destination countries. Further, this indicates that the nuclear family remains stable in the BiH diaspora, regardless of the time during which individuals migrated.



### Number of Family Members Who Live with the Respondents who are Employed

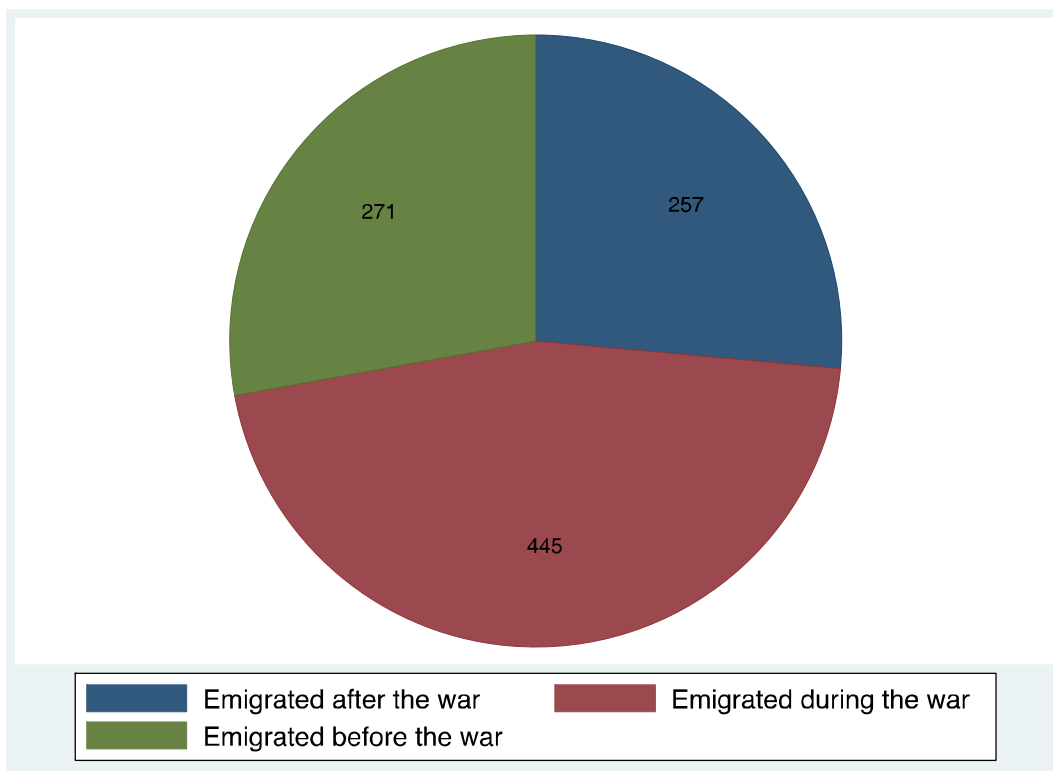
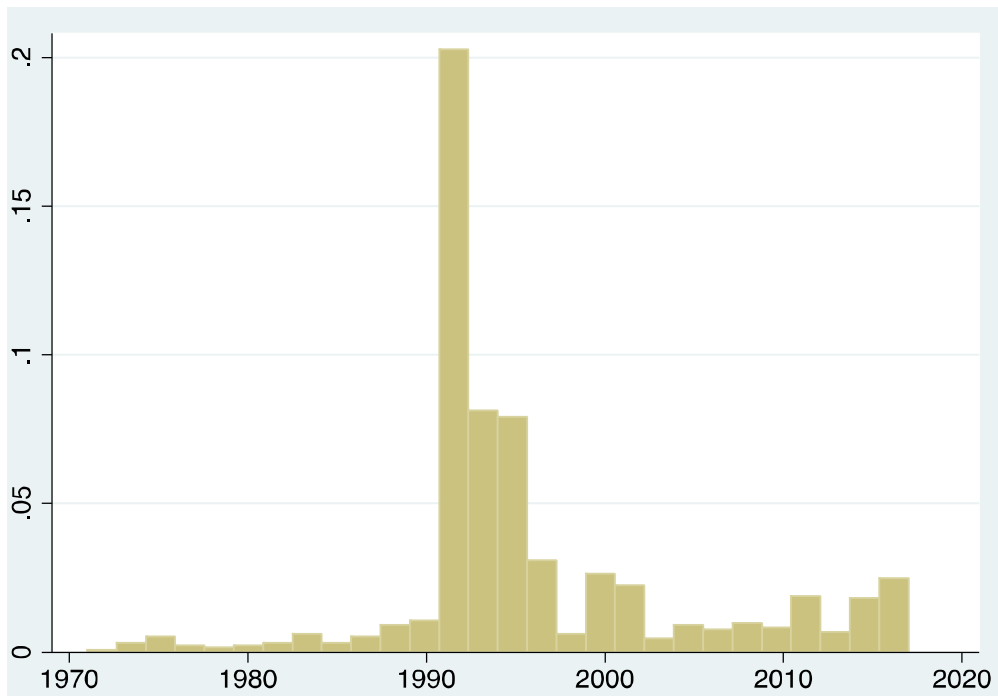
Only 60%, or 584 individuals, of the total sample responded about the number of family members who are employed and living in the same household. The majority (46%) of these respondents indicated having one other family member who is employed in the same household, followed by 33% who said they had two other family members who live with them and are employed. The rest reported having either three or four family members living with them who are employed. The majority of the sample reported being middle-aged and married or cohabiting. Those who reported having a third or a fourth family member in their household working likely made reference to their children who may be of working age and continue to live in the same household.



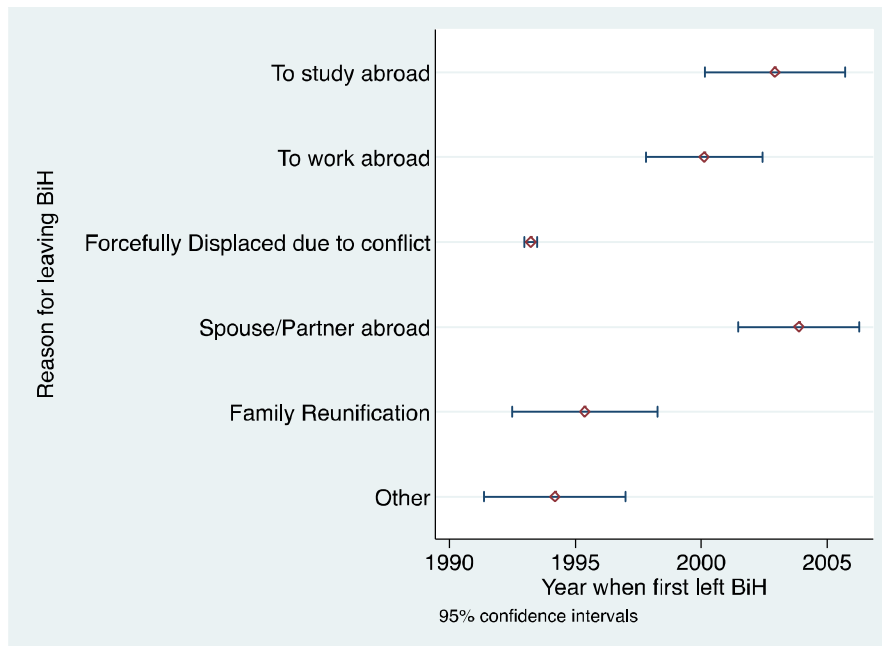
## MIGRATION EXPERIENCE

### Leaving Bosnia and Herzegovina

Out of 812 responses to the question asking when did first left BiH for over a year three waves of migration could be identified: 1) pre-war migration (1970-1990s); 2) forced and war-related migration (1990s); and 3) mixed post-war migration (2000s). The second migration wave included the largest number of migrants who form the BiH diaspora today.

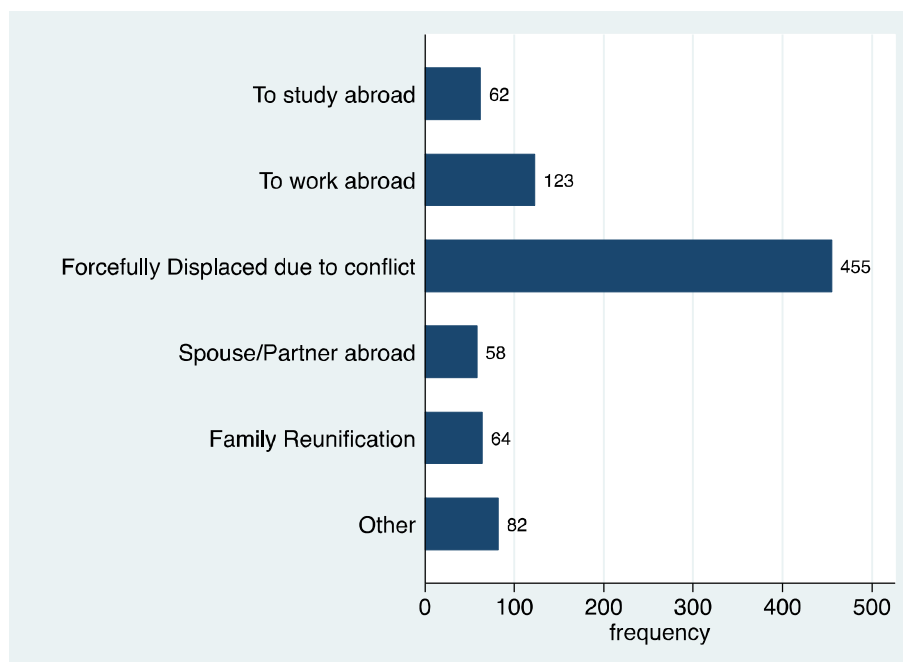


Consequently, there is a difference in average years since leaving BiH by reason for leaving. Refugees on average left BiH 24 years ago, while the ones who left for studies or family reunification left BiH 15 and 17 years ago, respectively.



### Reasons for Leaving Bosnia and Herzegovina

Of the 844 individuals who provided a reason for leaving BiH, 53% reported being forcibly displaced. This was followed by 14.5% of survey respondents who reported leaving for work, while the remaining reasons were studying abroad, followed by leaving due to a spouse or partner being abroad, family reunification, and other personal reasons. This finding is consistent with the majority of BiH diaspora included in the sample reporting Bosniak ethnicity, since the majority of refugees who immigrated in the late 1990s and early 2000s were Bosniaks.

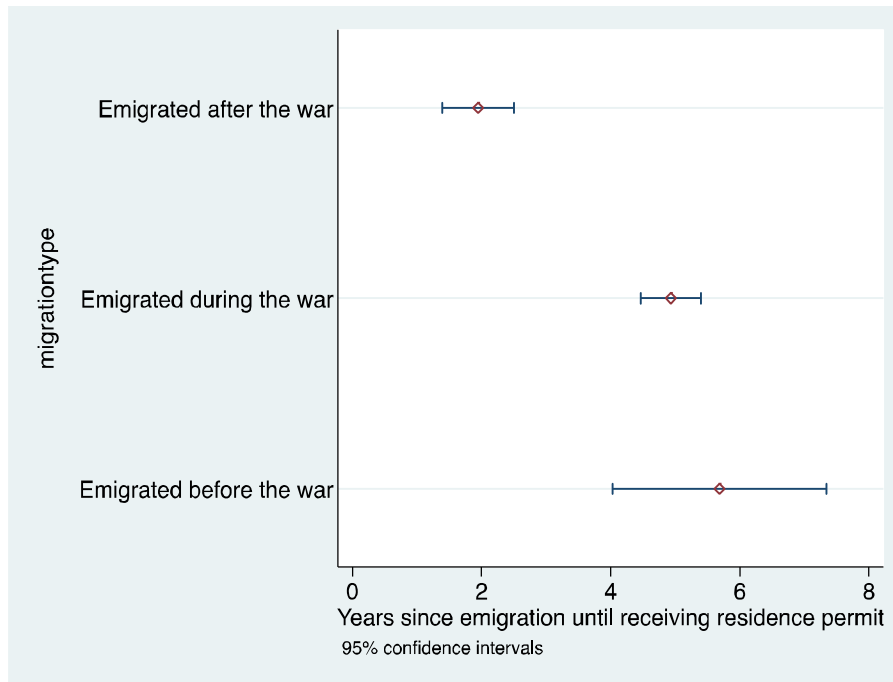


### Residence Status

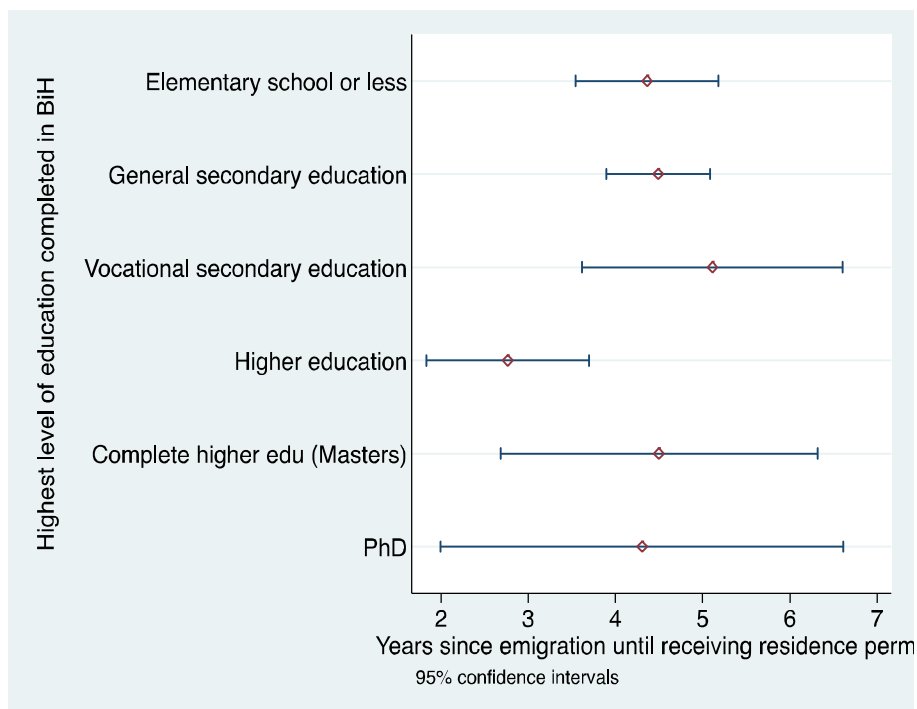
In terms of the residence status, those who left as refugees are the most likely to have obtained a citizenship abroad. Looking at other socio-demographic characteristics such as



level of education and types of migrants, there are differences in how long it took different groups to secure permanent residence status in the destination countries. Our findings indicate that BiH migrants with higher education received permanent residence status faster, in 2.7 years, compared to those who only had secondary education, whom it took 5 years. Moreover, emigrants who left BiH after the war received permanent residence status more quickly, in 1.9 years, compared to others, whom it took 5 years.

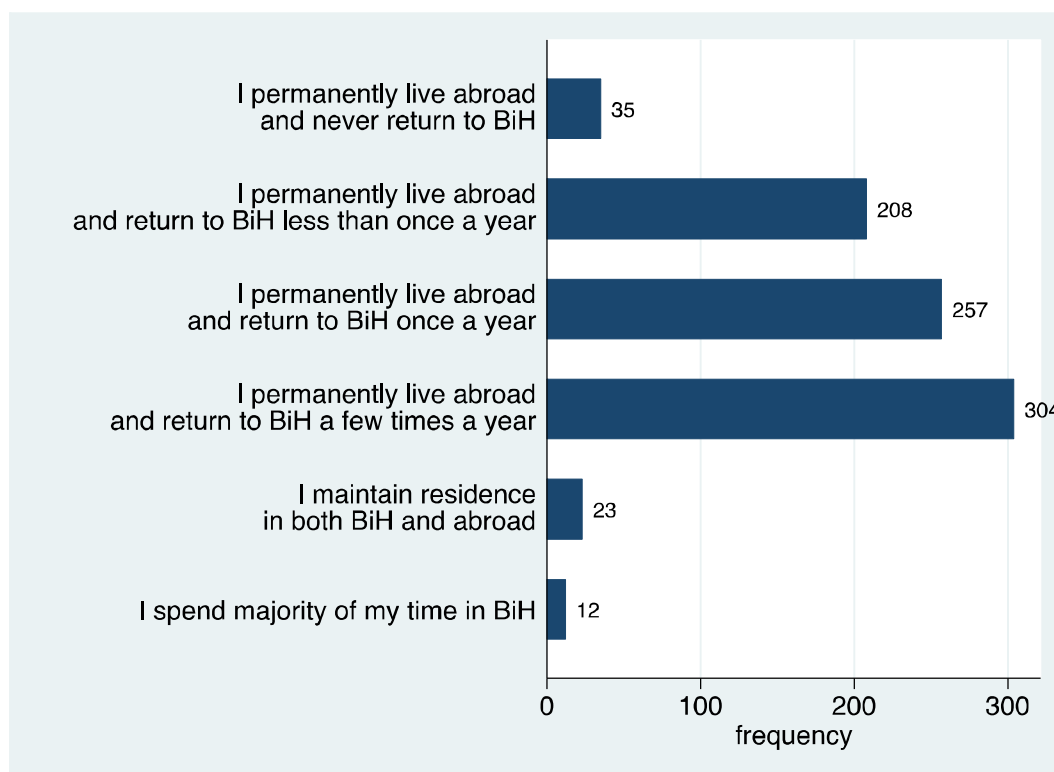


### Residence Status by Level of Education



### Time BiH Migrants Spend in BiH

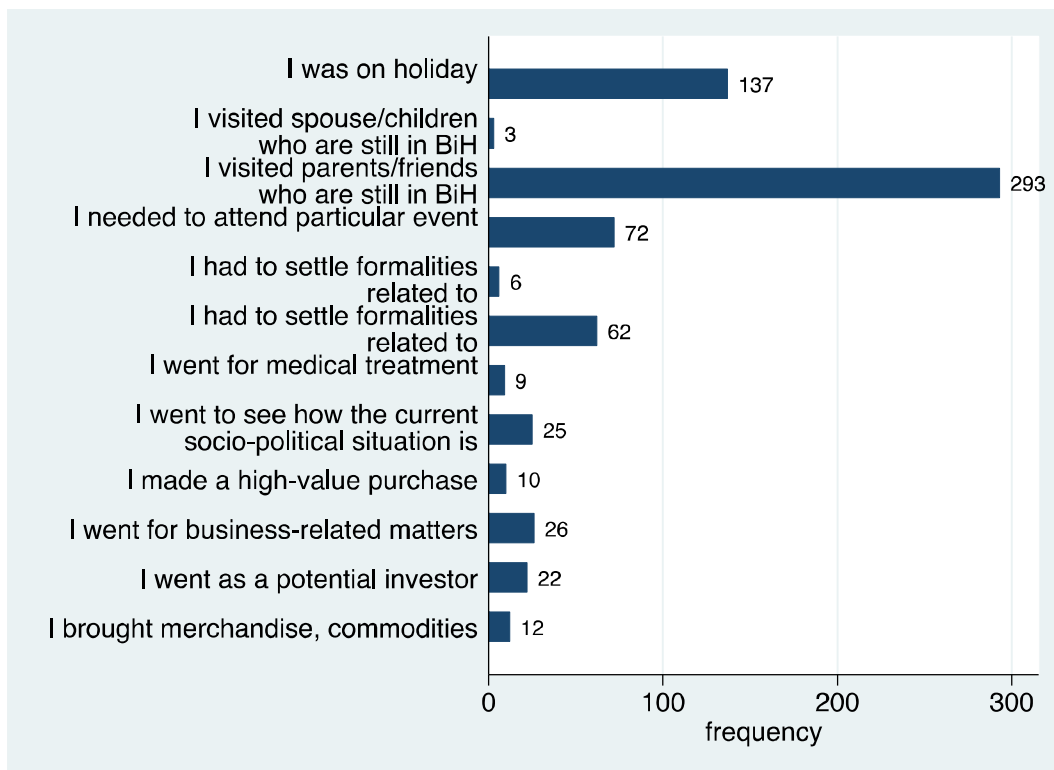
Out of 839 respondents, less than 1% of the survey respondents said that they spend the majority of their time in BiH and only travel abroad at certain times of the year. Rather, the majority of individuals, over 90%, noted that they lived abroad permanently, returning to BiH at various times per year. Of those who return to BiH but maintain a permanent residence abroad, 27% return less frequently than once a year, while 33% return once a year. Almost 40% return a few times a year. This indicates strong ties that are maintained with the homeland, even though the frequency might vary depending on a number of factors, including geographic distance to BiH, and the financial resources necessary for repeated travel back and forth. The finding also indicates that there is continued engagement with the homeland and likely local communities in BiH among diaspora communities. It is also noteworthy that only 2% of the individuals surveyed maintain dual residence, living truly transnational lives between BiH and another country. This suggests that short work assignments, as envisioned by temporary guest worker programs for example, are not the norm for BiH. Finally, 4% of the respondents noted that they never return to BiH. As is evidenced in qualitative country reports, a number of BiH diaspora members, especially those who live on other continents, such as the United States and Australia, have limited means and enough vacation time to be able to visit BiH with their families on a regular basis. Additionally, though a limited number of individuals, some do not own property where they can reside when visiting, while others consciously choose not to visit BiH due to trauma connected to the 1990s war.



### Reasons for Last Visit to BiH

The survey results indicate that BiH diaspora maintain strong family ties, with 43% of respondents listing this as the top reason for their last visit to BiH. The second highest reason, holiday visits, was noted by 20% of the respondents, with 11% noting that they travelled to BiH to attend a particular event, 9% to settle formalities, 4% for business related matters, and 3% as potential investors. It also signals that many in the diaspora still do not consider BiH as

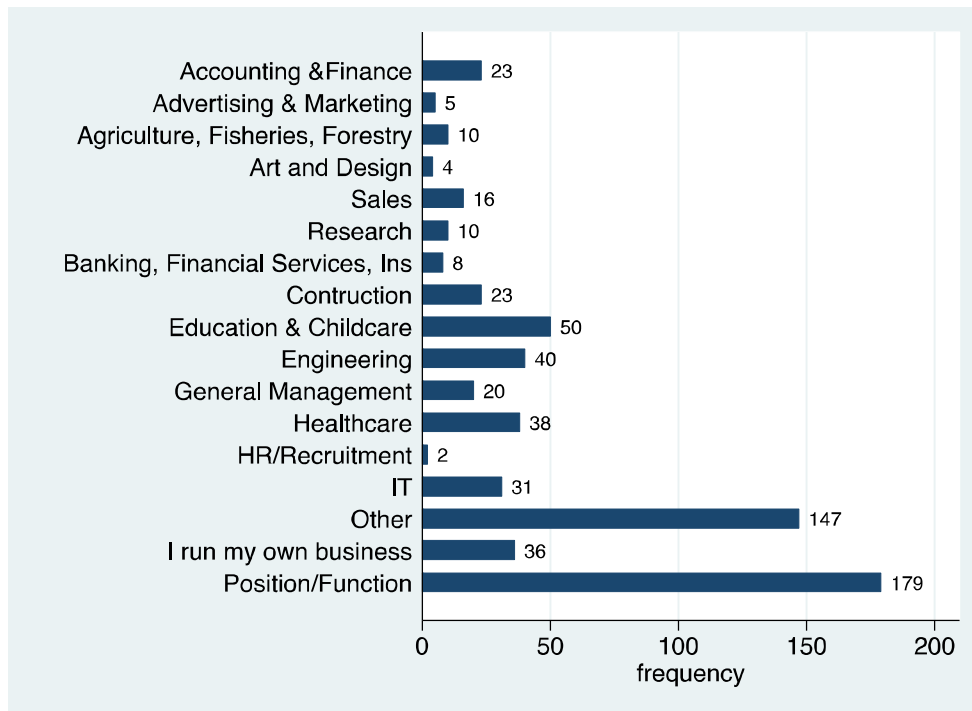
a place to pursue potential investment, but rather to visit their relatives and to spend time in a leisurely manner – diaspora tourism. This indicates that there is work to be done in order to shift diaspora thinking towards BiH as a country for potential investment, yet at the same time does not underscore that individuals who spend time with family or on holiday will discount potential investment opportunities or business matters. Moreover, it provides an opportunity to diversify the time the diaspora already spends in the country. Finally, as time passes, there will be less family and relatives for BiH diaspora to visit in BiH, and the connection between BiH diaspora and BiH will be left to the second-generation Bosnian and Herzegovinians born in their host countries. Second generation BiH diaspora are going to become more and more important when it comes to matters pertaining to the future of BiH, and not just development.



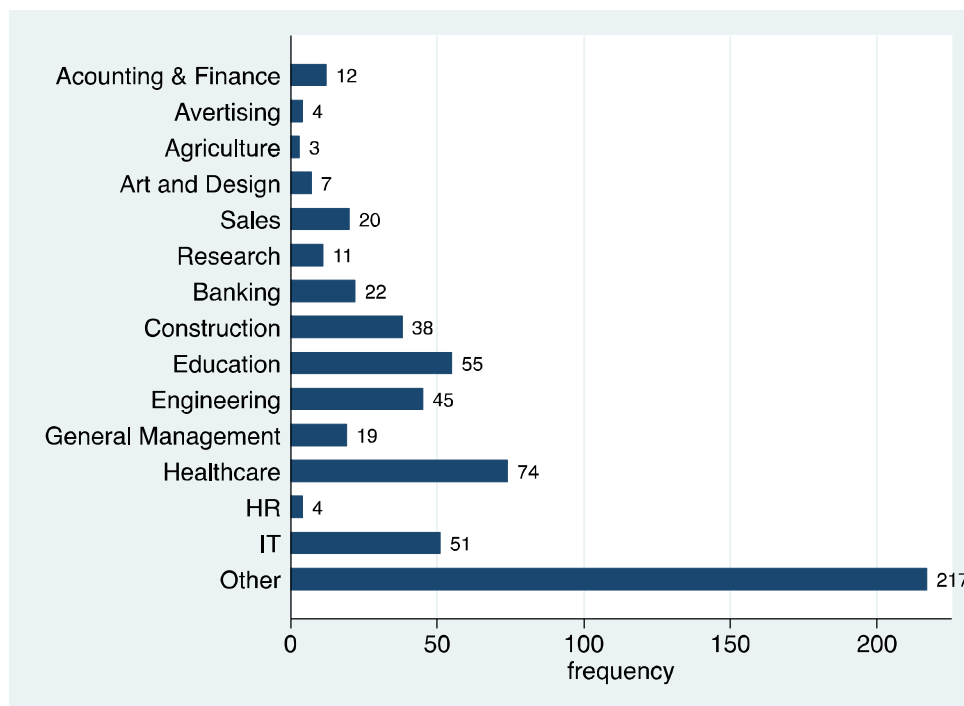
## EMPLOYMENT

### Occupation Prior to Leaving BiH

The sample of 642 respondents demonstrates that individuals were employed in a variety of occupations and sectors prior to leaving BiH. This likely accounts for the large number of individuals who are members of the conflict-generated diaspora and worked in a variety of fields prior to leaving. It is also indicative of the diversity of the diaspora's backgrounds and their potential to then also integrate into different host countries upon their migration.



### Industry Sectors



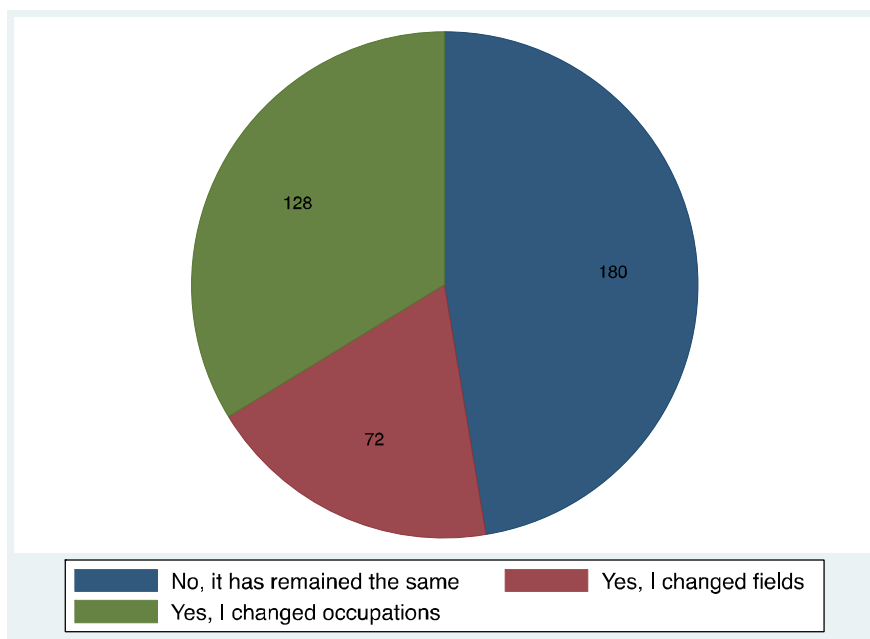
When asked about the sector in which their company operates, of the 582 survey responses, 13% of individuals said that they are employed in healthcare, 9% in education and childcare or IT, and 8% in engineering. This demonstrates the variety of sectors in which the BiH diaspora is employed in, and thus likely also the potential for knowledge transfer. The high level of responses for healthcare might in part be due to recent high migrations to Germany and Austria for work in the healthcare sector, including nursing homes and elderly care, as an attractive option for economic migrants, as well as opportunities for training and education in

healthcare in many of the destination countries, leading to requalification of diaspora individuals. This is in part also reinforced in the qualitative chapters for respective countries.

However, it is perhaps most interesting to note that 37% of individuals indicated that they were employed in an altogether different field prior to migration. This might include entrepreneurial ventures and other small businesses, the hospitality industry, academia, or arts which were not indicated as options in the survey. Nonetheless, there is clearly a wealth of transferable skills and knowledge represented by the BiH diaspora in a variety of relevant fields for the development of BiH.

### Occupation and Field of Work since Leaving BiH

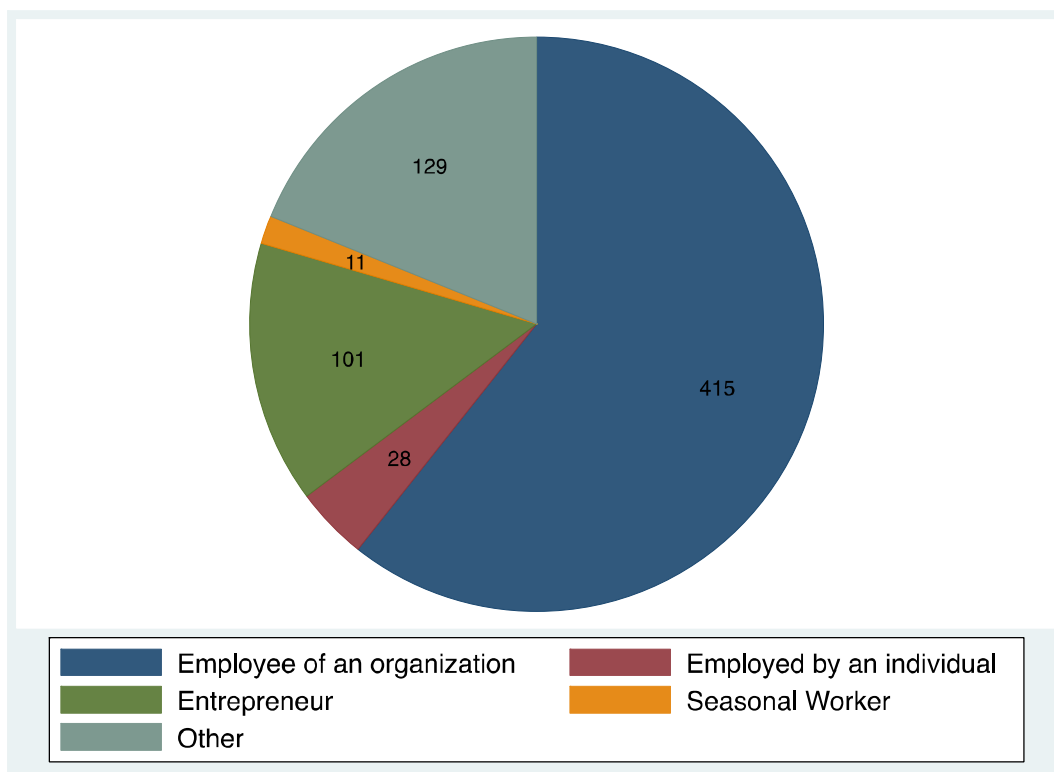
Of the 644 respondents providing an answer to how their occupations and field work has changed since leaving BiH, 41% have remained in the same or similar occupation that they held in BiH in the same field, while 28% changed fields but remained in similar occupations. Eleven percent of survey respondents changed occupations but remained in the same field, whereas 20% changed their fields and occupations altogether. This indicates that the BiH diaspora is relatively adaptable in finding employment utilizing the education and skills they have, but flexible enough to make necessary changes should it be required. Overall, the trend also indicates that BiH diaspora were able to pursue their professions in one capacity or another in the different countries of destination, considering that a majority of them (close to 80%) have either remained in a similar occupation, field, or both as they had in BiH prior to migration. The 20% who have changed their occupations and fields altogether may account for individuals who served as public servants or held other positions that are not transferable beyond BiH society.



### Employment Status in Current Country of Residence

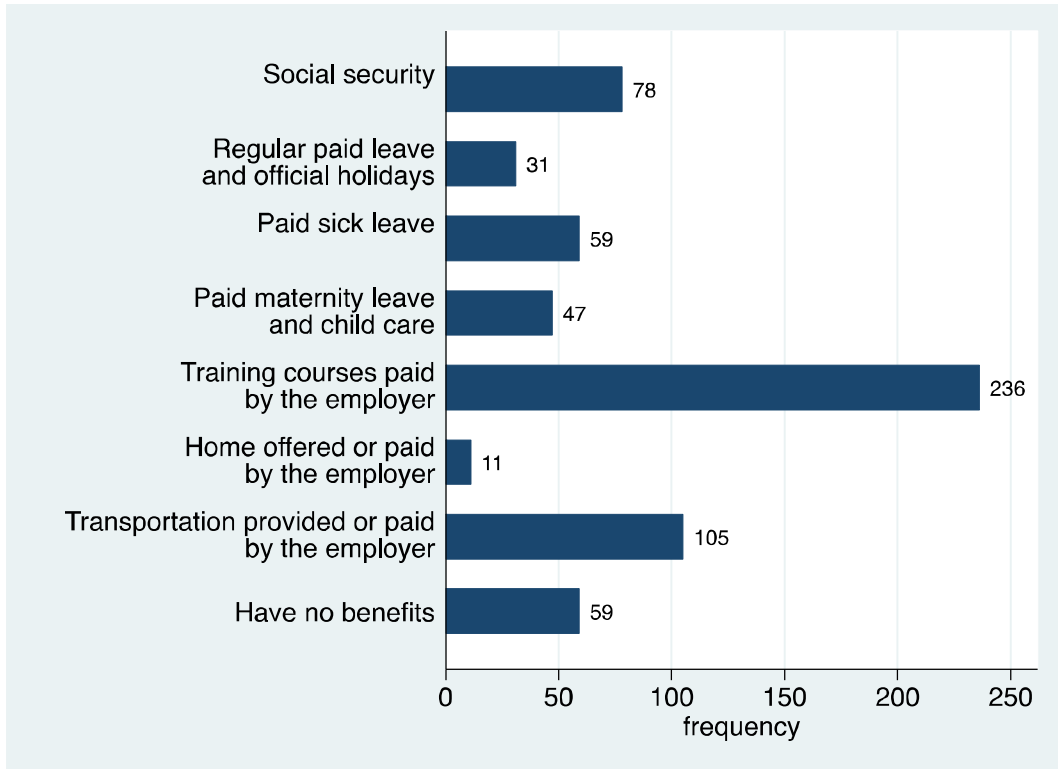
BiH diaspora survey respondents (684) demonstrated a high level of employment. Sixty percent of respondents are employed by an organization, while 4% are employed by an individual, likely in a small business setting. It is promising for potential diaspora development initiatives that the level of entrepreneurial spirit is relatively high among the BiH diaspora, with 15% of the responses accounting for individuals who are self-employed. Overall, this demonstrates that 80% of all individuals surveyed are either in full-time or part-

time/seasonal employment (1%). Nineteen percent of individuals surveyed noted “Other” as current employment status, likely accounting for retirees, housewives, and individuals who might receive state benefits on account of trauma as has been the experience among the Danish BiH community, for example. The same trend can be observed in the US, where there is a high number of BiH diaspora retirees living in assisted living facilities, who receive social security benefits, and have never been employed in the US. Country level data on employment rates demonstrates that BiH diaspora employment levels are generally on par with employment levels with local populations, particularly among the second generation, in almost all countries surveyed for the project. These survey results seem to confirm this finding as well.



**Employment Benefits**

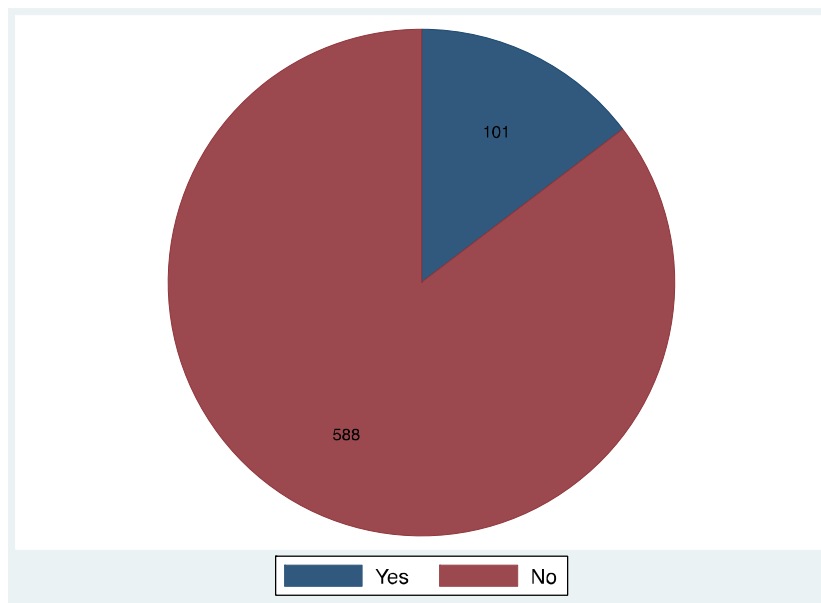
The survey results indicate that only 9% of respondents (out of 626) work without benefits, likely overlapping with the number of individuals who work part time or have seasonal work. Twelve percent of the respondents have health insurance, while only 5% have regular paid leave, 9% have paid sick leave, and 8% have paid maternity leave. These numbers should be interpreted with caution, however, due to differing policies connected to employment benefits in the ten different countries surveyed. These low numbers are likely not to be representative of the BiH diaspora in all of the countries as a whole due to higher number of survey respondents from the US where the welfare state regime does not account for the same kinds of benefits as in European countries. Perhaps the most noteworthy finding in this survey question response is the fact that 38% of survey respondents reported having training courses that are paid for by their employer, indicating that there is a high level of opportunity for socio-economic mobility among the BiH diaspora.



## INVESTMENTS

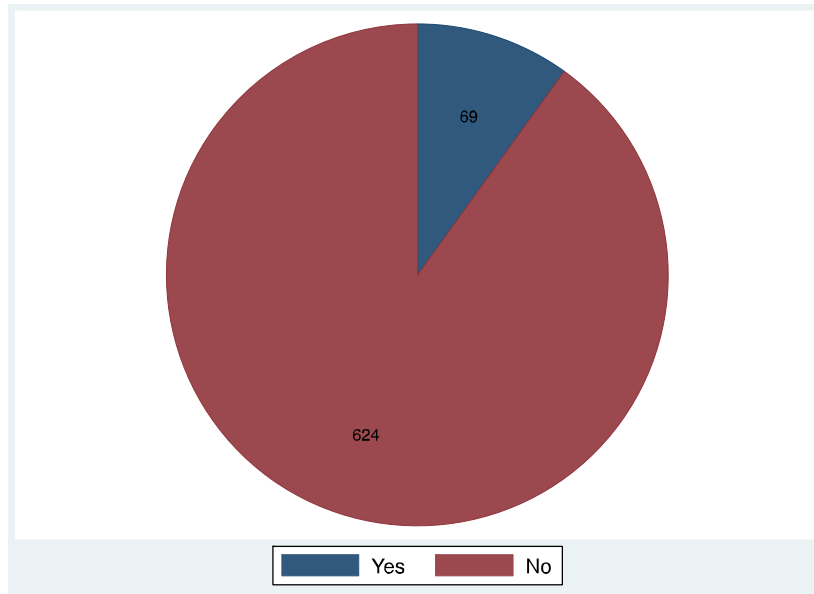
### Financial Investment in BiH

The survey findings demonstrate that an overwhelming majority of BiH diaspora survey respondents (85% out of 689) have invested money in BiH, including in personal real estate and land, other material resources, remittances for family and/or friends, and business. Considering the high levels of diaspora remittances accounted for by the World Bank in BiH, this finding confirms previous knowledge and the continued engagement of BiH diaspora individuals regardless of the countries of settlement, age, gender, and migration experience.



### **Business Financial Investments in BiH**

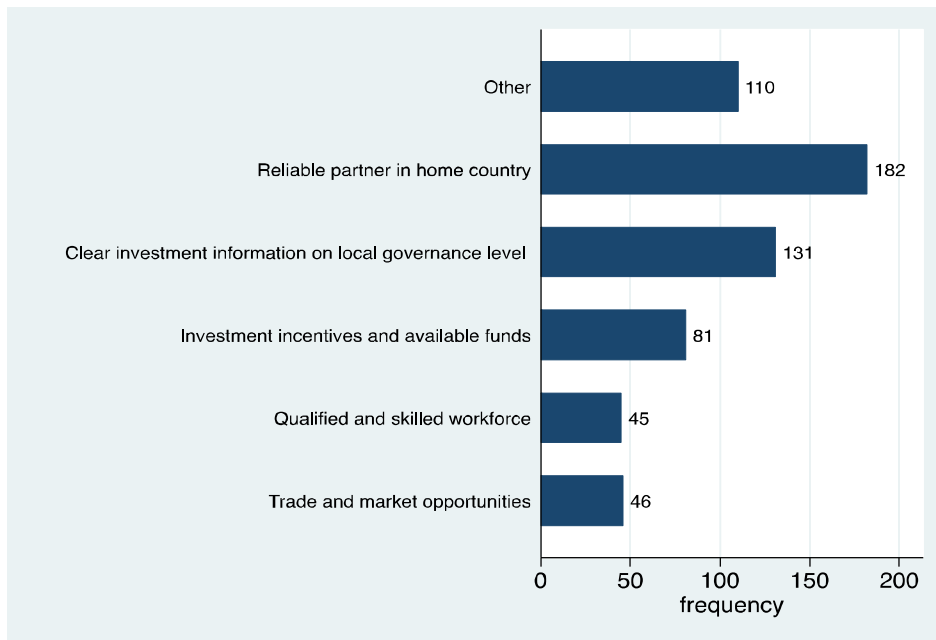
Specific to investing money in BiH for business, ninety percent of the 693 survey respondents indicated they had not invested money in BiH for business purposes. It is likely that the majority of investments mentioned above are made in the form of personal real estate and/or land, material resources, and remittances for family and/or friends and relatives.



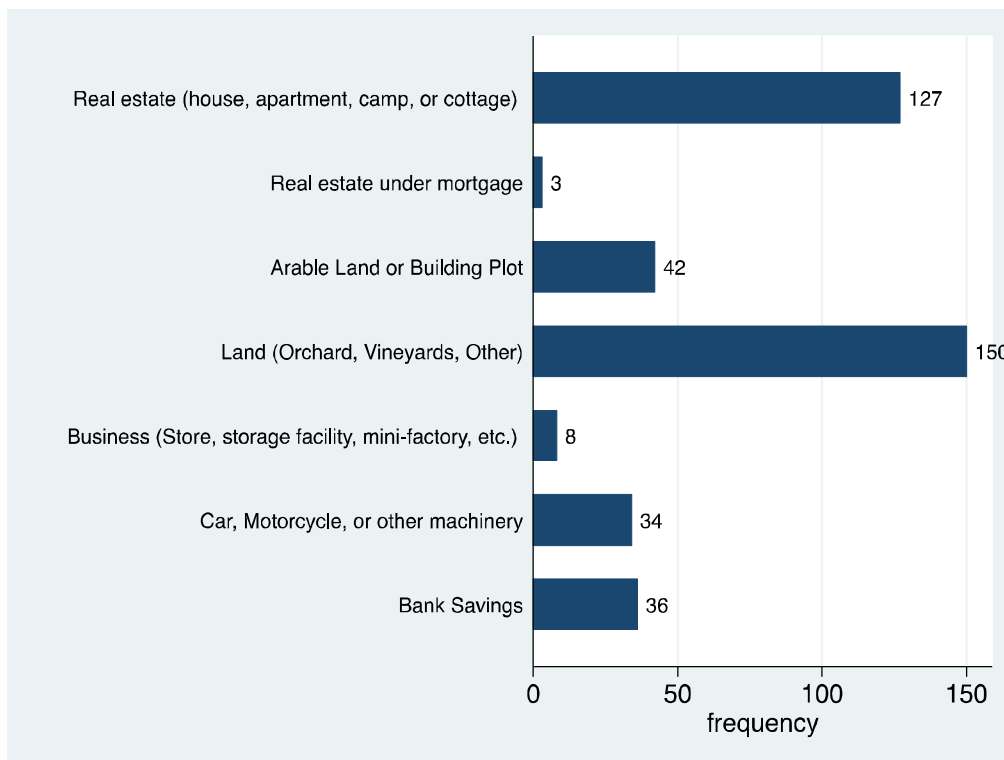
### **Measures that would Facilitate Investment**

A total of 595 respondents responded to the question about what would make them more likely to invest in BiH, about 30% said that a reliable partner in home country would make them more likely to invest, followed by 22% who said that clear investment information on local government level would make the difference, and 18% specified other. The rest of the responses were about equally divided among qualified and skilled workforce, trade and market opportunities, and investment incentives and available funds. Together, this pattern of responses shows that BiH diaspora do have an interest in investing in BiH, but certain mechanisms have to be in place first in order for them to do so.





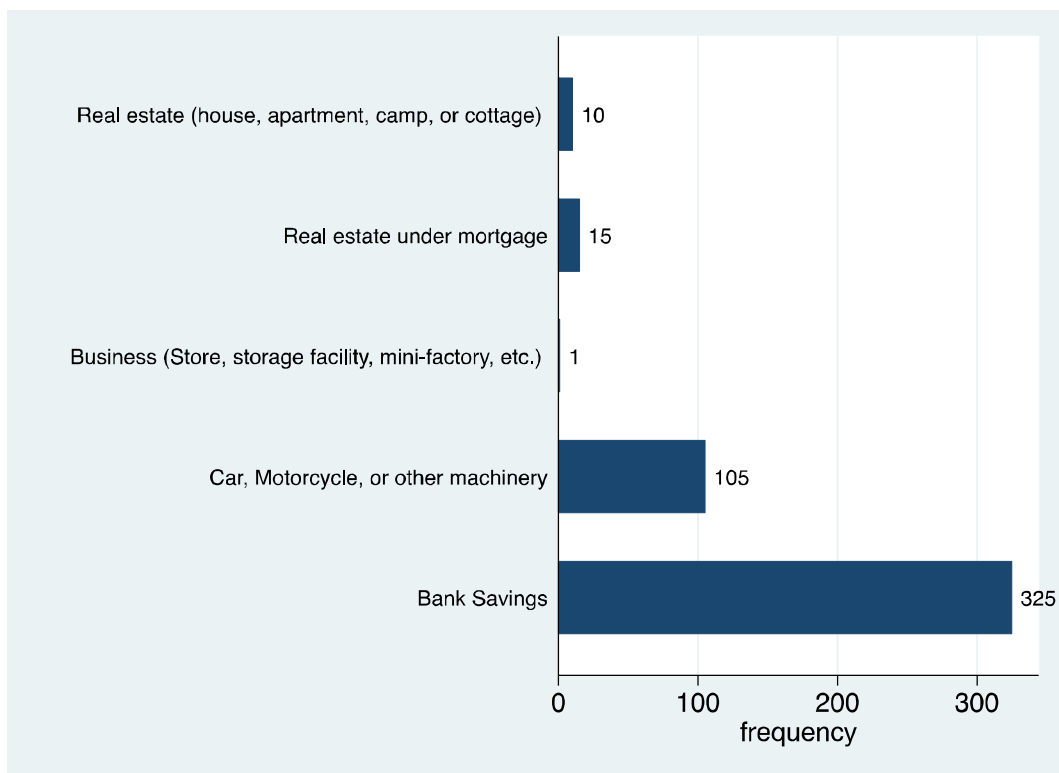
### Assets and Other Material Resources in BiH



Of the 400 respondents who reported on the assets and material resources in BiH, the majority (38%) said that they own land (orchard, vineyard, or other), followed by 32% who said they own some real estate, such as a house, an apartment, camp or cottage. Others reported having arable land or building plot, car, motorcycle or other machinery, and bank savings. Therefore, it is clear that most in BiH diaspora who do own material resources in BiH own them in shape of land or real estate. Because mostly those born in BiH responded to the questionnaire, it is safe to assume that the assets they own in BiH are those they possessed prior to migrating, or that they acquired via inheritance. This was confirmed by

data obtained on the time that these assets were obtained, presented in the third subsequent graph.

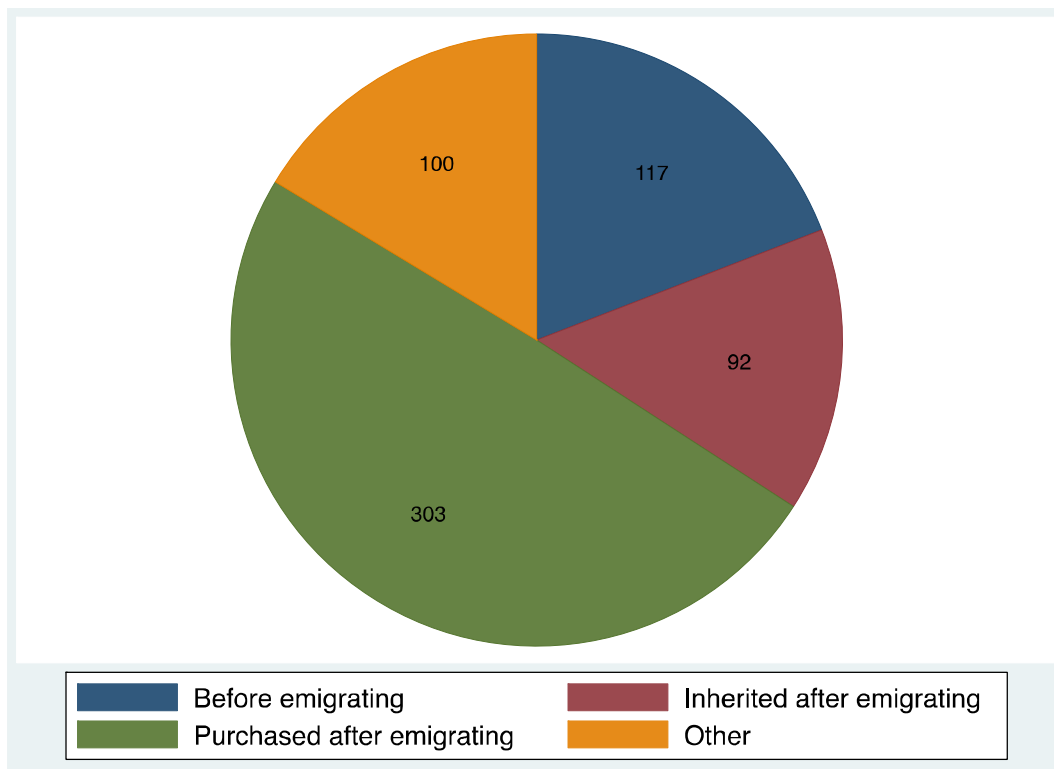
### Assets and Other Material Resources in Host Country



The trend for the assets and other material resources that BiH diaspora owns in host country is very different from the trend observed for the same group in BiH in the earlier graph. The majority of respondents (71%) who provided an answer to this question said that they own bank savings in host country, followed by 23% who said they owned a car, motorcycle, or other machinery. Very few reported owning land or real estate— under 6% for both categories combined.

### Time Assets in BiH were Acquired

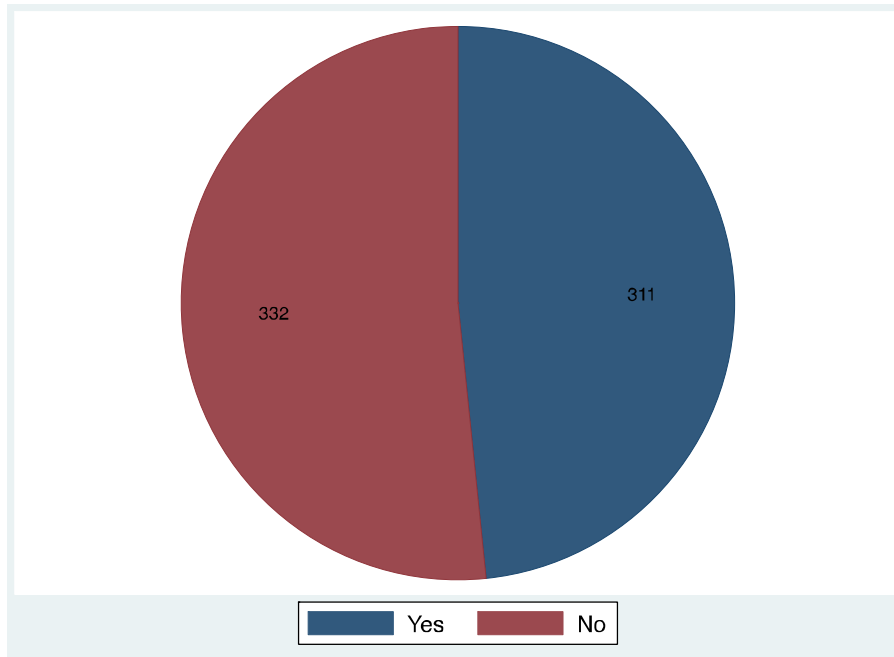
When asked when they acquired their assets in BiH, of the 612 who responded to this question, 19% indicated that they acquired their assets *prior* to migration. This is likely a reflection of the fact that a majority of the individuals were forcefully displaced and thus likely acquired property and assets without any plans to ever migrate. Approximately 50% of the survey respondents purchased their assets after they emigrated, rather than before. While this confirms old findings, it also indicates that private investments by diaspora members help local communities to sustain semi-stable incomes and sustain current consumption. Beyond this, it indicates that diaspora remain committed to their homeland by becoming or remaining property owners in BiH after migrating. There is also a relatively high rate of inheritance of assets (15%), which is likely to increase in the future as first-generation diaspora members who are likely the majority of property owners leave behind their assets to their children, the second-generation Bosnian and Herzegovinians.



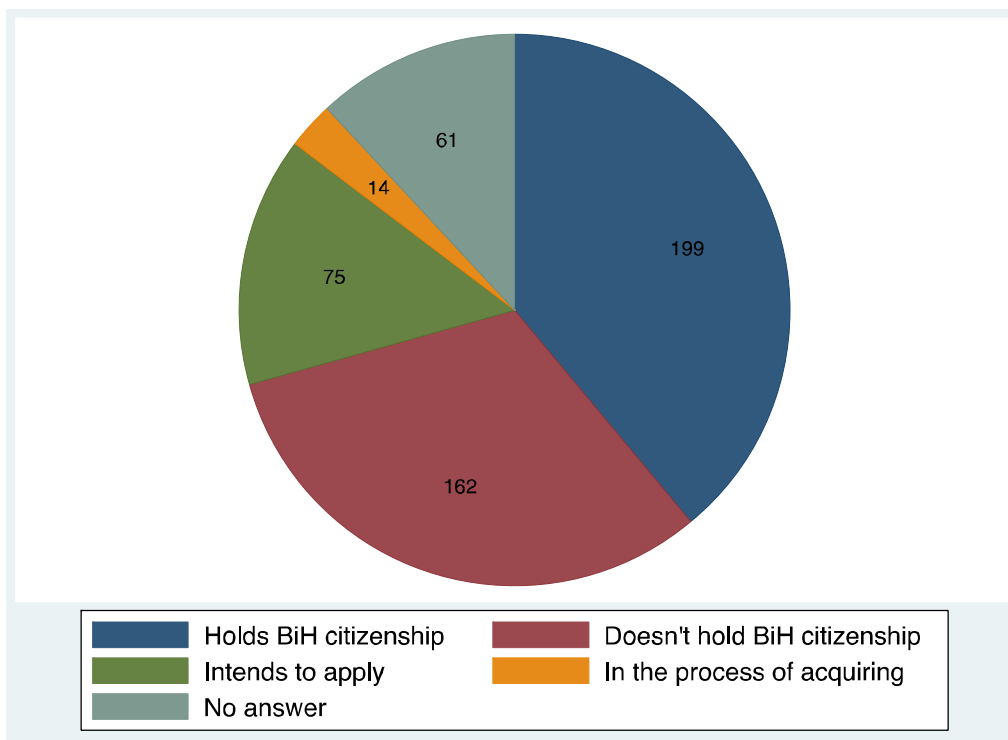
## CHILDREN

### Children under the Age of 18

There is a balance in the number of respondents who have children under the age of 18 and those who do not. This question is representative of the fact that of the sample size, about half of the survey respondents have children who might potentially need the use of supplementary schools. Further, this also demonstrates the number of second generation individuals who would be eligible to realize their BiH citizenship rights through at least one of their parents.



### Diaspora Children and BiH Citizenship

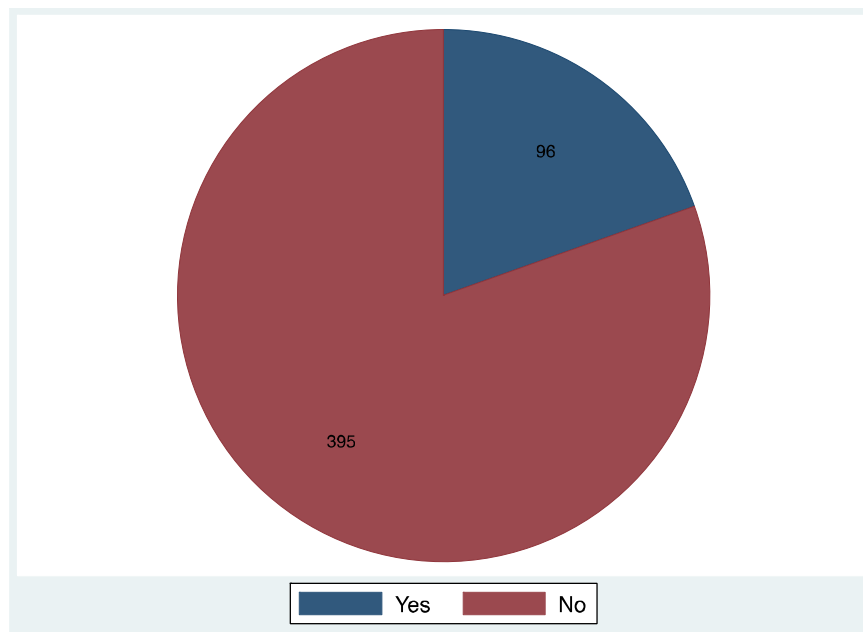


As reported, one of the major issues affecting the BiH diaspora in all ten countries is lack of BiH citizenship for children born outside of BiH. As the responses to this question indicate, about 50% of all children born in diaspora to survey respondents have not obtained BiH citizenship. The responses also indicate that a relatively small number of parents are in the process of acquiring or intend to apply for BiH citizenship.

### Children Attending Supplementary Schools in Bosnian, Croatian or Serbian

It is interesting to note that the vast majority (80%) of survey respondents' children (survey respondent total was 491) are not enrolled in supplementary schools in Bosnian, Croatian, or Serbian. As noted before, here the results are likely skewed by the respondents from the United States where there are no supplementary schools in B/C/S that are formally organized, in comparison to countries such as Australia, Austria, Germany, or Sweden, where there are diaspora organizations, associations, or mandated school programs that allow children to attend lessons in their native language. In fact, of the subsample within this group, close to 40% responded that the supplementary schools were organized in the countries of destination, while only 4% indicated that they had provided these lessons for their children through private organizations. Approximately a quarter of the children who were enrolled in supplementary schools were enrolled through diaspora organizations or associations, with teachers who likely volunteer to give lessons. Here, it is also worth noting that religiously based organizations have taken on the role of language maintenance in the diaspora, with 32% of respondents noting that their children attend supplementary lessons through religious organizations.

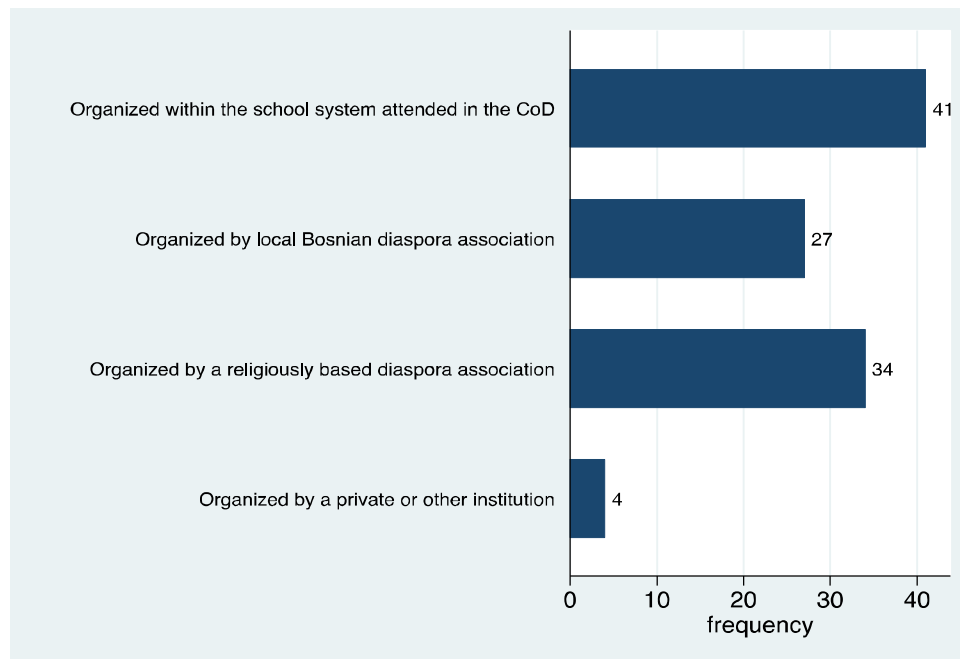
Overall, it is still noteworthy that approximately one in five diaspora children are enrolled in supplementary schools in Bosnian, Croatian, or Serbian. This finding indicates that interest in continued education in the native language is appealing to diaspora members across the sampled countries, something which was further confirmed during qualitative research as well.



### Organization of Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian Supplementary Schools

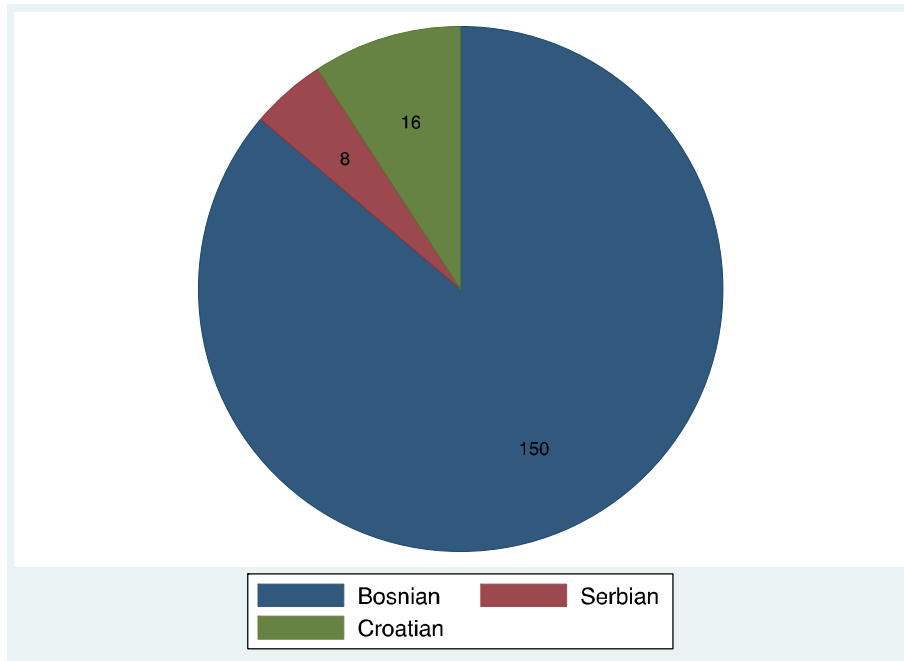
As for the consideration of whether the respondents' children attend supplementary school in Bosnian, Croatian or Serbian, findings for the question of where the supplementary schools are organized should be considered in the context of each country surveyed. While the majority of the respondents (39%) said that the supplementary school was organized within the school system attended in the host country, this likely pertains to respondents from the European countries of resettlement where there are mandated school programs that allow children to attend lessons in their native language. The US for example, has no such mandate and if supplementary schools exist, they are a few and usually organized at the level of

religiously-based diaspora associations (indicated by 32% of the respondents who provided an answer). Likewise, in most of the ten countries included, respondents said that the supplementary school was organized by a local BiH diaspora association (25%), and a few suggested it was organized by a private or other institution.



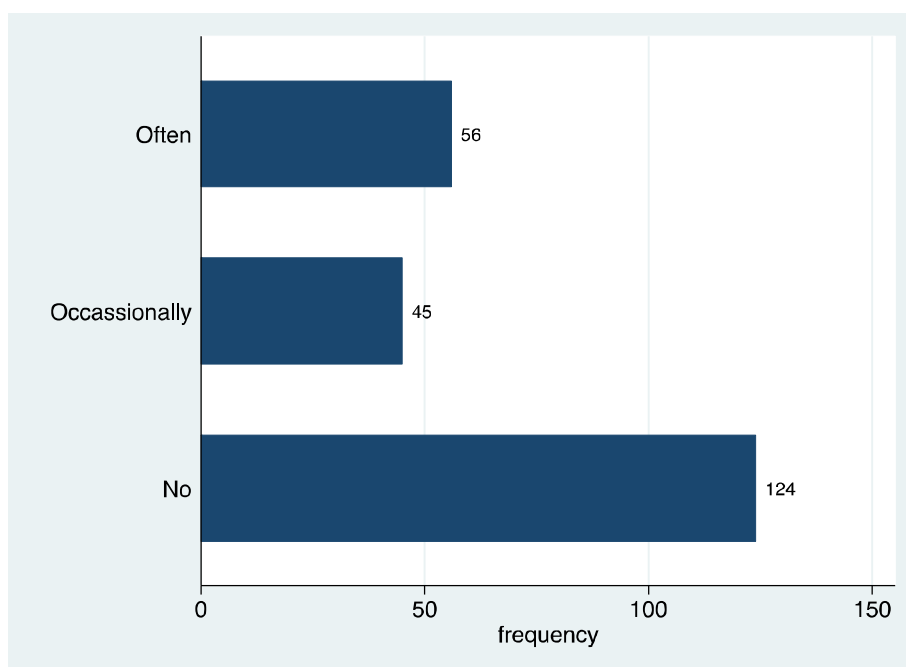
### **Primary Language used within the Supplementary School**

Based on 174 responses, this finding shows that over half of the respondents' children under 18 attend supplementary schools in Bosnian, Croatian, or Serbian. Only a few of the surveyed countries provide organized supplementary education on the state level such as Sweden and to a lesser degree in Austria. Thus, the high interest and attendance of children within supplementary schools indicates BiH diaspora's participation in supplementary schools, likely both those organized by host governments as well as those that are self-organized, as noted in individual country chapters. It is also indicative of the fact that there is a high level of interest in supplementary school education in the BiH diaspora overall.



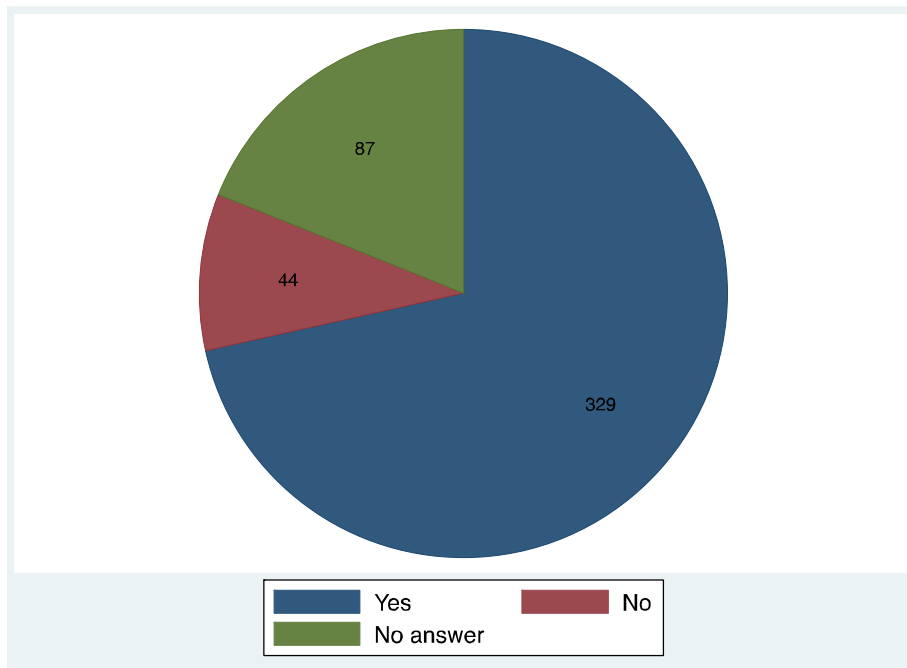
**Financial Contribution to the Work of the Supplementary school**

A total of 225 individuals responded to the question as to whether they contribute financially to the work of the supplementary schools in their host countries. The majority (55%) said that they do not contribute, but this is likely due to the fact that European countries have aforementioned mandated school programs that allow children to attend lessons in their native language. Countries such as the US that do not have these programs are more likely to seek financial contribution from the diaspora community towards supplementary schools for their children. In the survey, 25% of the respondents said that they often do contribute financially, and 20% said they contribute occasionally. However, beyond the responses provided to this question, one should consider the different effect that nations' policies on how supplementary schools are integrated in education as well as funded, actually have on BiH diaspora and furthermore on their connection to BiH.



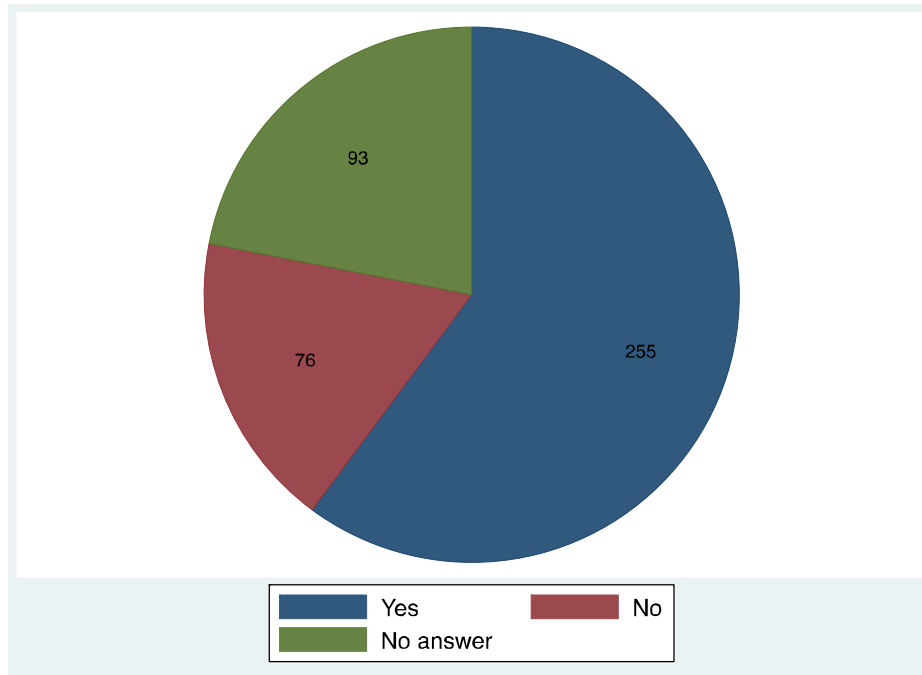
### Support for Children’s Enrolment in Supplementary Schools Funded by BiH

By far, the majority (72%) of the 460 respondents who provided an answer to this survey question based on a hypothetical scenario said they would support their children’s enrolment in supplementary schools funded by BiH institutions. This sentiment was echoed in the qualitative portion of the project as well and is encouraging when thinking about diaspora for development. The findings confirm that most BiH diaspora parents want to and strive for their children to know their native language, but supplementary schools are simply not available in some of the countries, though not all, that were surveyed. Because language is a gateway to the connection to the homeland, supplementary schools are important and should be a priority.



### Consideration of Online Supplementary School Education for Children

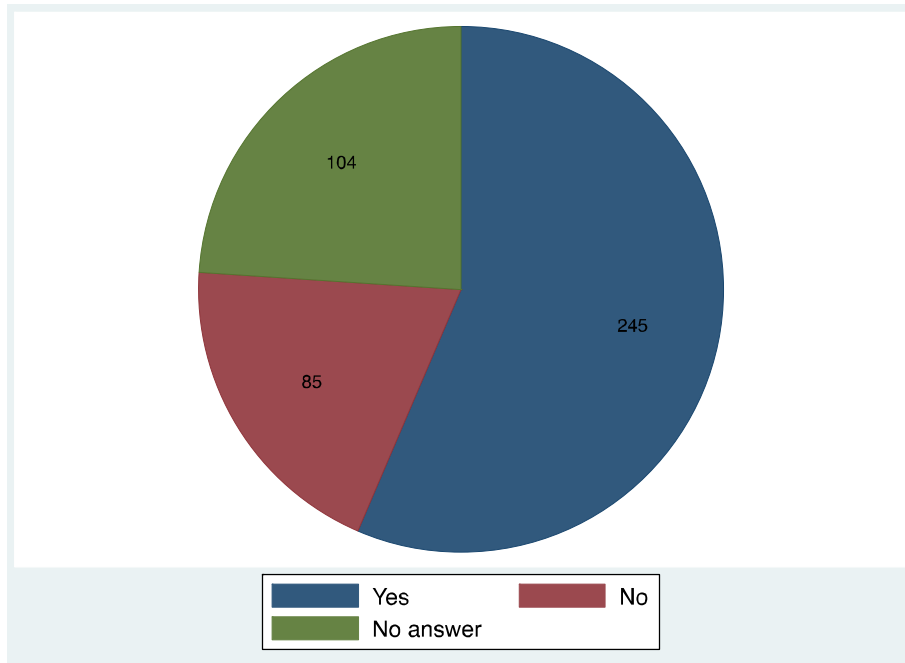




Interest in having their children attend supplementary school education in mother tongue was further evidenced among the 60% (of 424) respondents who indicated that they would consider online supplementary school education for their children. Clearly, this is a priority among a lot of BiH diaspora parents in countries where supplementary schools may not be available. For some, online access may possibly be an even better option as it would provide easier access for their children to be able to attend (versus having to drive their children to and from supplementary school).

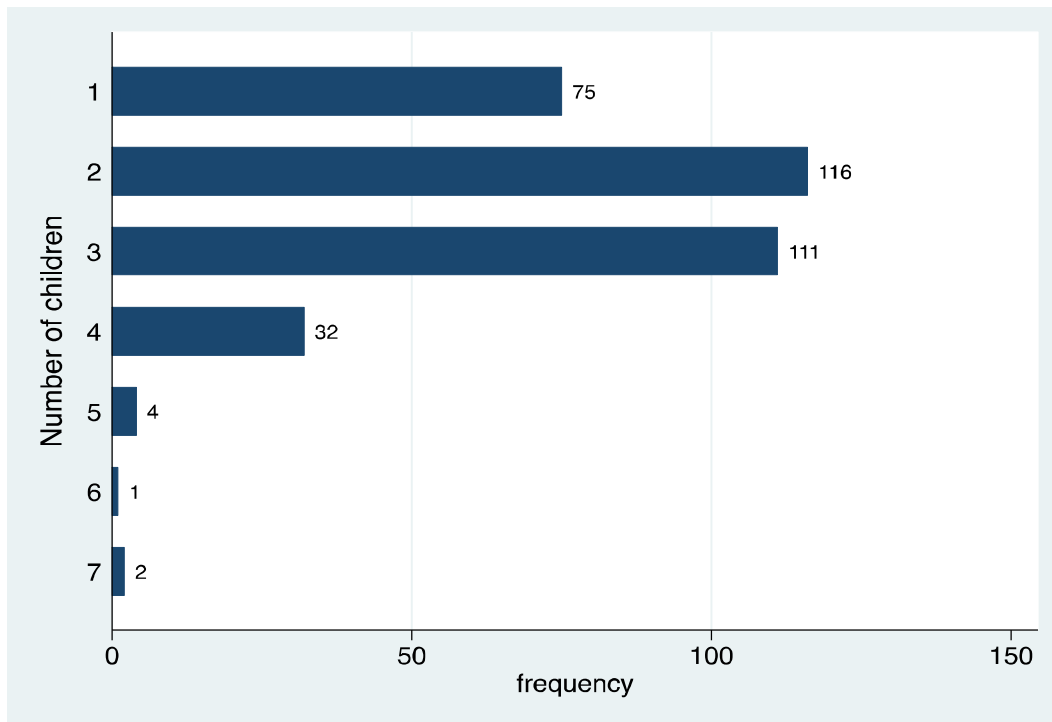
**Interest in Having Children Attend a Summer Supplementary School in BiH**

Beyond the option of an online supplementary school, there is also widespread support (56%) for a summer supplementary school among BiH diaspora surveyed. However, much like previous questions regarding alternative supplementary school options, the high rate of no response, 23%, likely indicates that BiH diaspora individuals would prefer more information and engagement when it comes to supplementary schools for their children, or that their children simply are not of school age and they thus did not feel the need to respond to this question. This is particularly important to note as the no response rate is higher than the lack of support for a summer supplementary school in BiH, 20%.



**Interest in Supplementary Schools Funded by BiH Institutions**

While only 341 of the respondents provided an answer to this question, the majority indicated having several children who would be interested in supplementary schools funded by BiH institutions. Specifically, 34% indicated having two children who would be interested, 33% indicated having three children who would be interested, and 22% said they had one child who would be interested. Nine percent said they had four children who would be interested. While responses to this question should be considered in the context of the number of children that most BiH diaspora families have, what is important to note is that most BiH parents have several children who they would be interested in having attend supplementary schools funded by BiH institutions, suggesting, once again, the importance of BiH diaspora parents who want to see BiH languages and culture carried through via all children that they have.



## INTERACTIONS

### Communication with Family Members, Relatives, and Friends in BiH

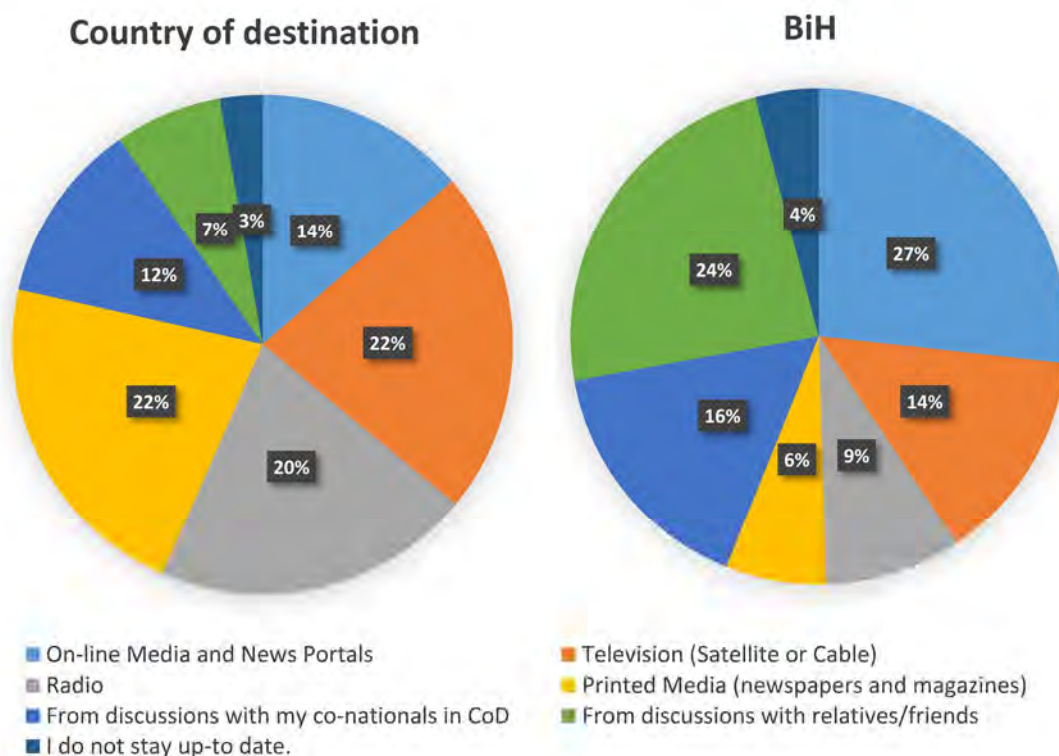
While 604 participants replied to this question, only a low number of respondents provided a frequency as to how often they communicate with family members and relatives. It is impossible to draw meaningful conclusions about BiH diaspora's communication with these respective groups based on the survey responses. There are several plausible reasons for this. BiH diaspora are primarily with their closest family members in host countries and likely have family networks in the diaspora rather than in BiH. This is especially true of those who immigrated in the late 1990s and early 2000s escaping the conflict, including extended families due to refugee reunification programs. When asked about friends and acquaintances, the majority (155) reported communicating with them several times a month, followed by several times a week, every few months, once a month, rarely (every six months or more), and daily. This demonstrates that BiH diaspora maintain social linkages to their homeland beyond familial relationships over time.

	Daily	Several times a week	Several times a month	Once a month	Every few Months	Rarely (every six months or more)
<b>With family members</b>	4	5	9	3	1	0
<b>With relatives</b>	1	7	6	1	2	1
<b>With friends and acquaintances</b>	61	108	155	77	95	68

### Staying up-to-date with Events in BiH and the Host Country

Clearly, to keep up with the social, political, and economic events in BiH, most in the BiH diaspora turn to online media and news portals, followed by discussions with family and friends, discussions with co-nations who also reside in the same host country, television, radio, and lastly printed media (newspapers and magazines). The preferred ways of getting the latest news are not surprising at all, and are consistent with the rest of the world where online media and news portals dominate and have largely taken over the print media. This is also reflected in the qualitative reports where a majority of BiH diaspora reported using the web for news and communication, with BiH newspapers and radio shows that once used to be popular in places with a high number of BiH diaspora, slowly dying out.

In terms of host country, the majority of respondents indicated staying up with social, political, and economic events via television, followed by printed media (newspapers and magazines), radio, online media and news portals, and discussions with co-nationals in host country, and discussions with friends and relatives. Therefore, there is a difference in mechanisms that BiH diaspora uses for staying on top of news in BiH versus the host country. For news related to BiH, most turn to the Internet, whereas for news related to the host country, most turn to television and print media.

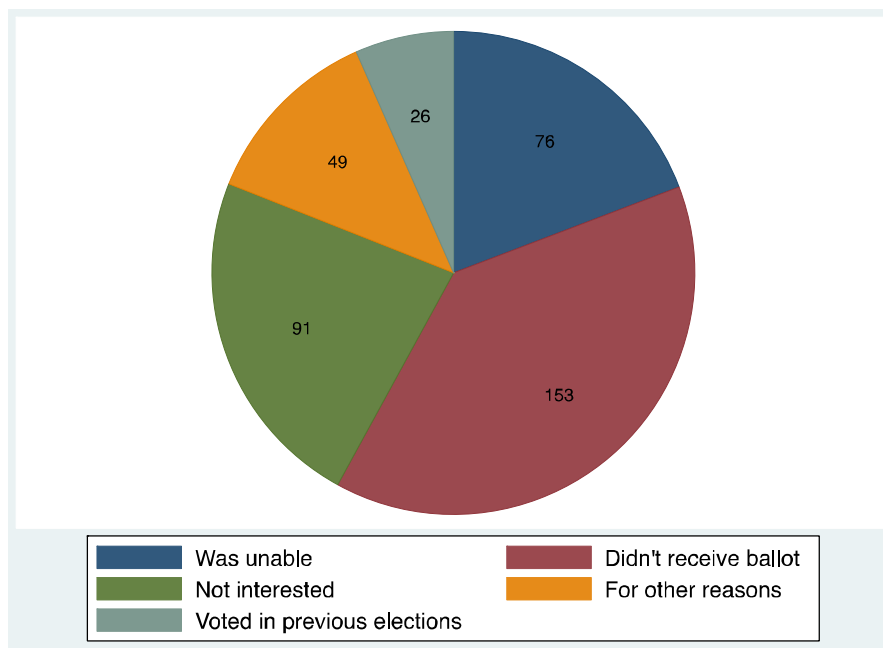


### Voting in the Last BiH Parliamentary or Local Elections

The majority of the 596 survey respondents, 66%, noted that they did not vote in the last BiH elections, though this was for a variety of reasons. Of them, 39% said they did not do so because they did not receive the voting ballot by mail. This presumably means that they were registered to vote and expected to receive their ballots by mail, and, if correct, indicates negligence on the side of Bosnian institutions in mailing ballots to Bosnian voters abroad in time, or at all. At worst, this leads to voter suppression of the diaspora.

Another 23% of the respondents who said they did not vote in the elections noted this was due to their disinterest in BiH elections. A slightly lower percentage of individuals (19%) noted they did not vote because they live too far away from or did not register on time for example. This seems to indicate that if given more opportunity to vote or if there was more outreach by BiH institutions towards diaspora members to vote, voting registration and election participation would be higher. Only 6% of those who did not vote indicated that they had voted in previous elections. This seems to indicate that BiH diaspora who vote do so continuously, and thus, that once individuals register to vote, their participation in elections is relatively high. This finding confirms information provided by BiH Central Election Commission about the participation rates of voters from abroad being relatively high for those individuals who do register to vote (generally above 65% voting rates) for elections between 2002 and 2010.

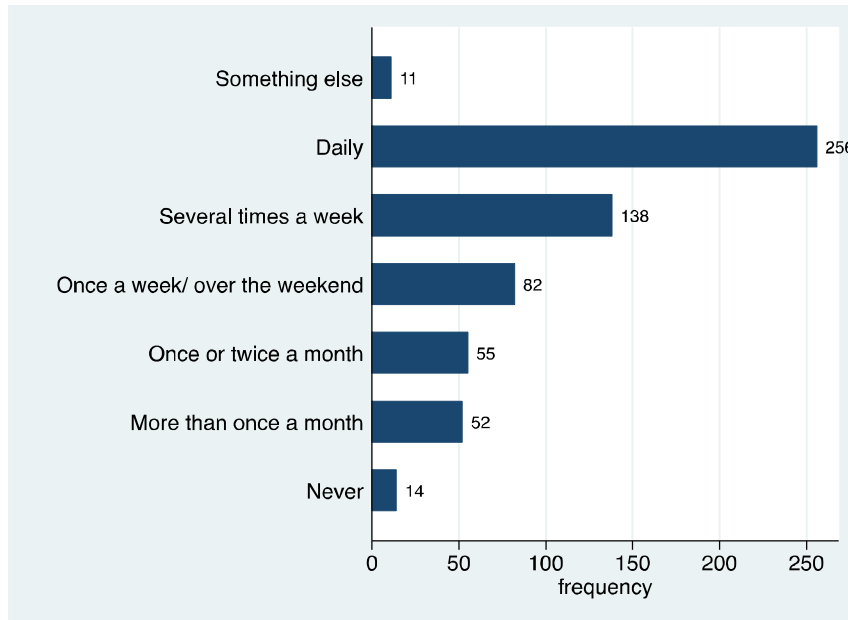
Approximately 25% of BiH diaspora individuals noted they had voted in the last BiH elections. This was almost evenly divided between those who chose to vote by mail and those who chose to vote in embassies and consulates in their country of destination. This finding is higher than the participation rate of BiH diaspora in BiH elections, and is likely a reflection of the survey respondents' self-selection for participation in the survey, as noted in the methodology section previously.



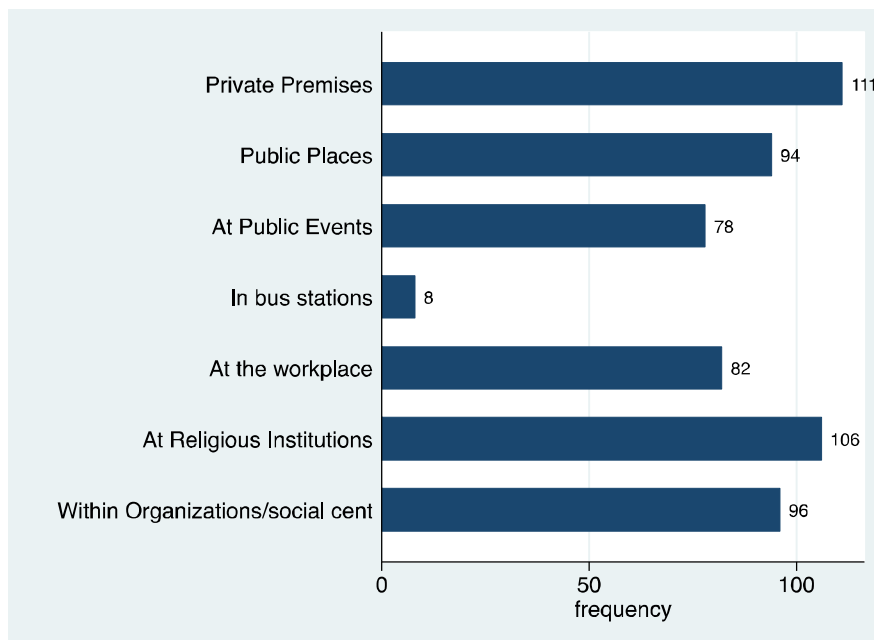
### Frequency of Interaction with BiH Compatriots Living in Host Country

Of the 608 respondents, it is clear that the majority have sustained contact with other BiH diaspora members in their country of destination, at least once a week, though often times several times a week, accounting for 66% of responses. In part, this likely reflects that familial ties are relatively strong among BiH diaspora individuals, confirmed by high rates of marriage and the fact that the majority live in households of four individuals, as previously noted. Further, this finding demonstrates that community ties among BiH diaspora are sustained in the country of destination and that relationships between diaspora members are strong and likely also make up a good portion of their social lives. This is confirmed further by the finding that only 2% of respondents noted that they never have contact with other BiH diaspora members in their country of destination. Further, the responses to this question also

points to the finding that the majority of BiH diaspora members likely live in proximity to other BiH diaspora members or at least retain strong communication links between each other. However, it is rather concerning that only 2/3 of individuals of the total amount of survey respondents chose to respond to this question at all, as it does not have political or other implications, but is rather surveying their contact with other like individuals.



### Settings of Interactions with BiH Compatriots Living in Host Country

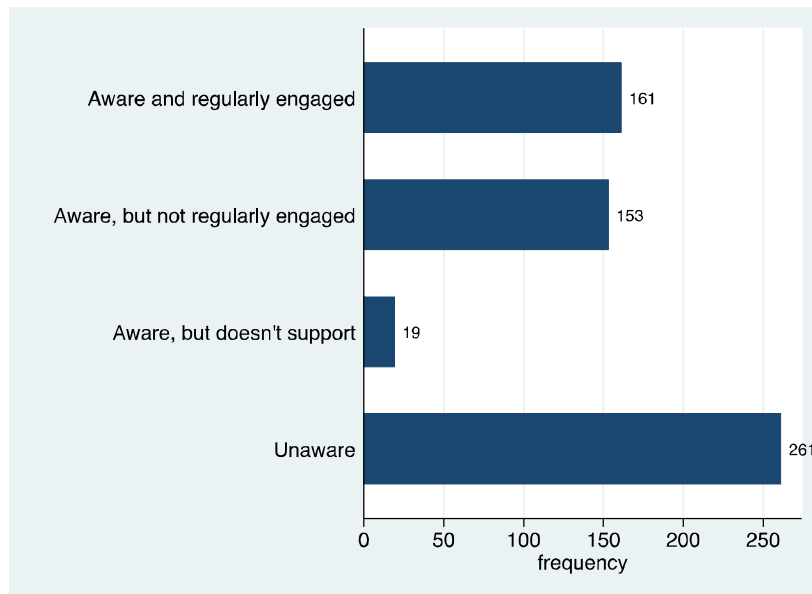


The majority of BiH diaspora respondents (total 575 respondents) noted that their interactions with other BiH diaspora members occur in a variety of settings. These include primarily private premises, likely indicating that BiH diaspora respondents' social lives include one another, as well as religious institutions, public places, and through diaspora organizations and social events around the same.

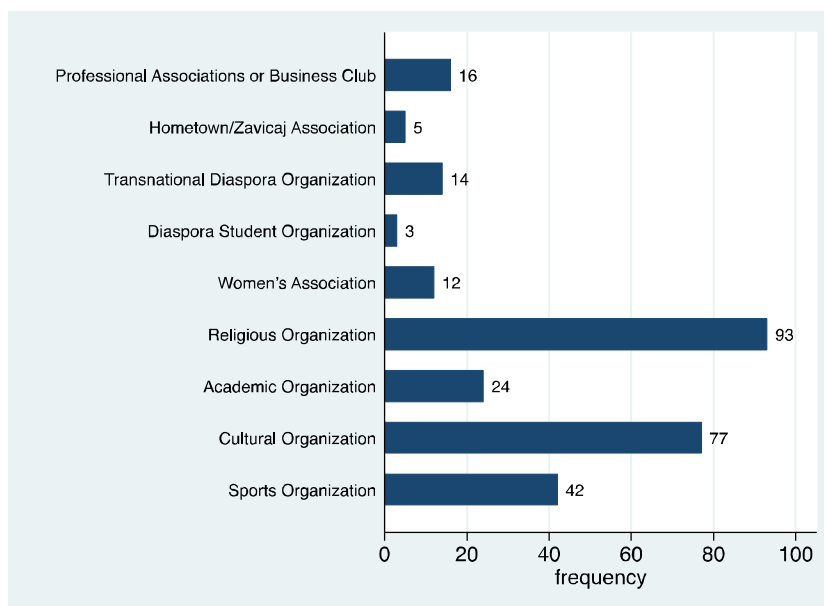
## ASSOCIATIONS

### Knowledge of Communication with and Participation in BiH Diaspora Organizations

Among the 594 respondents to this question, half are aware to some extent, including active engagement in diaspora associations in their respective local community. This includes 286 individuals who have reported they are members of diaspora associations themselves. On the other hand, the other half of the responds is unaware and thus unengaged in diaspora association activities in their respective countries of residence. Only 3% of the respondents noted they were aware of diaspora organizations and disapproved of their work altogether. This information indicates a split among BiH diaspora individuals between those who are involved and those who are not.



### Type of Diaspora Organization Membership

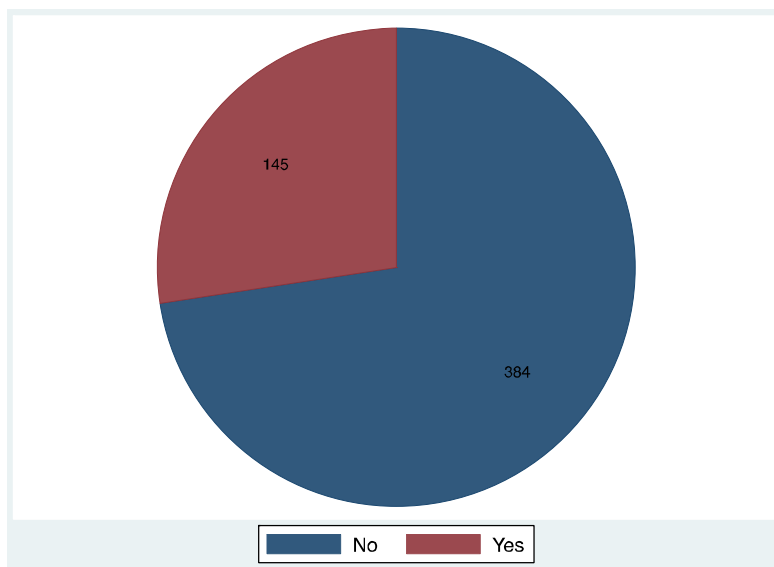


Of the 286 individuals who reported membership in diaspora organizations in their country of residence, the three most prevalent diaspora organization types are religious, cultural, or sports organizations. This holds with previous research about transnational community organizations and is likely also demonstrative of the fact that these are the diaspora associations that are most numerous in countries of residence.

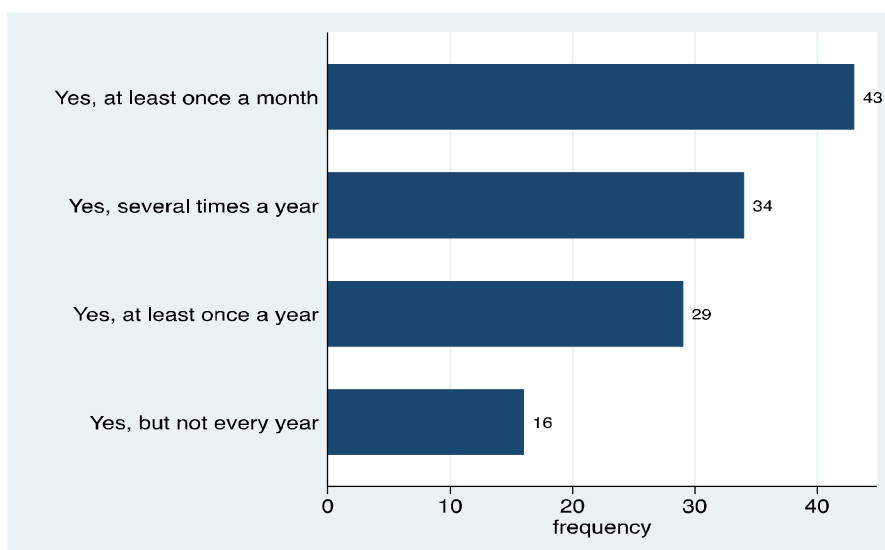
## REMITTANCES

### Sending Money and/or Goods to BiH

Of the 506 respondents, 75% indicated that they do not send money and/or goods to BiH, whereas only 8% indicated that they do on a regular monthly basis. Considering the high level of remittance that BiH diaspora is recognized for and that is recorded on an annual basis, in addition to qualitative data that indicates the same, this finding is likely the most contradictory finding to date. However, it goes together with the finding of high savings in the host countries and the fact that most have their families with them; hence no need to send remittances.

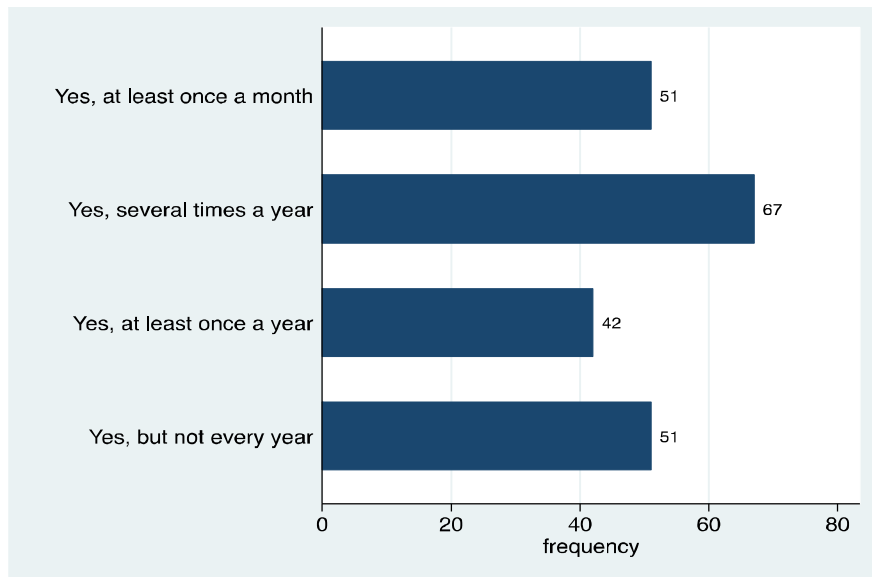


### Remittance Frequency



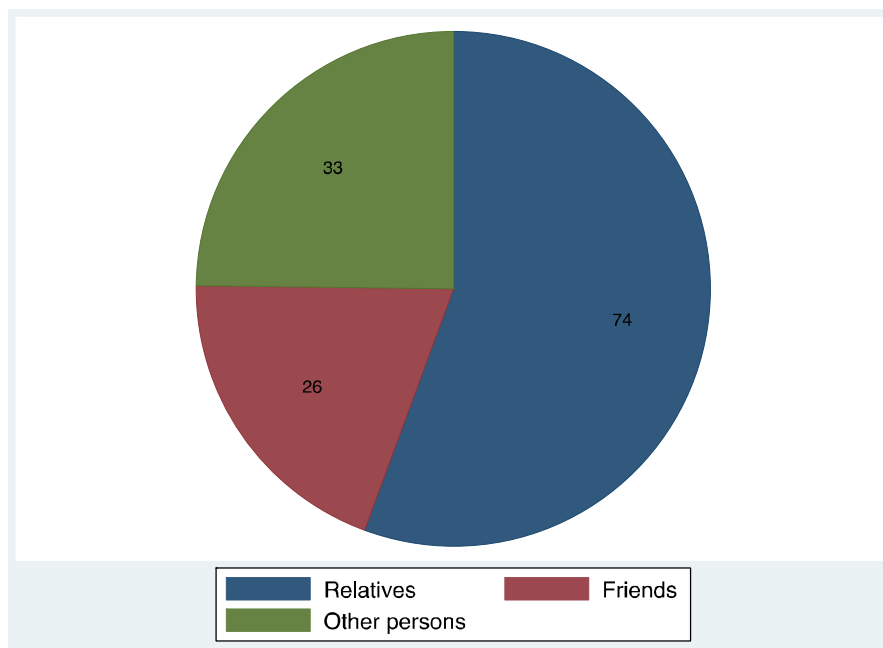


## Frequency of Sending Goods



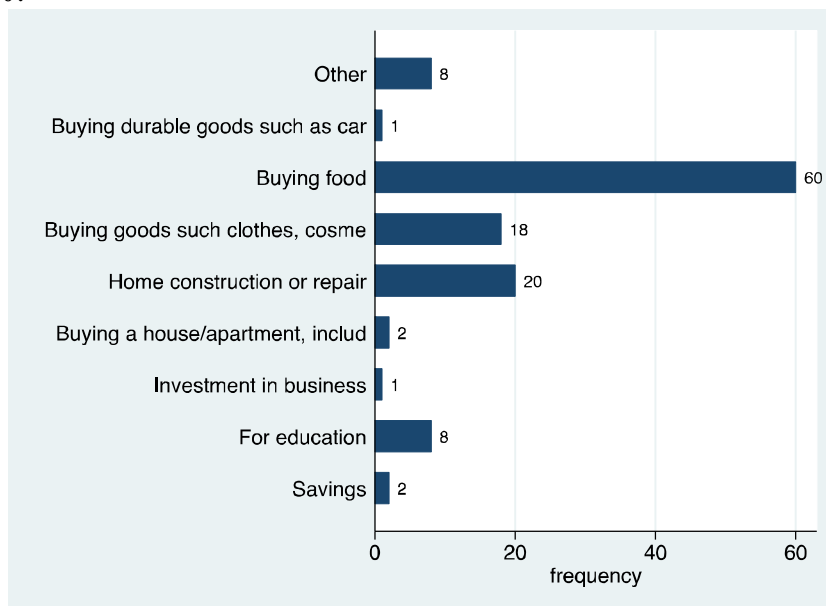
## Whom the money and/or goods are sent to?

Most of the respondents who send money and goods to BiH, reported that they send them to close family members and relatives. Interesting finding is that more people send money and good to other people than to their friends. As identified in the qualitative interviews, many people in the diaspora participate in donating money for student scholarships, humanitarian cause and different appeals in BiH that benefit individuals who are not directly related or know to their donors. Most financial transactions and donations take place through Western Union transfers, followed by direct handing over of money and goods during the visits to BiH, bank transfers, relatives when they visit the diaspora, unofficial couriers on a bus/aeroplane and using bank cards.

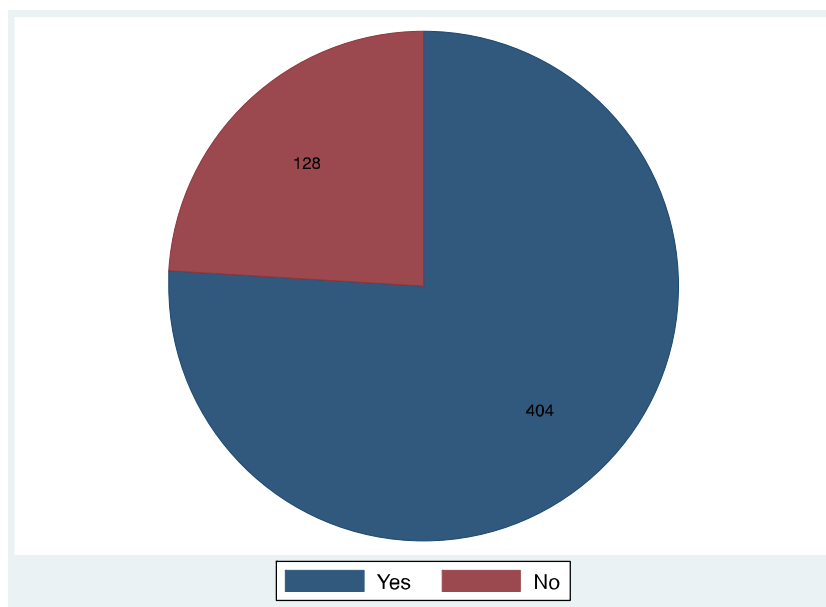


### Perceptions on what people in BiH do with the money sent

Although less individuals responded when asked about whether or not they remit themselves, the 446 respondents to this question likely also reflect BiH diaspora perceptions about remittance spending in BiH. Fifty percent of respondents noted that remittances are spent on subsistence and current consumption needs of the local recipients in BiH, more specifically on food. Other categories that remittances are spent on include home construction and repair as well as other purchases such as clothing, cosmetics, and like goods. This indicates that recipients in BiH more often rely on diaspora remittances in order to maintain their daily lives rather than make extraordinary purchases such as cars, televisions, and homes, which account for 3%.



### Savings in and Household Budget the Country of Destination



There is a high level of savings among the BiH diaspora, with 75% of the 532 respondents stating that they have savings in the country of destination. For the majority of respondents, the household budget was steady or increased moderately. Correspondingly, the level of savings followed similar trends. It is noteworthy that this moderate increase, while maintained among the level of remittances sent to BiH is slightly lower overall than the increases in household budgets and savings. This points to the fact that BiH diaspora likely also save for other means than remittances.

### Ways of Contributing Towards Development of BiH

The greatest percentage of BiH diaspora individuals favour continued vacationing in BiH, transfer of knowledge schemes and offering consultations to colleagues and companies in BiH in their areas of expertise. Other favourable responses included rebuilding their homes in BiH, continuing to send remittances to BiH, or virtual volunteering on a temporary or permanent basis in BiH. These responses indicate that BiH diaspora are interested in investment and the development of their country of origin in a variety of ways.

Form of contribution	Yes	No	Difficult to say (No answer)
Coming to work in the BiH labour market	106	186	153
Volunteering in BiH on a temporary and limited time basis every year	113	185	129
Online/virtual volunteering on either temporary or permanent basis	191	141	92
Saving money in BiH banks	82	248	89
Rebuilding my home in BiH	233	105	90
Continuing or starting to send money to family and friends in BiH	293	66	67
Vacationing in BiH every year	330	66	67
Investing in private/public BiH projects	133	151	131
Starting a business in BiH	160	153	120
Establishing business links with BiH companies	178	124	118
Offering consultations to colleagues/companies in BiH in my area of expertise	263	80	96
Transfer of knowledge scheme	311	61	78

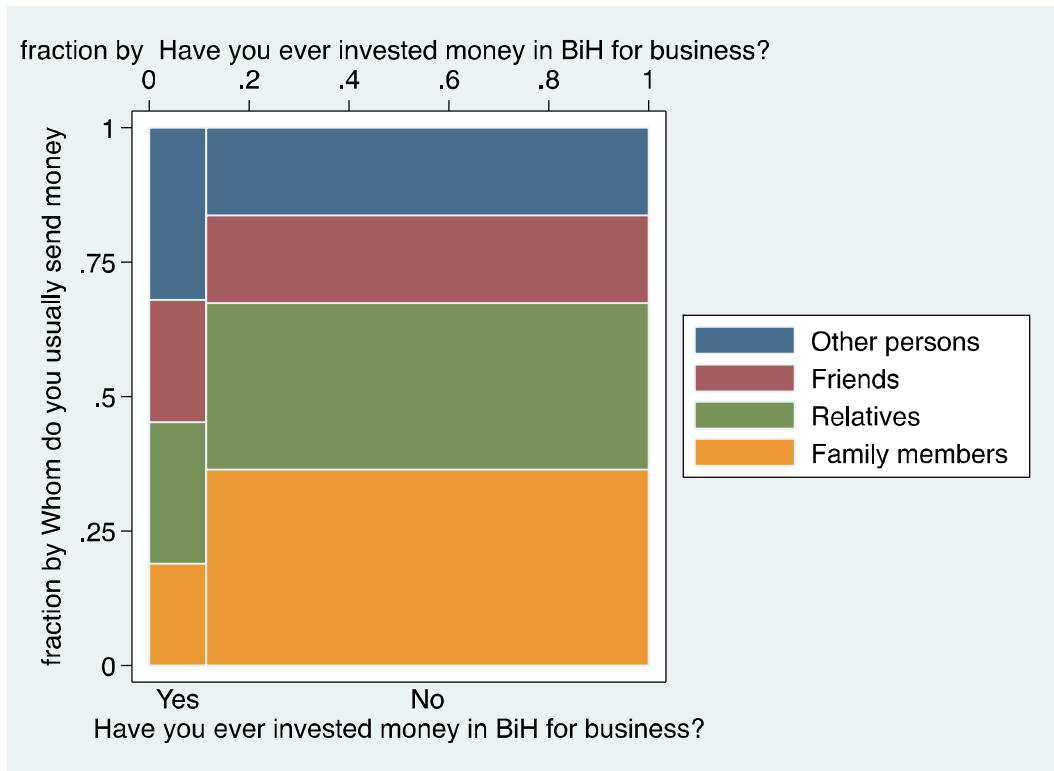
### Inferential Analysis of Data on Remittances

The following section presents some specific and additional results which corroborate and expand on the qualitative country-specific chapters. The below select chi-square analyses were conducted to expand the discussion of the previous section on remittances.

#### BiH Remittance Recipients and Prior Diaspora Investment in BiH

Remittance Recipient	Have you ever invested money in BiH for business?		
	Yes	No	Total
Family Members	10	149	159
Relatives	14	127	141
Friends	12	67	79

<b>Other Persons</b>	17	67	<b>84</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>463</b>



Pearson's chi-squared test ( $\chi^2$ ) was conducted to examine whether there is an association between BiH remittance recipients and prior diaspora investment in BiH. The test was found to be statistically significant,  $\chi^2(3) = 11.99$ ,  $p = 0.007$ , suggesting that there is an association between diaspora and whether they send money or goods to family members, friends, and others, and self-reported prior investment decisions in BiH.

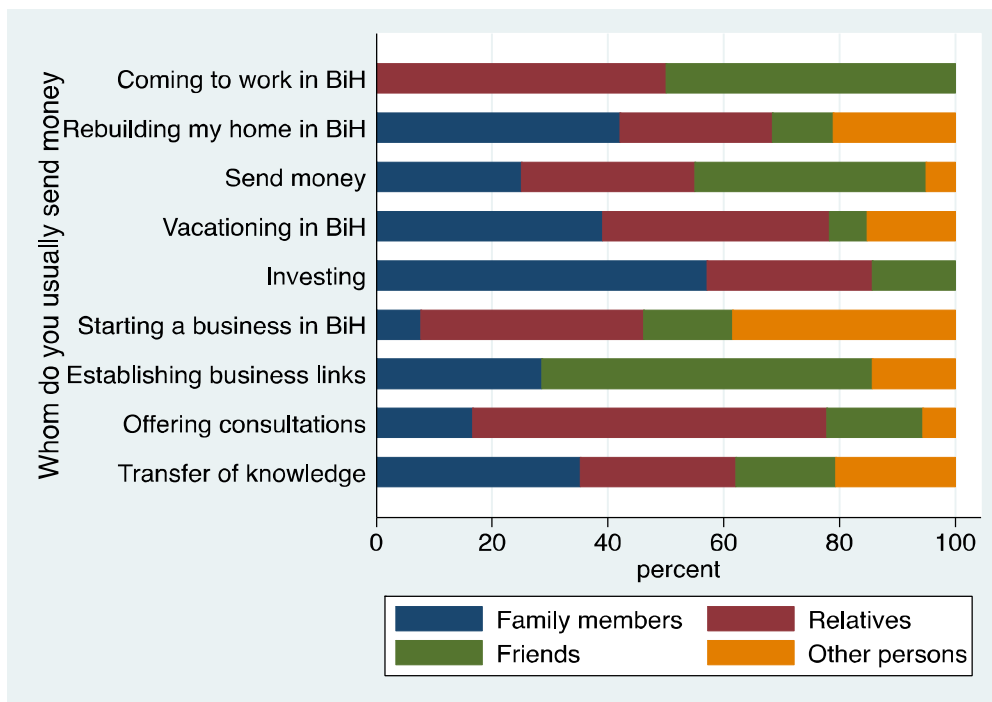
The results further indicate that the majority of BiH diaspora members who remit back to BiH within the categories outlined above have also never invested in BiH for business purposes. The strongest link in the survey sample is between those individuals who remit to family members and relatives and a lack of previous business investment in BiH. Non-familial relationships between diaspora members and remittance recipients demonstrate weaker links towards a lack of previous business investment in BiH. Moreover, the propensity of BiH diaspora individuals to send money or goods to family members does not align with past decisions to fund business investments in BiH, as only 10 out of 159 individuals in the survey sample who support their family members have a record of prior business investment in BiH, whereas 149 do not.

**Practical Implications:** One can infer from these results that BiH diaspora individuals who support their family members and relatives sustain current levels of consumption in BiH and have not recognized business investment opportunities in BiH in the past. Thus, the vast majority of survey respondents who have materially helped family members and relatives have at the same time overlooked business investments in BiH. More research is necessary in order to ascertain what circumstances would help to explain this pattern. One potential direction would be to further stratify the existing categories of remittance recipients in order to specify whether family members are individuals who might be able to channel these

remittances into new business opportunities rather than sustaining existing consumption levels or increasing their existing savings in BiH. Alternatively, a suggestion would be to collect more data on the availability of investment opportunities including information, institutional, and other types of support available to BiH diaspora in local communities where they could potentially invest.

### Remittance Recipients in BiH and Involvement Type towards Development in BiH

Involvement Type		Remittance Recipient			
		Family Members	Relatives	Friends	Other Persons
Coming to work in BiH	2	0	1	1	0
Rebuilding my home in BiH	19	8	5	2	4
Sending Money to BiH	20	5	6	8	1
Vacationing in BiH	46	18	18	3	7
Investing	7	4	2	1	0
Starting a business in BiH	13	1	5	2	5
Establishing business	7	2	0	4	1
Offering Consultations	18	3	11	3	1
Transfer of Knowledge	261	92	70	45	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>73</b>



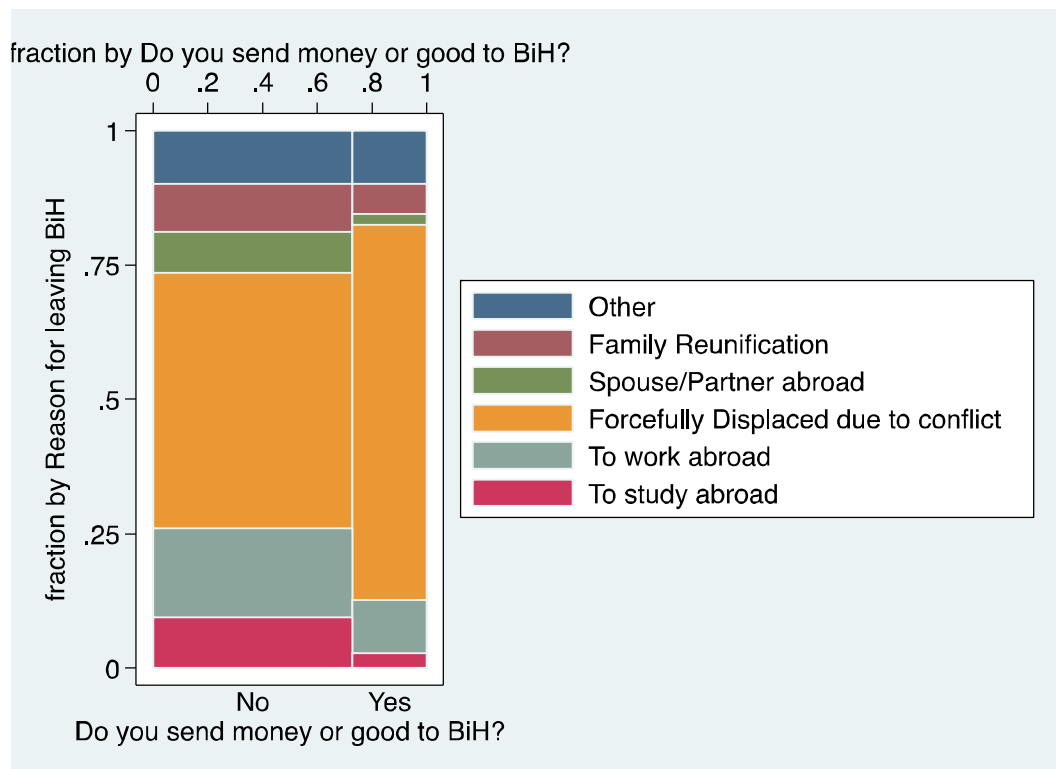
Pearson's chi-squared test ( $\chi^2$ ) was also conducted to examine whether there is an association between remittance recipients in BiH and involvement type towards development in BiH. The test was found to be statistically significant,  $\chi^2(24) = 44.27, p = 0.007$ , suggesting that there is an association between remittance recipients in BiH and involvement type towards development in BiH.

Knowledge transfer is the category found to be most associated with remittance sending frequency by BiH diaspora survey respondents. BiH diaspora survey respondents who send remittances to any of the four categories are correspondingly most interested in furthering their potential involvement in BiH development through knowledge transfer. All other types of involvement associated with type of remittance recipients outlined are scattered without prevalent other patterns, as evidenced in the table above.

**Practical Implications:** One can infer from the above result that the majority of diaspora individuals who send remittances to their family members, relatives, friends, and others in BiH consistently report high levels of interest in knowledge transfer as the most convenient way of involvement in furthering the development of their homeland. More research is needed in order to ascertain what types of knowledge transfer diaspora individuals would have to offer. Furthermore, in order to realize this potential, an identification of knowledge gaps in BiH is necessary and should be conducted. The potential of knowledge transfer needs to be assessed carefully rather than implied as the perceived benefits of diaspora knowledge transfer potential might not align with local needs and capacities.

### **Diaspora Remittance and Reasons for Leaving BiH**

<b>Reasons for Leaving BiH</b>	<b>Remittances Sent</b>		
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Total</b>
Study Abroad	4	36	<b>40</b>
Work Abroad	14	63	<b>77</b>
Forcefully Displaced	99	181	<b>280</b>
Spouse/Partner Abroad	3	29	<b>32</b>
Family Reunification	8	34	<b>42</b>
Other	14	38	<b>52</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>523</b>



A chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ) examined the relation between diaspora remittance and reasons for leaving BiH. The test was found to be statistically significant,  $\chi^2(5) = 25.12, p = 0.000$ , suggesting that there is an association between whether or not diaspora sends money to BiH and their reasons for leaving BiH.

It is interesting to note that the majority of survey respondents considered in this particular analysis were BiH diaspora survey respondents whose reason for leaving BiH was forceful displacement (280 out of 523). Moreover, over half of the respondents among those who were forcefully displaced (181 out of 280) indicated that they had not previously sent remittances to BiH, while the rest (99 respondents), who reported having sent remittances, comprised almost two thirds of that category. Overall, the results demonstrate that regardless of the reason for individuals leaving BiH, the numbers point to a propensity to remit back to BiH was twice as low compared to those who do remit.

**Practical Implications:** These findings indicate that individuals who were forcefully displaced from BiH also report sending remittances in highest frequency when compared to other reasons for migration. In all, 381 individuals out of the 523 total survey respondents indicated that they had not sent remittances regardless of their migration background. Some of these findings are not surprising and could be expected. For example, one would not expect students studying abroad to report remittances back to their homeland. The same holds true for individuals who leave in order to reunite with their family or to join a spouse or partner. The finding that seeks the most contextualization is the lack of remittance sending for individuals who left BiH in order to work abroad. Here, survey respondents also indicated by a majority, 63 out of 77, that they did not remit back to the homeland. More research is necessary in order to examine the reasons why the majority of economic migrants who presumably migrated more recently, do not remit back to the homeland as opposed to those who were forcefully displaced during the 1990s.

## RETURN

### Intention to stay in the Present Host Country and Never Return to BiH Permanently

This question generated a modest response rate (i.e. 446 individuals) when considering the overall number of observations recorded in total. Among those who responded, 46% indicated that they are determined to stay in their host country permanently, although certain circumstances might potentially prompt them to change their mind. This is reinforced by the responses to the following question, in which the majority of respondents noted that they do not know or would find it difficult to answer whether they would return to BiH permanently. This is in contrast to only 16% of respondents who said that they have no intention of returning to BiH permanently.

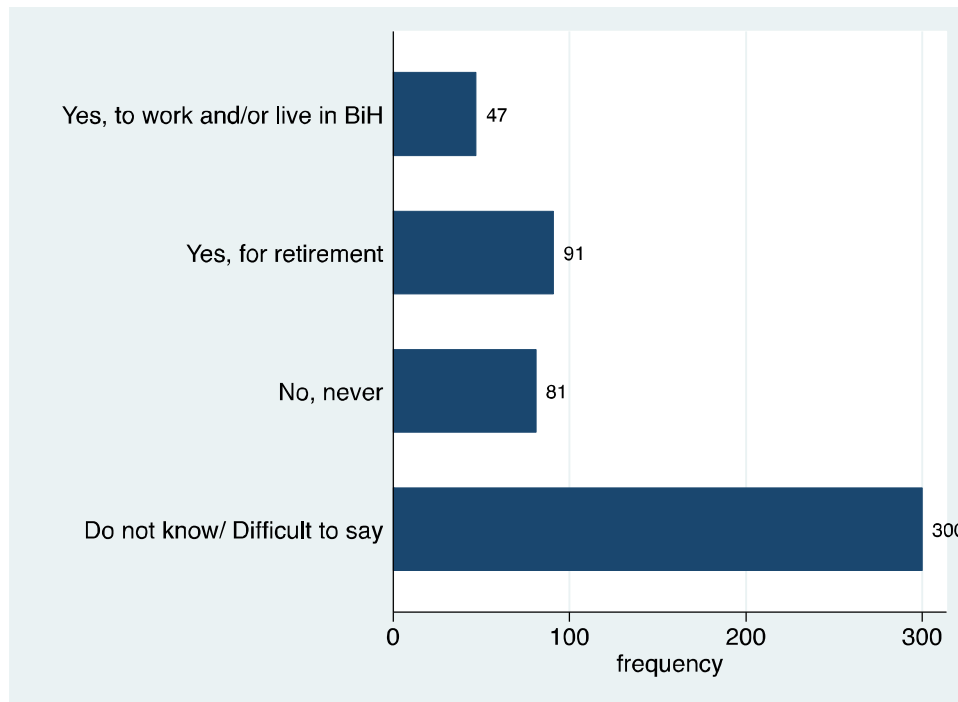
As the response rates to the questions below indicate, BiH diaspora members take into account their families when making such decisions. This likely also accounts for the high rate of individuals who noted that they have doubts or are still debating their decisions whether or not to return to BiH permanently.



### Plan to Return to BiH Permanently

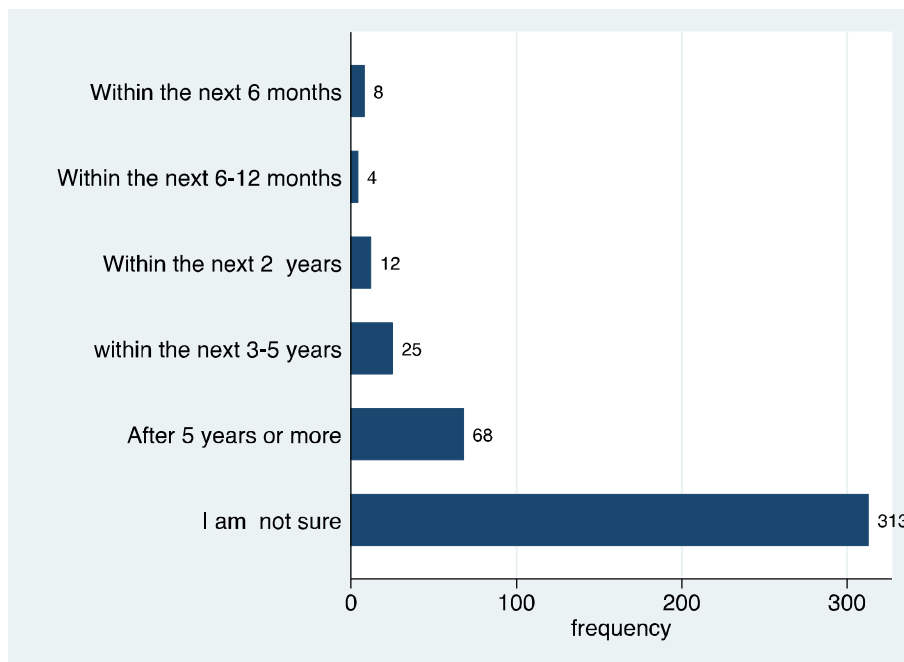
Of the 519 respondents who provided an answer to the question of whether they planned to return to BiH permanently, the majority (58%) indicated that they were not sure or that it was difficult to say, suggesting no plans for immediate or in the near future return. Many respondents (17%) felt they may return for retirement, but about an equal number (16%) said they planned on never returning. Only a very small percentage (9%) reported intention to return to work or live in BiH.



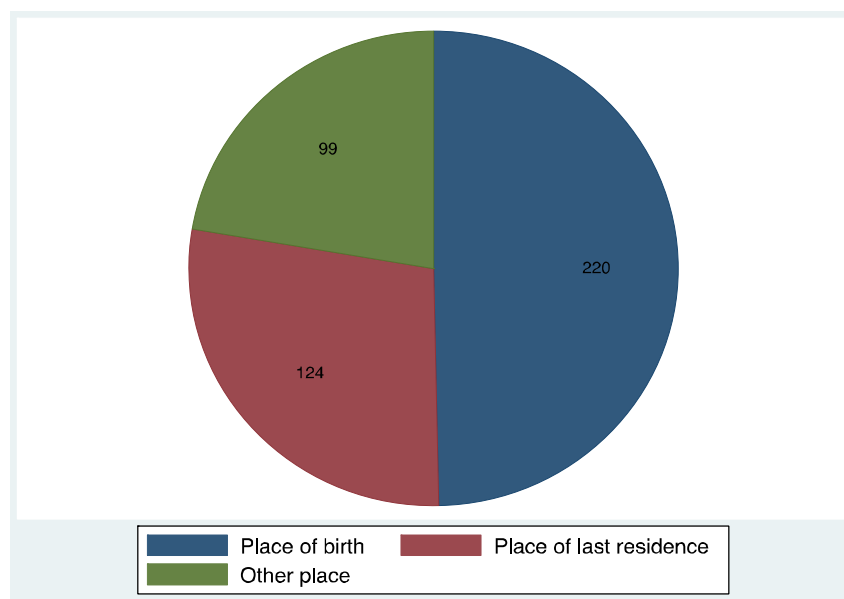


### Timing for Return to BiH Permanently

Of the 430 respondents who provided an answer to when they planned to return to BiH permanently, by far most (73%) said that they were not sure, and only a very small number was able to provide a definitive time frame. Even among those who did provide an exact time frame, it tended to be long-term focused (e.g. after 5 years or more) rather than short-term focused (e.g. within the next 6 months). Therefore, while it is difficult to make any kind of assumptions about diaspora's intention to return to BiH permanently since the majority of the respondents are not sure of when they intend to return, it is clear that most do not have immediate plans to return. This finding also reinforces the diaspora definitions regarding "imagined return," or the push-pull factors typical among refugees and migrants.



### Place in BiH where respondents may want to return to permanently



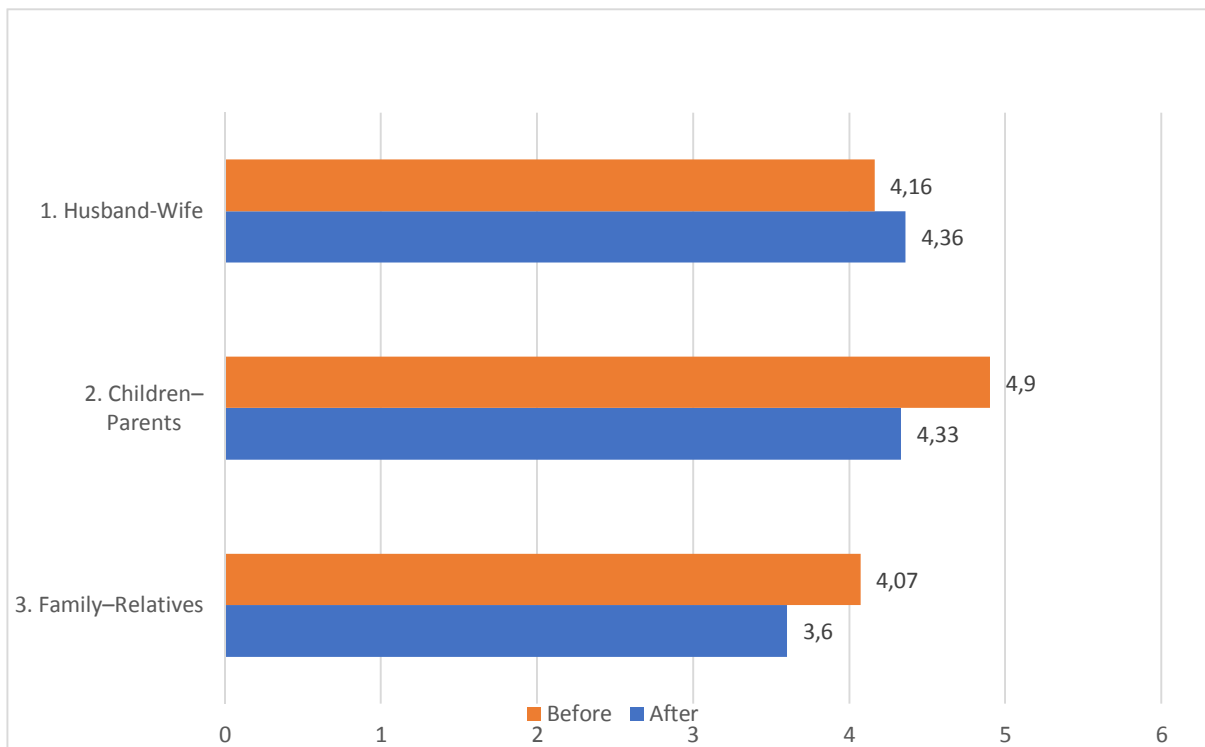
As the qualitative country reports also indicate, BiH diaspora remain tied to their places of birth and pre-migration residence more than to other places in BiH, including larger cities. Further, this also is aligned with literature about trans-localism and the importance of *zavičaj* identities within the BiH diaspora.<sup>30</sup>

### Family relationships: Before and After Going Abroad

The respondents were asked to assess, on a scale 1 to 5 (1=very bad, 2=bad, 3=neutral, 4=good, 5=very good), the quality of relationship among family members before and after going abroad. Three different relationship types were considered: husband-wife, children-parents, and family-relatives. Of those who responded to this question, the majority rated all

<sup>30</sup> Halilovich, H. 2011; 2012; 2013a.

three types of relationships positively before leaving BiH, with the means ranging from 4.16 for husband-wife relationship, to 4.9 for children-parents relationship, and 4.07 for family-relatives relationship.



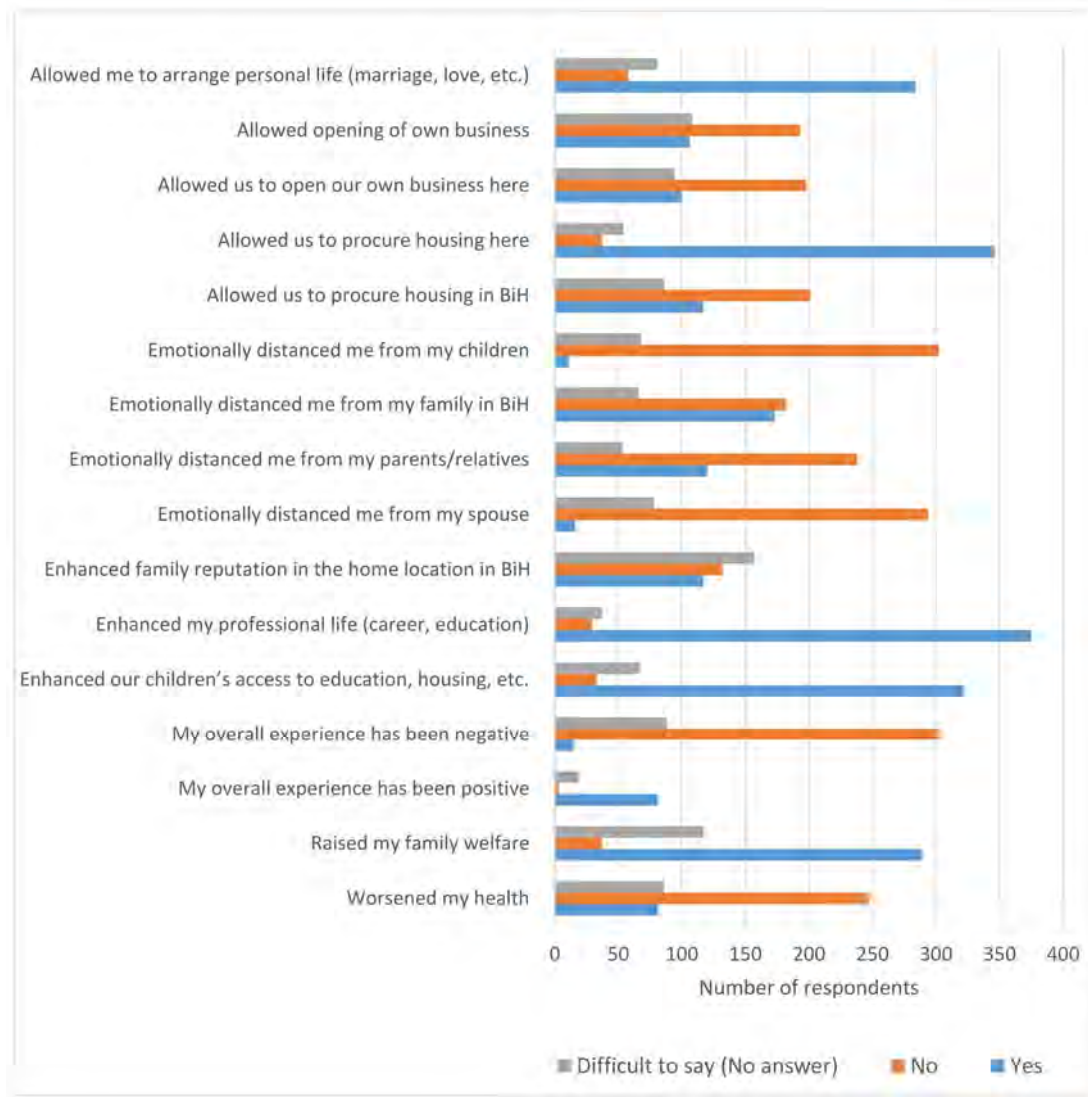
While all these three types of relationships remained relatively positive after going abroad, it is interesting that the mean for husband-wife relationship was the only one that increased (from 4.16 to 4.36). However, it should be noted that this relationship was assessed quite positively to begin with and that the overall change in mean, while positive, is small. Previous studies on other diaspora groups have found that migration can in fact improve husband-wife relationships due to improved economic standing and social status and relationship for wives.<sup>31</sup> On the contrary, the mean for the children-parents relationship decreased from before going abroad (4.9) to after going abroad (4.33). Much of this trend can be connected to differing cultural expectations and social adjustment between parents who are Bosnian and their children who adopt a new bicultural or CoD identity. Likewise, it is well known that once parents migrate, especially to Western and developed nations such as the ones included in this sample, they have less time available for their children and thus the quality of the relationship is bound to decrease. The same pattern was observed for the family-relatives relationship where the mean decreased from before going abroad (4.07) to after going abroad (3.6). This pattern is not surprising as both contact and time spent with relatives decreases with migration and physical distance, and the quality of the relationship can also be expected to decrease.

### **Influence of Migration on Individuals and Families**

Migration and displacement are complex processes that result in both benefits and costs. While most benefits could be expressed in material terms, the costs are often expressed in subjective terms. For example, respondents were asked how migration influenced them and their family in terms of benefits, ranging from that it allowed them to arrange their personal

<sup>31</sup>cf. Rahman, M. 2017.

lives and open own businesses in CoD and BiH, to allowing them to procure housing in CoD and BiH, and enhance their professional life and their children's access to education. The majority of respondents indicated positive change as a result of migration (especially enhancing their professional life and their children's access to education). The exception were respondents' negative responses as to opening businesses in either CoD or BiH. However, there is not any indication that all diaspora respondents were initially interested in opening businesses, hence this finding would need to be corroborated with further research.



Although almost half of the respondents claim that migration resulted in some form of emotional 'costs' (distance) from family and relatives left in BiH, a much larger number indicated that it did not. This was particularly true when it comes to emotional distance from one's spouse and children – by far, the most indicated that migration did not distance them from their spouse and children, likely in large part due to whole families being displaced or migrating.

The respondents were also circumspect when it came to assessing their migration experience as overall positive or negative, with close to one third being ambivalent and choosing 'difficult to say' as their answer. The majority, nevertheless, indicated that their overall migration experience has not been negative, but rather positive.

## CONCLUSION

The findings presented in this chapter reveal many important facts about the demographic, socio-cultural, and economic aspects of the BiH diaspora exemplified by the ten countries of destination covered by the project. While they differ in terms of the actual numbers and settlement patterns, in each of the ten countries the BiH migrants have generally adapted well to their new roles as residents and citizens of their host societies, while maintaining ongoing connections with their original homeland.

The demographics of our sample show that BiH diaspora is heterogeneous with females and males relatively equally represented across diaspora communities. Age-wise, it is the middle-aged (31-50 years old) who are the largest age group in the diaspora. Most surveyed people in diaspora are married. The average family size in this diaspora sample is comprised of four members. Most live in nuclear families. The majority of BiH diaspora respondents in our sample were born in BiH. The majority opted to provide answers to the questionnaire in Bosnian. A majority of diaspora survey respondents self-identified as Bosniaks, while a substantial proportion also identify as Croats, Serb, and others. Many of them still hold BiH citizenship, which is an encouraging finding. Many are also citizens of the countries in which they settled, and a majority tend to live in those countries most of the year.

Most pre-war BiH migrants participating in this survey left BiH having obtained only primary and secondary education, with a relatively low number of undergraduate and graduate education completed. The level of education among more recent BiH migrants in this sample tends to be generally higher than the earlier (pre-war) migrants.

In terms of migration experience, there are three waves of migration from BiH: 1) pre-war migration (1970-1990s); 2) forced and war-related migration (1990s); and 3) mixed post-war migration (2000s). The second migration wave, representing largely forced migration, was the greatest and most diverse. In terms of citizenship of other countries, those who left as refugees are the most likely to have a citizenship obtained, then the ones who left BiH before the war. The majority of the BiH diaspora maintains strong ties with the homeland, even though the frequency might vary depending on a number of factors, including geographic distance to BiH, and the financial resources necessary for repeated travel back and forth. Family ties remain the primary reason for visiting BiH, followed by holiday.

In terms of employment and professional experience, our findings reveal a high level of employment and a high willingness to transfer skills and knowledge in a variety of fields relevant for the development of BiH. This is directly reflected on the diaspora investments in BiH, with an overwhelming majority of survey respondents (85%) having invested money in BiH. While BiH diaspora does have an interest in investing in BiH for business purposes, certain mechanisms, such as reliable partners in the country and clear investments information on local governance, have to be in place first in order for them to do so. Thus, there is a relatively low percentage of diaspora survey respondents who have invested in BiH for business purposes. The majority of BiH diaspora surveyed respondents own material resources, land, or real estate in BiH. At the same time, most have bank savings in host countries. The survey sample demonstrates that diaspora members remain committed to their homeland by becoming or remaining property owners in BiH.

However, one of the important issues to be addressed is maintaining levels of engagement with and interest in BiH among members of the second-generation of BiH diaspora members. For example, the survey demonstrated that the majority of children born outside of BiH lacks BiH citizenship. In addition, the vast majority (80%) of survey respondents' children are not enrolled in supplementary schools in Bosnian, Croatian, or Serbian. While this might be skewed by the large US sample, as noted in the chapter, the survey nonetheless demonstrated there is demonstrable interest in supplementary schools among the diaspora. The survey showed that BiH diaspora respondents were also proactive in this regard, organizing supplementary school through local BiH diaspora associations. The majority of parents in the survey would support their children's enrolment in supplementary schools funded by BiH institutions. Many of the respondents would also consider online supplementary school education for their children as an option. There is also noticeable support (56%) for a summer supplementary school among BiH diaspora.

Members of the surveyed BiH diaspora maintain social linkages to their homeland beyond familial relationships and sustain them over time. There is a difference in mechanisms that BiH diaspora uses for staying on top of current events in BiH versus the host country. For news related to BiH, most turn to the Internet, whereas for news related to the host country, most turn to television and print media. While following closely what is happening in BiH, the majority (66%) of survey respondents noted they did not vote in the last BiH elections, for a variety of reasons. Community ties among BiH diaspora are sustained in the country of destination and the relationships between diaspora members in the sample are strong and likely also make up a good portion of their social lives. The majority of BiH diaspora respondents noted that their interactions with other BiH diaspora members occur in a variety of public, private, and online settings.

There is a split among BiH diaspora respondents between those who are involved and those who are not involved with BiH diaspora organizations. The three most prevalent diaspora organization types are religious, cultural and sports organizations, followed by a variety of local clubs and professional and interest-based associations.

Most of the respondents who send money and goods to BiH reported that they send them to close family members and relatives. One interesting finding of the survey showed that more people send money and goods to other people than to their friends. The greatest percentage of BiH diaspora individuals favour continued vacationing in BiH, transfer of knowledge schemes and offering consultations to colleagues and companies in BiH in their areas of expertise.

Most of surveyed BiH diaspora members are determined to stay in their host country permanently, although certain circumstances might potentially prompt them to change their mind. BiH diaspora members in the sample take into account their families when making such decisions. The BiH diaspora members remain tied to their places of birth and pre-migration residence more than to other places in BiH. It is reported that migration has affected some family relationships though not to a large and notable extent. It also had a mixed influence on individuals and families in terms of costs and benefits.

The findings described in this chapter complement the following chapters on the individual BiH diaspora populations in the ten selected countries. Each chapter ends with country-specific recommendations. The report concludes with an overall set of recommendations and provides important guidelines for future directions for all levels of BiH government and

institutions to take as they move forward with creating a comprehensive diaspora outreach strategy.

## CHAPTER II

### Country Report: Australia

#### Summary

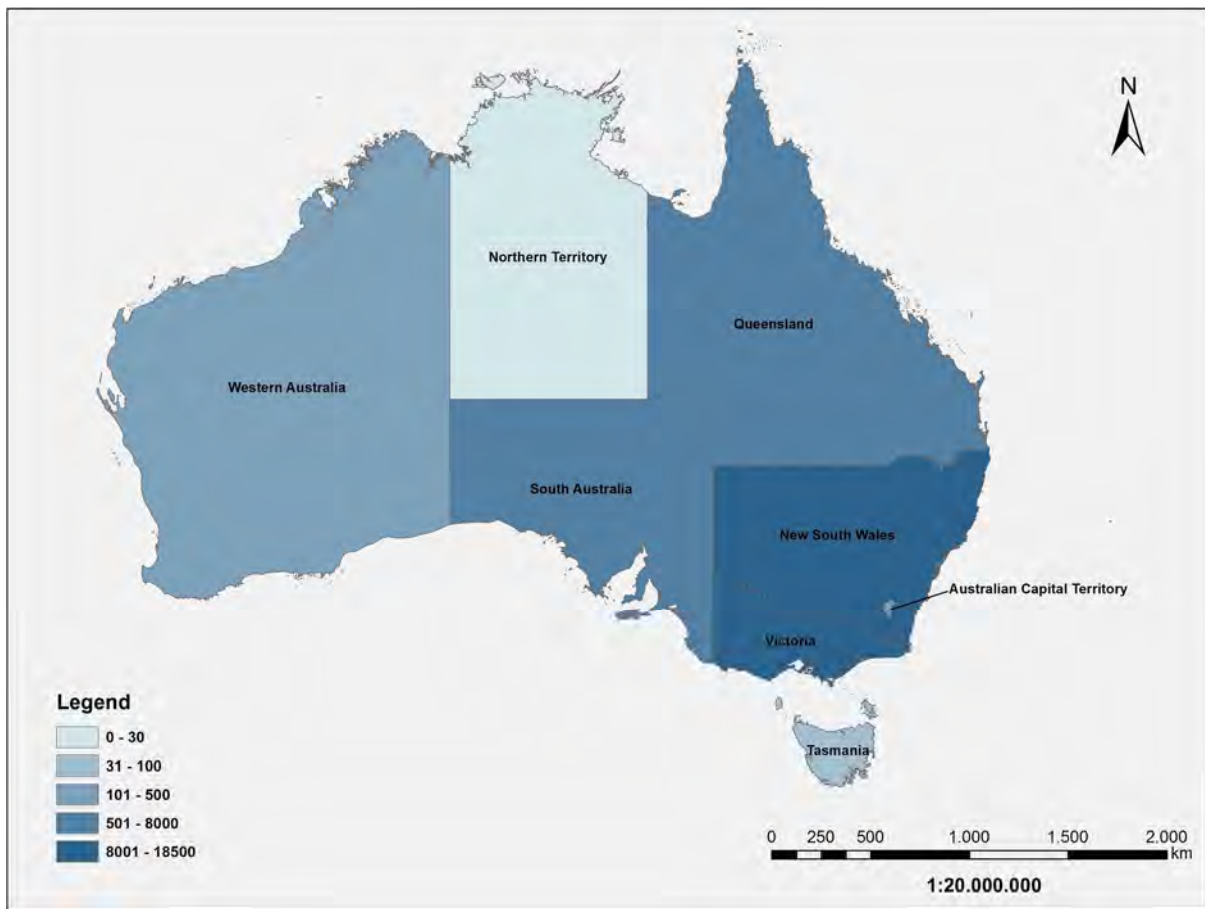
The country report is based on the data gathered between August and November 2017 among the members of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora in Australia. The findings presented here come from qualitative research involving face-to-face focus groups, in-depth interviews and participant observation in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane and through digitally mediated research (mainly via email exchange and Skype sessions) conducted with members of B-H diaspora in Adelaide and Perth. These were complemented by two individual interviews with the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Australia, Mr. Mirza Hajri , and an interview with Mr. Hakki Suleyman, chairperson of the Migrant Resource Centre North-West Region, in Melbourne. Five separate focus groups comprising of 8 to 16 people included: 1) youth, 2) business people, 3) academics and professionals, 4) mixed community group, and 5) women. The focus groups lasted between two and three hours. Further, some 60 individual interviews (ranging from short conversation to two-hour interviews) were conducted as well participant observation of two community events attended by some 400 people. The participants involved in the research come from 22 different diaspora organisations (with some belonging to multiple organisations). About one quota of the participants did not have any formal affiliation with diaspora organisations. The participants came from a range of ethnic and ethnically mixed backgrounds. They also came from different local and regional backgrounds in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) and included representatives of several migration waves. A relatively equal number of men and women were included of varied age groups.

Most of the BiH migrants in Australia have completed their migration cycle by becoming Australian citizens, settling in the ßBosnianø suburbs and neighbourhoods and to various degrees integrating into the Australian multicultural societyô socially, economically and culturally. Our research findings reveal that most of them continue maintaining different forms of connections with BiH for a variety of reasons and motivations: because of family, cultural identity, economic interests or altruism. Among many other shared challenges that members of the BiH worldwide diaspora generally face when it comes to engaging with homeland, a sheer ßtime-spaceø barrier between Australia and BiHô located on two different hemispheres and separated by 16,000 kilometres of physical distanceô makes the experiences of the BiH diaspora on this continent very unique in some regards. Notwithstanding these challenges, the BiH diaspora in Australia continues being one of the most active BiH diaspora groups when it comes to maintaining a plethora of engagements with BiH as well as performing and keeping alive their original cultural identities from the 'first homeland' in Australia. The findings point to moderate levels of confidence in and trust towards government institutions and political and social developments in BiH. This is further limited by slow developments in private sector, recent economic recession, and weak and complex formal institutions (at all government levels) that pose costly and time-consuming administrative barriers to starting and sustaining a new business in BiH. However, in spite of the challenges, several members of the B-H diaspora in Australia have found ways to invest in BiH, mostly relying on their own social capital and informal networks spreading across BiH, Australia and other countries.



## I. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Map 1. BiH diaspora in Australia<sup>32</sup>



### Background and Literature Review

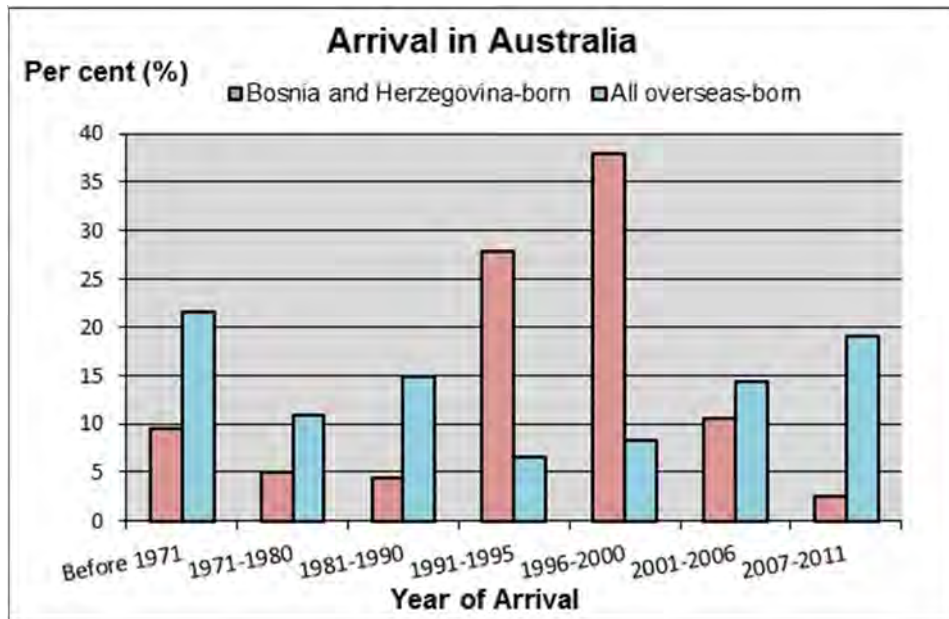
We can identify three waves of immigration to Australia by the people of BiH: 1) political migrants after World War Two; 2) economic migrants between the 1960s and the 1980s; and 3) refugees during and after the 1992-95 war in BiH (-humanitarianø migrants). As illustrated by the *figure 2* on the following page, compared to 62 per cent of the total overseas-born population, 84.9 per cent of the Bosnia and Herzegovina-born people in Australia arrived in Australia prior to 2001. Among the total Bosnia and Herzegovina-born in Australia at the 2011 Census, 10.6 per cent arrived between 2001 and 2006 and 2.5 per cent arrived between 2007 and 2011.<sup>33</sup> In many regards, each of the three migration waves has distinctive social, demographic and economic characteristics. However, it is only after 1992 that we can speak about a distinct and organised Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora on this continent. Before the early 1990s, the immigrants from BiH in Australia were not only small in terms of numbers, but also divided between the Yugoslav diaspora, the Croatian diaspora and the Serb diaspora, or represented by the religious and cultural institutions of the Bosnian Muslims. A number of

<sup>32</sup> Note: This map represents a *general estimate* of the BiH diaspora distribution in Australia. The estimate for each state was arrived at using a combination of respective community self-report, Australian Bureau of Statistics/Census of Population, 2006; 2011; 2016 (<http://www.abs.gov.au>) data, and data from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. ([http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/\\_pdf/bosnia-herzegovina.pdf](http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/_pdf/bosnia-herzegovina.pdf)).

<sup>33</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011.

them also chose to leave the ðoldø identities behind and assimilate into the mainstream AngloóCeltic culture by residing in ðnonóimmigrantøneighbourhoods, cutting off their links with any diasporic groups from the region, intermarrying with people from nonóYugoslav background and changing their names to better blend into the dominant culture. The idea of a ðYugoslav diasporaø in Australia was promoted by the Yugoslav state at the time via its embassy and consulates. It involved the establishment of and support to Yugoslav multió ethnic clubs (including soccer clubs).<sup>34</sup>

Figure 1. Arrival of BiH migrants in Australia<sup>35</sup>



The refugees from BiHø arriving in Australia initially in dozens in 1992, then in hundreds and thousands throughout the mid and late 1990sø brought with them their emotional baggage of personal and collective trauma that inspired solidarity and patriotism among the B-H immigrants from the earlier migration waves. The refugees also brought knowledge and practical skills enabling them to organise politically and promote the ðBosnianø cause. Many of them were directly involved in setting up B-H clubs, societies, organisations, and media outlets.

As in regards to geographic distribution, most B-H refugees of the 1990s settled in the state of Victoria (10,000), followed by New South Wales (8,000), Queensland (4,000), Western Australia (3,000) and South Australia (2,000)<sup>36</sup>. According to the 2006 Australian census data<sup>37</sup>, there were about 28,000 Bosnians in Australia, among them 14,620 Bosniaks, 6,100 Bosnian Serbs and 3,870 Bosnian Croats. The Census of Population conducted in 2011 showed an increase by about 11,000 people, getting the number of Bosnian-born just under 40,000.<sup>38</sup> However, as the census data are collected on a voluntary basis, these figures need to be treated with caution; indeed, it is well known that the Bosnian-born Australian citizens are

<sup>34</sup> Jupp, J. 2001. *The Australian People*, p. 245.

<sup>35</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006/2011/2016, (<http://www.abs.gov.au>). ([http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/\\_pdf/bosnia-herzegovina.pdf](http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/_pdf/bosnia-herzegovina.pdf)).

<sup>36</sup> Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2009.

<sup>37</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics/Census of Population, 2006 (<http://www.abs.gov.au>)

<sup>38</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics/Census of Population, 2011 (<http://www.abs.gov.au>)

not exclusively belonging to or identifying only with the B-H diaspora, but also with the Serbian and Croatian diaspora. Their respective organisations and churches urge their members and parishioners to declare themselves as Serbs and Croats from Serbia and Croatia respectively as the census data are considered by the government when allocating resources to the ethnic communities in Australia. The confusion about the actual numbers of Bosnians and Herzegovinians in Australia was further compromised by the fact that many B-H refugees arriving in the country during the 1990s were counted as 'stateless' or 'exó Yugoslavs'. The B-H diaspora organisations such as the Australian Union of BiH Associations in Australia (AUBHA) and the Australian Council of BiH Organisations estimate that the actual number of people with the Bosnian-Herzegovinian ancestry in Australia is somewhere around 100,000, which, for the same reasons as above, seems to be probably an inflated figure. Different conservative estimates estimate that the total number of Bosnians and Herzegovinians living in Australia is about 50,000.<sup>39</sup>

Regardless of their actual number – which is somewhere between 50,000 and 100,000 people of the B-H ancestry – today Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora in Australia (or the 'Bosnian diaspora' as it is commonly referred to) is a well-established migrant community which has been a subject of growing interest by many researchers across different disciplines, including anthropology, history, sociology, demography and economics.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, several PhD and Masters theses have dealt with different aspects of B-H diaspora in Australia.

In Australia, as in most other countries of settlement, the B-H migrants have been seen as role model immigrants with 'high integration potential'.<sup>41</sup> Their European (white) background, educational levels and skills have been significant factors for such a positive reception of the B-H refugees in Australia.<sup>42</sup> However, while these factors might have been helpful to the migrants and refugees from BiH in the initial stages of their settlement in Australia, they have not necessarily been directly translated into a competitive advantage in the Australian labour market, where Bosnians and Herzegovinians, coming from a non-English speaking background, have often ended up in low-paid jobs for which they are overqualified.

*Figure 2. BiH-born migrants level of education in Australia*<sup>43</sup>

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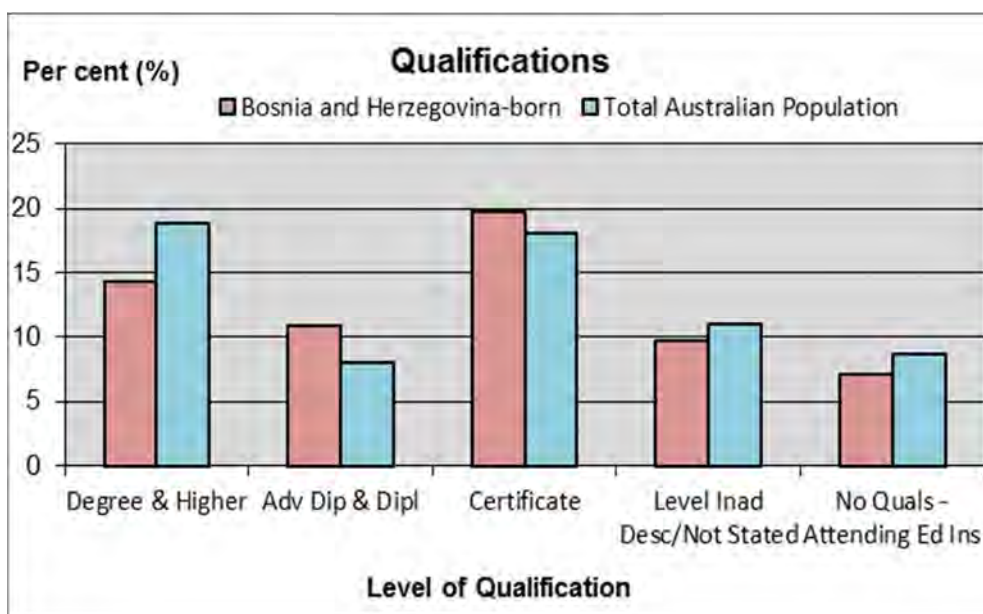
<sup>39</sup> e.g., by the BiH Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, 2008:7.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Adams, R. 2006; ColićPeisker, V. 2000, 2002, 2003, 2005; Halilovich, H. 2005; 2006, 2011, 2012, 2013a, 2013b, 2014; Čapo, J. and Halilovich, H. 2013; Markovic, M. and Manderson, L. 2002; Voloder, L. 2017; Vujcic, D. 2007; and Waxman, P. 2001.

<sup>41</sup> cf. ColićPeisker, V. 2005; Halilovich, H. 2006, 2011, 2012, 2013a; and Valenta and Strabac 2012.

<sup>42</sup> ColićPeisker, V. 2005; and Halilovich, H. 2006, 2012.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.



As the statistics from the 2006 and 2011 census indicate, while in terms of the level of education, or some form of higher education and school qualifications, the migrants from BiH were close behind the Australian population (54.6 vs. 55.9 per cent), their earnings were substantially lower than those of their Australian counterparts. In 2006, the median individual weekly income for the BosniaóHerzegovinaóborn in Australia was \$299, compared with \$431 for all overseasóborn and \$488 for all Australianóborn workers.<sup>44</sup> However, over the years, they have significantly narrowed down this gap.

At the time of the 2011 Census, the median individual weekly income for the Bosnia and Herzegovina-born in Australia aged 15 years and over was \$430, compared with \$538 for all overseas-born and \$597 for all Australia-born. The total Australian population had a median individual weekly income of \$577.<sup>45</sup> Similarly, the unemployment rate among the migrants from BiH was 7.8 per cent, compared to the total Australian population of 5.2 per cent in 2006 and in 2011 the corresponding rates were 6.1 per cent and 5.6 per cent respectively.

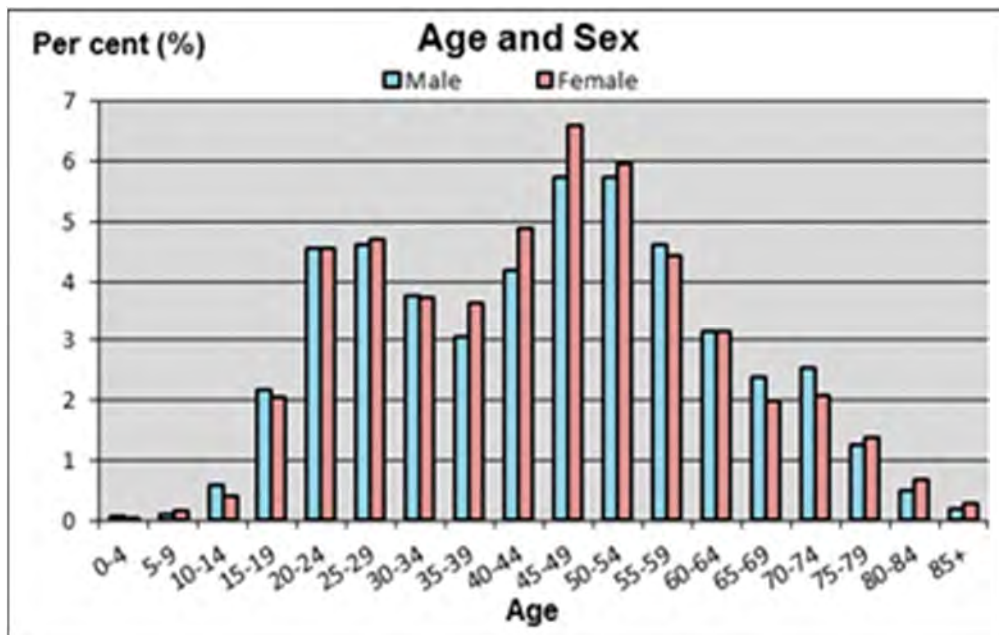
This household income and labour participation disparities between BiH-born and the Australian-born citizens (57.8 per cent vs. 65 per cent) also reflects a higher percentage of nonópartnered adults, i.e., war widows that make a significant proportion of some the B-H refugee communities like those from Srebrenica, Prijedor and other parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Figure 3. BiH diaspora in Australia by age and gender<sup>46</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006/2011/2016, (<http://www.abs.gov.au>).

<sup>45</sup> *ibid*

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*



The gender ratio relating to a higher percentage of women than men in the BiH diaspora in Australia was captured by the Census statistics in 2006 and 2011, with the overall gender ratio 97.1 males per 100 females. The statistics also reveal a generational pattern showing that women outnumber men for all age groups between 35 and 55 years of age. These statistics can be directly related to the 1992-95 war that took lives of mostly men, while many women became war widows. Several hundred war widows and their families from BiH migrated to Australia in the aftermath of the war. The reason why so many of the war widows migrated to Australia can be found in Australia's Humanitarian and Refugee Program which gave preference to applicants under the 'Women at Risk' category.<sup>47</sup> As confirmed in a focus group with B-H women in Melbourne, where the largest number of the war widows has settled, in most cases, the war widows from BiH in Australia have been the sole breadwinners for their families and have had to cope with all the hardship of migration and settlement, while also dealing with the unresolved issues left behind in BiH, often including missing husbands and relatives and financially supporting their ageing parents. The Australian government has been relatively generous to the war widows from BiH and similar refugee groups providing them with social security benefits, healthcare, public housing and options for further training and education. However, the labour market has been somewhat less accommodating of their needs and skills. This has led to many women being pushed into more informal market niches and finding casual, part-time and seasonal jobs in less regulated industries such as domestic cleaning, hospitality and crop harvesting. Some of these jobs do not only involve hard physical labour and less than optimal working conditions, but are also regularly the lowest paid jobs available, without basic employees' entitlements and security such as paid overtime, sick leave, annual leave or superannuation. Nonetheless, many women continue to send regular monthly remittances to their ailing parents left behind in BiH. It is also quite common for women to support the building of houses by their relatives in BiH or meet most of their larger financial expenses. As they reported, in many cases, war

<sup>47</sup> As Teresa Gambaro, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, stated: 'Australia gives hope to these vulnerable women and children through the Woman at Risk visa category. The visa helps refugee women and their children who are subject to persecution and have no protection from a male relative to rebuild their lives in Australia with dignity and purpose.' ([http://www.workpermit.com/news/2007\\_03\\_09/australia/women\\_at\\_risk\\_visa.htm](http://www.workpermit.com/news/2007_03_09/australia/women_at_risk_visa.htm))

widows and other female-headed households are stretched financially between demands here and over there

While the immigration and integration policies of each individual host country have affected the integration patterns of the B-H refugees and migrants into host societies, in Australia, shifting identities from refugees to Australian citizens has been a quite straightforward procedure as almost all of some 35,000 Bosnians and Herzegovinians who arrived on permanent humanitarian visas in the 1990s were eligible to apply for Australian citizenship after two years of residence in the country. (Since then, this has changed to four years of living in Australia on a permanent resident visa.) In fact, according to the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, the rate of Australian citizenship for the persons born in BosniaóHerzegovina was 96.1 percent, compared to the estimated rate of 75.6 percent for all overseasóborn.<sup>48</sup> Factors such as age, level of education, social networks and socioóeconomic background have influenced the degree of integration into mainstream Australian society of Bosnians and Herzegovinians settling on this continent far away from BiH. Australian citizenship for B-H refugees and migrants had primarily a practical purpose, enabling them, as bearers of Australian passports, to travel freely to most countries across the globe without need for visas, something they could not do with the BiH travel documents.<sup>49</sup> Australian citizenship enabled B-H refugees also to access subsidised higher education, apply for certain government jobs and be active participants in the political life in their adopted country. A number of Bosnians and Herzegovinians have joined Australian political parties and some of them have run as candidates for local and state governments. Most of the politically active migrants from BiH are members of or vote for the Labour Party (ALP), while a significant number of them are aligned close with the Liberal Party (LPA). Both dominant political parties in Australia have among their ranks the elected members with the BiH ancestry. In 2010, one of them, Edhem Ed Husic, an ALP member, became the first Muslim elected to the Australian Federal Parliament and ... the first MP sworn in by the Chief Justice of the High Court with his hand on a copy of the Koranó<sup>50</sup> Another prominent BiH-born politician is Inga Peulich, an LPA member, currently serving in the Legislative Council in the Parliament of Victoria as Member for the South Eastern Metropolitan Region. At a popular level, members of the B-H diaspora have displayed some pride to have given two Miss Australia in the recent years: in 2014 Monika Radulovi (originally from Zavidovi i in BiH) and in 2017 Esma Voloder (whose parents come from Sarajevo and Gra anica). Similarly, the tennis player Bernard Tomic (born in Tuzla) has been claimed by both the B-H and the Croatian diaspora.

### **Diaspora Associations**

While the macro level perspective and different statistics reveal much interesting information about Bosnians in Australia or AustralianóBosnians, the complex social realities are better understood if we go below the statistical categories and explore the lives of ordinary former B-H refugees and migrants in the actual places where they live, and the settings where they meet their social needs and perform their Bosnian identities.

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<sup>48</sup> Department of Immigration and Citizenship (Australian Government), ([http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/\\_pdf/bosnia-herzegovina.pdf](http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/_pdf/bosnia-herzegovina.pdf)).

<sup>49</sup> At one stage BosniaóHerzegovina was one of the few countries demanding an entry visa for Australian passport holders. Hence, many newó Australians, formeró Bosnian refugees, when travelling back to Bosnia for the first time after migrating to Australia needed to apply for visas at the BiH embassy in Canberra to get to their first homeland.

<sup>50</sup> Wilson, L. 2010 (<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/new-mp-is-first-in-australia-to-be-sworn-in-with-koran/story-e6frg6nf-1225930365789>).

Most B-H refugees who migrated to Australia under the Refugee and Special Humanitarian Program during the 1990s and in the early 2000s come from the areas of Podrinje, Prijedor, and Brčko, while others came from almost every part of BiH. Their settlement patterns in this country have been greatly influenced by the local and regional belongings or *zavičaji* from back home, so much so that, for instance, there are whole neighbourhoods where people settled in close proximity to their former neighbours and those with whom they share(d) a common *zavičaj* back in BiH. Such communities can be found in almost every place where Bosnians and Herzegovinians have settled – such as Melbourne’s suburbs of Deer Park, St. Albans, Noble Park, Dandenong and Springvale; Sydney’s suburbs of Fairfield, Liverpool, Blacktown, and Hurstville; Brisbane’s southern suburbs including Acacia Ridge, Sunnybank, Runcorn, Kuraby and Eight Mile Plains; and in Perth’s suburb of Mirrabooka, Beechboro, Balga and Morley. Similar patterns are clearly identifiable in many other B-H diaspora groups in other parts of Australia.

What this suggests is that the B-H diasporic communities, as expressions of collective identities and local particularities, have not been created in a spontaneous reaction to enforced displacement and subsequent migration, but have evolved through deliberate and informed decisions regarding the destinations of resettlement. In most cases –local factors played a decisive role in the migration patterns and social morphology of migrant communities. This is not unexpected in migrant settlement patterns. What is new is the translocal dimension, with deterritorialised B-H communities maintaining strong links (increasingly via the world wide web and social media) with their –sister communities spread across the globe in host countries, as well as with their *matice*, the original *zavičaj* – the emotional and intimate home, usually the neighbourhood or local community.<sup>51</sup>

In many places where Bosnians and Herzegovinians have settled there are *zavičajni klubovi* or –local clubs with distinctive names from the original home, such as the –Brčko Melbourne (*Klub Brčaka*) in Melbourne or the –Podrinje/Srebrenica Association – also based in Melbourne, with sister associations in Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide. The same organisational patterns follow the Prijedor associations in Melbourne and informal networks of people from Zenica, Mostar, Zvornik and Gorakde. Very often, these and many other similar Bosnian translocal associations, clubs and networks maintain their own websites, newsletters and mailing lists.<sup>52</sup>

Unlike ethnic diaspora organisations, most of these –local clubs and associations are, to various degrees, multi-ethnic or mixed, i.e., they include members of all Bosnian ethnic groups who come from a particular locale. This multi-ethnic aspect is especially true for the Brčko translocal network, a vibrant translocal community in Melbourne representing the largest and by far best organised translocal community within the B-H diaspora here. According to Agim Dobruna, a Brčko/Melbourne community activist, around 250 families from Brčko have settled in Melbourne – the unofficial centre of the wider global Brčko network – since the 1990s, while some 150 families settled elsewhere in Australia. Forced displacement, loyalty to locally embedded social networks and –chain migration have all contributed to the formation of the translocal community of Brčko, 16,000 kilometres from its original location in BiH.

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<sup>51</sup> apo, J. and Halilovich, H. 2013.

<sup>52</sup> See, for instance, –Podrinje/Srebrenica website: <http://www.srebrenica.org.au/index.html> or the –Brčko Portal <http://home.swiftdsl.com.au/~hamdija/stablo.html>.

The trans-local communities and clubs do not exist in isolation from other B-H diaspora organisations, especially not from several sports clubs that, apart from Tasmania, exist in every state in Australia. In the state of Victoria alone, there are five B-H sport soccer clubs, while every other state has on average two B-H sports clubs. Originally founded as exclusively Bosnian clubs in the 1990s and early 2000s, these clubs have increasingly been becoming multicultural and multinational clubs, involving players from various migrant and mainstream backgrounds such as Sudanese, Afghani, Italian, Macedonians

The current B-H diaspora umbrella organisation is the Australian Union of B-H Associations, which represents 28 clubs and societies from five Australian states and the Australian Capital Territory (Canberra).<sup>53</sup> In 2013, AUBHA replaced an earlier umbrella organisation, Vijeće BiH organizacija Australije (Australian Council of BiH Organisations), which ceased to exist. Both these umbrella diaspora organisations have been involved in organising events to mark important national holidays such as 25 November and 1 March. In collaboration with the B-H community organisations and local clubs, they have also been involved in organising commemorative events for the Srebrenica genocide victims on 11 July and The White Ribbon Day (*Dan bijelih traka*) on 31 May in memory of the victims of the Prijedor massacres. Other organisations include Australian Bosnian Academic Forum (ABAF), whose members are prominent B-H academics, researchers and artists living and working in Australia. ABAF has participated in and organised several academic events and conferences on the topics relevant to BiH and the B-H diaspora in Australia. Similarly, the Australian Bosnian Chamber of Commerce and Industries, in Melbourne, and the Bosnian Business Club, in Sydney, represent the interests of Bosnian businessmen and businesswomen involved in business activities in Australia and in BiH.

### **Educational Attainment**

Australia is known for its quality education, which represents the second largest export industry of the country. Within the last two decades several thousands of B-H migrants in Australia have completed various levels of higher education, ranging from undergraduate to postgraduate studies in many disciplines. Today, there are BiH-born academics working as professors and researchers at some of the leading Australian universities, while almost every one of the 38 Australian universities has enrolled B-H students. Since 2007, several groups of Australian students including some of the B-H background have visited BiH as part of their study tours, while an increasing number of B-H research students from Bosnia-Herzegovina (who are not member of the B-H diaspora) have enrolled in masters and doctorate programs at the Australian universities. All these exchanges have been either directly led or initiated and facilitated by members of the B-H diaspora in Australia

A similar situation in regards to education is present in primary and secondary schools, with dozens of B-H migrants opting for careers of teachers, and some of them taking leadership position, including the roles of principals of their respective schools. Unlike many other countries where ethnic language education has been institutionalised at the level of community ethnic Saturday schools the B-H diaspora in Australia has been able to integrate learning of mother tongue into the mainstream education from primary school up to the senior high school level. Teaching languages other than English (LOTE) in mainstream schools has been regulated at the state level, with each state accrediting the teaching of foreign languages in its schools. Since 2004, in the state of Victoria, Bosnian as a second language has been recognised as a year twelve elective subject equal to other

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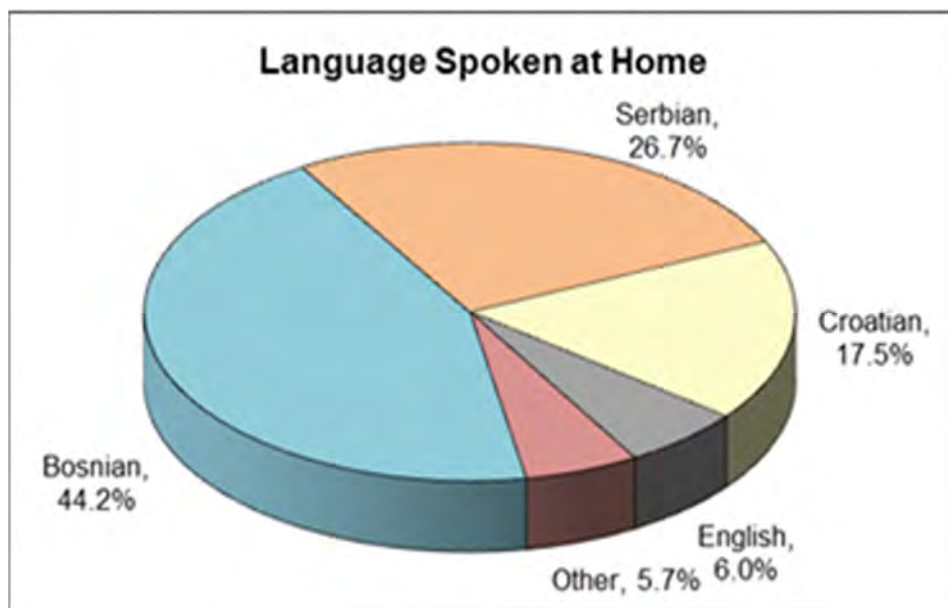
<sup>53</sup> AUBHA, <http://www.aubha.net/>.



mainstream subjects such as English, Mathematics, French or Italian. Similar accreditation processes have been underway in the states of the New South Wales and South Australia, as it was reported in a focus group involving Bosnian Teachers Association and community activists in New South Wales conducted as a part of the research for this report.

Learning other official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina—Croatian and Serbian—mirrors the ethnic pattern present in BiH, with most Bosnian-Croat children attending Croatian classes and Bosnian-Serb children the Serbian language classes. While the largest number of students in the Bosnian language classes could be identified as Bosniak, some are of Bosnian Croat, Serb or ‘mixed’ background. Regardless of how it is named—usually referred to as *naš jezik* (‘our language’ to refer to Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian and what was previously called Serbo-Croatian)—language still remains one of the most practical cohesive factors in diaspora. Many businesses serving the diaspora—ranging from specialist medical clinics to cafes and grocery shops—have been flourishing because of the use of ‘our language’ with the vast majority of diaspora Bosnians and Herzegovinians preferring to do business with those who speak ‘our language’ regardless of their names and ethnic background. Hence, ‘our language’ is seen not only as a necessity but also as an opportunity for many.

Figure 4. Language spoken at home among the BiH-born migrants in Australia<sup>54</sup>



As the official Census data shows, the main languages spoken at home by Bosnia and Herzegovina-born people in Australia are Bosnian (44.2%), Serbian (26%) and Croatian (17.5%). Out of the BiH-born migrants who declared speaking a language other than English at home, 75.6 per cent speak English very well or well, and 23.5 per cent speak English not well or not at all. It should be added that many families made of the BiH migrants opt to speak only English at home and are not captured by the statistics presented here.

<sup>54</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006/2011/2016, (<http://www.abs.gov.au>). ([http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/\\_pdf/bosnia-herzegovina.pdf](http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/_pdf/bosnia-herzegovina.pdf)).

–Bosnian as a second languageø has become a popular subject among many B-H high school students and their parents. Thus, in the final two years of high school, students are required to select a group of subjects, usually a combination of science and arts subjects, for their final exams, the results of which are decisive for gaining entry into competitive university courses. As many B-H parents are able and willing to assist their children with language lessons and basic writing, reading and speaking skills, they encourage their children to select –Bosnian as a second languageø as one of the year-12 exam subjects. Over the last twelve years, since Bosnian has been recognised as a subject equal to any other –Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) subjectø, many high school students from the B-H background have been able to increase their –tertiary entry scoreø (TES) thanks to high results achieved in –Bosnian as a second languageø. This mirrors the situation with the B-H children and youth studying Croatian and Serbian. During the late 1990s and up to the mid-2000s, German as LOTE subject was also very popular among the B-H students who came via Germany, where many of them spent their formative years and became fluent in German.<sup>55</sup>

### **Socio-economic Parameters**

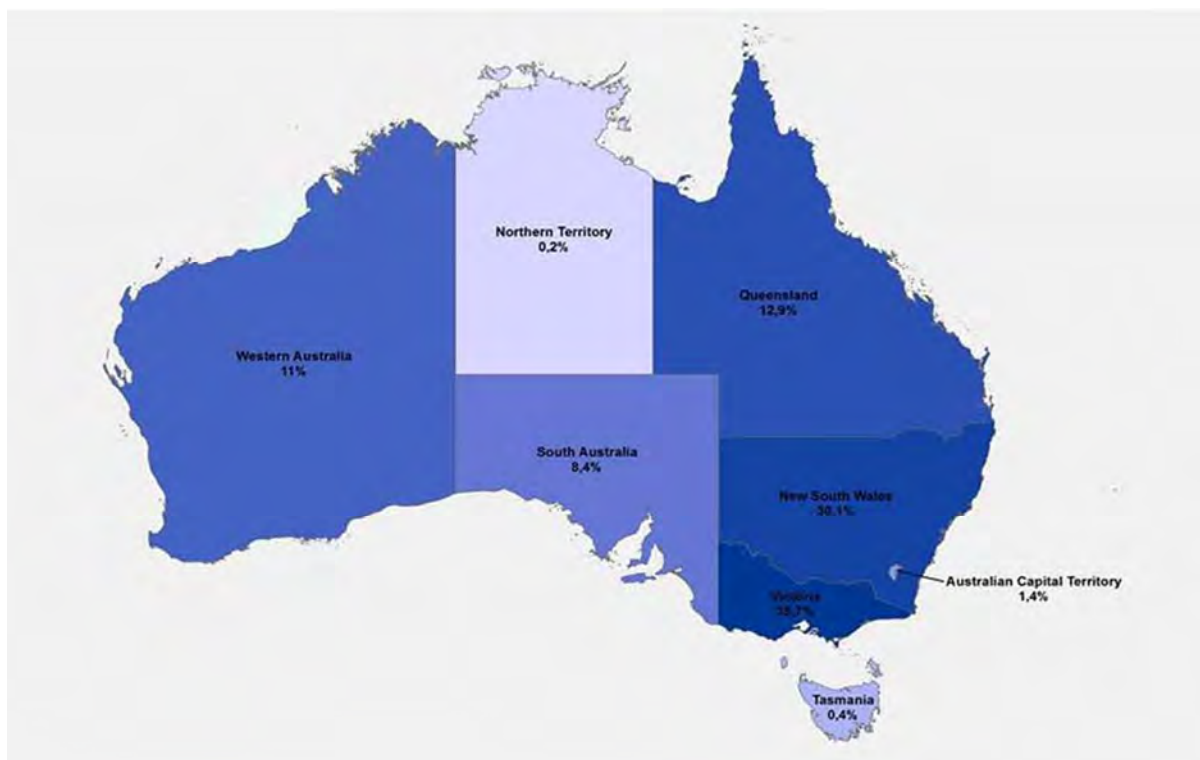
According to the qualitative data gathered via face-to-face interviews and focus groups, the majority of BiH diaspora in Australia resettled in the mid to late 1990s and early 2000s. Most have come on refugee and humanitarian visas (visa subclass 200 and 202).<sup>56</sup> Their visa applications were processed in a –transit countryø such as Germany, Austria, Netherlands, Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia. Many had received financial assistance to cover the travel costs, while others paid their own airfares. In most cases, they were assisted by International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and different resettlement agencies. A majority of those who came as part of the refugee resettlement program had a –proposerø who assisted them in the migration process. Usually, the –proposerø was someone they knew (family member, former neighbours, compatriots they met in transit countries) or belonged to the B-H community in Australia from earlier migration waves. Some had different charities acting as their proposers. About 1,000 of those with non-Bosnian proposers ended up initially in Tasmania, the Australiaø's only island state. Most of them then relocated onshore to places like Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney. A majority of those –inner migrantsø continue to live in these same areas where they arrived until today. Similar relocations from one place to anotherø e.g. from Adelaide to Melbourne, from Melbourne to Brisbane, Perth to Melbourne or Canberra to Sydneyø were not unusual during the first months and years of resettlement, but are hardly existent now. Over the last two decades, most B-H migrants have developed a sense of belonging to the cities and suburbs they live in. Those who move are usually younger people who follow their career paths or marry into a B-H community in a different city. Almost all Bosnians and Herzegovinians have by now obtained Australian citizenship and enjoy the benefits of dual citizenship with their native BiH. However, more than a half of those interviewed reported not to have current BiH documents. Several also reported that some of their family members, mostly children born in Australia and in transit countries, were not enrolled in the BiH citizenship.

### *Map 2. Distribution of the BiH migrants across Australia*

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<sup>55</sup> Cf. Halilovich, H. 2005 and 2006.

<sup>56</sup> Australian Government, 1996/2016.



All Bosnians and Herzegovinians living here report having family and/or friends back in BiH and other countries with whom they regularly keep in touch via phone and social media, and whom they visit whenever circumstances and finances allow. Those who still have close family members in BiH, such as parents or brothers and sisters, report more frequent visits to homeland than those who do not have such family relations in BiH. In most cases they use their annual leave to spend time with their relatives in BiH. The frequency of such visits ranges from once a year to once in ten years. Most report that the costs involved in travelling with their families to BiH are the main reason why they do not visit BiH more frequently. One participant calculated that he needed a budget of \$20,000 to cover the trip to and a 4-6 week stay in BiH for his five family members. This seems to be a conservative estimate. In the situations where they also had other expenses such as house mortgage, for many B-H migrants in Australia travel costs pose a significant problem.

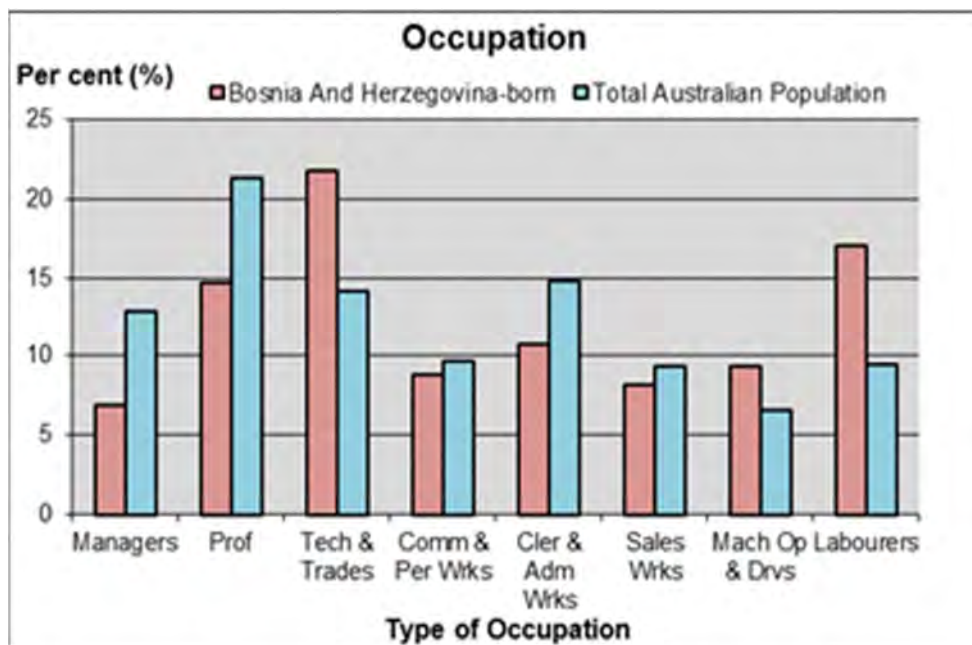
About two thirds of the participants interviewed reported that they occasionally or regularly send money to families and friends in BiH, especially if they support elderly parents and close relatives. Sending patterns include money transfers via services such as Western Union, bank wire transfers, or provision of credit cards to family members in BiH. In terms of gender, the interviews revealed that women tend to support their family members in BiH more than men.

Main employment indicators are referred to in the earlier part of the report. According to the official statistics, the unemployment rate among the Bosnians and Herzegovinians in Australia tends to be slightly higher compared to their Australian-born counterparts. However, the two focus groups and several in-depth interviews conducted with the B-H business persons and members of the Australian Bosnian Chamber of Commerce in Australia indicate that a majority of migrants from BiH have employments. Over the last two decades, the people who came to Australia with nothing (≈with IOM plastic bags) have become those

who own their homes, cars and all the necessities they need for a relatively satisfying lifestyle in a developed country. Those who were found unfit for work have been on government pensions and enjoy many free and discounted services such as public transport, free healthcare, and even the discounted car registration, household bills and entries to cinema, galleries and museums.

As most higher degree qualifications obtained in BiH and other countries were not recognised in Australia, most Bosnians and Herzegovinians with such qualifications had to undergo additional training and sometimes re-do their degrees at one of the Australian universities. For some because of the language barrier, age and other factors this posed a large burden, so they looked for careers in alternate professions, often in low-skilled and unskilled jobs, experiencing downward social mobility compared to the status and lifestyle they enjoyed in BiH. Other reoriented themselves and found a market niche which they turned into business opportunities, especially in various segments of the booming construction industry in Australia.

Figure 5. Predominant occupations of the BiH-born migrants in Australia<sup>57</sup>



\*Comm & Per Wrks = Community & Personal Service Workers

According to the official Census statistics, among Bosnia and Herzegovina-born people aged 15 years and over, the participation rate in the labour force was 57.8 per cent and the unemployment rate was 6.1 per cent. The corresponding rates in the total Australian population were 65 per cent and 5.6 per cent respectively. Of the Bosnia and Herzegovina-born who were employed, 43.3 per cent were employed in either a skilled managerial, professional or trade occupation. The corresponding rate in the total Australian population was 48.4 per cent.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006/2011/2016, (<http://www.abs.gov.au>).

([http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/\\_pdf/bosnia-herzegovina.pdf](http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/comm-summ/_pdf/bosnia-herzegovina.pdf)).

<sup>58</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics/Census of Population, 2011 (<http://www.abs.gov.au>)

The dominant industry sectors in which majority of Bosnians work include construction (especially home and building construction), retail, real estate, hospitality, tourism, health, transportation, law, financial sector and IT industry. The focus groups also highlighted the diversity that exists among the major B-H business leaders who have their own businesses in Australia. While most of them are small businesses in terms of the number of employees (up to 30 employees), many have a high financial turnover.

In addition to business sector and professional careers, BiH diaspora has also at least 20 medical doctors working in private and public clinics as specialist in different areas, about the same number of PhDs who work as university lecturers and professors at Australian universities, and several successful artists across different artistic forms.

### **BiH diaspora in Australia and Development Initiatives**

The distance between BiH and Australia has not been a deterrent for many members of the B-H diaspora to engage with various development initiatives in their first homeland. Most of such development initiatives relate to the localities and regions from where they originally come from, but Bosnians and Herzegovinians in Australia have also supported broader initiatives such as collecting donations for flood-affected regions in BiH or responding to charitable initiatives relating to places and people they do not know. Among others, major charitable activities have included collecting funds for building schools in the towns of Maglaj and Olovo; supporting the foundation *Obrazovanje gradi BiH*, headed by Mr Jovan Divjak; and provision of scholarships to students in many parts of BiH. They also respond to public appeals and make donations for various causes not directly relating to BiH, including the recent series of refugee crises.

In terms of the visible development initiatives between B-H diaspora and BiH, there are several examples involving members diaspora investments in the development of their local communities in BiH. They range from rebuilding homes and local infrastructure to running long-distance businesses in BiH from Australia. Such examples include: a truck tire business based in Bihać and run by two Bosnians from Bihać living in Melbourne; a family from Bihać living in Adelaide who have built a very impressive (and the only) hotel with a restaurant in their original hometown, operating throughout the year despite the owners' absence for most of the year<sup>59</sup>; a Bosnian businesswoman living in Sydney who has expanded her business in real estate and building industry to BiH; a businesswoman from Melbourne who established the first commercial research centre in post-war Sarajevo. There is also a reverse example of a returnee from Australia who has continued managing his business in the education sector based in Sydney<sup>60</sup> from his home in Sarajevo. Similar is a recently featured case in the *Australian Financial Review*<sup>61</sup> of a Bosnian businessman who has established a small factory near Sarajevo, producing special building material (façade) for the regional and international markets. There are many other examples involving returnees and part-time returnees to BiH, who use their properties in Australia to generate rental income which sustains their often quite comfortable lifestyles in BiH.

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<sup>59</sup> Rogatica.com 2015, <http://www.rogatica.com/index.php/2011-06-30-23-44-4/3097-na-spalu-otvoren-motel-brace-ceska>

<sup>60</sup> Aria Music School, <https://www.ariamusic.com.au/-about>

<sup>61</sup> Bleby, M. 2017, <http://www.afr.com/business/construction/perth-based-pro9-global-wants-sydney-factory-to-boost-existing-bosnian-capacity-20171120-gzp9j1#ixzz52TAI8I2m>

Almost every place in Australia where the B-H migrants have established their communities has shops selling products imported from BiH. Some are owned by migrants from BiH, while others are known as 'the Balkan supermarkets' and along the products made in BiH also sell various products made in the ex-Yugoslav and other countries.

In terms of the returnees from Australia to BiH, the trend is that in many cases they are either people who had successful careers in Australia and have accumulated enough capital and knowledge that they could transfer to BiH (academics, engineers, managers) or those who are of a retirement age and decide to return to BiH. Both groups have made significant investments in buying, building or reconstructing their homes in BiH before or after they returned.

Along the remittances, which about 65 per cent of B-H diaspora in Australia continue to send to BiH, the most massive form of development support comes from the actual visits to BiH by the 'Bosnian Australians'. While their earlier visits were mostly motivated by visiting close relatives, their behaviour has increasingly matched the patterns of international tourists. In addition to visiting their local places and relatives, they also spend time traveling through BiH and visiting tourist and other destinations across the country. Thus, they directly contribute to the 'diaspora visits' effect (*dolazi dijaspora*) as an important boost to many local communities. These visits usually take place during the summer months between June and September. A positive trend worth reporting is that many young 'Bosnian Australians' or popular 'Bozzies' (the term coupling 'Bosnians' and 'Aussies', many of whom were born outside of BiH) also choose BiH as a popular destination on their travels, in many cases bringing along their Australian friends.

One of the important development contributions of the B-H diaspora in Australia relates to the knowledge transfer from Australia to BiH. B-H academics and experts from different fields have been involved in driving and facilitating these exchanges in a number of ways: from bringing Australian students on study tours to BiH, to organising and participating in conferences in BiH, to acting as visiting scholars at BiH universities, to facilitating exchange agreements between BiH and Australian universities, to assisting students from BiH to study in Australia. Many of these initiatives have been ongoing and continue to grow.

### **Attitudes of BiH Diaspora Towards Government Bodies**

This topic generated a vibrant discussion in the face-to-face interviews and focus group conducted for the report. Members of the B-H diaspora are very divided on the question of government bodies and the current political situation in BiH. Their responses and attitudes range from anger with 'Bosnian government' to feelings that diaspora should take over running of the country. The majority actively follows BiH politics via social media, TV and radio. Many are also involved in the local BiH diaspora politics as well as the politics of Australia, as described earlier. Most reported that they vote in Australia (where voting is compulsory), while only a small number reported participating in the voting in BiH. They also stated that they used to vote in the past, but have lost interest over the years due to complicated registration procedures (which they find discriminating), a lack of good candidates and general apathy regarding the issue. This declining voting trend is clearly reflected in the official statistics by the Central Election Commission of the Bosnia and Herzegovina (CIK). For instance, compared to 6250 registered voters in Australia in 2002,

the number of registered voters in 2010 declined almost by 50 per cent, i.e. to 3459.<sup>62</sup> As HE Mirza Hajri , the BiH Ambassador to Australia, confirmed, in 2017 there were only 300 registered voters in Australia.

## II. MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION EXPERIENCE

While in most European countries Bosnians and Herzegovinians who migrated for economic reasons or were forcibly displaced during the 1992-1995 war were regarded and tolerated as temporary guest workers or refugees, who would eventually willingly or unwillingly go back home, those who arrived in Australia throughout the 20th century and especially during 1990s and early 2000s have been treated as immigrants in search of a permanent resettlement. That is also the way they have seen themselves. The so-called 'chain migration' with migrants assisting family members, friends and neighbours to migrate and join them in desired destinations has been a key feature of B-H migration to Australia. In effect, people's roots have become their routes. Their shared local patterns, kinship, networks and loyalties have played an important role in the morphology of the (re)constructed diaspora groups in Australia, with the formation of 'translocal' *zavičaj* communities, as described earlier.

Today, immigrants from BiH are economically, socially and culturally relatively well integrated into the wider Australian society. As described elsewhere in this report, members of the B-H diaspora have been represented in the mainstream politics at local, state and federal levels; run successful businesses and have their members in Australia's public life.

In addition to local clubs, cultural associations, religious institutions and sports societies, members of the B-H diaspora have also developed several media outlets including community radio stations in Melbourne, Geelong, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth. They also have two hours of radio programme in Bosnian on the national SBS radio<sup>63</sup> funded by the Australian government. Similar radio programmes on SBS also exist in Serbian<sup>64</sup> and Croatian<sup>65</sup>. Even though these radio programmes are meant to represent their respective ethnic and national diaspora communities (Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian), for many years all three journalists and radio presenters on the Bosnian, Croatia and Serbian programmes came originally from BiH (i.e. from Banja Luka, Tuzla and Derventa).

There are also community TV programmes in the respective languages on the Melbourne-based Channel 31. Between 2005 and 2010, B-H diaspora in Australia had its own television BIH SAT TV, while for close to two decades *Magazine Bosna* has been the only printed media outlet. There are also numerous websites catering for the needs of the B-H diaspora in Australia such as AUBHA, NSW Bosnians, OKO and the websites of individual community organisations and sports clubs.

About 50 per cent of the B-H households has subscriptions to TV packages including major TV stations from BiH, while close to 90 per cent use social media and the internet to receive

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<sup>62</sup> CIK, 2017,

[https://www.izbori.ba/Documents/Statistika\\_i\\_rezultati\\_izbora/Statistika\\_izbora/Izborni\\_pokazatelji2002-2012-eng.pdf](https://www.izbori.ba/Documents/Statistika_i_rezultati_izbora/Statistika_izbora/Izborni_pokazatelji2002-2012-eng.pdf)

<sup>63</sup> <https://www.sbs.com.au/yourlanguage/bosnian>

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.sbs.com.au/yourlanguage/serbian>

<sup>65</sup> <https://www.sbs.com.au/yourlanguage/croatian>

information and communicate with friends and relatives in BiH, Australia and other countries.

### **Diaspora Cohesion and Self-management**

The official policy of multiculturalism adopted by the Australian government in the 1970s has been very favourable to ethnic and national migrant communities in Australia. The Australian government is allocating substantial resources to support language, cultural, social and recreational programs of migrant communities and their organisations. While, for instance, some older migrant communities in Australia (such as Italian or Greek) took several decades to develop community infrastructure, the B-H diaspora achieved this within a decade. They followed the paths established by the older migrant communities in Australia and established their community organisations, sports clubs, language schools, places of worship and other essential infrastructure needed for a community to make itself visible and meet its specific needs. Today, there are about 50 distinct diaspora organisations representing various interests and groups of B-H migrants in Australia. They operate according to the Australian state and federal laws and regulations concerning community organisations. Many of them are eligible for and benefit from the government grants. B-H diaspora in Australia also owns four non-denominational multifunctional community centres (in Victoria, Sydney, Adelaide and Perth) worth tens of millions of dollars.

Thanks to the activities of these diaspora organisations, community activists and prominent individuals coming from the B-H background, Bosnians and Herzegovinians in Australia have generally a very good reputation, while most Australians have learned about BiH through their friends, colleagues and neighbours from BiH background.

### **Policies and Programs to Promote Diaspora Networking**

So far, the B-H diaspora organizations in Australia have relied on their own and their host country's resources and support to organise and conduct their activities and networks with other diaspora and mainstream organisations. While the two successive 'umbrella' organizations, initially the Australian Council of B-H Organisations and more recently the Australian Union of B-H Association, have coordinated various community organisations' activities, including the marking of important dates related to BiH, as described above. The BiH Embassy in Canberra<sup>66</sup> and its successive ambassadors have played a very positive role in promoting diaspora networks within Australia, with the B-H worldwide diaspora and with BiH. However, there has been a lack of concrete policies and programs in this regard coming from BiH, the exception being moral and material (learning material) support provided to the language school by the BiH Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees. Most participants in the study confirmed that they would desire more concrete programs that would link them to BiH. They also reported that the series of meetings Dr Dragan Čović, the presiding member of the BiH Presidency, had with the representatives of the B-H diaspora during his official visit to Australia in October 2017 was a positive move in showing a serious interest in the diaspora by the highest B-H officials. At these meeting, many issues such as recognition of the Australian qualifications were discussed and President Čović and his delegation promised to work towards resolving these issues from the BiH end.

## **III. POTENTIAL OF BiH DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT**

### **Barriers to Engagement of BiH Diaspora**

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<sup>66</sup> <http://www.bihembassy.org/index.php?lang=bs>



While many of the members of the B-H diaspora in Australia are enthusiastic about the possibilities for further engagements with BiH, they see that most of the current ones have been one-directional, i.e. coming from the diaspora. Many of the barriers seem to be of structural nature because, in spite of having close to 50 per cent of its population residing outside of the country, BiH is one of the few countries in the region which does not have a state institution dedicated solely to its diaspora. The Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees has done an excellent job in trying to engage with the diaspora, but this ministry also has many pertinent domestic issues to deal with, and the members of B-H diaspora do not feel like competing for the Ministry's attention with their compatriots in BiH. The focus groups and face-to-face interviews also reveal that many members of the B-H diaspora feel that they are not taken seriously and there are still perceptions of them as "deserters", "Gastarbeiter" or "refugees" with the term "diasporci" often having pejorative connotations. They also express their dissatisfaction with the term "emigration" or "iseljništvo" used in the official documents as this term does not include many members who were born outside of BiH or have spent most of their lives living in Australia and other countries.

Along cultural barriers, other reported issues include a lack of information about investment opportunities in BiH, nepotisms and corruption, complex bureaucracy, complex and expensive banking sector and most importantly the nationalist politics that prevent the country from faster developments and from becoming an attractive destination for all types of investment – from financial to human, social and cultural capital – that exist in the diaspora. Other issues mentioned elsewhere in the report include complicated procedure to enrol children and youth born in diaspora as well as the mentioned lack of recognition of the qualifications gained in diaspora. All these barriers significantly impede the B-H diaspora in Australia to be more involved in the development of BiH.

### **Relations with BiH Consular and Diplomatic Missions in Australia**

BiH embassy in Canberra is the only B-H embassy building in the world which was completely built by the BiH diaspora in Australia. The project started in 1995 and was completed in 2000. The strong relationship between the B-H diaspora in Australia and its Embassy has been one of the defining features. In spite of the distance between different Australian cities and Canberra (ranging from several hundred to several thousand kilometres), the events hosted by the BiH embassy are regularly attended by the members of the B-H diaspora from across Australia. Because of the great distances between Canberra and most other Australian cities where Bosnians and Herzegovinians live, the Embassy holds regular consular days in all major Australian cities. Consular activities mostly include enrolling children born in Australia in the BiH citizenship, certifying documents and assisting in property and legal matters relating to BiH and involving the BiH citizens in Australia. This has been very welcomed by the members of the B-H community and has further strengthened the relationship between the BiH Embassy and BiH diaspora in Australia. This strong relationship extends to the Australian government, so that in 2013, in collaboration with the BiH Embassy, the members of the B-H diaspora financed the creation and installation of a "Bosnian sculpture" in the gardens of the Australian Parliament in Canberra.<sup>67</sup> The two-meter-high sculpture is in *stećak* form and is made of Australian stone by Dr Adis Fejzi, the Bosnian sculptor residing in Brisbane. The sculpture was presented to the Australian Parliament as a gift by the BiH Embassy at the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the diplomatic relationship between BiH and Australia.

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<sup>67</sup> Maher, L. 2013 (<http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2013/03/20/3719839.htm>).

The current ambassador HE Mirza Hajri , as well as his predecessors HE Bakir Sadovi (2014-17), HE Dr Damir Arnaut (2010-14), the late HE Amira Kapetanovi (2006-09) and HE Dr Zdravko Todorovi (2002-05) have all made important contributions to the good relationships between the BiH Embassy and the B-H diaspora in Australia.

Ms Djemila Gabriel, the honorary consul of BiH in New South Wales<sup>68</sup>, has also been very active in fostering positive relationship between BiH, its diaspora in Australia and the broader Australian society.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings from both qualitative and quantitative data have several potential policy implications and practical recommendations. Based on the recommendations outlined below, the government of BiH<sup>6</sup> at all levels, from local municipalities and cantons to the entity and state institutions<sup>6</sup> should develop policies that will remove the main obstacles and enhance the significant potential of the BiH diaspora to engage in development of the country.

**1. Recognise and enhance positive relationships between BiH diaspora in Australia and BiH.** Compared to other BiH diaspora groups, the BiH diaspora in Australia mostly resembles the BiH diaspora in Sweden. This is mainly due to the similar integration policies aimed at educating and integrating new migrants into the multicultural fabric of these countries. As a result, the BiH diaspora in Australia is made up of relatively well educated, highly skilled, self-aware, and generally well-integrated first-generation migrants from BiH, as well as their second and sometimes third generation. However, from the BiH perspective, BiH diaspora in Australia is often perceived as remote not just physically but also in every other regard. In spite of the distance, members of the BiH diaspora in Australia continue to make important contributions to BiH in terms of capital, knowledge and skill transfer. Recognising and actively seeking and supporting such transfers is an important step to be made by all levels of government in BiH.

**2. Establish a state institution (e.g. Ministry or Office for Diaspora) to work with the issues relating to the BiH worldwide diaspora.** This would enable a systematic engagement with the diaspora and its potential. If the BiH MHR is to continue working with the BiH diaspora, then it should be properly resourced with staff and funds.

**3. Simplify the procedure for political participation** of the BiH diaspora in BiH by changing the election law and procedures that discriminate against the voters in diaspora. Moreover, members of the BiH diaspora should be able to run for public offices at all levels of governance.

**4. Promote BiH as a tourist destination in Australia.** Australia is not only one of the world's most popular and desired tourist destinations, but Australians are some of the most travelled tourists in the world. Especially the second generation of migrants from BiH have adopted this travelling culture. BiH should do more in marketing its tourist potential to BiH diaspora and the mainstream Australia.

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<sup>68</sup> <http://www.honoraryconsul.com.au/index.php/en/consul>

**5. Develop Programs ‘Learn about BiH in BiH’ for second and third generation of BiH diaspora in Australia (and worldwide).** As they are often lacking any lived experience in BiH, the second and third generations often do not know much about BiH, and subsequently do not engage with its economy, culture and politics. In addition to promoting BiH as a tourist destination, BiH should develop inclusive educational programmes for the generations of BiH diaspora born outside of BiH. Delivered as immersive learning experience across BiH, this program should be specially tailored for the young people in the diaspora and aimed at promoting many positive characteristics of BiH and its diverse people, culture and nature. This should be done on an ongoing basis and would also provide the opportunity for young people to meet their peers from other diaspora communities as well as those living in BiH.

**6. Provide support to language schools in diaspora** by developing suitable and culturally inclusive learning material for children and youth in diaspora learning Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian as second languages.

**7. Sign a bilateral agreement between BiH and Australia regulating reciprocity of social and healthcare coverage for BiH and Australian citizens.** This would greatly benefit members of the older generation of B-H diaspora who are on government pensions (social security) as it would enable them to spend more than three months a year in BiH.

**8. Recognise trans-local or *zavičaj* patterns in everyday transactions taking place between host and home countries and address them in relevant policies.** Like any other diaspora group, BiH diaspora in Australia is a very heterogeneous in many regards. Its loyalties and social and emotional connections are primarily with specific local communities in BiH (not with the entities or the state of BiH). The BiH government at all levels should be aware of the importance of BiH migrants’ local or ‘micro cultures’ and social networks (region, locality, dialect) and get actively engaged with them (e.g., plan cultural events during ‘diaspora season’ from June to September).

**9. Create investment-friendly environment for returnees’ and emigrants’ prospective businesses.** BiH continues to have a very complicated system for opening up a new business. This is even more complicated for the BiH citizens residing in diaspora, many of whom are experienced business people. BiH should develop special programmes and provide incentives to attract investors from the diaspora.

**10. Actively engage in registering children and young people who were born outside of BiH and never obtained the citizenship of BiH.** A majority of children born in recent years in Australia have not been enrolled in the BiH citizenship, or do not have JMBG and relevant documents. The complicated procedure requiring several documents issued in BiH is the main reason for this.

**11. Simplify regulatory procedure for recognition of academic and professional qualifications obtained at the Australian universities.** The BiH diaspora is probably the most educated diaspora, but the qualifications obtained in Australia are not recognised in BiH. This impacts on knowledge and skill transfer from the diaspora to BiH. BiH academic institutions and government should find ways to enable knowledge transfer in forms of academic programs, conferences, mentoring initiatives, collaboration on research projects and training workshops.

**12. Improve communication** with the diaspora via a dedicated TV or radio program (as it existed in former Yugoslavia) or via a website, magazine and similar media. Moreover, the BiH government should include diaspora in all important government agendas.

**13. Reparation settlement, policies and packages relating to losses and damages during the 1992-95 war in BiH.** Considering that a majority of the first generation of B-H migrants in Australia was adversely affected by the war, they have never received any form of compensation for their losses and damages. It is an imperative that they (including war widows) get included in any settlement relating to this important issue.

## CHAPTER III

### Country Report: Austria

#### Summary

This chapter is based on data collected in Austria (Vienna) in August 2017, involving two focus groups/group interviews and ten individual (face-to-face and online) interviews. Focus groups included between 4 and 8 participants, whereas the group interviews included 2 to 4 individuals. One focus group involved mixed cohort of the members from the BiH diaspora organizations and those who were not affiliated with any diaspora association. Another focus group was with BiH businessmen and women in Austria. An individual interview was conducted with a staff member at the BiH Embassy in Vienna. These were complemented by an individual interview with a senior officer at the Federal Ministry for European, Integration and Foreign Affairs, in charge of integration of migrants and refugees.

Most of the migrants are in the last stage of their migration cycles; they have citizenships, settled businesses, and are mostly integrated in the Austrian society. Most are willing to consider the investment options, but not necessarily in BiH. Others (new economic migrants and student mobility) are at the beginning of their migration cycles, and cannot seriously evaluate their real potential in this matter.

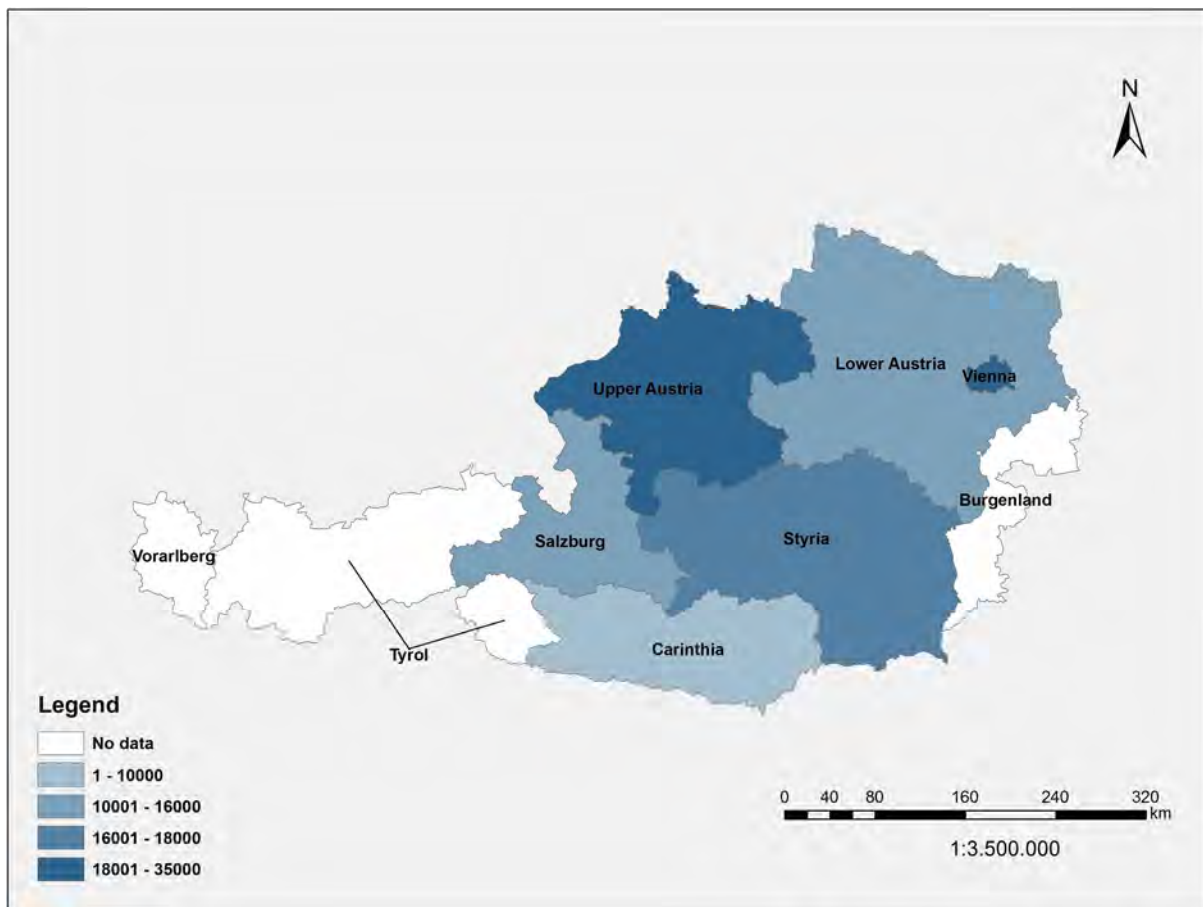
The initial analysis indicates existence of various types of diaspora engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These can be divided into several basic categories. Most prominent are family-based (usually related to remittances and other forms of personalized financial aid), community-based (typically related to involvement with local communities and governments, aimed at promoting initiatives in education, enhancing skills, or even in transitional justice matters), and business-oriented (connected with low- and high-scale investments, social corporate responsibility projects, etc.).

Most interlocutors report that individual experiences with local communities in BiH heavily shape overall their perceptions on potential and the capacity to engage, as well as the time-space dynamics of their own integration within the Austrian society. Their testimonies point to low levels of building trust towards local political and social developments. This is further limited by slow developments in private sector, quite recent economic recession with no real indications of full recovery, as well as weak-functioning local institutions (at all government levels) that are unable to swiftly remove administrative barriers and adapt to new market needs.

Most diaspora exchange that takes place occurs through business contacts. Diaspora members are almost not aware of adequate opportunities for quality networking with local community authorities and business regulating government institutions in BiH. Additionally, there are almost no civil society organizations in BiH promoting the importance of structured BiH diaspora engagement in local communities, and for macro-economic development.

## I. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Map 3. Distribution of BiH diaspora in Austria by region (Land)<sup>69</sup>



### Background and Literature Review

There has been modest research done on BiH migrants in Austria.<sup>70</sup> Common points are related to the analysis of different waves of migration, and problems associated with the socio-economic integration of BiH migrants into the Austrian society.

Austria received the second highest number of refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Bosnian war in the 1990s, which made BiH migrants in Austria one of the largest refugee groups. Arrival of BiH refugees was publically approved, and there were various forms of public support. The exact number of BiH migrants in Austria is unknown; the most recent available estimates indicate between 135,000 and 165,000 people according to the BiH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees<sup>71</sup> while the Migration Profile from 2016 of the BiH Ministry of Security notes that there were 93,973 BiH citizens.<sup>72</sup> The majority of them live in Vienna, Styria, and in Upper Austria. The Austrian Citizenship Act does not permit dual citizenship, and it is estimated that around 40% of BiH migrants (including those with a

<sup>69</sup> Note: This map represents a general estimate of the BiH diaspora distribution in Austria. Cf. Emirhafizovic, M. 2013.

<sup>70</sup> For instance: Franz, B. 2003, 2005; Halilovich, H. 2013a, 2013c; and Emirhafizovic, M. 2013.

<sup>71</sup> Stanje bh. iseljeni-tva po drflavama (Austrija)

<http://www.mhrr.gov.ba/iseljenistvo/default.aspx?id=6233&langTag=bs-BA#AUSTRIJA>

<sup>72</sup> BiH Migration Profile 2016, [http://www.msb.gov.ba/PDF/MIGRATION\\_PROFILE\\_2016\\_2ENG.pdf](http://www.msb.gov.ba/PDF/MIGRATION_PROFILE_2016_2ENG.pdf)

refugee status) living in Austria have taken Austrian citizenship by now. Most official documents and published articles state that BH migrants are highly integrated into the Austrian society and are valued in the labor market when compared to other migrant groups.<sup>73</sup>

Prior to 1998, BiH refugees were in a system of temporary protection, excluded from access to labor market. In 1998, BiH migrants gained access to permanent residence and permanent labor permits. The status of migrants originating from BiH, residing in Austria for a longer period of time, is fully resolved through the acquisition of Austrian citizenship. Others have obtained residence permits (permanent or limited stay), mainly for family reunification, work, and studying.

As in all other countries of destination, BiH diaspora associations in Austria are largely segregated and decentralized, established on a national and ethnic basis, although there are some associations registered as multiethnic.

Bosnia and Herzegovina and Austria have concluded 15 bilateral agreements that are relevant for BiH migrants. The most relevant are the Agreement between BiH and Austria on Social Security<sup>74</sup> and the Convention between the Republic of Austria and BiH on the Avoidance of Double Taxation. Some of the Agreements concluded during Yugoslavia are still in effect (for instance the Agreement between the SFRY and the Government of Austria on the equivalence of evidence of final examination for secondary schools; the Agreement between the SFRY and Austrian Governments on Equivalencies in Universities, the Labor Recruitment Agreement from the 1960s, etc.).

### Up-to-date Demographics

Among foreign nationals in Austria, Germans remain by far the largest migrant group. On January 1, 2017, more than 181,600 Germans lived in Austria, followed by 118,500 of Serbians and 116,800 of Turkish nationals. Citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina (94,600) and Romania (92,100) are on the fourth and the fifth place.<sup>75</sup> The Federal Office for Statistics reports a total of 94,611 of BiH citizens registered in Austria. The number has been slowly declining since 2002 (from 107,248).

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Number	107,248	107,046	103,981	99,557	93,380	92,557	91,831	90,528
Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	
Number	89,575	89,578	89,925	90,963	92,527	93,973	94,611	

Out of 1,287,800 foreign born working age migrants in Austria, Bosnian citizens are in the top three non-EU migrant worker groups (57.5% of the total number, along with Turkish and Serbian workers). Out of Ex-Yugoslav migrants, BiH and Croatian citizens have lower unemployment rates (18.1% and 15.7%, respectively), than Serbian citizens (42.5%).<sup>76</sup>

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> And an additional Protocol on the Exchange of the Ratification Instrument on Social Security between the Austria and BiH.

<sup>75</sup> Statistisches Jahrbuch - Migration and Integration 2017: 9.

<sup>76</sup> Population of working age (15 to 64 years) on 1.1.2016 by birth and current nationality, reported by Statistik Arbeit und Beruf 2016: 16.

The most frequent reasons for the migration of BiH citizens to Austria are economic in nature. The prevailing tendency is to retain employment, followed by the pursuit of education, as a continuation of the 100-year-old tradition of free education for students from BiH, and merging and reunification of members of diaspora families who arrived in previous years.

With regard to the migration of Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens to Austria, there is a decrease in number migrants who seek asylum. This especially refers to all economic asylum seekers, who cannot apply for asylum in Austria since 2014, when Bosnia and Herzegovina was put on a list of "Safe country of origin." Being on this list presumes absence of state persecution, protection from persecution by non-state actors and legal protection against human rights violations, and therefore no grounds for applying for asylum in Austria. According to statistical data published by the Federal Ministry of the Interior of Austria and the Federal Service for Affairs with Foreigners and Asylum of Austria, the number of applications for asylum from Bosnia and Herzegovina in the period January-August 2017 amounts to a total of 34 requests.<sup>77</sup>

### **Diaspora Associations**

Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora in Austria is well organized and active. Engagement of diasporans in the clubs and associations of Bosnia and Herzegovina is relatively high. There are around 50 associations of citizens registered in the country, organized primarily on an ethnic basis. The most active organizations are: the Center for Contemporary Initiatives - CSI from Linz, HKD Napredak from Vienna, Association of Serbian Clubs from Vienna, Association for the Integration of Bosnian Citizens in Austria "Bosna" from Vienna, Institute for Professional Information and Cultural Activities. There is mutual cooperation between the associations, but it is not generating any lasting impact. It is interesting to note that, in 2008, the BiH Embassy in Vienna instigated an action to establish an Association of BiH Citizens in Austria. The meeting was organized, representatives of all the constituent peoples of BiH participated in the organizational structure, but the Association is no longer active.

### **Educational Attainment**

Austria is one of the top destinations for students from Bosnia and Herzegovina and has a well-organized system of supplementary education in mother tongues for children of foreign origin within regular schools.

Language classes in Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian are organized within the regular education system, and teaching programs, textbooks, as well as employment of qualified teachers is handled by the Federal Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture of Austria. The need for language assistance was particularly high among Turkish (79%), Chechen (77%) and Arabic-speaking (75%) children. Albanian (66%) and Romanian-speaking children (65%) also had above-average funding requirements. The proportion of Hungarian speaking children in need was 60%, and for those who speak Bosnian/Croatian /Serbian as a first language, it was 57%.<sup>78</sup> Around 10,233 pupils in the academic 2015/16 took some lessons in the languages (Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian).<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> The number of asylum applications in Austria in August 2017 was 17,095, leading countries are Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Iraq (Bundesministerium für Inneres).

<sup>78</sup> Statistisches Jahrbuch - Migration and Integration 2017: 44.

<sup>79</sup> Der muttersprachliche Unterricht in Österreich Statistische Auswertung für das Schuljahr 2015/16, Informationsblätter zum Thema Migration und Schule Nr. 5/2016-17.



Approximately 20,000 students in Austria come from third countries, and almost 6,000 of them are from former Yugoslav countries. There were 2,993 students with a Bosnian passport registered in 2016 (representing the third largest group of foreign students, 4,1% in total).<sup>80</sup> In 2015, the Federal Ministry for Science, Research and the Economy (BWF) received a total of 877 applications for the recognition of foreign qualifications. A total of 480 (54.7%) were approved. Most applicants came from Bosnia and Herzegovina (157), followed by Serbia (129) and Hungary (76). In 2016, a total of 7445 foreign graduate diplomas were assessed. Most of applications were from Hungary (546), Romania (527), Serbia (507), and BiH (448).<sup>81</sup>

### **Socio-economic Parameters**

The unemployment rate in Austria was 5.7% in 2015 ó 4.8% for nationals and 11.4% for foreigners; 8.4% for EU and 15.3% for non-EU nationals, and 15.7% for BiH nationals. The recorded overall rates are well below the EU average of 15.1%.<sup>82</sup> Relevant reports point to prevalently affirmative attitudes of Bosnian migrants to the Austrian lifestyle. Differences are visible among various groups of migrants and they can be correlated with their geographic origin. Only less than 10% of respondents with a Croatian, Bosnian or Serbian migration background do not agree with the way in which they live in Austria.<sup>83</sup>

Regional distribution of BiH migrants is somewhat concentrated in various regions like Vienna (around 35.000), Upper Austria (around 30.000), Styria (up to 18.000), Lower Austria (16.000), Salzburg (14.000), and Koro-ka (10.000). Other groupings are smaller and more dispersed.<sup>84</sup> There are also clear settlement patterns in terms of where members of a particular local group from BiH settled in large numbers. For instance, most refugees from Zvornik settled in and around Vienna, those from Vi-egrad in Linz, and Sarajevans in Graz.<sup>85</sup> BiH diaspora members in Austria communicate with their family and relatives in Bosnia via online technologies (such as Skype and Viber). Only a limited number of people use landline or mobile phones (mostly for texting).

Voting patterns have an intrinsic value to BiH diaspora's engagement, as they might define the social climate in which policies are shaped, and this can in turn foster or deter economic or other types of investments. The Central Election Commission of BiH<sup>86</sup> indicates that the number of registered BiH voters in Austria has grown in the past four election cycles. Still, the total number is relatively low compared to the number of voters who have a right to register. The numbers are below. It is important to note here that the number of registered voters is still higher than the number of individuals who end up voting in each election in the end, which is usually around 65% to 70%.

2998 voters registered in 2010 General Elections  
3507 voters registered in 2012 Local Elections  
3434 voters registered in 2014 General Elections  
6661 voters registered in 2016 Local Elections

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<sup>80</sup> Statistik Arbeit und Beruf 2016: 36.

<sup>81</sup> Statistik Arbeit und Beruf 2016: 56-7.

<sup>82</sup> AMS Österreich, Arbeitsmarktforschung/Statistik 2015.

<sup>83</sup> Statistisches Jahrbuch - Migration and Integration 2017: 102.

<sup>84</sup> Emirhafizovic, M. 2013.

<sup>85</sup> Halilovich, H. 2013a and 2013c.

<sup>86</sup> Issued by Branko Pertic, Member of the CIK BiH, document number: 04-50-2-274/17, September 2017.

## II. MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION EXPERIENCE

As outlined above, initial waves of Bosnian immigration was predominately composed of guest worker recruitment from Yugoslavia in the 1970s, and was followed by refugee-movements as a result of the 1990s wars in former Yugoslavia.<sup>87</sup> Until 1998, some 85,000 refugees from BiH found shelter in Austria. Publicly, BiH refugees were largely welcomed and supported as their integration was organized by relatives, who were already residing in Austria, by churches, and by many local governments.<sup>88</sup> Only about 5,500 BiH refugees who initially arrived in Austria moved to third countries. A total of 10,100 repatriated back to BiH between 1996 and 2005. The highest number of returnees to BiH from Austria was around 4,000 individuals annually between 1996 and 1998, immediately at the end of the war. Then, this number dropped dramatically to an average of 800 individuals annually until 2001, when it dropped even further, under 500 individuals annually.<sup>89</sup>

When the war started, Austria did not accept the war as a reason for granting the refugees status according to the Geneva Convention, but instead developed a system of temporary protection based on membership to a group at risk of persecution. Subsequently, the state granted access to labor market and permanent residence. Only refugees without family ties in Austria were eligible for financial support.<sup>90</sup> An official from the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs reports that most BiH migrants are well integrated in the society. It is difficult to separate the needs of the BiH diaspora community from other communities originating from ex-Yugoslavia. People who arrived to Austria as refugees in the 90s gained a status of *de-facto* refugees, a special legal term coined by the Austrian Government. Some of them returned or moved to third countries. Those who stayed had to resolve their legal status. After 1998, the *de facto* refugee status was abolished, and 60,000 refugees who remained in Austria were integrated into the labor market, as there were no treaties on repatriation.

All nine Austrian provinces are in charge of integration, and they deal with this matter differently. There is an institution called Austrian Integration Fund ÖIF<sup>91</sup> which operates integration centers in six federal states (Vienna, Upper Austria, Styria, Tyrol, Salzburg and Carinthia). It implements the national integration plan.<sup>92</sup> The Agency aims to provide language, professional and social integration of asylum beneficiaries and migrants on the basis of their respective rights and obligations in Austria. At the same time, ÖIF provides factual and background information to the majority population on this subject. Vorarlberg, for instance, has excellent policies, sophisticated integration strategies, and excellent organization. Vienna is equally well organized, and works well with BiH migrants and associations.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> For more details, please see Perchinig, B. 2010.

<sup>88</sup> Valentini, P. 2000: 147.

<sup>89</sup> Barslund, M. et al. 2017: 259.

<sup>90</sup> ITHACA Research Report N. 1/2015, p. 6, 21.

<sup>91</sup> For more details, please see <https://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/integration/the-austrian-integration-fund/>

<sup>92</sup> For more details, please see <https://www.bmeia.gv.at/en/integration/national-action-plan/>

<sup>93</sup> Vienna and Vorarlberg in particular were able to establish tools that enable the measurement of the effects of the integration work in the states of monitoring and evaluation activities. First implemented in 2010, Vienna accordingly carries out an integration and diversity-monitoring scheme every two years in order to document the changes and the future challenges for the city resulting from them. In Vorarlberg, a broad and comprehensive

The number of voluntary returns of BiH citizens from Austria during in 2016 was 115 persons, which represents 11% of the total return.<sup>94</sup> The legal framework for processing is the Law on Legal Residence, which came into force in 1993. With the onset of the migrant crisis in the Republic of Austria, the legislation has been amended and narrowed several times.

### **III. POTENTIAL OF BIH DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT**

#### **Relations with BiH Consular and Diplomatic Missions in Austria**

The Embassy of BiH in Vienna regularly performs activities related to improving the relations with BH diaspora in Austria.<sup>95</sup> The Embassy has regular cooperation with local government institutions and organizations; inter alia, with the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Austria, Foreign and Asylum Service of the Republic of Austria, International Organization for Migrations and others. The Embassy responds to the inquiries of the mentioned institutions and organizations, mainly in regards to the verification of citizenship and identification. The Embassy received no information on migrants/diaspora from BiH having problems in exercising their rights.

Embassy officials believe that in order to provide better services for emigration, transfer of knowledge to BiH, it would be helpful to improve the mutual cooperation of the relevant BiH institutions in a joint effort to organize various activities and events that could strengthen diaspora's attachment to their motherland. At the same time, it is of great importance to enable conditions for the implementation of further cooperation activities, such as establishing and expanding contacts in all fields of cooperation, participation of BiH leaders at events abroad, inviting representatives of diaspora and successful businessmen, from BiH to business forums and fairs in Austria, and vice versa. Additionally, it would be beneficial to engage with diaspora through reform of the electoral law, to enable the participation of representatives of diaspora in elections in BiH, and through increased bilateral ties of the two countries, to open new opportunities for education of emigrants, etc. The Embassy of BiH in Vienna plans to conduct several diaspora-oriented activities in 2018, but greater support of the relevant institutions from BiH is necessary.

#### **Perceived Barriers and Preconditions for Diaspora Engagement**

Local interlocutors in Austria have identified several challenges to promoting higher levels of diaspora involvement and some opportunities for improving the current state of affairs. Firstly, most of them believe that much more energy and time needs to be invested in reforming local and mid-level administration in BiH. This has to happen not only because it can contribute to facilitation and opening up space for new business opportunities (such as shorter business registration time, less paperwork, more educated local personnel, higher quality of services in public institutions), but also because diaspora and other foreign investors need to start perceiving and realizing the potentials of institutional protection of their investments. Slow court proceedings, inexistence of economic based (market) courts, and other alternative forms of legal protections available (like commercial arbitrations, mediation, etc.) deter potential investors from investing larger (or smaller) sums of money.

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stakeholder survey is currently being carried out. It focuses on the effectiveness of the integration tools used in Vorarlberg (policy statement, coordination office in the administration, point of knowledge and competence -okay.zusammen leben-)

<sup>94</sup> Data taken from Migration profile of BiH 2016.

<sup>95</sup> The number of requests to renounce BH citizenship initiated through the Embassy in Vienna as of September 2017 was 198. However, many more have gone through the process in BiH.

On top of that, a government relationship towards business people needs to be harmonized and deprived of institutional corruption, extra (hidden) taxes on opening or expanding business. Investors need to feel that their business can grow, and currently they still struggle with the idea of investing the initial capital.

Some interviewees report that recent trends in BiH development policy-making ideas about diaspora involvement is narrowly focused only on economic engagement (remittances and entrepreneurship), and on structuring diaspora investments in local communities (private business). Not much has been done to expend these trends onto diaspora engagement in political sense, and in developing macro-policies of development, like investments in infrastructure, education, technologies, and also in volunteer work, and civil society organization activities. In their view, this has to change, to allow high-educated diaspora members to participate and consult on investments in a broader sense. This could also motivate non-Bosnians in Austria to join initiatives and contribute more resources. In sum, more initiatives need to be taken to ensure that rights of diaspora in policy-making processes are guaranteed as more democratic rights will inevitably pave way for more financial engagement.

Another set of perceived barriers relates to mentality, multiple existing dependencies and uneven development potentials in different parts of the country. This is followed by lack of knowledge about structures and administrative processes; low investments in research and development of new forms of technology, as well as ineffective transition to a market economy in many sectors. Finally, some interlocutors warn of the slow developments in the SME sector, vulnerabilities in the banking sector, various financial restrictions for investments in business expansion with low-risk credit lines.

#### **IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**1. Harmonize and integrate of local development policies and other related regulations:** potential diaspora from Austria claim they investors cannot effectively operate in decentralized and under-regulated economic areas and navigate through various policies on entity (or cantonal) levels, where registration and management of business is dependent on different taxation rules and differentiated fees.

**2. Strengthening the role of regulatory bodies for market and investments:** diaspora investors from Austria emphasized the importance of knowing about available mechanisms of protection exist, and that assess to various local funding opportunities is available, primarily low-risk loans from local banks or subsidies from the government agencies to support growth.

**3. Reform the existing court system:** Some interlocutors in Austria involved in trade and setting up international business stressed that setting up specialized courts (or chambers) that exclusively deal with resolving investment disputes in BiH would be helpful. These currently do not exist in BiH but do in many other European countries, including Austria. This could help in resolving some of investors' doubts about the tediously long and expensive court proceedings. Existence of such courts could lead to expeditious and economical decisions, given by judges who are familiar with business laws and practices.

**4. Strengthen the alternative dispute resolution system:** Adopting the minimum legal regulations on commercial arbitration (domestic and international) and setting up institutions

that can administer and manage ADR proceedings were also mentioned in conversations with diaspora potential investors as a useful mechanism to encourage development. This would help to increase investors trust in local business system, as they are aware of its increasing use by the business community and the legal profession in Austria.

**5. Adopting legal regulations that allow diaspora participation in political life in Bosnia and Herzegovina:** It would entail expanding bilateral agreements on dual citizenship between Austria and BiH, and allow for easier registration procedures for voting from abroad or even removing active voting registration requirements for all voters who reside abroad. Interviewees BiH migrants in Austria feel that economic investment should be reinforced by political engagement and opportunities for participation in the public sphere in BiH. In this sense, they are interested in corporate social responsibility models.

## CHAPTER IV

### Country Report: Denmark

#### Summary

This country report is based on data gathered between August and November 2017 among members of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora in Denmark. The research findings presented are based on existing academic research, quantitative data collected from Danish Statistics agencies as well as other relevant institutions, a focus group conducted in Copenhagen, as well as face-to-face interviews (in-person, via telephone and Skype, and email communication) with Danish BiH diaspora business people, diaspora association members, and BiH Embassy officials in Copenhagen including Ambassador Haris Ba-i . For the purposes of this report, BiH diaspora includes individuals who were born in BiH as well as those who are descendants of Bosnian-born individuals and thus consider BiH as their homeland in one way or another, prescribing a sense of belonging.

The majority of face-to-face interviews were conducted in Copenhagen where the umbrella BiH diaspora organization and the BiH Embassy are based, and is generally considered the hub of BiH diaspora activity. One focus group (BiH businessman, diaspora organization leadership, diaspora community members) was organized in Copenhagen with four individuals. Six additional face-to-face interviews were conducted, lasting anywhere between 45 minutes to two hours. Shorter interviews, over the phone conversations, and email exchanges related to the project were also conducted with another ten individuals. As part of the project, diaspora umbrella organizations, diaspora religious organizations, and diaspora social media were contacted, and their assistance and participation solicited in an attempt to reach out to as diverse as possible of the BiH diaspora community.

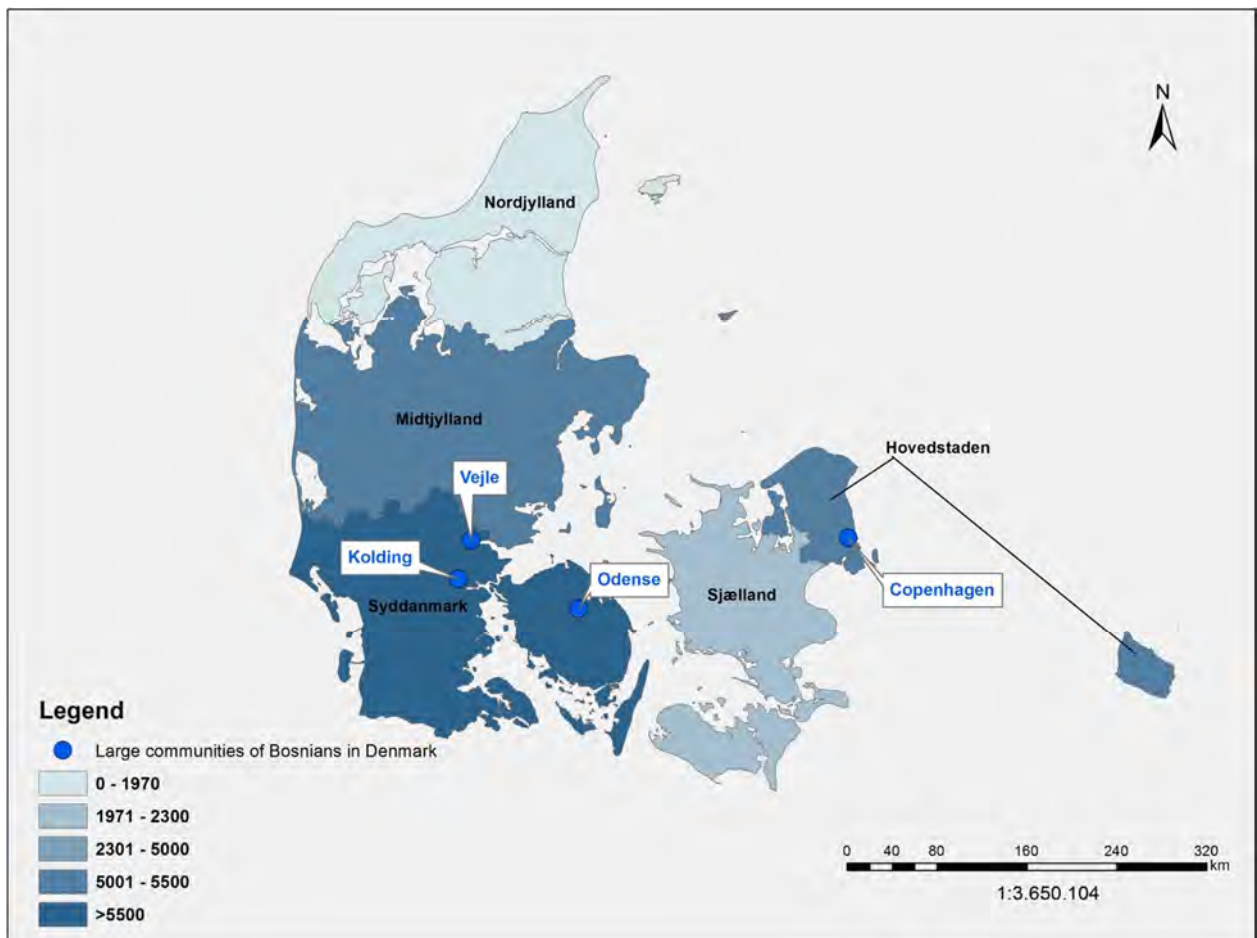
The report finds that there were few BiH migrants in Denmark prior to 1992. Hence, when we speak of the BiH migrant population in Denmark today, we can speak of a largely conflict-generated population which arrived as refugees during the early 1990s to Denmark, a country which, at the time, was ill-equipped to receive the large number of refugees who arrived on its shores. Individuals were housed on boats and across Denmark in refugee camps initially while the Danish government debated how best to handle the refugee situation at hand. This initial period, per interviews, disadvantaged BiH diaspora members in Denmark, as they often compare themselves to those individuals who arrived in Sweden and had a clear path to integration and citizenship, with access to language learning and educational resources. The Danish integration regime disadvantaged many of the individuals who arrived in Denmark during this period who were of working age and with their young families. A generally less educated refugee population than in other countries, without many opportunities for education and to learn the language during the initial period in Denmark note is that Denmark generally received a less educated BiH population than other countries, the BiH population has lagged in employment with the Danish population and has had greater integration problems than for example in other countries with BiH populations.<sup>96</sup> It is perhaps for this reason that many individuals retain strong ties to BiH. The second generation has demonstrated high levels of integration and has the potential to bring investment, knowledge transfer, and related know-how to BiH. There is also potential for smaller and more targeted investment opportunities to take hold in collaboration with this diaspora, though much more engagement from BiH institutions and organizations is necessary prior to this.

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<sup>96</sup> Barslund, M. et al. 2017.

## I DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Map 4. Distribution of BiH diaspora in Denmark with the largest communities marked<sup>97</sup>



### Background and Literature Review

The Danish government passed the so-called ‘Yugoslavian Law’ in November 1992 in response to the refugee influx from Bosnia and Herzegovina. This suspended asylum proceedings for up to two years for the refugees, placing different conditions on them, and allowing for refugee centers to be opened throughout Denmark. It allowed for temporary residence permits for BiH refugees entering Denmark, as well as provided provisions for family reunification and those seeking medical treatment. Under this law, 360 refugees were admitted in 1992, 14.456 in 1993, 3.865 in 1994, 2.078 in 1995 and 459 in 1996, bringing the total to 21.218.<sup>98</sup>

The deadline for deferral of asylum proceedings expired in December 1994 for the first temporary residence allowances, which led the Danish government to introduce a new law in January 1995, aimed at ensuring equal terms and rights to BiH war refugees within Danish society. Under the law, they were first granted another temporary residence permit, however this time it would become permanent after two years, allowing a clear citizenship path for

<sup>97</sup> Note: This map is derived from data collected by the Dutch Statistics Agency, updated September 2017. The four cities highlighted are the cities with the highest populations of BiH diaspora in Denmark, based on the same data, which is also presented in a table in this report.

<sup>98</sup> Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1996.

those individuals who remained in Denmark thereafter. Most importantly, BiH refugees, who were living on boats and in refugee centers around Denmark until this point were granted access to social services, education, labor and housing as other refugees with official asylum status. Between 1995 and 1996, 17,460 BiH refugees were granted such permits, allowing them to settle in Denmark.<sup>99</sup>

Today, the numbers look as follows in comparison to the late 1990s, indicating a steady growth of the population.<sup>100</sup> Most prominently, it is interesting to note that this is a young population, with potential to be engaged with the homeland in multiple ways, including in particularly through transfer of knowledge. Of the 23,082, over 80% are under the age of 60, and the breakdown between men and women is relatively even. The two tables below indicate more details.

<b>First- and Second-Generation Breakdown of Bosnians-Herzegovinians in Denmark</b>						
	<b>2012Q4</b>	<b>2013Q4</b>	<b>2014Q4</b>	<b>2015Q4</b>	<b>2016Q4</b>	<b>2017Q4</b>
<b>Immigrant</b>	17436	17362	17280	17191	17124	17062
<b>Descendant</b>	4929	5139	5362	5574	5790	6020

<b>Age and Sex of Bosnians-Herzegovinians Origin Individuals in Denmark as of 2017Q4</b>		
	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11629</b>	<b>11453</b>
<b>0-4 years</b>	630	537
<b>5-9 years</b>	622	583
<b>10-14 years</b>	629	613
<b>15-19 years</b>	731	642
<b>20-24 years</b>	857	769
<b>25-29 years</b>	983	945
<b>30-34 years</b>	992	944
<b>35-39 years</b>	881	915
<b>40-44 years</b>	754	769
<b>45-49 years</b>	815	818
<b>50-54 years</b>	902	992
<b>55-59 years</b>	970	1010
<b>60-64 years</b>	825	722
<b>65-69 years</b>	475	480
<b>70-74 years</b>	228	261
<b>75-79 years</b>	163	221
<b>80-84 years</b>	113	157
<b>85-89 years</b>	46	57
<b>90-94 years</b>	10	14
<b>95-99 years</b>	3	4
<b>100 years and over</b>	0	0

<sup>99</sup> The number deviates from the 21,218 as some left for third countries such as the United States or repatriated to BiH during this period.

<sup>100</sup> Statistics Denmark 2017.



However, less than half of this population retains BiH citizenship according to the Danish Statistics agency, and the numbers have continued to decline over the last five years, likely since BiH and Denmark do not have a dual citizenship agreement.

<b>Population in Denmark with BiH Citizenship</b>					
<b>2012Q4</b>	<b>2013Q4</b>	<b>2014Q4</b>	<b>2015Q4</b>	<b>2016Q4</b>	<b>2017Q4</b>
11,034	10,946	10,868	10,815	10,313	10,056

According to the BiH Central Election Commission, this number is even lower, as only 2,926 individuals registered for elections in 2002; 1,968 in 2004; 1,661 in 2006; 1,494 in 2008; and 1,505 in 2010. This is about 15% of the eligible population who hold citizenship at the time of writing. When asked during interviews about their voting patterns, interviewees fell into the population that does vote, though they were disenchanted by BiH politics and noted the lack of viable choices that represented political platforms that are forward looking to bring BiH on the path to the EU more swiftly. One interviewee noted that she didn't think that BiH was taking EU accession seriously in a concerned manner. This was echoed by others.

Since 1997, immigration from BiH to Denmark has decreased, and the nature of it has changed. Family reunification remains a popular option for BiH citizens to come to Denmark, though it has decreased from 119 in 1997 to 15 in 2016. Asylum applications today are also much lower as BiH is considered a safe country, amounting to only one in 2016, from 670 in 1997. It is also interesting to note that there is almost a negligible amount of BiH students in Denmark as well as economic migration. Hence, the BiH population in Denmark can be considered as relatively stable and unchanging.<sup>101</sup>

There are BiH migrants living across Denmark. Below is a table which notes the number of individuals with BiH background living in Danish regions as of 2017. The two communities with the highest number are Copenhagen, which has 1,649 immigrants and 1,304 descendants, whereas Odense has 1,263 immigrants and 453 descendants.<sup>102</sup>

<b>Population with BiH Background in Denmark, 2017</b>		
	<b>Immigrant</b>	<b>Descendant</b>
<b>All Denmark</b>	<b>17,062</b>	<b>6,020</b>
Region Hovedstaden	4,178	1,304
Region Sjælland	1,660	639
Region Syddanmark	6,031	2,267
Region Midtjylland	3,745	1,288
Region Nordjylland	1,448	522

Further, it is interesting to note that the number of BiH migrants is highest among other countries from the former Yugoslavia, as evidenced by the table below.

<sup>101</sup> Statistics Denmark 2017.

<sup>102</sup> Statistics Denmark 2017.

<b>Population at the first day of the quarter by Country of Origin</b>			
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	<b>Croatia</b>	<b>Serbia</b>	<b>Serbia and Montenegro</b>
23,082	2,124	1,951	891

### **Family Reunification in Denmark**

There is an increasing number of applications for family reunification in Denmark over the last five years, with individuals bringing their spouses from BiH. The number of applications for family reunification in Denmark 2015 was 85, while in 2014 it was 74. At the time of writing, this was the most likely migration reason to Denmark from Bosnia and Herzegovina today. In addition to a minimum age requirement of 24, those wishing to repatriate their spouses must also have the financial means to do so (54,289.48 DKK in 2017). Further, these schemes allow for Danish as a second language training and encourage integration into Denmark swiftly. It is interesting to note that requests for family reunification are comparable for both men and women, indicating a willingness among BiH migrants in Denmark to marry fellow BiH migrants rather than native Dutch individuals. This in turn potentially also demonstrates that levels of integration among this group are not as high as in other countries.

### **Repatriation**

At the same time, Denmark has offered repatriation schemes for BiH citizens starting as early as 1994 for individuals with temporary residence permits and thereafter for individuals with residence permits. The two schemes both covered initial costs of returning to BiH. Following the Immigration Act after 1996, health insurance for a year as well as up to 15.840 DKK (5.280 DKK for children under 18) were additionally available for individuals who choose to repatriate. 115 individuals took advantage of the scheme in 1994. Immediately following the war, as many as 506 BiH citizens chose to repatriate, with the number dropping to 321 in 1997, and 187 in 1998. By 2002, 55 individuals took advantage of the Danish repatriation scheme and this number has remained relatively static since on a yearly basis. Per the Danish Refugee Council, individuals choosing to repatriate today are mostly elderly and interested in living out the rest of their lives in peace. Most are able to maintain modest monthly pensions by Danish standards which lead to comfortable lives by BiH standards (close to 2000 BAM/month).

The BiH population in Denmark is a relatively young population. In comparison to Sweden, or other Scandinavian countries, there is no youth organization among this diaspora population that helps to provide a sustained relationship with the homeland, although such an organization has existed in the past. BiH migrants in Denmark are spread out across the country, with the highest concentrations living in Copenhagen, and the Odense and Kolding communes. Other communes with high BiH migrant populations include Vejle, Randers, and Horsens. For the most part, this demographic pattern reflects the communes in Denmark that also generally have the highest population of immigrants in Denmark. While only estimates are available, there are sizeable populations from the Trebinje and Prijedor area living in Denmark today, as well as from Herzegovina more generally.<sup>103</sup>

However, while the population is relatively young, it is noticeable how many individuals are retired, or receiving social benefits in Denmark. According to interviews, this is often a result of post-traumatic stress due to war experiences, or initial time spent not working in Denmark upon arrival. In large part, due to the Danish government's lack of integrating BiH refugees

<sup>103</sup> Interview with BiH Embassy, September 2017.

during this initial period, there is consequently also less integration in the Danish labor market, and thus also a higher number of individuals who receive public benefits in Denmark of BiH origin. The labor force participation of BiH migrants in 2013 was around 20 percentage points below that of Danish nationals, which is under 10% in total approximately the same gap as for the reported employment rate in 2015.<sup>104</sup> The tables below shows the number of BiH migrants who are unemployed in Denmark by year and sex breakdown, as well as a breakdown of all public benefits received by BiH migrants living in Denmark as of 2010, 2015, and 2017.<sup>105</sup>

<b>Full-time unemployed people with BiH as country of origin in Denmark</b>										
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Men</b>	263	215	482	609	535	491	452	373	310	267
<b>Women</b>	401	252	325	360	359	395	418	393	345	296

<b>BiH country of origin persons receiving public benefits</b>			
<i>Units: number</i>			
	<b>2010 Q4</b>	<b>2015 Q4</b>	<b>2017 Q2</b>
<b>Total</b>	8,995	9,031	8,766
<b>Danish State Education Grant and Loan Scheme Authority</b>	1,465	1,663	1,622
<b>Net unemployment, total</b>	599	501	443
<b>Persons receiving holiday benefits</b>	24	14	18
<b>Guidance and activities upgrading skills, total</b>	418	184	122
<b>Subsidized employment, total</b>	604	608	648
<b>Maternity benefits, etc. total</b>	232	237	265
<b>Early retirement pension</b>	4,133	4,313	4,324
<b>Early retirement pay</b>	4	4	6
<b>Social benefits, total</b>	924	1192	1069
<b>Sickness benefits, with job</b>	591	314	248

The table above accounts for the war experiences many of them brought from BiH. However, it is worthwhile to note that BiH migrants in the 25-39 age group are generally employed at higher percentages than their Danish born counterparts within the workforce. Thus, intergenerational trauma does not seem to have an effect on employment levels, and thus, potential investment abilities. However, detailed information about wage earnings among the BiH population in Denmark is unavailable. There are not many known Danish BiH businessmen. It is generally acknowledged that large scale investment might be too premature for this population to undertake, although smaller investment opportunities are more manageable and bring more potential. Among those interviewed, there was a great interest in knowledge transfer opportunities as well as Bosnian language learning among the second generation.

## **Educational Attainment**

<sup>104</sup> Barslund, M. et al. 2017.

<sup>105</sup> Danish Statistics Agency, 2017.

Education attainment rates for BiH diaspora living in Denmark are higher than for the native-born population. This bodes well considering the poor labor market participation for the first generation, as well as for the potential of investment back to the homeland within the second generation. Particularly among women, this pattern holds, being 10% higher when compared to other migrant groups who have lived in Denmark over 15 years, and 8% higher than the native-born Danish population.<sup>106</sup> The table below provides an overview of the highest education attainments of BiH descent individuals living in Denmark today.

<b>People living in Denmark 1. January 2017 between 15-69 years old and with origin from Bosnia and Hercegovina - by highest educational attainment</b>			
(only education attained in Denmark)			
	Immigrants	Descendants	<b>Total</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,341</b>	<b>2,330</b>	<b>9,671</b>
H10 Primary education	1,094	1,419	<b>2,513</b>
H20 Upper secondary education	570	736	<b>1,306</b>
H30 Vocational Education and Training (VET)	2,603	80	<b>2,683</b>
H35 Qualifying educational programmes	25	2	<b>27</b>
H40 Short cycle higher education	529	23	<b>552</b>
H50 Vocational bachelors educations	1,320	13	<b>1,333</b>
H60 Bachelors programmes	317	51	<b>368</b>
H70 Masters programmes	852	5	<b>857</b>
H80 PhD programmes	31	1	<b>32</b>
H90 Not stated	8,416	9	<b>8,425</b>

In a Danish citizenship study conducted in 2013, BiH immigrants and descendants of BiH immigrants in Denmark surveyed overall were more comfortable with the Danish language than other immigrant groups (69% as compared to 54% for all immigrant groups). This indicates a high level of integration within the society. Further, 69% of those surveyed considered themselves politically active within Danish society, including voting. While this is lower than the Danish population overall, the figure nonetheless remains relatively high and indicative of a sense of belonging to Danish society. When combined with the fact that 50% of those surveyed also believe that immigrants' efforts are being recognized in Danish society, as compared to 37% among the Danish population, this might also indicate that BiH Danish population also feels well received and is optimistic about its opportunities in Danish society. In fact, individuals interviewed stressed they did not feel discrimination among Danish society or within their workplace, and noted that they generally felt they were afforded opportunities in Denmark, particularly after their initial few years as refugees in the country. While this information is based on a representative sample and should not be taken for granted, it nonetheless affords an overview of BiH migrants' beliefs about life in Denmark.<sup>107</sup> Further, the same sentiments were echoed during a focus group as well as through individual interviews in Denmark. Even though education was initially not guaranteed to BiH refugees during the initial phase of their arrival in Denmark, the community's insistence on the importance of education is noticeable in the high rate of educational attainment among the second generation and the emphasis that education receives

<sup>106</sup> Dansk Flygt Report 2014.

<sup>107</sup> Ankestyrelsens Medborgerskabsundersøgelse 2013.

among BiH migrants as a tool for integration within Danish society, as elaborated upon by both interviews as well as the focus group.

### **Communication Patterns**

Communication with BiH is often through familial connections via modern communication technologies such as Viber and Skype, with Facebook being another option individuals often noted as making it easy to stay in touch. When it comes to news consumption, Facebook groups and friendsøposts tend to be the most informative in addition to popular news media, much as is read in BiH with Klix.ba and *Oslobodjenje* being singled out most often. This holds for most BiH diaspora across the world. Additionally, Danish language and Denmark based resources are also used. In previous years, BiH diaspora informed themselves amongst each other through the *Bosanska Pošta* newspaper, but this has since ceased to function. Hence, they note feeling disconnected from what is going on among the community abroad.<sup>108</sup>

Many communicate with their families back in BiH on a regular basis and maintain transnational links to other BiH migrants, either through translocal ties or by familial ties. These relationships are not to be underestimated as they have the ability to disseminate information among the wider diaspora community, particularly for those individuals who are not necessarily part of diaspora associations or clubs.

### **Remittance/Investment Volume**

All of the individuals interviewed remit back to the homeland through their familial ties and own property back in Bosnia and Herzegovina they often return to. It was noteworthy that a good number have also purchased apartments in Sarajevo to use during their summer vacations, which are most often spent in BiH.

When it comes to investment volume or knowledge thereof, they remain uninformed, though interested in learning more and potentially contributing. However, concerns about corruption and lack of trust in BiH institutions remain high among individuals interviewed. They feel slighted by the homeland to a degree for not enabling better Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian language education courses, including funding Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian language teachers for their children growing up in Denmark. This was echoed among members in a focus group conducted in Copenhagen in September 2017.

Of those interviewed, their experiences were limited to personal ones rather than business ventures and a general lack of knowledge about potential opportunities was noted. However, there was interest in humanitarian projects, which were noted by interviewees. The BiH community in Denmark has demonstrated their ability to organize around these issues and thus has the potential to continue to do so in a more concentrated effort if given the opportunity. In particular the Bosniak community has been supportive of returnee communities in BiH and was involved in humanitarian assistance after the floods in BiH.

## **II. MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION EXPERIENCE**

As the BiH migrant population in Denmark is dispersed across the country, there is also less of a feeling of cohesion among the group. There is a hub organization for BiH diaspora in

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<sup>108</sup> Interviews with Author, September 2017.

Denmark which serves as the umbrella organization for individuals who belong to clubs or associations called *Savez bosanskohercegovačkih udruženja u Danskoj – SBHUD* and maintains a Facebook presence which helps to inform its members and those in the community. Its membership on Facebook is below 1,000 and its members are estimated to be around 500 according to its leadership, a number which changes and has decreased over time. However, the establishment of this organization in 2012 does signal continued engagement among the BiH diaspora population in Denmark and a willingness to explore potential opportunities.

There are an estimated 40 smaller clubs among BiH diaspora communities in Denmark that focus on issues of integration, education, and maintaining cultural ties to BiH. One of the major organizational events that SBHUD focuses on an annual basis is a ceremony to commemorate the Srebrenica Genocide which animates the largest number of BiH Danish diaspora members to attend and be present. One interviewee noted that she considers Srebrenica Genocide commemorative activities as important in also spreading awareness among the Danish population about the experiences of individuals from BiH.

### **III. POTENTIAL OF BiH DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT**

#### **Barriers to Engagement of BiH diaspora**

There is currently limited engagement and participation when it comes to development among the BiH diaspora in Denmark. As noted previously, this is likely also in part due to the demographics of the BiH population in part. Interviewees in Denmark noted this was in large part due to their lack of connection to BiH institutions. The BiH Embassy in Copenhagen is far away from many communities in Denmark and there is little to no engagement from BiH politicians or institutions in Denmark directly.

One of the challenges BiH diaspora organizations encounter in Denmark is one of fundraising for their maintenance, as they are not financially supported through guaranteed means in Denmark. This leads to compromises about sharing space among associations and religious organizations, in particular Bosniak ones, which discourages individuals who do not consider themselves as Bosniak to become engaged due to an inherent understanding that there will be an emphasis on Bosniak belonging rather than BiH belonging, regardless of whether or not this is the case.<sup>109</sup>

Moreover, interviewees noted that the difficult initial experience in Denmark which left people in limbo during the first few years of living in Denmark and intensified their post-traumatic stress symptoms has created further barriers for diaspora engagement. Interviewees noted that diaspora members echo grateful immigrant narratives rather than active citizen engagement, whether in Danish or BiH society. One interviewee noted that the first generation is thus lost.<sup>110</sup>

One interviewee noted that there is little engagement among the second generation of BiH migrants in Denmark as they do not necessarily connect very much to those in the first generation and have assimilated into Danish society and their day-to-day responsibilities, focusing on BiH during their holidays or through familial ties rather than more formally.

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<sup>109</sup> Interviews with Author, September 2017.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

Overall, this reflects ongoing challenges regarding effective organization abroad among BiH migrants which is not unique to any group, yet further fragments a small community in this case. It also discourages individuals who do not consider themselves religious, or individuals with different ethnic backgrounds, to participate in a variety of activities as they might feel uncomfortable or overburdened. It is important to note that often these individuals retreat to Danish society and focus on integrating more within it rather than turning to other similar diaspora organizations.<sup>111</sup>

The main hurdle, as expressed in interviews as well as echoed by BiH Embassy staff and organizations that work with migrants in Denmark, is access to information to remaining engaged with the homeland. There are currently no policies in place to promote diaspora networking and home country engagement, and individuals feel disconnected from their relevant BiH institutions, or uninformed about how to contact them. Interviewees noted that there should be more engagement with particular agencies from BiH who work on promoting the country, not just among the diaspora but also among the Danish population. They showed particular interest and willingness to engage about tourism and the IT sector in BiH.

### **Relations with BiH Consular and Diplomatic Missions in Denmark**

The BiH diplomatic mission in Copenhagen serves as a hub of activity, though Copenhagen presents a distance for many of those who live more north in Denmark to regularly visit. The collaboration between Copenhagen based diaspora organizations and the Embassy is thus stronger than others. While the BiH Embassy in Copenhagen could be classified as a mini-Embassy, it is important to note that it is one of the few that manages both Facebook sites as well as updates its website on a regular basis, a commendable task in particular when considering that the diaspora population is dispersed across the whole country. Moreover, there was enthusiasm for further engagement from the Embassy staff and a level of openness for engagement with diaspora members in the future.

## **IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on findings from both the qualitative and quantitative data of this project, it is clear that many of the recommendations for engaging BiH diaspora in development activities is contingent on recommendations for improving BiH diaspora relationships with the homeland and increasing trust between the same. Despite current shortcomings, BiH diaspora would like to see their ties with the homeland strengthened, and would like to be an active participant in the future of BiH. Recommendations for areas of improvement include:

**1. Increase the engagement and presence of BiH institutions among the BiH diaspora in Denmark.** One of the recommendations echoed by members of focus groups and interviewees in Denmark was the importance of engagement of homeland institutions towards the diaspora. This includes all levels of government, including localities. As there is an already established and strong relationship with the Embassy, further participation could be fostered through the embassy in order to foster more engagement rather than only consular affairs. To a degree, the Embassy has already taken certain steps in doing this by maintaining a Facebook presence and serving as the main contact point for questions related to Bosnia and Herzegovina, within their limited mandate. This is a welcome development and should be supported in the future. BiH diaspora in Denmark emphasized the need to build more goodwill among the diaspora and the homeland, whether through increased Bosnian,

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<sup>111</sup> Interviews with Author, September 2017.

Croatian, Serbian language learning opportunities for diaspora communities in Denmark, or cultural collaborations that would help to gather individuals living in Denmark and build a stronger community, which remains fragmented at this point.

**2. Create promotional material on success stories of BiH diaspora investment in BiH.**

Promotional material would provide those who may be considering investment in BiH with both motivation and an example of how someone else succeeded. It would also break down some of the barriers connected to engagement of BiH diaspora. Thus, there is a need for capacity building and information campaigns in order to inform members about potential financial and social capital contributions. For those who are at the prime time of their career, it is important to provide information and connectedness to BiH in order to promote investment. Whether this happens through campaigns during the summer that aim to inform diaspora about opportunities (advertisements at airports for example), or through the promotion of a diaspora web portal (which interviewees noted would be helpful), or a third means is less important than a concerted and sustained effort to engage this population before their engagement wanes. Overall, more engagement from the homeland to the second generation is necessary prior to this population becoming too distanced from the homeland and uninterested as a result.

**3. Develop programs and activities to foster stronger relationships between BiH diaspora and local individuals, both in the first and second generation, including, but not limited to diaspora organizations.**

There is potential for collaboration with organizations such as *SBHUD* in order to promote opportunities. What needs to be emphasized is their belonging to the greater Bosnian community, as many of these individuals spend on average one to two months in BiH on an annual basis. Not all consider themselves part of the diaspora and see potential return as a real viability, as evidence by the number of individuals who return to BiH upon their retirement.

**4. Provide opportunities for diaspora to get engaged in BiH in order to boost local economic development opportunities.**

Individuals who are members of Bosnian diaspora organizations in Denmark are willing and interested in humanitarian projects and have supported house reconstructions for returnees and other small investment opportunities in local communities. Fostering more such opportunities would be welcome as members usually only hear of need through informal channels and thus often are unaware of the needs on the ground that might be more acute. Supporting diaspora humanitarian work can also go a long way in helping the economic development of local communities in BiH through investments in training programs, and targeted projects aimed at creating sustainable opportunities for populations in BiH.

**5. Encourage and simplify diaspora citizen participation and better integrate diaspora individuals into the BiH political scene**

Encouraging diaspora voting registration at minimum and informing diaspora members in the second generation about how to realize their citizenship in order to be able to maintain ties to the homeland.

**6. Develop programs and activities to foster stronger relationships between BiH diaspora and local individuals, both in the first and second generation.**

Increased efforts to retain the engagement of the second generation would be beneficial for long-term planning. This includes engagement with the first generation through cultural activities promoted by and in collaboration with BiH institutions including the Embassy, as well as



organizing programming relevant for BiH diaspora members during peak periods of their visits to BiH such as during the summer holiday season.

**7. Provide direct support for supplementary education in the diaspora as well as the establishment of programs in BiH.** BiH diaspora members in Denmark have received books from BiH for supplementary education purposes, organized through the BiH Embassy in Copenhagen. Supplementary education teachers work on a voluntary basis and diaspora noted that more formalized support would be helpful, including sending teachers from BiH to Denmark. They would also support alternative initiatives such as online supplementary education in order to ensure their children learn Bosnian, Croatian or Serbian language, reinforced with time spent in BiH and interacting with other children.

**8. Establish formal procedures for BiH diaspora to transfer academic knowledge, practice, and skills.** Interviewees noted their frustrations at trying to implement something on their own and being unable to due to logistical difficulties, lack of support from institutional actors, or simply, lack of networking connections to establish initial contacts when they have tried to invite speakers from BiH or tried to organize such informal events themselves in BiH. These are all easily resolvable through either MHRR contacts, or similar venues, to act as mediators in helping to strengthen diaspora homeland links. Formal procedures that go beyond individual contacts would also go a long way in building trust and creating sustainable opportunities for knowledge transfer.

## CHAPTER V

### Country Report: Germany

#### Summary

This country report is based on data gathered between August and November 2017 among members of the BiH diaspora in Germany, as well as previous academic work conducted among the same population between 2013 and 2016. The findings are thus presented from a variety of sources including academic work, quantitative data acquired from the German Statistics Agency as well as other relevant institutions, a focus group conducted in Munich, another one conducted via Skype, as well as multiple in-depth interviews with German BiH diaspora business people, diaspora association members, prominent members of the diaspora, and four BiH Embassy officials in Stuttgart and Munich. Combined, they are demonstrative of a representative sample of BiH migrants in Germany, including a variety of migration experiences, ethnonational diversity, age, sex, and education levels. For the purposes of this report, BiH diaspora includes individuals who were born in BiH as well as those who are descendants of BiH-born individuals and thus consider BiH as their homeland in one way or another, prescribing a sense of belonging.

The majority of face-to-face interviews were conducted in Stuttgart and Munich, where large BiH diaspora communities reside but diaspora associations also exist. One focus group (academic, mixed diaspora community, recent migrant, student) was organized in Munich with four individuals and another focus groups with four individuals was organized via Skype as the participants came from various parts of Germany (mixed diaspora community, religious organization, business person) with another four individuals. In terms of face-to-face interviews, 10 in-depth interviews were conducted, with each interview lasting anywhere from 45 minutes to 2 hours. Shorter interviews, over the phone conversations, and email exchange related to the project were also conducted with another dozen individuals. As part of the project, diaspora umbrella organizations, diaspora religious organizations, and diaspora social media were contacted and their assistance and participation solicited in an attempt to reach out to as diverse as possible of the BiH diaspora community.

Germany's relationship with the countries of former Yugoslavia dates back further than most of the countries of destination of BiH refugees and ultimately, diaspora during the 1990s. Throughout the period of the 1960s until today, the relationship between Germany and Yugoslavia was marked by cooperation in terms of guest workers and later, refugee admission. Today, Germany remains as one of the major destinations for economic migrants from the region and BiH specifically. During the 1990s in the midst of war outbreak in BiH, Germany accepted some of the highest numbers of refugees from the fledgling country, approximately 320,000.<sup>112</sup> While it is estimated that only 6% of the BiH refugee population that arrived during the 1990s has remained in Germany after the war, this second migration wave nonetheless created a lasting impact on the population of BiH diaspora in Germany as well as all of the former Yugoslav communities.<sup>113</sup> This included, among other things, higher participation in Croatian and Serbian religious diaspora associations, as well as the establishment of Bosniak religious associations, which continue to impact debates about Islam in Germany today.

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<sup>112</sup> Valenta, M. and Ramet, S. 2011.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

Third destination countries such as the United States, or return to the homeland were the two most common end results for most of the population by the late 1990s. Trauma claims were able to prevent them from receiving the dreaded '*Abschiebung*,' being deported, from Germany back to Bosnia and Herzegovina, after the war. Today, those in Germany represent some of the most diverse BiH diaspora populations in Europe. It includes former guest workers (*Gastarbeiter*) and conflict-generated diaspora members who came to Germany during the 1990s. Further, it also includes individuals who arrived to Germany to study or work in the post-conflict period. Today, around 248,000 individuals with a background from Bosnia and Herzegovina live in Germany today, while 172,000 of them are considered to be first-generation.<sup>114</sup> In the first generation, only 37,000 are single, whereas the rest of the population is married. The figures are different when taking in the whole population where marital status is more evenly divided, with 104,000 of the population being unmarried. Their average age is 22.5, likely reflecting the high number of recent economic migrants to Germany.<sup>115</sup>

Individuals coming to Germany from BiH today are students and guest workers, and these numbers are on the rise. This is reflective of the high number of BiH citizens who are dissatisfied with the socioeconomic situation in BiH and are willing to migrate, most often to countries such as Germany.<sup>116</sup> BiH citizens who seek asylum in Germany today are mostly BiH Roma citizens, based on discrimination claims in BiH, which ultimately end up being unsuccessful according to Bosnian Embassy officials interviewed. The remaining population that finds itself in Germany has largely adjusted to post-war life in Germany, with many having taken German citizenship. Due to the diversity of this population and its varied experiences with migration, it is worthwhile to consider both larger trends among the population as well as compare these with particular segments of the population in order to gain a thorough understanding on the whole.

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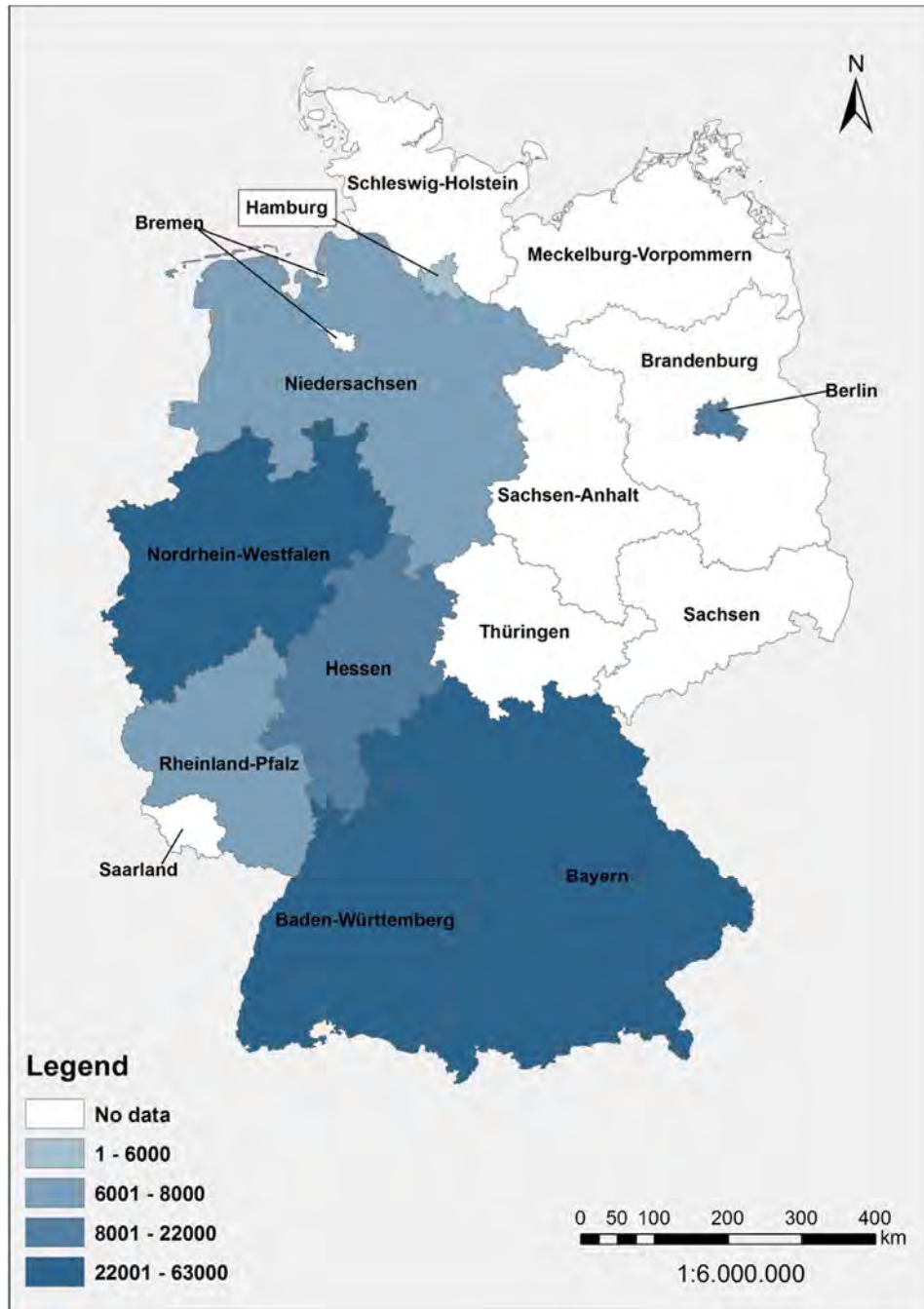
<sup>114</sup> Karabegovi , D. 2016.

<sup>115</sup> Bevölkerung mit Migrationshintergrund - Ergebnisse des Mikrozensus, Statistisches Bundesamt 2016.

<sup>116</sup> Balkan Barometer 2016 Survey,  
[http://www.rcc.int/seeds/files/RCC\\_BalkanBarometer\\_PublicOpinion\\_2016.pdf](http://www.rcc.int/seeds/files/RCC_BalkanBarometer_PublicOpinion_2016.pdf).

## I. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Map 5. Distribution of BiH diaspora in Germany divided up by Land<sup>117</sup>



### Background and Literature Review

Individuals from former Yugoslavia started arriving in Germany in the late 1960s on a regular basis as many were recruited to work in what, at the time, was Western Germany. The bilateral agreement in 1968 envisioned more than half a million workers to come to Germany over a period of five years. It was beneficial to both countries due to growing unemployment

<sup>117</sup> Note: This map is derived from data collected by the German Statistics Agency as of the end of 2016. It includes both individuals with migration experience, as well as those with Bosnian migrant backgrounds.

in Yugoslavia as a result of structural economic changes and the need for workers in Western Germany.<sup>118</sup> From the outset, remittances back to the former Yugoslav countries became a staple of the *Gastarbeiter*, or guest worker, experience. For many of the individuals, coming from poor, rural, and uneducated backgrounds, the remittances sent back home were essential for their respective families' survival back home.

In 1963, the amount received by the country was the equivalent of 41 Million US Dollars. By 1974, Yugoslavia received 1.6 Billion US Dollars from remittances. The number increased to a little over 2 Billion by 1977 and was close to 5 Billion by 1980.<sup>119</sup> According to the German Federal Statistics Office, the number of Yugoslavs in Germany during this period reached as high as 239,519 individuals in 1970.<sup>120</sup> Throughout the 1980s, Yugoslavs remained Germany's second largest migrant population, integrating relatively well within German society. Previous studies of integration within German society among Yugoslavs and other migrant groups also note that Yugoslavs achieve higher social standing as compared to Turks.<sup>121</sup>

More recent studies of second-generation Yugoslavs in comparison with second-generation Turks in Germany show that Yugoslavs tend to fare better with integration, particularly when looking at education, though they are still not precluded from discrimination altogether.<sup>122</sup> What became evident though is that the idea of guest workers who would return to their homelands once they were finished working had proven unrealistic. German policy makers were faced with the fact that their country was one in which many guest workers were instead living more permanently than they had anticipated.<sup>123</sup>

<b>Bundesland</b>	<b>BiH Migrant (total)</b>	<b>BiH Migrant (1<sup>st</sup> gen.)</b>
Baden-Württemberg	47,000	33,000
Bayern	63,000	45,000
Berlin	22,000	15,000
Brandenburg	N/A	n/a
Bremen	N/A	n/a
Hamburg	6,000	n/a
Hessen	22,000	16,000
Meckelburg-Vorpommern	N/A	n/a
Niedersachsen	8,000	6,000
Nordrhein-Westfalen	63,000	41,000
Rheinland-Pfalz	7,000	n/a
Saarland	n/a	n/a
Sachsen	n/a	n/a
Sachsen-Anhalt	n/a	n/a
Schleswig-Holstein	n/a	n/a
Thüringen	n/a	n/a

<sup>118</sup> Shonick, K. 2009.

<sup>119</sup> Zimmerman, W. 1987.

<sup>120</sup> A detailed table can be found in: Rossig, R., 2008.

<sup>121</sup> Esser, H. and Korte, H. 2009.

<sup>122</sup> Doerschler, P. 2004.

<sup>123</sup> Castles, S. 1985.

German law did not allow for dual citizenship until recently.<sup>124</sup> Those born since 2000 are once

again able to claim dual citizenship between Germany and BiH, and these numbers will indicate the number of individuals who choose to retain their dual citizenship over the following year. Above is the current population of BiH migrants, including those with migration experience broken up by the respective German state in which they live. The information is provided by the German Statistics Agency.

The three most populous German states are Bavaria and Nordrhein-Westfalen with approximately 63,000 individuals with BiH background, followed by Baden-Württemberg with 47,000. This roughly also adheres to the cities in which there are BiH Consulates, including Stuttgart, Munich, and Frankfurt am Main.

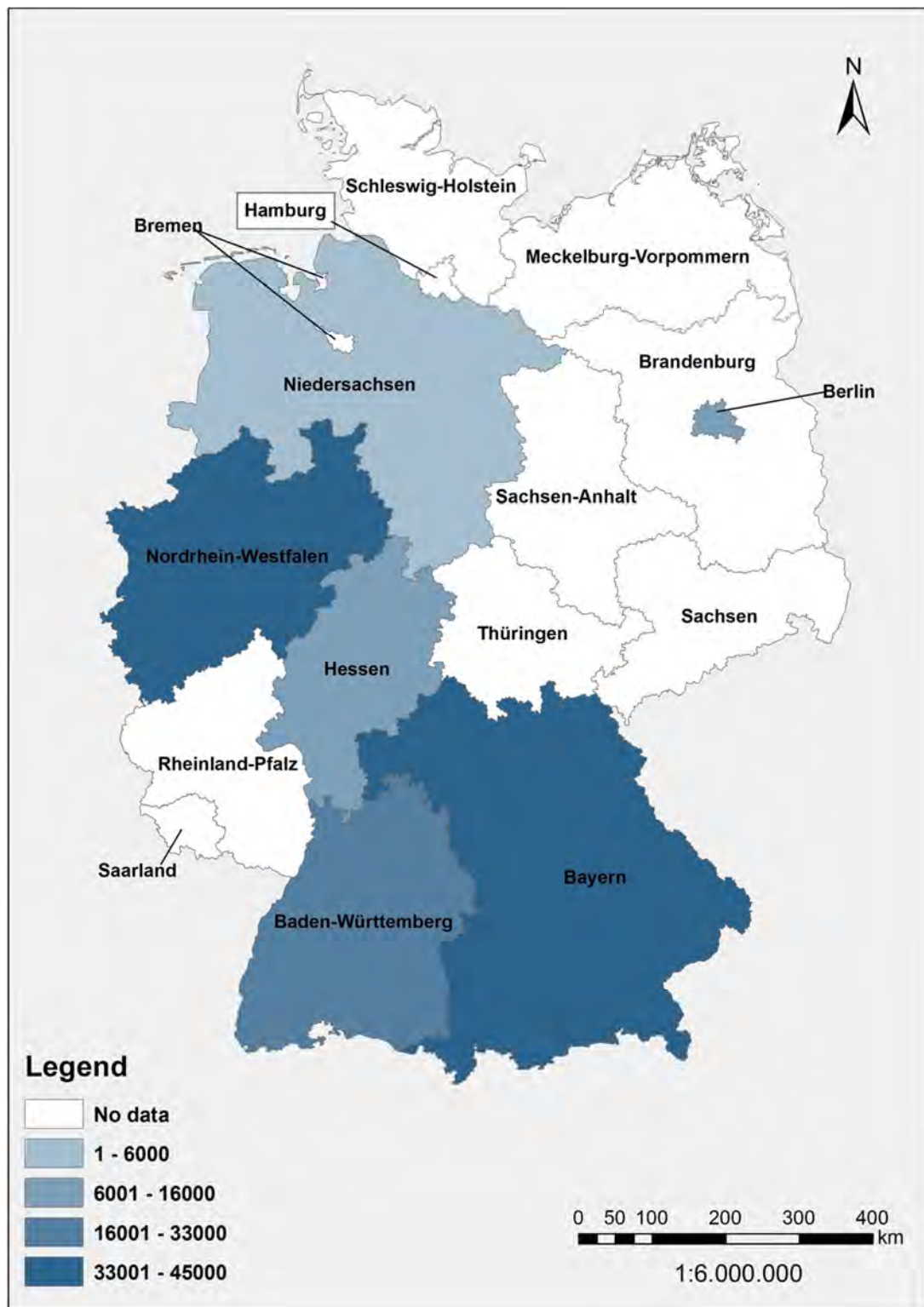
1,196 individuals deregistered their residence in BiH and changed it to Germany in 2016. While this number is largely understood to be much lower than the actual number of individuals living in Germany rather than in BiH today, it nonetheless demonstrates that Germany is a top country of destination for BiH nationals, a trend that is on the increase if compared to data from previous years. This number was 244 in 2012, 672 in 2013, 910 in 2014, and 998 in 2015.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> German citizenship laws changed in the early 2000s to allow for dual citizenship to individuals born in Germany, but this does not apply for most of the BiH refugees who came to Germany during the 1990s, hence forcing them to choose one or the other.

<sup>125</sup> Migration Profile BiH 2016.

Map 6. Distribution of first-generation BiH diaspora in Germany by Land<sup>126</sup>



<sup>126</sup> Note: This map is derived from data collected by the German Statistics Agency as of the end of 2016. It includes only individuals with migration experience themselves.

There are approximately 10,000 individuals who have both BiH and German citizenship. Of those, 8,000 do not have direct migration experience, meaning they were most likely born in Germany. There are an estimated 28,000 individuals with BiH background who hold German citizenship, though breakdowns about when they gained German citizenship are unavailable. However, we know that close to 13,000 individuals have given up their BiH citizenship for German citizenship since 2009.<sup>127</sup> The data is below.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Citizenship Change</b>
2009	1733
2010	1945
2011	1703
2012	1865
2013	1801
2014	1598
2015	1719
2016	1971
<b>Total:</b>	<b>13084</b>

The large majority of individuals with BiH background in Germany live in multiple person households, often times with others of BiH background. Among those with direct migration experience, there are 15% who live alone, where this number is slightly lower when the whole population is accounted for at 11%. On average, the BiH household in Germany has 1.44 children, while this is slightly higher among those with direct migration experience (1.62).<sup>128</sup>

	<b>BiH Migrant (total)</b>	<b>BiH Migrant (1<sup>st</sup> gen.)</b>
One-person Household	29,000	25,000
Multiple Person Household	219,000	146,000

It is difficult to generalize about the socio-economic profile of the BiH population in Germany. When examining their net incomes, it is noticeable that the highest number of households with members who are BiH earn between 3200 and 4500 Euros per month, though this is closely trailed by 2000 ó 2600 Euros per month and reflected within those who have migration experience themselves as well as those who might be second generation.

The average net household income is 2556.00 EU/month per household and 1,073.00 EU/month per individual. Average gross income is 1481.00 EU/month. For those with direct migration experience, the average net household of is 2561.00 EU/month and 1055.00 EU/month per individual, which is slightly lower than when considering the population as a whole, but not indicative of much change in socioeconomic status inter-generationally. Average gross income is 1464.00 EU/month.

At the same time, it is important to note that 28% of the BiH population in Germany is at risk of poverty, which is reflective of both the low-paid labor that many conflict-generated diaspora members who were unable to complete education do, as well as the incoming influx

<sup>127</sup> öBevölkerung und Erwerbstätigkeit.ö Statistisches Bundesamt (Destatis) 2017.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.



of economic migrants who work remedial jobs throughout Germany and are thus taken advantage of. The detailed data and breakdown is shown in the table below.<sup>129</sup>

	<b>BiH Migrant (total)</b>	<b>BiH Migrant (1<sup>st</sup> gen.)</b>
Net Income under 900 EU	12,000	10,000
900 ó 1300	12,000	11,000
1300 ó 1500	9,000	8,000
1500 ó 2000	17,000	16,000
2000 ó 2600	20,000	19,000
2600 ó 3200	17,000	15,000
3200 ó 4500	21,000	19,000
4500 and over	11,000	10,000

Among the BiH population in Germany, the majority is employed and less than 10% of individuals receive unemployment benefits. Of the employed individuals, the majority work full time hours, between 40 and 45 hours per week. Moreover, it is a young population with the potential to contribute to Germany's economy. Only 26,000 of the population is retired and receiving benefits, and all of these individuals have direct migration experience, indicating that the population on the whole is relatively young. About a third of the population is supported in one way or another by family members indicating strong familial ties among the BiH community in Germany. Finally, it is interesting to note that only about 6% of the BiH population in Germany receives state benefits, accounting for about 15,000 individuals, of which 12,000 have direct migration experience. The table with the complete data is below.<sup>130</sup>

	<b>BiH Migrant (total)</b>	<b>BiH Migrant (1<sup>st</sup> gen.)</b>
Employed	105,000	88,000
Unemployment Benefits	18,000	14,000
Retirement	26,000	26,000
Supported by Family Member	82,000	31,000
Other State Benefits	15,000	12,000

### **Repatriation**

Germany does not offer official repatriation schemes for BiH nationals like countries such as Denmark and the Netherlands. However, there is an established bilateral agreement about readmitting BiH nationals who enter Germany without proper permits. In 2016, this accounted for 78.35% percent of readmissions to BiH. Put another way, there were 1,245 Bosnian nationals readmitted from Germany, which represented almost a 100% increase from 626 individuals in 2015. As noted previously in this report, BiH Embassy officials highlighted that a majority of this population includes BiH Roma who seek asylum in Germany and are readmitted after Germany does not grant them the same. In fact, 2016 was a watershed year in that it represents the highest number of readmissions of BiH nationals.<sup>131</sup>

### **Educational Attainment**

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> BiH Migration Profile, Ministry of Security 2016.

The table below demonstrates the levels of education by BiH diaspora in Germany at the high school level. It is interesting to note that a majority of the population has completed their high school education or is still enrolled or about to enroll in school. In other words, only about 12% of the BiH population in Germany does not hold a high school diploma.<sup>132</sup>

<b>Education Level</b>	<b>BiH Migrant (total)</b>	<b>BiH Migrant (1<sup>st</sup> gen.)</b>
Still in Education/Not Yet Enrolled in School	59,000	10,000
Incomplete Education	30,000	28,000
Completed Education	157,000	133,000
Hauptschule	75,000	67,000
polytechn.Oberschule	n/a	n/a
Realschule o. ä.	43,000	35,000
Fachhochschulreife	10,000	9,000
Abitur	26,000	20,000

Of these, 93% are first generation BiH, likely individuals who arrived in Germany as guest workers or arrived as unqualified refugees during the 1990s. Overall, the number of individuals who have completed their high school education is over five times higher than those who haven't, and this does not take into account the individuals currently enrolled or too young to be enrolled.

<b>Professional Education</b>	<b>BiH Migrant (total)</b>	<b>BiH Migrant (1<sup>st</sup> gen.)</b>
Still in Education/Not Yet Enrolled in School	72,000	14,000
Without Professional Qualification	75,000	71,000
With Professional Qualification	99,000	86,000
Non-Academic Qualification	85,000	74,000
Teaching	75,000	64,000
Master's Level Education	10,000	10,000
Postgraduate Professional Cert.	n/a	n/a
Academic Qualification	14,000	12,000
Berufsakademie	n/a	n/a
Fachhochschule	5,000	n/a
University	8,000	7,000
Promotion	n/a	n/a
Bachelor	n/a	n/a
Master	n/a	n/a
Diplom Magister/State Exam	10,000	9,000

Further, it is clear from the table above that BiH diaspora, including those with personal migration experience, have pursued a variety of education options in Germany. The majority have completed some sort of professional qualification beyond high school, with only 8,000 completing University. This might very well change in the second generation, of which there are still a high number of individuals who are yet to reach the age of enrolling in higher education or are currently enrolled, or approximately 58,000.<sup>133</sup>

<sup>132</sup> Bevölkerung mit Migrationshintergrund - Ergebnisse des Mikrozensus 2016.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

### **Communication Patterns**

Communication with BiH is often through familial connections via modern communication technologies such as Viber and Skype, with Facebook being another option individuals often noted as making it easy to stay in touch. When it comes to news consumption, Facebook groups and friends' posts tend to be the most informative in addition to popular news media, much as is read in BiH with Klix.ba and Oslobo enje being singled out most often. This holds for most BiH diaspora across the world. In Germany, there are also numerous diaspora German and Bosnian language outlets. This includes the newly formed magazine Pangea,<sup>134</sup> a publication organized by the NBSAD,<sup>135</sup> a network of BiH students, academics, and young professionals in Germany.

What should not be neglected is that individuals increasingly receive their news from German language sources. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy to mention that Deutsche Welle, the German public international broadcaster, has a whole subsection particularly focused on BiH and the Balkans where German BiH diaspora members also get the news.<sup>136</sup>

### **Remittance/Investment Volume**

There is widespread curiosity in the potential for investment and business opportunities in BiH, and a seemingly higher interest when asked about potential return given potential job opportunities than in other countries examined. This is likely due to a combination of factors including more widespread experience and understanding about the circular nature of migration, as well as the relatively well-connected nature of Germany's airports with BiH.

Among those interviewed, strong connections to the places of origin were noticeable and remittance rates, though not specified numerically, were confirmed. Often times, these are along established networks that have been ongoing for decades, whether individuals arrived in Germany as guest workers or as refugees during the 1990s. For those who have more recently migrated to Germany in order to work, it is noticeable that they feel less inclined to continue these trends rather than moving their younger siblings and family members to Germany in order to be able to live a better life. It reflects a frustration with the ongoing political and socio-economic situation in BiH, particularly in rural areas.

Many individuals from the country's northwest, the Krajina, have migrated to Germany to work or to study. However, it is difficult to get particular numbers as a large proportion of them have Croatian passports which enable them to travel and work in Germany visa free, as opposed to BiH passports. Often, they only return to BiH to see family, for the holidays, and other relevant events, though this shows less interest in returning to BiH.

## **II. MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION EXPERIENCE**

Berlin has an active ex-Yugo scene, particularly on a cultural level, while Munich has more of a Gastarbeiter community. Bosniak Islamic Centers are peppered throughout the country. Croat and Serb religious centers are also active throughout Germany, though it is difficult to disaggregate how many of their membership have BiH citizenship or roots as a majority might identify as Serbian or Croatian diaspora members instead. The Serbian Orthodox Church of Germany is headquartered in Stuttgart for example, and the Croatian Catholic

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<sup>134</sup> See <https://www.facebook.com/pangeamagazin/?fref=ts> for their website.

<sup>135</sup> See <http://nbsad.de/> for their website.

<sup>136</sup> See <http://www.dw.com/bs/teme/s-10037> for their website.

community is also well organized. Moreover, the Croatian community in Germany is very well represented, through a number of organizations and bodies, including the *Kroatische Wirtschaftsvereinigung*, an organization that has fostered exchange, investment, and knowledge transfer between Croatia and Germany since 2007.

As noted above, BiH diaspora in Germany lead comfortable lives in Germany today, for the most part earning stable incomes and high levels of employment and education. A large proportion of them have acquired German citizenship, which, due to German law has often meant that they have rescinded their BiH citizenship, in effect disconnecting them from the potential to be politically influential within it. For example, there were 10,027 diaspora voters registered for the 2002 BiH elections, the highest number of diaspora votes from any country, including neighboring Croatia. This number dropped drastically for the 2004 elections to 5083, then to 4978 in 2006. The number dropped to 4510 in 2008, yet increased to 6,099 for the 2010 elections including 528 voters who voted directly at the Consulate in Stuttgart according to the BiH Central Election Commission's data.

German incorporation is understood not to include collaboration with migrant organizations, nor does it seek out political participation from them on a federal level, but rather relegates this to the subnational level, to each particular *Land*.<sup>137</sup> Migrant and diaspora organizations in Germany are rather insular from one another and few have transnational links or represent themselves as representative of the BiH diaspora in Germany. One of the key Bosniak diaspora organizations, established originally in 1989 as the first such organization in Germany, is the *Islamski kulturni centar Bošnjaka*, or Islamic Cultural Center of Bosniaks in Berlin. Berlin and Stuttgart both have large Bosniak populations and thus both have similar organizations involved in the daily lives of its community, established within a few years of 1992 primarily as religious centers by guest workers and refugees. During the war period between 1992 and 1995, they organized fundraising and provided help to Bosnia and Herzegovina, whether it was sending aid convoys to war zones within the country, or helping incoming refugees get settled in Germany. Today, their activities are not as focused on the homeland as they are on ensuring that the second generation in Germany remain fluent in the Bosnian language and providing them with community engagement opportunities.

For this community, highlighting a -Bosnian style of Islam,<sup>138</sup> which is more moderate and in line with integration in Western society, is highly important. Bosniaks in Berlin seek to represent a version of being Muslim disassociated with extremism and easy to accommodate in European countries. Their activism in Germany around -Migrantenpolitik is especially relevant due to the refugee crisis in the Middle East and increased Islamophobia across Europe. Beyond this, they are interested in bringing to the forefront something about Bosnia and Herzegovina that is not associated with the conflict of the 1990s, to showcase their contribution to their hostland, as well as to move beyond the war trauma many carry. Their political participation and discussions often center around German debates rather than those in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They believe that the Islamic Society is not responsible for the political engagement of the diaspora and that separate organizations need to organize this. Hence, they understand their diaspora engagement to be non-political and focused on increasing the rights of local citizens in BiH. Overall, Bosniak diaspora organizations in Germany demonstrate their potential for involved diaspora mobilization, but they indicate more of an involvement in the hostland politics and maintaining a religiously minded

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<sup>137</sup> Soysal, Y. N. 1994.

<sup>138</sup> Bringa, T. 1995.

community. The German incorporation regime has increasingly provided them opportunities to be represented on the subnational levels in their communities, to also further conversations about the importance of Islam in Germany. This has led them to participate on panels and within local governmental structures in Germany with other migrant populations and amidst other migrant organizations.<sup>139</sup>

There are a number of other diaspora organizations and clubs in Germany focused on the Bosnian population that offer meeting spaces for individuals to engage and to meet one another. Unlike in Sweden, there is not an established network which acts in an organized and mission-driven way. At the time of writing, a new organization, modeled in part like the APU Network, the *Netzwerk bosnischer Studenten und Akademiker in Deutschland e.V.*, has been established which seeks to connect BiH students, academics, and professionals in Germany to one another, but also professional links among them in order to provide relevant job skills and job growth. The organization has offices across Germany, and while recent, has demonstrated determination and a willingness to engage with both German and BiH institutions in order to further their mission of connecting BiH migrants in Germany to one another.<sup>140</sup>

One of the more established diaspora associations in Germany is the umbrella organization for BiH schools in Germany which advocates for Bosnian language learning among the second generation and has developed an impressive network of these schools across Germany. The *Dachverband bosnischer Schulen in Deutschland e.V.*, headed by a former BiH Consul, Haris Halilovi, is headquartered in Stuttgart and well-connected throughout Germany due to its engagement in education. Their focus within the diaspora has been on language and cultural maintenance and is supported minimally from institutions in BiH, something lamented on by the organization and interviewees respectively.

On a final note, it is important to consider the economic migrants arriving in Germany today. As previously noted, it is difficult to account for exact numbers as there are many individuals who are able to travel to Germany freely using their Croatian passports and find work this way. Due to the number of asylum requests from the Western Balkans, Germany changed its law to allow for higher numbers of work permits for individuals from the same region in October 2015. The law (§ 26 Abs. 2 BeschV) is in effect until December 2020. As a result, this has increased the number of economic migrants from the region to Germany. Here, the hope of the German state is to separate asylum requests from economic migration and enable individuals to work. This has created a 251.6% increase in work permits being issued for BiH citizens between 2015 and 2016, from 2,022 to 7,110. Numbers for 2017 indicate further growth, though have yet to be published officially.<sup>141</sup>

Interviewees as well as Embassy officials in Germany noted that for many of these individuals, initial adjustments and life in Germany are difficult in large part because they do not speak the language and thus are more prone to discrimination at work, have difficulties finding adequate housing, and experience feeling alone. BiH diaspora individuals who arrived in Germany in previous waves have differing levels of contact with these new migrants. One positive example is an organization, *Hilfe von Mensch zu Mensch e.V.*, based in Munich, who advocates for the rights of these individuals as well as migrants and refugees

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<sup>139</sup> Karabegovi, D. 2016.

<sup>140</sup> Karabegovi, D. 2016.

<sup>141</sup> "Statistik über die Arbeitsgenehmigungen-EU und Zustimmungen." Bundesagentur für Arbeit Statistik, 2016.

in general and is headed by a BiH diaspora member. However, it is unclear how many individuals who arrive to Germany are aware of all the potential resources at their disposal as well as the legal protections they have a right to, particularly if their German is not at adequate levels, as mentioned by one interviewee.

### **III. POTENTIAL OF BiH DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT**

Considering the size of the BiH diaspora population in Germany, there is quite potential for engagement, both in terms of development as well as knowledge transfer and cultural engagement. There are successful and established BiH diaspora members in both first and second generations who remain connected to their homeland and are willing to further engagement, as evidenced during interviews by entrepreneurs who work in both countries. Moreover, Germany is ranked 7<sup>th</sup> among investments by country to BiH with 560 million BAM invested in various industries by companies such as HeidelbergCement AG ó Kakanj, Messer Griesheim Haft., and Xella International.<sup>142</sup>

There are successful BiH migrants and those with Bosnian backgrounds living in Germany and working in a variety of sectors. There is not an official network among them. Rather, they connect directly to their respective contacts in BiH in order to establish business deals or to further their businesses. During fieldwork, it was often suggested that there is more potential for mid-level managers with BiH backgrounds to attract business opportunities to BiH from Germany rather than open their own businesses. To a large degree, there is already this kind of collaboration between certain German and BiH firms, and collaboration with the German Embassy in Sarajevo as well. This should only be fostered further.

#### **Barriers to Engagement of BiH Diaspora**

Interlocutors identified several challenges and barriers to their engagement. Firstly, they wanted stronger connections to the relevant Embassy or Consulate closest to them and were interested in organizing more events. This was also echoed by staff at BiH Consulates who felt they would have stronger sway within the community when it comes to the potential of investment back into the country if they were able to connect with members of the diaspora more regularly and more often. In large part, this disconnection seemed to come from a lack of resources on the part of the BiH institutions and a lack of adequate communication between the two, despite very similar stated goals.

External voting was noted by individuals who have retained their BiH citizenship as an important right which should be simplified with the coming elections in BiH. Many find the procedures to be outdated and argued for the importance of online voting or more simplified external voting options for them. Even though this process has in recent years been simplified, certain interviewees were visibly still shaken from previous unsuccessful experiences with external voting, and thus, uninformed.

Moreover, there was a timid response from individuals who gave up their BiH citizenship due to the German citizenship regime not allowing for dual citizenship. In effect, interviewees noted that they thus lost their connection to the homeland, which in turn then also has little

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<sup>142</sup> Foreign Investment Promotion Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2017.

way of reaching out. While they remain committed to supporting their country of origin, they are often more concerned with humanitarian measures and improving the socioeconomic connections in Germany rather than outright business investments and economic development.

Both fieldwork and previous research have demonstrated that the BiH population in Germany is highly fragmented and disorganized, both across the country as well as within different ethnonational or religious factions. Their activities revolve around identity maintenance rather than other transnational activity such as potential investment.<sup>143</sup> This indicates the importance of involving these religious communities in diaspora development activities as well as when fostering diaspora dialogue regarding the homeland. However, it is also worth mentioning that this might create feelings of competition among different diaspora organization and reflects the challenges faced by Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs who feel themselves to be part of both a Croatian or Serbian as well as a BiH diaspora in different ways.

Concerns about the level of transparency in business dealings, a nascent banking sector with investments that are still considered high risk, and the generally unfriendly business environment were all listed as further potential barriers of investment by diaspora individuals.

One rather concerning thing noted among individuals who are economic migrants to Germany since the end of the 1992-1995 conflict, and in particular more recently, has been the negative perception towards BiH. There were repeated reflections among interviewees that there is only a bleak future in BiH, which had prompted them to leave, and that, as a result, they were uninterested in investing or being engaged with BiH beyond maintaining familial connections. They noted this is a result of a political environment that has stalled EU integration and development opportunities for the country in order to enrich. This kind of negative perspective is particularly concerning considering that these individuals have the most immediate ties to BiH. While this kind of economic migration to Germany has previously resulted in increased development in the homeland, what was noted by these individuals is that they were more interested in bringing their families to Germany and finding ways to stay in Germany permanently than ever returning to BiH.

### **Representative Diaspora Body in Germany**

A noteworthy development in the diaspora-homeland relationship in Germany is a move to establish a representative diaspora body, initiated as a result of the recently adopted BiH Policy on Cooperation with Diaspora.<sup>144</sup> Through outreach by both the BiH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees and the BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs, two meetings were organized at the time of writing, in Munich and Stuttgart respectively, and two further meetings are planned in Berlin and Frankfurt in 2018. At the time of writing, the representative body is envisioned as having 28 members selected from four regions in Germany around Munich, Stuttgart, Berlin, and Frankfurt, each with 7 members. These

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<sup>143</sup> Paul, J. 2017.

<sup>144</sup> One of the major objectives of the Policy is as follows: "Strengthen the capacities of emigrant organizations and establish a mechanism for presenting emigrants in the receiving countries and in BiH. Which means to examine and develop a mechanism for the representation of diaspora in BiH - representative bodies of diaspora (representatives of different organizations and prominent individuals from diaspora) so that in each country with numerous emigrants, if possible and if there is interest, a body with equal participation of representatives of all three constituent peoples, including representatives of national minorities, can be established."

should consist of two representatives from each of the three main constitutive peoples in BiH and one selected from the Others. At these meetings, participants also agreed that they will have six expert groups consisting of BiH migrants who work in business and trade, academia and education, culture and sports, social sciences and the humanities, project management and legal administrative affairs.

These meetings have represented opportunities for individuals living in Germany to voice their visions of collaboration between Germany and BiH. While this is still in nascent stages, it is important to note that the number of attendees at these meetings, between 50 and 60, mirrored many of the diaspora organizations that are well recognized diaspora organizations, as well as attracted a smaller number of diaspora entrepreneurs. Their immediate concerns surrounded using the term '*iseljenišтво*' or expatriates, and reverted back to the term '*dijaspora*.'

A potential downside of this kind of representative body is that it would further alienate the diaspora from the local population, rather than providing them a seat at the table within existing governmental structures, according to some interlocutors in Germany who are not part of diaspora associations and organizations even though this is exactly the opposite of the intended results of BiH institutions. While the aspirations for it are high, diaspora individuals questioned what kind of support it would receive, whether it would have any formal powers, and how collaboration would look like. Considering the high number of individuals who are not part of formal diaspora organizations, it is also interesting to consider how legitimate, or representative, such a body would be in comparison to the actual population of BiH migrants living in Germany, including also recent economic migrants who might have the most acute needs from their government amidst precarious working conditions. These questions will ideally be addressed over the coming year, in addition to others, including what the role of the representative body in Germany would in relation to working with BiH, including integration within German state structures. This thus refocuses the question to having representatives from each of the German *Länder* to represent the BiH population within that region of Germany, as these individuals might better understand challenges faced among the BiH population there rather than sharing ethnonational belonging for example. However, it is commendable that there is currently a proactive effort underway between BiH institutions to engage individuals in Germany.

### **Relations with BiH Consular and Diplomatic Missions in Germany**

Besides the main BiH Embassy in Berlin, there are also three more general consulates in Germany that serve the diaspora population as well as help foster bilateral relations between BiH and Germany. These are located in Munich, Stuttgart, and Frankfurt. Each retains a good working relationship with the diaspora population, with diaspora donations having helped renovate some of the buildings utilized by the General Consulates for example. In Stuttgart for example, the previous General Consul Haris Halilović maintains a residence and is engaged in fostering diaspora-homeland connections as well as supplementary schooling for Bosnian diaspora students across all of Germany. At the time of writing, the former assistant minister for the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees who worked on diaspora relations, Ruzmira Tihic Kadri, serves as General Consul in the BiH Consulate in Munich, thus solidifying potential engagement between the BiH state and its population in Germany. Each of the General Consulates as well as the Embassy have staff that has served in the missions for longer periods of time and thus have a collective level of institutional memory that is higher than in other BiH Embassies and Consulate around the world, in line with the historic migration patterns between Germany and BiH. Nonetheless, Embassy staff noted that they



would in turn prefer increased engagement and initiative from the BiH population living in Germany as they have limited resources and rely on collaborative arrangements in order to further foster relationships between BiH and the diaspora population.

#### **IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on findings from both the qualitative and quantitative data of this project, it is clear that many of the recommendations for engaging BiH diaspora in development activities is contingent on recommendations for improving BiH diaspora relationships with the homeland and increasing trust between the same. Despite current shortcomings, BiH diaspora would like to see their ties with the homeland strengthened, and would like to be an active participant in the future of BiH. Recommendations for areas of improvement include:

**1. Increase the engagement and presence of BiH institutions in the BiH diaspora in Germany.** Considering the size of the BiH population in Nordrhein-Westphalen, it would make sense to open another BiH Consulate in this region as the distance traveled for this population is relatively lengthy in order to receive consular services or to feel a connection to the country of origin. The Embassy and Consulate staff in Germany could be further supported in Germany in order to foster more community among BiH migrants in Germany, either within their own spaces, or through collaboration with BiH diaspora organizations or businesses through helping to sponsor certain events or simply by promoting diaspora activities in Germany.

**2. Provide direct support for supplementary education in the diaspora as well as the establishment of programs in BiH.** Members of BiH associations in Germany emphasized the need to build more goodwill among the diaspora and the homeland, whether through increased Bosnian language learning opportunities for diaspora communities, or cultural collaborations that would help to gather individuals living in Germany to build a stronger community, which remains fragmented at this point.

**3. Encourage and simplify diaspora citizen participation and better integrate diaspora individuals into the BiH political scene.** There should be an increased effort to promote dual citizenship and to foster connections to the homeland as well as lobby with the German government in order to enable dual citizenship for this population as a whole. Interviewees were apologetic about having had to give up their BiH citizenship and unwelcome by Bosnian authorities at all levels when trying to become engaged in the homeland. Considering many other countries preferential policies towards individuals who are descendants from that country regarding investment and development, it would bode well for BiH to adopt such policies as well.

Further outreach both by political parties as well as consular and embassy staff about how external voting works would be welcome in order to better reflect the diaspora voice. Considering the size of the BiH population in Germany and previously high voting numbers, not working on this issue would constitute potentially serious voter suppression.

**4. Integrate sustainable connections between BiH institutions at all levels and diaspora organizations and individuals.** There is a general disappointment noted among Bosnian diaspora individuals and organizations when it comes to governmental institutions and the state as a whole. This falls into multiple categories, including concerns about corruption,

continuous negative media coverage, and the increased brain drain the country is experiencing as a result of a transitional situation in the post-conflict period.

**5. Create promotional material on success stories of the BiH diaspora investment in BiH.** A general and prolonged outreach campaign by official BiH representatives at all levels would be an encouraging way to build more goodwill among the diaspora as well as to promote the best of what BiH has to offer.

**6. Provide direct support for supplementary education in the diaspora as well as the establishment of programs in BiH.** One of the main issues that was echoed throughout focus groups as well as interviews was the importance of Bosnian language learning and the second generation's ability to retain some connection to BiH. Much like in other countries, several ideas were suggested, including more opportunities for student exchange, summer programs geared for diaspora members to meet other diaspora members as well as individuals from BiH of the same age, including language lessons in the summer as well as other forms of childcare for younger children. This represents an entrepreneurial opportunity for BiH as well as an opportunity for higher education institutions to provide programming. Collaborations of this kind should be considered in addition to summer programs for younger children including volunteering opportunities in BiH and day-trips to get to know their country better.

**7. Develop programs and activities to foster stronger relationships between BiH diaspora and local individuals, both in the first and second generation.** Interviewees also noted the importance of response rates when it comes to correspondence with different institutions in BiH. Being abroad, they feel disconnected from the country of origin, and lack of regular communication when they seek it out breeds resentment and lowers chances of future collaboration as well as investment. This speaks to the more general belief about a lack of engagement by the BiH state by diaspora actors and an invitation to engage further, both through official channels but also between the diaspora and the local population.

**8. Build e-service options for diaspora engagement with BiH Institutions in order to encourage a more secure economic and political environment.** Creating mechanisms that provide diaspora a way to provide feedback and thus demand accountability from different institutions in BiH would go a long way in building the diaspora's confidence in collaborating, investing, and working with local actors in BiH. This can be in the form of submitting complaints, or increasing the level of e-services which help to track existing claims, request, and tasks, or having dedicated staff within BiH institutions who work with the diaspora specifically, or are well equipped to do so.

## CHAPTER VI

### Country Report: Italy

#### Summary

The report is based on data collected in Italy (Milano and Verona) in August 2017, involving conflict generated and new-economic migrants. A total of eight interviews were conducted. One was with a senior officer at the Area Sviluppo Associativo Organizzazione ed eventi Legalità, working with BiH migrant workers, two with BiH diplomatic representatives of the BiH Embassy in Rome and General Consulate in Milan, one local businessman of BiH origin in Verona, one university professor of BiH origin, and three young BiH diaspora members who have lived in Italy for more than ten years.

There are almost no comprehensive data available on BiH diaspora migration to Italy before 1990. Most BiH migrants arriving to this country were asylum-seekers from the 1992-1995 war in BiH. Majority of them stayed only for a limited period of time, and then resettled to other European countries. BiH associations in Italy are self-organized, and there is almost no state involvement. Active communities are in the North and Centre of the Apennine peninsula. Other significant groups are based in Rome, Bologna, Piacenza, Milan, Gorizia, Udine, Bergamo, Brescia, Torino, Cagliari, Catania, and Trieste. In general, all ethnic groups have found a high level of integration within Italian society.

Interlocutors report low levels of trust in BiH institutions to provide and carry out integrative actions. As in Italy, there is insufficient communication, and low levels of confidence in business ethics. Their experiences with the BiH market points to relatively low number of business opportunities, advance payments, missed deadlines, preference for short-term financing of development projects, and an inadequate long-term investment environment free of major risks. They also share negative perceptions of the political environment, especially at lower levels of government, with direct experience of extortion and demands for bribe. This is coupled with rather negative perceptions of the government conduct at higher levels, mainly in media they actively follow. They point out the need to build local partnerships and engage in local horizontal interaction with other non-governmental stakeholders.

## I. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Map 7. Distribution of BiH diaspora in Italy by region<sup>145</sup>



### Background and Literature Review

Italy is not a traditional country of migration for Bosnians and Herzegovinians, and thus data on BiH migrants in Italy are truly scarce. Available data from MHRM indicate that 40,000 migrants of BiH origin reside in Italy. More than 14,000 people immigrated to this country between 2002 and 2011. They live in Veneto (9,307), Lombardy (5,168), Friuli Julian (3,957), Lazio (3,333), Emilia Romagna (2,885), and Piedmont (2,122).

The National Institute of Statistics of Italy (2009) reported a total of 29,066 BiH citizens living in Italy. According to incomplete data from EUROSTAT, between 1991 and 2011, a total of 3,642 BiH citizens acquired Italian citizenship. Others reside in Italy on the basis of several types of residence permits. In 1992-1996, the country accepted 50,000 refugees from former Yugoslavia—mostly Croatia and BiH—first under temporary status that was later extended.<sup>146</sup> Other resources point to lower numbers of refugees accepted in Italy from BiH, indicating 20,000 to 30,000 refugees accepted as a result of Italy's strict refugee policy.<sup>147</sup>

<sup>145</sup> Note: This map represents a *general estimate* of the BiH diaspora distribution in Italy. The estimate for each province was arrived at using a combination of respective community self-report, Italian National Institute for Statistics, 2017.

<sup>146</sup> cf. Halilovic, S. 2008: 28.

<sup>147</sup> Reyneri, E. 1998: 2.

BiH diaspora in Italy are organized within various associations and religious organizations. These organizations are engaged in numerous activities with diverse cultural contents. A part of diaspora members of BiH origin, belonging to Serb and Croat ethnic groups, are involved in the work of the organizations attached to and promoting the interests of Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Croatia.

Relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Italy are defined and regulated by 129 bilateral agreements, most of them taken over by the succession of the former SFRY. The Bilateral Agreements concluded by BiH and Italy, which are relevant for BiH diaspora are: Memorandum of Understanding between the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Government of Italy on cooperation between small and medium-sized enterprises; Agreement on Cooperation in the Area of Education, Culture and Sport between the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Government of the Republic of Italy; Agreement between BiH and the Government of Italy on improvement and protection of investments; Memorandum of Understanding on Bosnian-Italian Scientific Co-operation; Agreement between the Council of Ministers of BiH and the Government of the Republic of Italy on the acceptance of persons with illegal residence (i.e. readmission).

Other relevant bilateral treaties with Italy, ratified after the succession of SFRY are: Social Security Convention with Italy, with the General Protocol; Administrative Agreement for the Application of the Social Insurance Convention between Yugoslavia and Italy; Approval of the Agreement between Yugoslavia and Italy on the Regulation of Mutual Social Security Obligations; Social Insurance Convention between Yugoslavia and Italy; Agreement between Yugoslavia and Italy on information institutions; Agreement in the field of culture between the Government of the FNRJ and the Government of Italy; Agreement in the field of culture between the Government of Yugoslavia and the Government of Italy; Agreement between Yugoslavia and Italy on the extension of the diploma validation period; Agreement between SFRY and Italy on the mutual recognition of diplomas and professional titles acquired at the university and institutions of higher education; Agreement on scientific and technical cooperation between SFRY and Italy; Agreement on Economic, Industrial and Technical Co-operation between Yugoslavia and Italy; Agreement on scientific and technical cooperation between Yugoslavia and Italy; and other.

### **Up-to-date Demographics**

According to data furnished in 2007, the official number of BiH migrants would be 29.255.<sup>148</sup> The Italian National Institute for Statistics 2011 census report shows that there are 27.911 citizens of BiH registered in Italy.

Italian Ministry of Interior reports indicate that 25.791 BiH citizen resided in Italy in 2016.<sup>149</sup> Most of them resided in the north-eastern part of the country, more precisely in Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, and Emilia-Romagna. According to the data provided by the Italian Ministry of Interior, a total of 6.446 of BiH citizens received the Italian citizenship from 2007-2017.<sup>150</sup> According to the information provided by the BiH Embassy in Rome and BH General Consulate in Milan, the majority of the BiH citizens living and residing in Italy are

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<sup>148</sup> Caritas-Migrantes Report 2007.

<sup>149</sup> 13,814 of male and 11,977 of female migrants. This number does not include people who had been naturalized in the past two decades.

<sup>150</sup> Data issued by Direzione Centrale per i diritti civili, la cittadinanza e le minoranze, Ministero dell'Interno, September 2017.

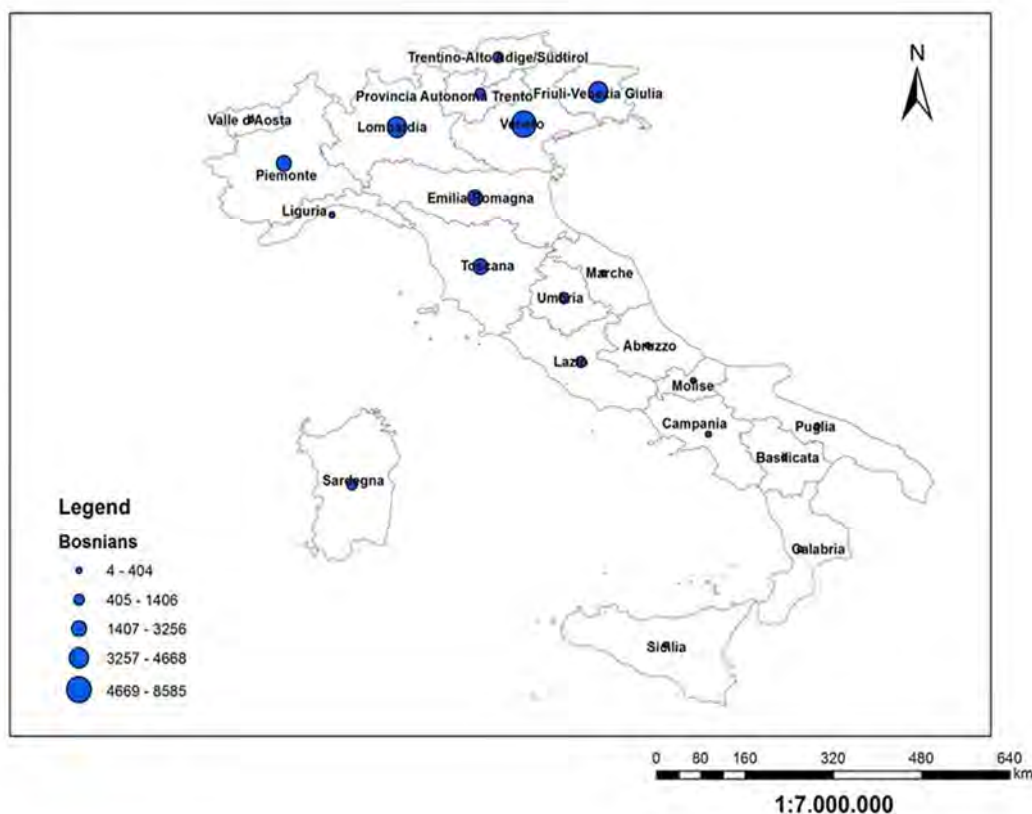
of Roma/Romani descent, The majority of this population arrived to Italy during the Yugoslav period in two separate waves during the 1960s and the late 1970s. Today, the majority of the Roma population has settled in northern Italy, predominately in Turin. BiH Roma live in municipality camps along with Serbian Roma, and are often undocumented.<sup>151</sup>

There is only a relatively low percentage of people belonging to and organizing around three dominant ethnic-based diaspora communities of Bosniaks, Croats, or Serbs.

<b>Italian National Institute for Statistics</b>	<b>never married</b>	<b>de facto separated</b>	<b>legally separated</b>	<b>divorced</b>	<b>widowed</b>	<b>Total in 2011</b>
<b>Territory</b>						
Italy	5979	214	156	336	498	<b>27.911</b>
Nord-ovest	1511	41	34	75	126	6964
Piemonte	553	8	9	11	36	2018
Valle d'Aosta Vallée d'Aoste	3	..	..	..	..	20
Liguria	89	4	..	2	3	258
Lombardia	866	29	25	62	87	4668
Nord-est	2988	124	102	216	266	16463
Trentino Alto Adige Südtirol	235	9	8	32	35	1406
Provincia Autonoma Bolzano	125	1	7	23	9	707
Provincia Autonoma Trento	110	8	1	9	26	699
Veneto	1595	63	55	104	108	8585
Friuli-Venezia Giulia	659	36	28	61	79	3880
Emilia-Romagna	499	16	11	19	44	2592
Centro (I)	1026	42	18	37	79	3256
Toscana	189	18	4	10	21	796
Umbria	29	1	..	4	5	156
Marche	143	9	6	13	24	674
Lazio	665	14	8	10	29	1630
Sud	224	5	1	5	14	650
Abruzzo	23	2	..	1	6	88
Molise	..	..	..	..	..	4
Campania	147	2	..	4	6	404
Puglia	41	1	1	..	1	122
Basilicata	2	..	..	..	..	9
Calabria	11	..	..	..	1	23
Isole	230	2	1	3	13	578
Sicilia	13	1	..	1	1	57
Sardegna	217	1	1	2	12	521

<sup>151</sup> Manzoni, C. 2014.

Map 8. Major regions with BiH migrant populations in Italy marked.<sup>152</sup>



These numbers include every person with BiH citizenship in Italy. There are no other specific data on the level of educational attainment or other socio-economic characteristics regarding this population available.

### Associations

There are several associations of citizens of Bosnian-Herzegovinian origin active in Italy. The most prominent ones are Association "BiH izvan granica" based in Piacenza; Association of Citizens of BiH, based in Biella; Association "Ljiljan" based in Prescia; Association of Citizens of BiH in Verona; Association of Citizens of BiH "Most" based in Trieste Association of Citizens "Nema problema" based in Bologna; BiH Community "Bosna u srcu" from Rome; and "Amici dei Bosnia" based in Bari.

On November 25, 2017, the aforementioned organizations of BiH citizens came together in City of Piacenza to form a "Union of BiH Citizen Associations" in Italy. They adopted a Statute, and proceeded with electing the Steering Committee and managing staff. Ms. Mirjana Paunovi, a delegate from Trieste, originally from Banja Luka, was elected as the President of the association, and Ms. Fatima Neimarlija from Rome as her deputy. Mr. Sanel Muharemovi from Piacenza was elected as the Union's secretary, while Mr. Nermin Fazlagi from Verona was appointed as a treasurer. The Steering Committee consists of 9 members.<sup>153</sup> The Union's primary task is improving the position of BiH diaspora in Italy,

<sup>152</sup> Note: This map represents a general estimate of the BiH diaspora distribution in Italy. The estimate for each province was arrived at using a combination of respective community self-report, Italian National Institute for Statistics, 2017.

<sup>153</sup> Nalo, A. 2017.

organizing intercultural exchanges and professional practices, and providing advice on consular issues and residence permits in Italy. In addition to fostering horizontal connections between various BiH diaspora associations in Italy, establishment of the umbrella association BiH diaspora in Italy is an important step in strengthening the communication and cooperation between BiH authorities and various diaspora communities in Italy, which is in line with article 1.3. of the recently adopted national level Policy on cooperation with BiH diaspora.

### **Migration Trends**

Comparative literature suggests that during the dissolution of the Socialist Yugoslavia and the following regional conflict, geographical proximity and an increased attention and sensitiveness towards this situation by the Italian citizenry, especially in the northern Italian regions, marked the rise of new local actors in the field of decentralized cooperation. Eventually, such decentralized cooperation institutions in Italy contributed to the creation of a more favorable environment for collaborating with civil society associations, opening new spaces for migrants' participation in the respective country of residence-homeland in ex-Yugoslavia. The resulting changes have directly and indirectly influenced diaspora associations and their organization processes, which are still visible in northwestern BiH and the Cazin region.<sup>154</sup> In 1992-1996, available reports indicate that Italy accepted 50.000 refugees from former Yugoslavia, mainly from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most BiH migrants considered Italy as a place of transit, rather than their final destination. After a short period of residence in Italian camps, most resettled in other countries, such as Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, as well as overseas, in Canada, the U.S., and Australia.

This situation was partially due to the difficulties of the Italian Government in dealing with issues related to the reception and integration of refugees. Actually, a clear distinction between asylum seekers and illegal immigrants did not exist in the Italian Legislation. Namely, between 1992 and 1994, the Italian Government adopted two emergency measures to cope with the growing flow of refugees from Former Yugoslavia. Both measures were aimed at delegating power in this matter to both police and voluntary organizations.<sup>155</sup> The "Aliens Act" of the 28th of February 1990 contained instructions for the border policy to reject asylum seekers. However, this act did not solve the issue of recognition and reception of refugees within Italian territory. Two years later, Law no. 390, adopted in 1992, was the first Italian act designed to face the problems raised by the arrival of thousands of people from Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to the abovementioned Law, BiH migrants were defined as "displaced" rather than asylum seekers or refugees. This definition enabled the Italian Government to delegate to humanitarian associations and to offer assistance to these groups of migrants, without embarking on political decisions about the legal status of those who were deemed as "displaced".<sup>156</sup>

Interlocutors report that BiH diaspora initiatives in Italy were hard to initiate and sustain, due to low number of migrants proactively attached to country's post-conflict development, as well as their dispersion across the country. Major actions required a lot of time or money, and many discussions never turned into concrete projects. Over time, their motivations to assist have downsized to family interests and needs. In spite of these difficulties, some migrants managed to gain strong public recognition and support for their initiatives, thanks to their work on issues related to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Noteworthy examples of Elvira

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<sup>154</sup> Sinatti et al., 2010:10

<sup>155</sup> Capussotti, 2003.

<sup>156</sup> Gentile, V. 2012; Tatjana Sekulic, a personal interview, November 2017.



Muj i , who published a book on Srebrenica, and Azra Nuhefendi , collaborator of Osservatorio sui Balcani and Pedrag Matvejevi , a public activist working on promoting and enhancing interethnic solidarity and cooperation, are credible indicators that diaspora mobilization in Italy can be achieved, but it requires a great deal of personal interest and investments.

Central Electoral Commission of BiH<sup>157</sup> reports indicate that number of registered BiH citizens or voters in Italy has been inconsistently growing in the past 4 election cycles. The total number is relatively low compared to the number of voters who have the rights to register. It is important to note here that the number of registered voters is still higher than the number of individuals who end up voting in each election in the end, which is usually around 65% to 70%.

247 voters registered in 2010 General Elections

586 voters registered in 2012 Local Elections

433 voters registered in 2014 General Elections

1652 voters registered in 2016 Local Elections

## II. MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION EXPERIENCE

Interviewed representatives of the Italian authorities in Milan and members of Italian state-funded associations that worked on integration of BiH refugees and economic migrants in Italy highlighted excellent levels of integration of BiH migrants. Migration portfolio in Italy is fragmented, and falls under several government departments. Successful management of migrants' needs depends on cooperation of different stakeholders. BiH migrants have succeeded to recognize their own responsibilities in navigating this complicated system, and they have actively pursued solutions to their own problems, rather than waiting for the government to take concrete actions in resolving the matter. They have been actively involved in widespread consultation processes, and managed to organize within diaspora associations, private sector, and otherwise to voice their problems and seek assistance of local and regional governments.

Gentile explored the role of women in diaspora, with a focus on the case of Bosnian diaspora women in Italy.<sup>158</sup> Her work shows that collective traumas, more than shared ethnic identities, brings individuals to consider themselves as a part of a diaspora community. Diaspora therefore entails a form of solidarity, which encompasses complex interconnections among individuals' plural affiliations. In this case, the emphasis on cultural features of BiH into their daily lives in Italy is incorporated in a broader inter-ethnic perspective, and diaspora members, especially women, have become not only mediating actors between hosting societies and diaspora communities, but also crucial players in enhancing integration within and across their community.

Other interlocutors, members of a younger generation of migrants, highlight the importance of building trust and credibility between various diaspora communities, as well as local communities in BiH, as a prerequisite for any successful diaspora-driven development initiative. In their view, good intentions have an expiration date, and if people do not act promptly and strategically, if they fail to mobilize key actors, set priorities and commit to

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<sup>157</sup> Branko Petric, Member of the CIK, document number: 04-50-2-274/17

<sup>158</sup> Gentile, V. 2012.

certain goals, much will be lost over a very short period of time. They claim that this is exactly what happened in Italy. Self-organized leadership of various diaspora associations, who initially struggled with resolving their existential problems, did not manage to come together and turn their initiatives into productive action. Lack of easily accessible funding in Italy to initiate diverse twinning projects, as well as lack of up-to-date and specific information on what can be done in their local communities in BiH, has contributed to associations' isolation and low levels of horizontal connections. Those who were active at the beginning have slowly disengaged, while others were unavoidably deterred to join.

### **III. POTENTIAL OF BIH DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT**

Interviewed diaspora members, many of whom are owners of private companies and/or employed in a private sector, have pointed out that BiH authorities and other involved parties need to pay more attention to diaspora potential to increase investments to some of the attractive business opportunities, mainly through commercialization of some of BiH's underutilized natural export assets, for instance drinking water resources, and also energy—primarily electricity. Removing all investment barriers to these sectors is perceived as critical for unlocking sustainable local economic growth and reducing related pressures on local economies. In addition, by setting up various investment incentive systems for diaspora, allowing them to gain favorable access financing projects in natural resources, and providing access to market these products in tradable sectors, could foster other type of investments, principally aimed at increasing productivity to address local high unemployment rates, and even poverty.

Additionally, local interlocutors believe it is important to design and organize more efficient ways to increase the inflow of remittances, to facilitate and stimulate local consumption needs. These could lead to some small-scale co-financing projects of locals and diaspora, discourage local recipients of remittances to keep their money in banks as temporary deposits, but to invest it some SME projects or in various public-private partnerships managed by local communities and diaspora.

The Embassy of BiH in Rome and the General Consulate in Milan are in regular contacts with most of the active BiH diaspora members, living mainly in Rome, the Veneto region and the surrounding area. Their practical assistance in channeling locally driven initiatives and their transmission to relevant counterparts in BiH is considered of great importance to the overall success of all meaningful projects.

### **IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**1. Public administration reforms to allow diaspora to easily look for information online:** Interlocutors in Italy noted that local governments need to invest more effort updating and promoting their local initiatives, mainly through online means. Apart from systematizing information, it is important to clearly identify goals and needs, and what can be expected from different stakeholders. Diaspora needs an opportunity to prepare before on-site arrivals to BiH, and then have an effective communication with local agents.

**2. Boost tax revenues through administrative reforms:** Cantonal, entity and state-level institutions need to complete the instigated and initiate additional reforms aimed at improving the efficacy of public spending, to project an image of trustworthy investment destination not only for diaspora, but also for those diaspora entrepreneurs might be interested to bring with.

BiH businessmen in Italy consider it difficult to lobby for investments abroad if there is no publically available information, doubts to as how money is spent, applicable tax rates, and potential hidden costs, etc.

**3. Promote the agricultural productivity of BiH for Diaspora Investors:** Bosnian diaspora business owners in the field of agricultural production noted the potential of the agricultural sector in BiH as a potential investment opportunity. They consider there to be a need to create more promotion for investors in agriculture, organic production, clean energy, and other related areas. By improving the agricultural sector and centralizing the strategies of agricultural development in various cantons and both entities, other non-agricultural employment opportunities could also be gained.

**4. More regulation in public-private partnerships:** Another business opportunity identified by BiH diaspora businesspeople in Italy were investments in public-private partnerships which are common in Italy but rare in BiH. They consider this an underexplored and underutilized area of investment that can generate economic growth and development. The perceived poor governance of publically financed projects in BiH, as well as perceptions of an unfavorable tax climate remain serious challenges for investment by BiH diaspora in Italy. They consider that local governments need to commit to adopting and implementing government integrity action plans, to raise levels of trust of potential investors. This should be done not only by improving an image of reliability of local partners to deliver, but also in their proving their solvency and the ability to generate profits for all partners involved, according to interlocutors in Italy.

**5. Channel remittance inflows into local investments:** The majority of local governments in BiH are fully aware of the fact that remittances can have positive effects on shaping consumption patterns, but not many have engaged in organizing local trainings on investment or starting-up a business, cooperative, or production structures for remittance recipients in BiH. Much of the money received from abroad is spent covering current consumption needs, while some of it is saved in banks or in private locations. It is recommended that local BiH governments need to escape territorial traps in seeking diaspora engagement. Rather, they need to invest time and money into establishing formal or informal connections with remittance recipients that profit from diasporas' indirect (family based) engagement. Practically, local governments need to engage with local receivers of remittances and provide opportunities to educate them about various sustainable investment opportunities, with low financial risks, low interest rates, and high chances for gaining profit in the long-run.

## CHAPTER VII

### Country Report: The Netherlands

#### Summary

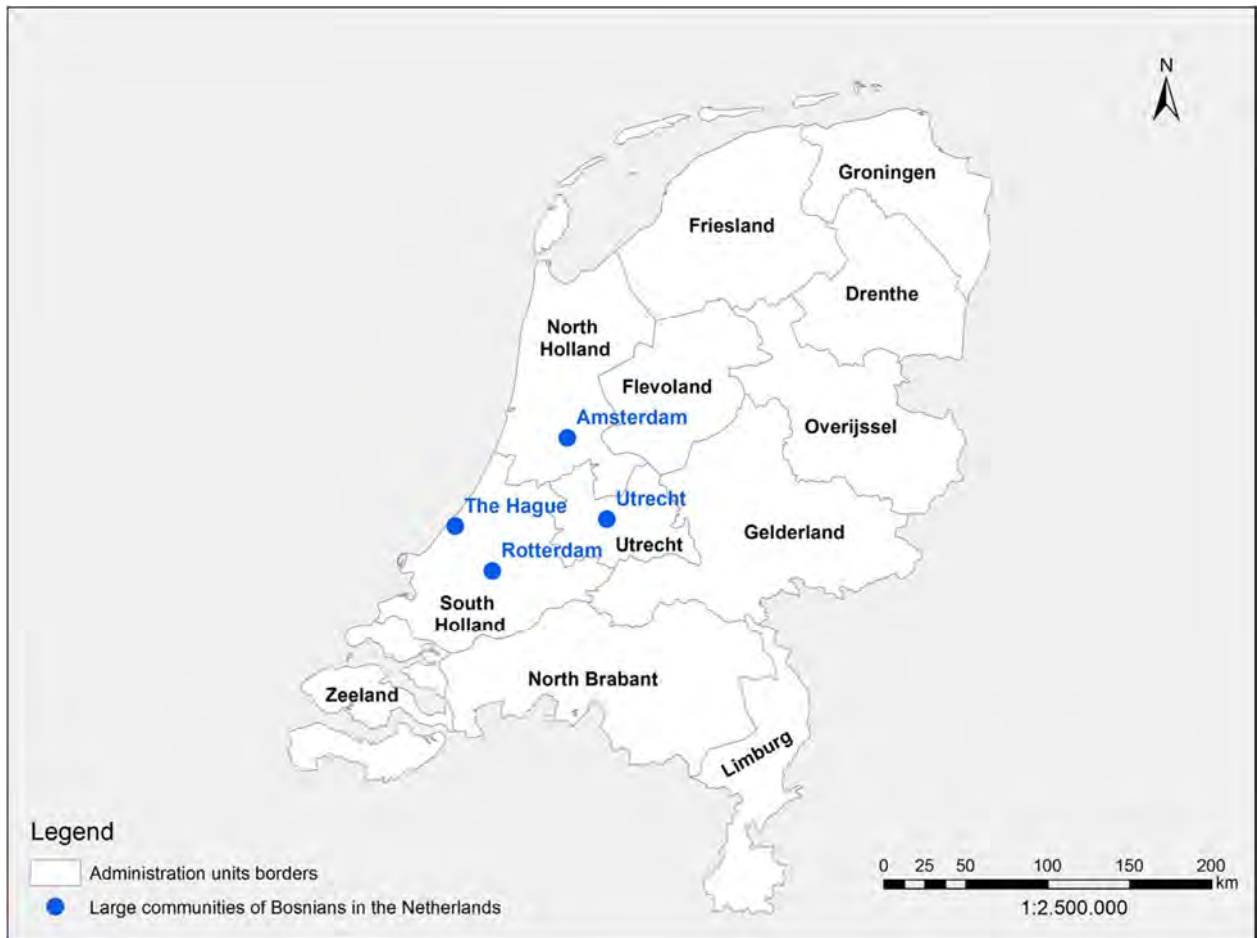
This country report is based on data gathered between August and November 2017 among members of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora in the Netherlands. The research findings presented are based on existing academic research, quantitative data collected from Dutch Statistics agencies as well as other relevant institutions, a focus group, as well as ten face-to-face interviews (in-person, via telephone and Skype, and email communication) with Dutch Bosnian diaspora entrepreneurs, activists, diaspora association members, and BiH Embassy officials in The Hague. For the purposes of this report, BiH diaspora includes individuals who were born in BiH as well as those who are descendants of Bosnian and Herzegovinian-born individuals and thus consider BiH as their homeland in one way or another, prescribing a sense of belonging.

The majority of face-to-face interviews were conducted in Amsterdam and The Hague, including Sarajevo as a BiH diaspora business owner was in BiH. Each interview lasted between one to two hours. Shorter interviews, over the phone conversations, and email exchange related to the project were also conducted with ten other individuals. One focus group including five individuals (BiH diaspora organization members, business people, academic, and recent migrant) was organized at the BiH Embassy at The Hague. As part of the project, diaspora umbrella organizations, diaspora religious organizations, and diaspora social media were contacted and their assistance and participation solicited in an attempt to reach out to as diverse a group of the BiH diaspora community as possible.

BiH diaspora in the Netherlands accounts primarily of conflict-generated diaspora members and their children. The report highlights several associations that are engaged in the Netherlands in an effort to provide an oversight of the population. However, it is important to note that most individuals from Bosnia and Herzegovina living in the Netherlands today are not part of diaspora organizations and associations according to interviewees and have rather integrated within the Dutch system as citizens. Hence it is challenging to make generalizations about the population as the group does not act as a cohesive unit within Dutch society or have representatives on the national level that engage as representatives of the BiH diaspora. This is also important to keep in mind considering that outreach to the BiH community in the Netherlands thus presents an additional challenge.

## I. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Map 9. Distribution of major BiH diaspora hubs in the Netherlands<sup>159</sup>



### Background and Literature Review

The Netherlands established a guest worker agreement with Yugoslavia in 1970, which led to economic migration from former Yugoslavia to the Netherlands. Thus, there have been cycles of migration from the region of former Yugoslavia to the Netherlands since then. Many of these individuals settled in Rotterdam and Amsterdam and formed Yugoslav clubs in order to associate together and form community in the Netherlands while being abroad.<sup>160</sup> However, the majority of the BiH diaspora population lives in the Netherlands as a result of the 1990s conflicts in former Yugoslavia. During this period, Bosnians arrived as refugees, as elsewhere in Europe. The Netherlands, with a strong history of migration, was able to incorporate thousands of refugees during this period. The refugee population was encouraged to learn the language and to integrate within Dutch society upon their arrival in the Netherlands. Today, it is difficult to map this population in details as Dutch governmental agencies do not classify these individuals separately between the different republics of former Yugoslavia.

<sup>159</sup> Note: This map is derived from data collected by the Dutch Statistics Agency as of the end of 2016. The four cities highlighted are the cities with the highest populations of BiH diaspora and immigrants more generally in the Netherlands.

<sup>160</sup> Koinova, M. 2014.

Hence, this group is considered and analyzed as one within the Dutch system, and as such is representative of the 9<sup>th</sup> largest immigrant group in the Netherlands today, based on having at least one parent from the region.<sup>161</sup> Much like the rest of the immigrant population in the Netherlands, BiH are centered in urban areas, predominately Amsterdam, Utrecht, The Hague, and Rotterdam. For example, the table below accounts for individuals who are registered as having a BiH background living in the Netherlands, divided up by province. The first generation is defined as individuals born in BiH with at least one parent born abroad, whereas the second generation is defined as born in the Netherlands with at least one parent born in BiH. Of course, this does not account for the whole BiH diaspora population in the Netherlands, as noted before, since the majority of individuals were born in former Yugoslavia.

<b>People with a BiH background in the Netherlands as of Jan 1, 2017<sup>162</sup></b>			
<b>Province</b>	<b>1st generation</b>	<b>2nd generation</b>	<b>Total</b>
Drenthe	22	2	24
Flevoland	17		17
Friesland	14	4	18
Gelderland	109	4	113
Groningen	32	3	35
Limburg	86	6	92
Noord-Brabant	125	8	133
Noord-Holland	115	4	119
Overijssel	46		46
Utrecht	67	6	73
Zeeland	20	2	22
Zuid-Holland	244	12	256
<b>Total</b>	<b>897</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>948</b>

According to the Central Statistics Bureau of the Netherlands, there are 2.119 BiH citizens living in the Netherlands as of 2016. There are also 887 people living in the Netherlands who are first generation Bosnians and Herzegovinians or have at least one parent born in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Further, according to the Central Statistics Bureau of the Netherlands, there are 51 second generation Bosnians living in the Netherlands as of 2017. A total of 36 individuals cancelled their residence from BiH to the Netherlands in 2016 according to the BiH Ministry for Security Migration Profile prepared for that year, indicating a low number of economic migrants to the Netherlands. Overall this indicates the Netherlands are not a high priority destination country for Bosnian citizens today. It ranks as the eighth country of destination for 2016, with 1.196 individuals leaving to go work in the Netherlands from BiH in 2016.<sup>163</sup>

Overall, the number of BiH migrants appears to be low, considering that the Netherlands has previously been estimated to have a much larger BiH diaspora population than indicated. The exact number is difficult to disaggregate as the Central Statistics Bureau of the Netherlands

<sup>161</sup> Ersanilli, E. 2014.

<sup>162</sup> Statistics Netherlands 2017.

<sup>163</sup> Bosnia and Herzegovina Migration Profile, 2016.

does not differentiate among those who arrived from Yugoslavia by the respective resulting republics, as noted above. Nonetheless, according to the 2013 BiH Ministry for Security's Migration Profile report, the total number of individuals born in Bosnia and Herzegovina and living in the Netherlands was 25,440, as reported by Statistics Netherlands. In an effort to clarify this, below is a table which reflects the total numbers, indicating both first and second-generation backgrounds for the total (former) Yugoslav population. In the Netherlands, individuals who have at least one parent born in a particular country are considered second generation. Previous research has demonstrated that over 40% of the population from former Yugoslavia is from BiH. In fact, this is twice the size of the Serbian population in the Netherlands.<sup>164</sup> Using the numbers below, we can assume that the population of Bosnians and Herzegovinians living in the Netherlands today, including the second generation, would be estimated between 30,000 and 35,000, as confirmed by interlocutors as well. A table accounting for individuals from former Yugoslavia living in the Netherlands between 2009 and 2017 is below.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>First Generation</b>	<b>Second Generation</b>
2009	78,035	52,653	25,382
2010	79,119	52,739	26,380
2011	79,962	52,554	27,408
2012	80,837	52,554	28,285
2013	81,498	52,375	29,123
2014	82,290	52,371	29,919
2015	83,261	52,486	30,775
2016	84,243	52,627	31,616
2017	85,504	53,012	32,492

These numbers point to the fact that a large majority of those who arrived in the Netherlands from BiH as refugees have taken advantage of the Dutch citizenship regime and have attained dual citizenship after five years of residence. The Netherlands offered the majority of individuals who arrived as refugees during the 1990s a citizenship path within five years, an opportunity almost all took advantage of.<sup>165</sup> The high level of naturalization in the Netherlands points to the high level of integration of these individuals in Dutch society as well, and their general acceptance within it. Interviewees confirmed this in both in-depth interviews as well as during focus groups. They highlighted the importance of becoming part of the Dutch lifestyle and their lack of interest in engaging with their war-torn homeland as well as others in diaspora during the initial stages of life in the Netherlands. They indicated this was an attempt at overcoming traumatic experiences back in BiH and a way to associate with Dutch people rather than diaspora members, with whom many did not feel a strong connection.

This echoes prior research which disaggregated available information about individuals living in the Netherlands by their birthplace. The three cities which had the most numerous individuals living in the Netherlands were Sarajevo (2665), Zenica (1832), and Prijedor (1107). All other cities had individuals in lower numbers with cities such as Doboij (969), Tuzla (937) and Banja Luka (693) coming, and all other cities with 500 or less individuals originating from there. These also represent more urban centers in BiH, likely also reflecting the diverse nature of the diaspora experiences among individuals, a variety of ethnic

<sup>164</sup> Mulalic L et al. 2007.

<sup>165</sup> Al-Ali, N. 2002.

backgrounds, as well as a higher level of education in comparison to previous waves of guest workers from the region to the Netherlands. In fact, there were generally more young families among this population in the early 2000s than in other groups from former Yugoslavia.<sup>166</sup>

Prior research has shown that BiH women are generally able to find employment in the Netherlands easier than BiH men, and in turn learn the language and feel a sense of belonging, though the BiH population in general has not experienced high levels of discrimination in Dutch society.<sup>167</sup> However, for many of the BiH refugees who arrived in the Netherlands, at least initial employment was not necessarily in the field in which they worked back in the homeland, but rather involved lower-paid positions such as cleaning and child-care. Considering the size of the second generation, today, most individuals with BiH roots are gainfully employed in a variety of professions. Interviewees included consultants, entrepreneurs, individuals working in media and academia, as well as in management positions.

The political environment in the Netherlands, with the rise of right-wing political parties, has also affected individuals with BiH and former Yugoslav backgrounds living in the Netherlands, as previous research has noted. Respondents indicated that they felt there were higher levels of discrimination and hate speech directed towards them and other migrants after the election of Geert Wilders in the Netherlands. This was an attitude, that while prevalent among individuals who considered themselves Muslim, was nonetheless present among individuals of all ethnic backgrounds.<sup>168</sup> Interviewees for this study confirmed these findings, though they also reflected on their participation in Dutch politics through voting and active engagement, noting the importance of being engaged within Dutch society in order to respond to anti-immigrant sentiments.

### **Repatriation**

875 BiH individuals have taken advantage of the Dutch Remigration scheme since 2000. This is available for individuals who have arrived to the Netherlands from a number of relevant countries prior to 2014 (Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia, Cape Verde, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia and Surinam). Incidentally, it also applies for Croatian nationals who arrived before 2013, Slovenians who arrived before 2004, and Spaniards, Portugese, Italians, and Greeks prior to 1993. It allows for a monthly remigration benefit and support with the remigration process from the Dutch Migration Institute. Among the 875 BiH who have chosen to remigrate to Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are 497 men and 378 women. They are all predominately older individuals, well into retirement age, with only 5 individuals who were under age 44 at the time of remigration (4 women, one man). It is important to note here that the number of individuals who choose to remigrate on an annual basis has remained relatively steady, demonstrating an ongoing trend for older individuals with a BiH background to choose the option of returning in order to live out their lives. As interviewees noted, this number is likely higher in reality, as older Bosnian and Herzegovinian couples often return together, with one of them taking advantage of the remigration benefit while the other retains the privileges of being able to return to the Netherlands and maintain nationality in the Netherlands, as noted in interviews among the BiH diaspora. Further, there are likely individuals who do not take advantage of the remigration benefit but return to BiH, or live transnationally, as they do not want to lose their Dutch national insurance and other relevant benefits including pension in the Netherlands.

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<sup>166</sup> Mulalic L et al. 2007.

<sup>167</sup> Al-Ali, N. 2002.

<sup>168</sup> Koinova, M. 2014.



### **Educational Attainment**

As in other countries of integration, BiH migrants are generally understood to have attained higher levels of education than other migrant populations and the Netherlands does not seem to differ in this, though detailed data is not collected by Statistics Netherlands. Research has demonstrated that over 40% of second generation BiH migrants obtain a university or vocational university degree, which is higher than the Dutch national average.<sup>169</sup> The number for individuals aged 15-24 who were enrolled in full time education in 2007 from former Yugoslavia amounted to roughly the same as Dutch nationals, 54.9%.<sup>170</sup> While initial conditions for Bosnian refugees in the Netherlands presented difficulty for most in regards to integrating within the labor market in the country, it is worthwhile to note that this seems to be overcome within one generation as those in the second generation demonstrate similar levels of educational attainment as the local population. The Netherlands are understood to have created a more favorable environment for Bosnian migrants and one in which they have managed to integrate well within a decade upon arrival, nearly approaching the same employment levels as native-born Dutch.<sup>171</sup> As a result, there are successful and highly educated individuals who have connection to BiH living in the Netherlands including lawyers, doctors, business owners, and a variety of other professionals.

### **Diaspora Associations and Communication Patterns**

Communication with BiH is often through familial connections via modern communication technologies such as Viber and Skype, with Facebook being another option individuals often noted as making it easy to stay in touch. When it comes to news consumption, Facebook groups and friends' posts tend to be the most informative in addition to popular news media, much as is read in BiH with Klix.ba and Oslobodjenje being singled out most often. This holds for most BiH diaspora across the world. Additionally, the Netherlands is home to the *BiH Diaspora Radio* which has regular weekly broadcasts and aims to keep the diaspora informed about all relevant news for them (<http://www.radiobhdijaspore.com>).

There is an umbrella organization, Platform BiH, established in 1997, which seeks to gather BiH associations in the Netherlands. In turn, the organization is a member of the *Svjetski Savez Dijaspore Bosne i Hercegovina*, thus aiming for more transnational links with Bosnian diaspora elsewhere. As of the writing of this report, 26 smaller associations were members within the network, including three that operate across the Netherlands (*Business Club BiH-NL*, *Mladi BiH*, and *Naučno Akademski Umjetnički Klub NAUK BiH*), and 23 that operate regionally, including Bosniak regional clubs, women's clubs, diaspora activist clubs, and associations that focus on translocal links between specific homeland communities and the Netherlands. Among these clubs, there are none that are expressly organized only for Serbs or Croats. Rather, there are a limited number of associations within the Netherlands, often religiously based, that gather Serbs and Croats including those from BiH who live in the Netherlands. Within the Platform umbrella organization, there is a joint platform of supporting their homeland through continued engagement and improving the relationship between the Netherlands and BiH.

While most these organizations are expressively inclusive of all ethnonational groups in BiH, they often have a challenging time recruiting members of all three major constitutive peoples.

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<sup>169</sup> Bolwijn, M. and De Mooij G. 2015.

<sup>170</sup> De Boom, J., A. Weltevrede, S. Rezai & G. Engbersen 2008.

<sup>171</sup> Barlund, M, et al. 2017.

This is reflective of BiH diaspora organizations on the whole, regardless of country of integration and holds true in the Netherlands as well.<sup>172</sup> Religiously based organizations, whether mosques or churches, also offer spaces for diaspora members to meet one another and often encourage engagement to the homeland, though they are rarely the only focus of the individuals' lives in the Netherlands, as noted by interviewees. This also leads to many Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats being absorbed into Serbian and Croatian diaspora organizations respectively, with diaspora organizations that are 'Bosnian' having a greater proportion of Bosniaks than Bosnian Serbs or Bosnian Croats.

The Platform publishes a magazine regularly noting their activities, and collaborate with the aforementioned BiH diaspora radio station. In this way, the umbrella organization and its member associations reflect many of the same trends as among BiH diaspora members worldwide. What is important to note here though is that there is often overlap among different memberships within these associations and organizations and individuals often know each other through a number of different associations or relationships prior to their migration experience such as from the homeland communities themselves. This also points to the fact that individuals involved in diaspora organizations, regardless of whether they have ethnic labels or not, are more engaged than other individuals and thus able to forward their particular agendas among government actors, both in the homeland and the hostland.

There is an interest in Bosnian language learning among this community and there are organized language lessons, on a voluntary basis, for the second generation. In Rotterdam for example, diaspora associations have organized such lessons as supplementary education schools are not offered by the Dutch state.

### **Remittance/Investment Volume**

All of the individuals interviewed remit back to the homeland through their familial ties and own property back in Bosnia and Herzegovina they often return to. It was noteworthy that a good number have also purchased apartments in Sarajevo to use during their summer vacations, most often spent in BiH. This sentiment was echoed by BiH Embassy staff.

There are multiple individuals who have managed to establish small or medium businesses from the Netherlands and have as a result also grown the same in BiH, employing a small number of individuals in BiH as well. These include manufacturing, tourism, and consulting firms. Those diaspora members who invested all noted the dedication of time initial business procedures too and the lack of clarity about tax procedures for them as well as a lack of incentives to retain their business in BiH. They echoed the relevance of their own connections in establishing their businesses rather than help from local institutions. However, it is noteworthy to mention that once their businesses started, there were not major hurdles in day-to-day operations.

Several interviewees noted that they had previously tried to invest back in the country or help their children do so, with varying levels of success. They attribute this to the lack of transparency in how long processes take in BiH, and as a result, their lack of time to wait for various institutions while attempting to open or manage their businesses. They lament the lack of e-services and the need to 'run around looking for forms, stamps, and approvals' while in BiH.

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<sup>172</sup> Van Gorp, J. and Smets, K. 2015.

Nonetheless, there is interest for investment in BiH. As noted, there is Bosnian Business Club in the Netherlands with close to twenty members who keep each other informed about potential business opportunities or have already established businesses in Bosnia and Herzegovina, or have their own businesses in the Netherlands and are looking to potentially expand. These individuals are more than interested in furthering investment opportunities and strengthening the link between the Netherlands and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, the group is diverse both in its representativeness of a variety of sectors in business and different ethnic backgrounds, although this is in no way highlighted among the group as a particular feature of their makeup. Interlocutors noted they consider themselves "Bosnian" and struggle with the need to define themselves based on ethnonational belonging in BiH. This is likely as a result of the fact that many retain a refugee mentality and consider their relationship to the homeland not on an ethnonational basis but on the basis of belonging translocally, as in being from a particular locality in BiH for example. One business owner noted relevant ties to communities in Konjic and Mostar that she utilized in order to maximize her business growth while another noted his ties to Zenica including local knowledge about where it would be best to open a business and which local partners to work with in order for it to succeed.

Overall, individuals have demonstrated a history of establishing businesses that operate between the Netherlands and BiH and are interested in continuing these practices, as evidenced in part by the Bosnian Business Club. Examples include hospitality, consulting, and general contracting businesses. One interviewee runs a successful eco-tourism business which provides tourists from the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe a special opportunity to explore the BiH landscape and nature in general by utilizing connections among the local population.

## II. MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION EXPERIENCE

There is little to no financial support or space allocations made for cultural or diaspora associations in the Netherlands by the Dutch government.<sup>173</sup> Hence, any diaspora organizations in the Netherlands struggle with the same challenges of most non-profits including fundraising and sustainability. Considering activities are conducted on a volunteer basis, there is little incentive for diaspora members to organize in official capacities beyond the strength of their wills. This is perhaps why the most organized diaspora organizations are organized around shared interests such as the desire to invest back in BiH and ensure that the second generation speaks Bosnian, or identity, such as particular religious organizations or those that focus on Bosnian heritage such as *Sevdah*.

Interviewees noted that BiH diaspora organizations and associations are a relative novel development among the community as they spent their initial time in the Netherlands adjusting to Dutch life and integrating within their respective communities. Further, individuals were not settled together in communities as has been the case in other countries such as Switzerland, but were instead initially dispersed among numerous communities throughout the Netherlands. Individuals echoed this sentiment during a focus group, noting that they even avoided contact with other BiH migrants during this initial period in order to overcome traumas survived during the conflict.

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<sup>173</sup> Barslund, M. et al. 2017.

Whether trauma is felt more acutely in the Netherlands due to the proximity of the ICTY in The Hague or whether the Bosnians and Herzegovinians who migrated to the Netherlands have experienced on average more trauma prior to their arrival in the Netherlands is yet to be explored. However, it is noteworthy that BiH diaspora have mobilized politically at times relevant for a variety of ongoing trials at the ICTY, in support of memorialization claims and in an effort to raise awareness of atrocities committed, often in relation to the Srebrenica Genocide. Often times, BiH diaspora organizations in the Netherlands, as elsewhere, place a high emphasis on organizing commemorative events focused on the Srebrenica Genocide. One of the BiH diaspora organizations in the Netherlands is focused around commemoration and memorialization activities in the Prijedor area, thus highlighting the importance of the diaspora's engagement in these activities and their interest with local politics in BiH. Nonetheless, this does not translate into diaspora voting. According to the Central Election Commission of BiH, there were only 1930 individuals registered for the 2002 elections, 888 for the 2004 elections, 836 for the 2006 elections, 915 for the 2008 elections, and 927 for the 2010 elections.

BiH diaspora members are not organized politically as Bosnian-Dutch citizens within the Netherlands either. As noted by a Bosnian-born Dutch political candidate for the D66 party, Nermina Kundi , "Most people from BiH vote for the Workers Party (PvdA), a small part for D66, but I do not know whether this is representative data. I think that we are present in several political options including Wilders."<sup>174</sup> Kundic herself arrived in the Netherlands in the early 2000s after having married a Dutch national, rather than being conflict-generated diaspora herself.

### **III. POTENTIAL OF BiH DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT**

Considering the high levels of integration among BiH diaspora members as well as the existence of diaspora associations focused on entrepreneurship opportunities, there is high potential for diaspora investment despite the relatively low number of BiH diaspora individuals. Furthermore, there is quite potential for collaboration regarding transfer knowledge considering BiH diaspora's educational attainment and levels of integration in the Netherlands, as outlined throughout this chapter. BiH Dutch diaspora interlocutors noted their interest in giving guest lectures or organizing workshops in their chosen professions to professionals in BiH or to students.

#### **Barriers to Engagement of BiH diaspora**

More resources and targeted work mainstreamed between BiH institutions at all levels, including with the Embassy in the Netherlands can serve as a focal, inviting point for the diaspora and as a first contact for engagement, investment, and solution-building. Diaspora members in the Netherlands echoed the importance of capacity building initiatives in BiH prior to greater investment, as well as a general improvement in the business environment in BiH. This includes swifter responses from within the country for a number of business related procedures including registering their businesses and clarity about tax procedures both within BiH as well as for the Netherlands. This would include not only higher levels of direct collaboration with particular agencies within BiH and the Netherlands, but also more knowledgeable staff in BiH business and banking institutions when it comes to international business.

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<sup>174</sup> <http://www.sarajevotimes.com/bosnian-woman-dutch-politics-bosnia-needs-liberalism/>

Diaspora echoed the importance of creating mainstreamed processes for diaspora to engage with the homeland, whether through economic, political, or by social means. These initiatives should be more formally supported and acknowledged by BiH institutions as well as connected with other relevant actors in BiH as it combines the potential for the diaspora ó development nexus to be developed through the knowledge, interests, and resources of the diaspora actors as well as collaboration on the ground.

During interviews with entrepreneurs from the BiH diaspora living in the Netherlands, interviewees noted the need for more human resources and organizational management expertise in business practices in BiH. Such measures help to ensure that employee turnover is minimized, help businesses thrive, as well as develop workforces over time to succeed. While this reflects on good business practices in the Netherlands, interviewees noted that it was also possible to implement within BiH. Several had either done so in their own businesses or provided consulting services to this degree and noted that while there was initial distrust about this among the local population, over time it proved to be a worthwhile experience. This is a developing field in BiH and worthwhile to examine in the future.

Interviewees noted the challenges of maintaining this linguistic heritage in a new country. Those who struggle the most were often individuals whose partners are not Bosnian speakers, and those who do not have the chance to spend increased periods of time in BiH on an annual or bi-annual basis in order for their children to absorb certain cultural practices. Without fostering these cultural ties to the homeland, it is increasingly difficult for BiH diaspora members to maintain engagement with the homeland.

#### **Relations with BiH Consular and Diplomatic Missions in the Netherlands**

The BiH Embassy is located in The Hague and serves all of the Netherlands. As in other countries, it conducts both consular and diplomatic affairs of the country and serves as the main point of connection to the Bosnian state for the diaspora population. As with BiH Embassies in other countries, there is a willingness on the part of Embassy to collaborate with diaspora individuals on projects and attend diaspora organized events. For example, cultural events that focus on BiH heritage and similar cultural diplomacy opportunities are of a particular focus here. Embassy staff noted that many BiH diaspora individuals who retain BiH citizenship do not have much contact with the Embassy as they resolve any bureaucratic issues they might need to resolve when they go to BiH, usually on an annual or biannual basis. They do not keep detailed records of all Bosnian citizens in the Netherlands as a result.

#### **IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on findings from both the qualitative and quantitative data of this project, it is clear that many of the recommendations for engaging BiH diaspora in development activities is contingent on recommendations for improving BiH diaspora relationships with the homeland and increasing trust between the same. Despite current shortcomings, BiH diaspora would like to see their ties with the homeland strengthened, and would like to be an active participant in the future of BiH. Recommendations for areas of improvement include:

- 1. Establish formal procedures for BiH diaspora to transfer academic knowledge, practice, and skills.** This is an untapped opportunity where diaspora is willing and interested in giving back but where there is currently not an outlet or a partner to help organize such events. These are all easily resolvable through either MHRR contacts, or similar venues, to act as mediators in helping to strengthen diaspora homeland links. Facilitation between BiH

institutions and the diaspora, whether through government agencies, or through the establishment of epistemic communities in particular sectors which could be relied on to partner with one another in an effort to further their potential mutual benefit would be a good start.

**2. Integrate sustainable connections between BiH institutions at all levels and diaspora organizations and individuals.** Members of BiH diaspora associations in the Netherlands emphasized the need to build more goodwill among the diaspora and the homeland, whether through increased Bosnian language learning opportunities for diaspora communities in the Netherlands, or cultural and religiously based collaborations that would help to gather individuals living in the Netherlands to build a stronger community, which remains fragmented at this point.

**3. Encourage and simplify diaspora citizen participation and better integrate diaspora individuals into the BiH political scene.** Encouraging diaspora voting registration at minimum and informing diaspora members in the second generation about how to realize their citizenship in order to be able to maintain ties to the homeland. Ensuring that there is support for diaspora related initiatives at the national, entity, and local levels remains a concern for diaspora members, who come from a variety of localities in BiH and are fully aware of the need for all stakeholders to agree on implementation of different initiatives. This also relates to the potential benefit of having diaspora representation within the BiH parliament as well as an integrated approach among all levels of BiH government in working with diaspora partners. In turn, it would be one way to increase diaspora voting while at the same time targeting it specifically.

**4. Capitalize on the emotional connection that the first generation BiH diaspora in the Netherlands holds for BiH, and their localities and communities in particular.** An increased effort to collaborate within translocal communities from localities or regions as well as to take into account diaspora's specific translocal experiences which are not necessarily only centered around Sarajevo, Banja Luka, or Mostar, for example. Encourage engagement of trans-local organizations with their respective local communities and places of origin in BiH.

**5. Develop programs and activities to foster stronger relationships between BiH diaspora and local individuals, both in the first and second generation.** Increased efforts to retain the engagement of the second generation would be beneficial for long-term planning. This includes engagement with the first generation through cultural activities promoted by and in collaboration with BiH institutions including the Embassy, as well as organizing programming relevant for BiH diaspora members during peak periods of their visits to BiH such as during the summer holiday season.

**6. Encourage programs and options to foster a more secure economic and political environment for diaspora development initiatives with BiH institutions at all levels, including e-services.** Including more e-services as well as transparency tools such as complaint forms which would be followed up and improved upon for the BiH business as well as general environment would go a long way in helping to build the diaspora's confidence and trust in its homeland.

**7. Integrate sustainable connections between BiH institutions at all levels and diaspora organizations and individuals.** This includes not only knowledge-transfer opportunities, but

also creates lasting bonds between diaspora members and local populations, including in the second generation.

**8. Anticipate the potential of older returnees through the Dutch remigration scheme and create programming for them to invest in BiH prior to return.** Considering that the Netherlands is a country with an established remigration scheme, interviewees noted that they had given thought to remigration upon retirement in the Netherlands, whether in an official capacity through the existing scheme, or unofficially, in order to spend the majority of the year in BiH and limited time in the Netherlands. One of the concrete recommendations to note here is to anticipate the potential of such older returnees to BiH over the coming decade and create programs for them as well as provide resources in BiH. These would include financial advising, as well as social programs for the elderly, and the potential of modern retirement homes in BiH. These provide opportunities for the BiH job market with the possibility to expand if there is increased interest from other countries as well.

## CHAPTER VIII

### Country Report: Slovenia

#### Summary

The report is based on data collected in Slovenia (Ljubljana and Velenje) in August 2017, involving various groups of citizens and generations of migrants: pre-war, conflict generated, new-economic migrants, and descendants of all generations. Data were collected in 3 group interviews with representatives of Union of Bosniaks in Slovenia and Citizensø Association -Ljiljanø Association of -Bosniak Youth of Velenje,ø and a group of citizens from a pre-war generation of migrants, residing in Slovenia for over 40 years. These were complemented by individual interviews with a senior officer at the national institute for employment, working with BiH migrant workers, and other individuals from business and academic sector.

The BiH diaspora in Slovenia is very specific due to their *positionality* within the former Yugoslav federal union, which both Slovenia and BiH were part of. Their proximity to BiH, specific language connections, Slavic-based cultural ties with local population and other minority groups from SFRY make their daily awareness of local problems in BiH more acute and sharp. Overall, they seek a more institutionalized approach in their relationship with local communities, mainly by developing local strategies and plans for concrete forms of cooperation.

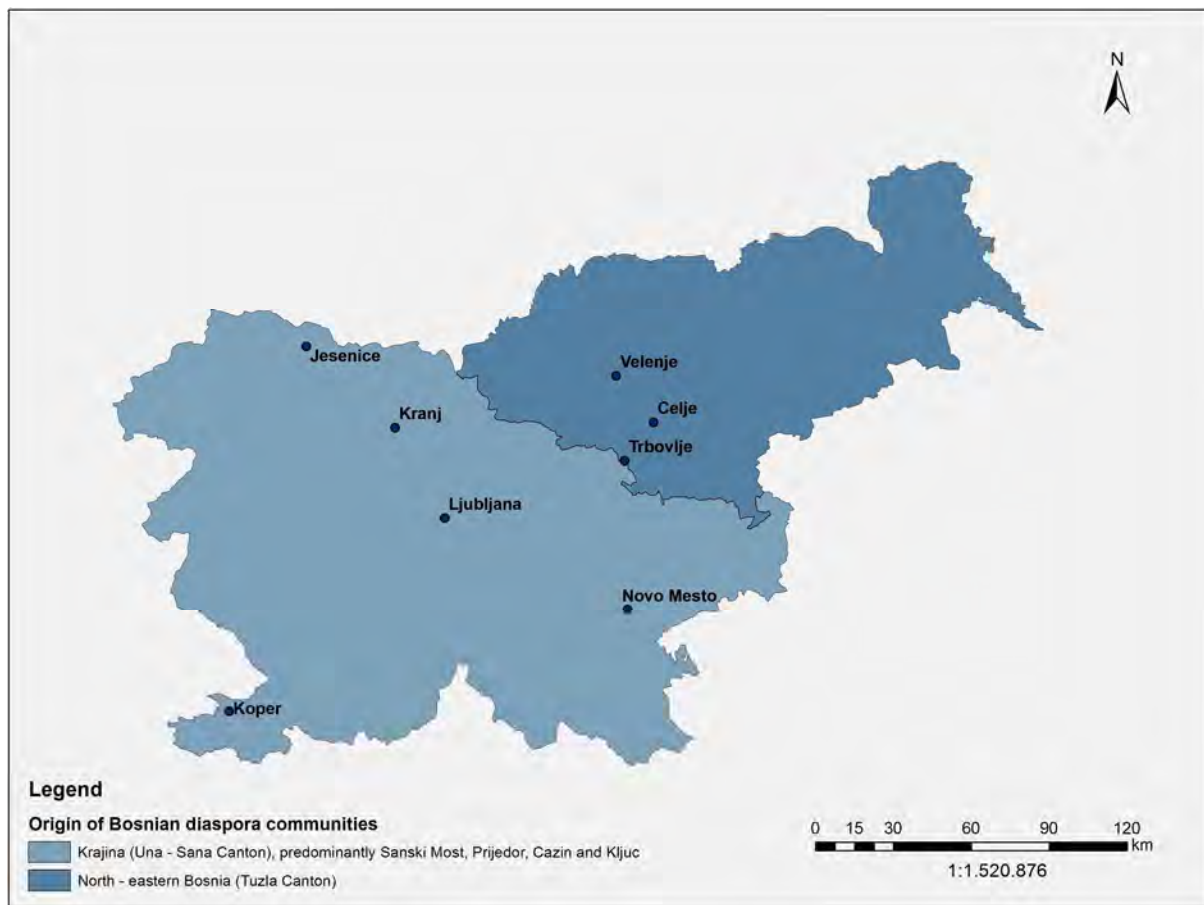
Most BiH diaspora have family-related commitments, and they provide financial assistance to their immediate or close family members. They are driven by nostalgia, and ethnic (regional) loyalties. Their support to local projects is, on average, secondary rather than leading. They are concerned with addressing perceived social disparities. Second-generation migrants maintain some links with their parentsø local communities, mostly superficial and not economic based. Others engage in circular migration, between Slovenia and BiH, for longer or shorter periods.

The analysis also indicates the existence of unfavorable work conditions for newly arrived economic migrants, including lack of information and legal protection for workers who had lost their job in Slovenia and are facing with abrupt return to BiH. This influences migrantsø preferences towards *transitional employment patterns* pursuing job opportunities in other high-paid sectors and in other countries, with better working conditions.



## I. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Map 10. Major hubs of BiH diaspora communities in Slovenia<sup>175</sup>



### Background and Literature Review

Available data on BiH migrants in Slovenia are scarce.<sup>176</sup> All point to the fact it is difficult to get the exact number of migrants in this country because the majority of the population arrived to Slovenia between 1961-1985, around 40.000 people who had permanently settled in Slovenia with their families. The most recent estimates, provided by the BiH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, indicate that there are approximately 150.000 BiH migrants living currently in Slovenia: 97.142 persons born in BiH and 64.069 descendants born in Slovenia, who have also acquired Slovenian citizenship.

The status of most migrants of BiH origin in Slovenia is resolved through acquisition of citizenship, permanent or limited residence-work permits. All available reports point to increased trends of labor migration from BiH to Slovenia in the past decade. The total number of BiH citizens residing in Slovenia with a legal, usually employment-based, permit is 43.733. A total of 19.948 are permanent residents and 23.785 persons are temporary.

<sup>175</sup> Note: This map represents a *general estimate* of the BiH diaspora distribution in Slovenia. The estimate was arrived at using a combination of respective community self-report, and demographic data from Slovenian Ministry of Interior, Statistični ured Republike Slovenije.

<sup>176</sup> See: Kalcic S. and Gombac J. 2011; Pajnik M. 2011; Babic, D. and Skiljan, F. 2011; and Kuti S. and Gregurovic S. 2012 on migration and integration controversies of Bosnians in Slovenia and in Croatia.

Migrants from BiH are members of numerous Bosnian and Herzegovinian associations in Slovenia, promoting various interests like culture, education, sports, religion, etc. The Bosniak Cultural Association of Slovenia established in 1996 (Bo-nja-ka kulturna zveza Slovenije BKZS) is an umbrella organization of Bosniak cultural societies and associations in Slovenia.<sup>177</sup> Generally, Serbs<sup>178</sup> and Croats<sup>179</sup> who had emigrated from Bosnia and Herzegovina, join the associations of the migrants who attach themselves to the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Croatia, respectively. Likewise Bosniak and Muslim population from Serbia and Montenegro join the associations of the migrants who attach themselves to BiH or Bosniak ethnic body in general. This phenomenon is equally applicable to all countries of destination hosting diaspora from former SFRY.

There are several important bilateral agreements concluded between BiH and Slovenia regulating the status of BH migrants in Slovenia. The three most relevant ones are the Agreement on social security between BiH and Slovenia, the Agreement on Employment of BiH Citizens in Slovenia and the Agreement on Cultural, Scientific and Education Cooperation between the Council of Ministers of BiH and the Government of the Republic of Slovenia.<sup>180</sup>

### Up-to-date Demographics

The number of Slovenian citizens born in Bosnia and Herzegovina prior to 1991 who had registered permanent residence in Slovenia during the period of Slovenian independence was 56.793.<sup>181</sup> The Slovenian national Office for Statistics reports that there are 50.378 citizens of BiH registered in Slovenia as of 2017. The number has steadily grown since 2008, and the overall number of migrants has doubled since the 2002 census. This number does not include people naturalized over the past two decades. The official statistics shows that a total 14.212 BH citizens have acquired Slovenian citizenship since 2002.<sup>182</sup> Although the Law on

<sup>177</sup> Considering that this is a specifically Bosniak association, some members are also from Serbia and Montenegro, which has sizeable Bosniak minority populations. Thus, the nine members of the BKZS are Dru-tvo bosansko-hercegoveškega in slovenskega prijateljstva Ljiljanø Kulturno -portno dru-tvo Bo-njakov Biserø Jesenice, Kulturno umetni-ko dru-tvo Sandflakø Ljubljana, Dru-tvo rojakov Plava in Gusinja Åzvorø Kranj, Kulturno umetni-ko dru-tvo Sevdahø Ljubljana, Bo-nja-ko mladinsko kulturno dru-tvo Velenje (Facebook), Kulturno umetni-ko in -portno dru-tvo Beharø Koper, Kulturno umetni-ko dru-tvo Zagorski Biser, and Dru-tvo Bosanski Dijamant Maribor. Other registered associations of Bosnians-Herzegovinians are: Bo-nja-ko kulturno dru-tvo RUH Domflale, Dru-tvo ljubiteljev BIH knjige ó Drina, Kulturno -portno dru-tvo Bo-njakov zeleni biser Postojna, Slovensko-bosansko-hercegovski poslovni klub, Zveza Bosanskohercegovskih kulturno umetni-kih in humanitarnih dru-tev. Most interviewees claim that only one fifth of the BH migrants are members and/or actively engaged in works of BH associations. Only 10% are somewhat connected with the Islamic community of Bosniaks in Slovenia.

<sup>178</sup> There are 14 Serbian associations-societies in Slovenia; the Association of Serbian Societies of Slovenia is an umbrella organization that acts in the public interest of promoting and preserving the identity and culture of Serbs in the Republic of Slovenia. Members of the alliance are Serb societies and associations, as well as individuals.

<sup>179</sup> The activities of Croats in Slovenia were organized through the work of twelve Croatian associations-societies and several catholic missions, located in Ljubljana, Maribor, Novo Mesto, Portorofl.

<sup>180</sup> Complemented by a Protocol on the Implementation of the Agreement on the Employment of BiH Citizens in R. Slovenia, concluded between the Council of Ministers of BiH and the Government of the Republic of Slovenia.

<sup>181</sup> Slovenian Ministry of Interior, issued by Iris Jegli , Director of the Administrative Office for Internal affairs and Naturalization, no. 090-327/2017/6 (1323-01)

<sup>182</sup> Data are generated and sent by Ms. Suzana Gorenc, Uradna oseba za posredovanje informacij javnega zna aja, Statisti ni ured Republike Slovenije.

\*Although the Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Slovenia, when acquiring Slovenian citizenship, provides for a waiver of a previous citizenship, there are numerous cases when denial is not mandatory. Ministry of Civil

Citizenship of the Republic of Slovenia, when acquiring Slovenian citizenship, provides for a waiver of a previous citizenship, many people keep both citizenships. The Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a state level body in charge of renouncing the Bosnian citizenship procedure, has no official data on the number of BH citizens who have given up their Bosnian citizenship to acquire a Slovenian one.<sup>183</sup>

<b>Citizens of BiH in Slovenia</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Census 2002</b>	<b>19240</b>
2008	32468
2009	33073
2010	39026
2011	38836
2012	39255
2013	41256
2014	43250
2015	44885
2016	47726
2017	50378

<b>Number of naturalized citizens of BH, 1996-2016</b>	
1996	350
1997	207
1998	2188
1999	1172
2000	955
2001	687
2002	1678
2003	1607
2004	1682
2005	1674
2006	1687
2007	548
2008	481
2009	488
2010	565
2011	635
2012	587
2013	545
2014	570
2015	741
2016	724

Slovenian National Institute for Employment confirms over 180.000 working permits issued to the BiH workers in Slovenia in the past 10 years.<sup>184</sup>

<b>Issued Working permits BiH</b>	<b>Approved</b>	<b>Declined</b>	<b>Total number</b>
2006	21.211	993	22.204
2007	31.849	2.104	33.953
2008	43.610	2.414	46.024
2009	26.056	2.015	28.071
2010	19.185	1.450	20.635
2011	9.543	1.012	10.555
2012	6.671	780	7.451
2013	7.470	788	8.258

Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a state level body in charge of renouncing the Bosnian citizenship procedure, has no official data on the number of BH citizens who had given up their Bosnian citizenship to acquire a Slovenian one (MCP BiH, no. UP-I-03-07-3-25-2-ZR/17).

<sup>183</sup> BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs, no. UP-I-03-07-3-25-2-ZR/17.

<sup>184</sup> Greta Metka Barbo Skerbinc, Deputy Director, Employment Office of Slovenia - Zavod za zaposlovanje RS, document number: 090-10/2017-3

2014	5.806	746	6.552
2015	5.093	962	6.055
2016	5.131	656	5.787
2017 ó June	5.402	483	5.885

The first wave of BiH migrants arrived to Slovenia in the 60s and 80s, pursuing jobs in construction and heavy industry, manual labor. The majority have since returned to BiH or reside in Slovenia as pensioners. The second larger wave arrived in the 90s, as conflict-generated and displaced persons, was estimated by many media and UNHCR to be around 70,000. In fact, the Slovenian Office for Immigration and Refugees notes this number to be closer to 45,000.<sup>185</sup> Many of them moved to other countries during the conflict or in the aftermath. Not many have returned back to BiH. Those who stayed faced a two-way process of inclusion within Slovenian society, incorporating their culture into Slovenian every-day life and mainstreamed practices. Refugees who remained in Slovenia were met with challenging initial conditions. Particularly affected were those who were placed in refugee centers without any social or financial aid from the Slovenian government. Furthermore, economic integration proved difficult for the same population in the post-conflict period due to low earnings, forced illegal employment under bad conditions, and exploitation as a result. These often led to lower physical and mental health of BiH refugees in Slovenia, as evidenced by longitudinal research.<sup>186</sup>

### **Educational Attainment**

Interviewees report that ÷guest workerø generations of migrants, on average, tended to be less educated. They primarily worked in the service industry, manufacturing, transport and storage, or construction. Young people of BiH origin currently living in Slovenia are, on average, highly educated and integrating across a variety of job market areas in the country, often as experts and qualified professionals.

According to data provided by the Slovenian National Ministry of Education, there are only three schools in Slovenia that provide additional classes in Bosnian to primary school students. Since 2012/2013, there have been a total of 65 students enrolled in additional classes in Bosnian language.<sup>187</sup> The Slovenian government supported their education with approximately 2,500 EUR (~ 30 EUR per student). Since 2012/2013, there a total of 55 students have also enrolled in additional classes in Serbian language. The Slovenian government supported their education with ~2,600 EUR. Since 2012/2013, there have been 345 students enrolled in additional classes in Croatian, and both Slovenian and Croatian governments supported their language courses. Bosnian language classes were held in the Primary School Livada Ljubljana (65 students in the last five years), Primary School Vojko Simuc Izola (8 students in the last 5 years), Primary School Dragomir Bencic Hrpelje (2 students in the last 5 years); Serbian language classes in Primary School Livada Ljubljana (55 students in the last 5 years); and Croatian language classes in various schools.<sup>188</sup>

The Cultural-Artistic Society ÷Beharø which operates in Koper, is engaged in the preservation and promotion of the culture, language and folklore heritage of Bosnia and

<sup>185</sup> Vrečer, N. 2010: 485-499.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid: 489.

<sup>187</sup> Classes organized with outdated books for learning Bosnian, no visible pro-active involvement of authorities in BiH to provide additional materials for schools, and for individual learning (i.e. home-schooling).

<sup>188</sup> Data issued by Bronka Straus Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, The Education Development Office, on August 17, 2017.

Herzegovina, through the implementation of projects *From language to language* (2016) and *Word, Picture, and Experience* (2017), a bilingual collection of children's stories, translations and poetry. These projects were supported by the Public Fund for Cultural Activities of R. Slovenia (JSKD) and the Municipality of Koper.

Though there are many students studying in Slovenia, university-level cooperation between BiH-Slovenian institutions of higher education is rather underdeveloped, with only few exchange programs available: the Slovenian government's fund for higher education (CMEPIUS), the Slovene Human Resources Development and Scholarship Fund, and the EU Commission (Erasmus +).

### **Socio-Economic Parameters**

Interviewed officials in the Slovenian Office for Employment claim that local employers value BiH workers. Their skills are particularly appreciated when the market offers no adequate replacement in terms of the pay or quality of work provided by workers coming from other non-EU countries. Employment of newly arrived BiH migrants usually takes place in deficit sectors and professions, like transport or construction. Most migrants have to change their profession. Worker contracts are usually short-term, low paid and BiH migrants often relocate to another country to work for a Slovenian company, but with local earnings. They face hard work conditions, strong pressures for above-standard working hours, unbearable conditions, and are often threatened with termination of the contract unless they meet the company standards. Some are tricked into transferring to another company, with promises of better working conditions, but are unaware that these companies do not fulfill basic conditions for foreign employees mandated by the state. After transfer are made, they lose work permits and are forced to either return to BiH or to remain in a grey zone representative of widespread informal employment.

The frequency of communication of BiH diaspora members with their families in BiH ranges from low to seldom, depending on the age of the migrants and means of communication. Interviewees communicate with their relatives in BiH and in other countries mostly via online technologies (like Viber or Skype), only few use telephones; landline or texting. Those who are from the Una-Sana Canton, towns like Velika Kladuša, Cazin or Bihać, often travel back to their hometowns, some on a weekly basis.

As an employee working in the service industry or sales, one can earn up to 1.000 EUR (net) on a monthly basis. A family of four with one income, struggles to cover basic costs of rent and utilities. This only increases in large cities, hence why most BiH diaspora live in smaller towns. Remittances sent to family and relatives in BiH impact household economies, so low-income families need to plan carefully when they want to set some money aside. They mostly take the money personally as they do not use bank transfers due to high transaction costs. Most interviewees agree that an average BiH migrant visitor brings up to 1.000 EUR when visiting BiH, for a period of 7-10 days: 450 EUR are given to the family, the rest is spent purchasing food or services. There are no real plans for small or large investments among ordinary people. They simply finance current consumption needs, repairs, construction, and help their family members to tie some loose ends. In spite of fairly limited income in most BiH diaspora families, many are still willing and able to engage in gathering and distributing collective remittances. For example, the majority provided donations for those affected by the floods in BiH in 2014.

BiH diaspora communities in Slovenia are dispersed across the entire country. Cities of Celje, Trbovlje, and Velenje are mostly populated by people from northeastern BiH (primarily the Tuzla Canton). Places like Jesenice, Kranj and Ljubljana, as well as Koper and Novo Mesto, are inhabited by people coming from Krajina (Una-Sana Canton, predominantly Sanski Most, Prijedor, Cazin and Kljuc). Migrants from Sanski Most are one of the largest groups of Bosnian migrants in Slovenia. There are no twinning projects and no reports of high-value projects that would concretely connect local communities in BiH with their diaspora communities in Slovenia.

The Central Electoral Commission of BiH<sup>189</sup> reports indicate that the number of registered BiH voters in Slovenia has fluctuated over the past four election cycles. Still, the total number is relatively low compared to the number of voters who have the rights to register. They are listed below. It is important to note here that the number of registered voters is still higher than the number of individuals who end up voting in each election in the end, which is usually around 65% to 70%

321 voters registered in 2010 General Elections  
498 voters registered in 2012 Local Elections  
379 voters registered in 2014 General Elections  
1564 voters registered in 2016 Local Elections

## II. MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION EXPERIENCE

Segregation of the three main ethnic groups from BiH and embeddedness in national protectionism and failure of government, media and CSOs to promote positive trends in bringing all groups together remains a huge problem. However, resolving the minority status and addressing the inactive approach of the BiH governments towards the issues of the BiH diaspora in Slovenia is reported as a key priority. The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia establishes a set of special collective rights for members of the recognized national minorities – Italian and Hungarian. Migrants from the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as others from the territory of former Yugoslavia are not recognized as national minorities in the Slovenian Constitution. They have been denied certain important collective rights, i.e. the right to be represented at the national parliament, lack of programmatic financing of their general activities and specific ones related to supplementary education or instruction in their mother tongue, stocking libraries with books in their native tongue, running radio and/or television programs in their mother tongue, etc.<sup>190</sup>

There have been several attempts to change this, but with no success. Interviewees claim that associations of BiH diaspora, as well as those in Croatian or Serbian cultural societies in Slovenia, are not well organized, and they do not push enough for attaining this particular legal status. Also, there has not been any significant step taken by the BiH Council of Ministers to remedy the situation, and this creates a rather negative atmosphere among the BiH diaspora community in Slovenia, and a perception of disengagement of the BiH authorities towards their citizens abroad. This also sends a wrong message to the Slovenian national government, which tends to perceive BiH migrants as isolated from their own government, which puts them in a very difficult position when negotiating their own legal

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<sup>189</sup> Issued by Branko Pertic, Member of the CIK BiH, document number: 04-50-2-274/17, September 2017.

<sup>190</sup> Supplementary education can be provided within the framework of the Agreement on Cultural, Scientific, and Educational Cooperation between the Council of Ministers of BiH and the Government of the Republic of Slovenia.

status in Slovenia. Slovenian government compensates this gap with a modest financial assistance to cover certain activities of BiH organizations and individuals. The Law on the Promotion of Public Interest in Culture prescribes the state institutions to financially support projects intended for the integration of minority communities and immigrants. This law directly refers to the ability of immigrants to participate in Slovenian society, although there is a requirement that the proposed programs or projects in the field of culture should also meet local community's needs.<sup>191</sup>

Problems of new-migrants, the so-called economic workers, are often reduced to only 'standard migration issues', sometimes by negative public perceptions, recently actualized in the case of Ljubljana Mosque and Islamophobic movements in Slovenia. These trends particularly affect the Bosniak community in Slovenia, while Croat and Serb diaspora communities, often attached to associations that promote interests of migrants who come from Croatia and Serbia, respectively, do not face these challenges. Political developments in Slovenia can have an impact on how diaspora members organize to promote their own interests in the country and ways in which they are capable to mobilize support in local development in BiH for the medium- and long-term outlook. Depending on how things are resolved, engagement of BH diaspora in Slovenia towards development projects in BiH will remain mainly in family-based and non-profit sectors, while profit-oriented involvement will remain sporadic and reserved to those who are well-off and possess enough financial capacities to manage business in outside of Slovenia and the EU.

### III. POTENTIAL OF BIH DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT

Interviewed BiH diaspora businessmen were dissatisfied with low efforts put into strengthening the fiscal system and reforming public administration in BiH. They also emphasized the issue of weak judiciary, no effective initiatives for public-private partnerships. In addition, they are concerned with the high start-up costs and hidden tax rates, as well as fragility in economic and political cohesion in BiH. Investments from Slovenian companies were present in larger scales up until 2007, and then they slowly declined. There is a perceived lack of networking platforms among diaspora groups, and many representatives of the various associations are under the impression that the BiH Embassy has not paid attention in facilitating the relationships. All initiatives were a result of personal involvement of enthusiastic employees or facilitated ad hoc as a response to impulses from either diaspora groups or local governments in BiH.

Criteria for investments can be summed as 'local-patriotism'. Potential investors are most worried about the overall investment climate, the quality of locally available human resources to manage the tasks and to report back, and fairly low chances to expand their businesses. Investment platform networks in BiH have grown since 2012, and potential investors report that they might be interested in investing in their regions of origin, but they are also willing to consider other options if the infrastructure, primarily roads, could help their business to run more efficiently and swiftly. They are very interested in cities that lie on the borders with Croatia and in the Cazinska Krajina.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that many interlocutors mentioned their deep dissatisfaction with the diaspora representation discourse in BiH, and portrayals of BiH diaspora as

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<sup>191</sup> Most associations face fundraising and sustainability challenges. To remedy the situation, some Associations group themselves and apply for EU funds and organize various cultural programs and festivals to promote the minority culture in the mainstream Slovenian society.

–engagedø and –positiveø as compared to those who are –less engagedø or –disengagedø as –negative.ø This can create a negative climate and have destructive consequences on mobilization of BiH diasporans in Slovenia according to them, who might be motivated to reach out and invest their time and money otherwise.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**1. Enhance transparency in public administration management and increase the quality and quantity of outreach initiatives from local communities in BiH:** Local communities interested in enhanced quality of diaspora engagement need to come together and adopt communication policies that would be aimed at promoting diaspora-friendly initiatives and open platforms for conversations on institutionalization of diaspora engagement within local communities.

**2. Heighten the involvement of BiH government to start negotiations with the Slovenian government aimed at promoting and protect the interests of BiH diaspora communities in Slovenia:** BiH diaspora communities in Slovenia need to renew their trust in BiH government institutions. One way of making this happen is to initiate a formal negotiation process with the Slovenian government with regards to granting Bosniak/Croat/Serb communities national minority status. This could be done individually or jointly with Croatian and Serbian government, who have taken initial steps towards resolving this matter. Additionally, BiH and Slovenian governments need to open up negotiations on more flexible working arrangements that would not only enhance the number of jobs available for BiH workers in Slovenia, but would also enhance the quality of their protection from being exploited and allow access to other social security provisions.

**3. Reform retirement policies in BiH:** Engage in a comprehensive adjustment of social security systems that would allow for more diaspora retirees to seriously consider their return to BiH, while keeping the options for partial returns, circular migrations, and maintaining prospects of other types of transnational lives between BiH and Slovenia. These would include easier pension collection methods (via post or bank), access to health care privileges and other benefits granted to local pensioners. Need for more public and private investments in adequate facilities for elderly in BiH.

**4. Pay more attention to diaspora representation in media:** Local media, as well as nation-wide broadcasters in BiH, need to take more responsibility and engage in campaigns of positive diaspora representation with the aim of boosting more acceptance of their initiatives  
the local population, according to BiH diaspora members in Slovenia.

**5. Open up platforms to engage in high-tech and ecological investments:** BiH entrepreneurs in Slovenia noted that local governments and regulatory agencies in BiH to consider options for promoting a more business friendly and inviting atmosphere for attracting high tech start-ups, especially in health industry and medical research. Additionally, they need to promote standards and research in eco projects, specifically wind power. This would bolster investor confidence to invest in dynamic and competitive market. Such investments are too expensive and fairly complicated to develop in the EU, due to many restrictions imposed by the regulating agencies in Brussels.



## CHAPTER IX

### Country Report: Sweden

#### Summary

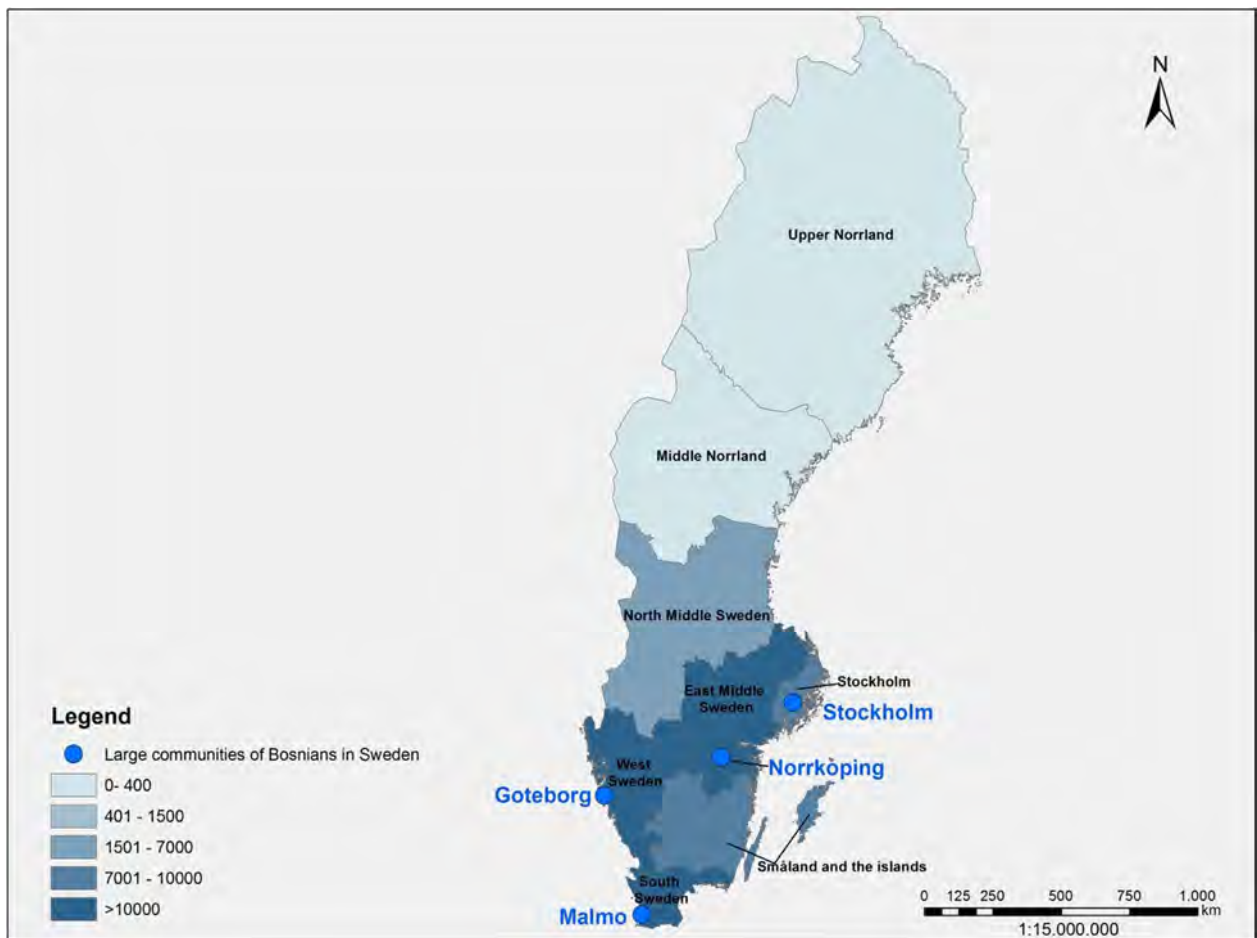
This country report is based on data gathered between August and November 2017 among members of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian diaspora in Sweden, as well as being informed by previous academic research conducted among the same population between 2013 and 2016. The findings are thus presented from a variety of sources including quantitative data acquired from the Swedish Statistics Agency as well as other relevant institutions, focus groups, group interviews, and face-to-face interviews (in-person, via telephone and Skype, and email communication), conducted with Swedish Bosnian and Herzegovinian diaspora business people, diaspora association members, prominent members of the diaspora, and two BiH Embassy officials in Stockholm. Combined, they are demonstrative of a representative sample of Bosnians and Herzegovinians in Sweden, including a variety of migration experiences, ethnonational diversity, age, sex, and education levels. For the purposes of this report, Bosnian and Herzegovinian diaspora includes individuals who were born in BiH as well as those who are descendants of Bosnian or Herzegovinian-born individuals and thus consider BiH as their homeland in one way or another, prescribing a sense of belonging.

The majority of face-to-face interviews were conducted in Stockholm, Malmö, and Motala, where large BiH diaspora communities reside but also diaspora associations exist. One focus group (BiH diaspora women's organization, business people, academic, and a mixed diaspora community group) was organized in Malmö with eight individuals whereas another was organized in Motala (BiH diaspora women's organization, businessmen, and a mixed diaspora community group) with five individuals. Two more focus groups were scheduled in Norrköping and Stockholm, yet ended up being group or face-to-face interviews due to a lack of BiH diaspora individuals representative of the population signing up. In terms of face-to-face interviews, 10 in-depth interviews were conducted, with each interview lasting anywhere from 45 minutes to 2 hours. Shorter interviews, over the phone conversations, and email exchange related to the project were also conducted with another dozen individuals. As part of the project, diaspora umbrella organizations, diaspora religious organizations, and diaspora social media were contacted and their assistance and participation solicited in an attempt to reach out to as diverse as possible of the BiH diaspora community.

Today, the BiH Swedish population is one of the most visible and prominent migrant groups in Sweden and is considered generally well integrated, highly educated, and with high rates of employment. At the same time, many retain strong connections to BiH, which are boosted by the fact that dual citizenship laws allow for individuals to retain their BiH citizenship while being Swedish citizens. There are a number of BiH Swedish diaspora associations and organizations that help to boost the community's presence in Swedish society. Increasingly, they are also becoming more involved with engagement in the homeland as well as the pursuit of business opportunities, which opens up numerous development opportunities for both countries that are of mutual benefit.

## I. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Map 11. Distribution of BiH diaspora in Sweden with the largest communities marked.<sup>192</sup>



### Background and Literature Review

Sweden, much like Denmark, is not a traditional migration country. Over the second half of the twentieth century, it has increasingly attracted migrants, initially from its neighboring Finland as a result of labor migration during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. From the 1970s on, this trend has shifted increasingly from labor migration towards refugee flows from conflicts from Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia throughout the 1980s. With the disintegration of Yugoslavia, particularly from the mid 1990s on, refugee flows from Bosnia and Herzegovina ensured that Sweden was well on its way towards becoming a multicultural society.

Previous studies have placed the number of Bosnians in Sweden at an estimated 80,000 individuals.<sup>193</sup> According to Statistics Sweden, as of 2017, there were a little over 58,000 Bosnian born individuals living in Sweden, with around 39,000 with Swedish citizenship, acquired between 2000 and 2017. The same agency reports that around 6,200 individuals have BiH citizenship without a Swedish citizenship as of 2017. According to the same, there

<sup>192</sup> Note: This map is derived from data collected by the Swedish Statistics Agency as of the end of 2016. The four cities highlighted are the cities with the highest populations of BiH diaspora in Sweden, based on the same data.

<sup>193</sup> Valenta, M. and Ramet, S. 2011:4.

are approximately 72,000 people born in Yugoslavia who lived in Sweden in 2009.<sup>194</sup> Most have established residency and citizenship since the mid-1990s as a result of Swedish policy towards Balkan refugees. 96% of the Bosnian refugees who arrived in Sweden during this period have stayed, in comparison to Germany where only 6% of the population remains.<sup>195</sup> Hence, this group represents one of the largest transnational populations of Bosnians in Europe and the world. These breakdowns are demonstrated below. We can see that the largest portion of this population is between 35 and 44, having largely arrived to Sweden between the ages of 11 and 20 approximately. This also indicates that a majority of the population was likely schooled in the Swedish education system and able to integrate better within Swedish society and its labor market.

This table also indicates that there is a small number of individuals who arrive to Sweden as young children, likely as a result of their parents being Swedish citizens. However, the numbers do not account for the number of individuals who might be considered second generation Bosnians in Sweden, with one or both parents having been born in Sweden. These number are difficult to gauge, but help to understand why the number of Bosnians living in Sweden is estimated at 80,000 rather than 58,000.

<b>BiH born persons by Age, Sex and Year in Sweden<sup>196</sup></b>										
Years		2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
0-4	men	32	14	18	20	20	21	27	36	45
	women	21	23	12	24	28	34	33	37	40
5-14	men	3598	1289	265	251	244	239	234	233	248
	women	3316	1143	254	246	236	230	217	219	239
15-24	men	4458	5378	4145	3681	3227	2683	2260	1724	1167
	women	4358	5311	3935	3450	2976	2516	2021	1572	1110
25-34	men	4779	5044	5726	5844	5963	6190	6328	6549	6784
	women	4705	4964	5791	5949	6061	6186	6405	6440	6493
35-44	men	5658	5848	5514	5465	5507	5525	5571	5713	5891
	women	5423	5922	5629	5512	5530	5510	5557	5707	5812
45-54	men	3594	5082	5977	6017	6125	6126	6140	6087	6060
	women	3404	4803	5816	5977	6126	6185	6213	6227	6220
55-64	men	1775	2285	3574	3916	4185	4471	4764	4999	5277
	women	2200	2295	3469	3752	3966	4239	4555	4834	5199
65-74	men	1417	1576	1548	1592	1636	1720	1854	2030	2141
	women	1946	2257	2036	1982	2020	2027	2068	2136	2212
75-84	men	238	506	859	876	915	938	973	1000	1046
	women	481	918	1376	1444	1492	1570	1637	1653	1650
85-94	men	30	45	76	88	94	116	139	160	168
	women	89	105	155	198	233	271	288	340	367
95+	men	1	1	2	1	4	2	1	2	5
	women	3	4	6	5	7	5	4	7	7
<b>Total:</b>		<b>51,526</b>	<b>54,813</b>	<b>56,183</b>	<b>56,290</b>	<b>56,595</b>	<b>56,804</b>	<b>57,289</b>	<b>57,705</b>	<b>58,181</b>

<sup>194</sup> Statistics Sweden, 2017, <http://www.scb.se/sv/>.

<sup>195</sup> Valenta, M. and Ramet, S. 2011:4.

<sup>196</sup> Statistics Sweden, 2017, <http://www.scb.se/sv/>.

When it comes to citizenship, as noted, over half of the Swedish Bosnian population have become Swedish citizens. Sweden does not keep track of Swedish citizens with dual citizenship. However, the number of individuals who only hold a BiH citizenship in Sweden has continued to decrease over the last few decades. The information is noted below. While the majority of interviewees for this research held dual citizenships, those who did not noted that they did not feel that they needed them in order to continue to participate within Swedish society, or were elderly and did not see the benefit as they did not travel anywhere except for between Sweden and BiH.<sup>197</sup> The data is below.

<b>BiH Citizens in Sweden<sup>198</sup></b>									
	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>men</b>	11310	6762	4063	3729	3626	3537	3490	3431	3370
<b>women</b>	11529	6899	3845	3419	3220	3060	3051	2984	2887
<b>Total:</b>	<b>22839</b>	<b>13661</b>	<b>7908</b>	<b>7148</b>	<b>6846</b>	<b>6597</b>	<b>6541</b>	<b>6415</b>	<b>6257</b>

The breakdown of this population is interesting to note. While a large proportion of these individuals is elderly, there are also quite a high number of individuals of working age who retain BiH citizenship while living in Sweden, close to half. Considering that this is a conflict-generated diaspora rather than a group of economic migrants, this is particularly interesting to note and likely indicates that there might be stronger ties to BiH in Sweden than in other countries. This is evident when considering the number of registered voters in Sweden for BiH elections in more recent history. The number of BiH citizens with only BiH citizenship living in Sweden compared to the number of registered voters in BiH living in Sweden is very high. For example, only 8890 individuals were registered to vote for the 2002 elections, according to BiH's Central Election Commission. The number declined to 4749 for the 2004 elections. By the 2006 elections, it was 4096. The number rose for the 2008 elections to 5005, and jumped further to 5601 for the 2010 elections. While it is not possible to tell whether this number represents the individuals who only have BiH citizenship or whether this is a mix, it is nonetheless worthwhile to note that it is possible to raise the interest of BiH citizens living in Sweden to vote and thus increase their engagement with the homeland, considering the more recent rise in voter registration.

Prior to examining the breakdown of individuals arriving in Sweden since the conflict, below is a table that indicates the number of individuals who have acquired Swedish citizenship more recently. It is clear that this number has continued to taper off as the population of individuals without Swedish citizenship has lowered, yet it is interesting to note that it has seemed to remain steady over the last few years, at around 600 individuals per year. It is thus easy to conclude that the number of individuals who take advantage of the Swedish citizenship regime was initially high once refugees were eligible for citizenship, but has remained steady with individuals continuing to take advantage of it over time.

<b>Number of BiH citizens who have acquired Swedish citizenship<sup>199</sup></b>									
	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>men</b>	6102	829	423	524	458	313	271	294	302
<b>women</b>	6347	855	479	591	476	382	267	297	305
<b>Total:</b>	<b>12449</b>	<b>1684</b>	<b>902</b>	<b>1115</b>	<b>934</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>607</b>

<sup>197</sup> Respondent in Motala, Sweden, September 2017, and Respondent in Stockholm, Sweden, September 2017.

<sup>198</sup> Statistics Sweden, 2017, [http://www.scb.se/sv\\_/](http://www.scb.se/sv_/)

<sup>199</sup> Statistics Sweden. Population Statistics. Retrieved from: [http://www.scb.se/sv\\_/](http://www.scb.se/sv_/).

Below is a table that indicates the current status of BiH citizens claiming settlement in Sweden by year breakdown.

<b>Immigration by grounds for settlement for BiH citizens<sup>200</sup></b>						
		<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>students non EU / EEA citizens</b>	<b>men</b>	2	1	1	1	1
	<b>women</b>	1	1	2	4	6
<b>labour non EU / EEA citizens</b>	<b>men</b>	71	58	55	71	63
	<b>women</b>	9	8	9	15	15
<b>workers EU / EEA citizens</b>	<b>men</b>	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>women</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>self-employed EU / EEA citizen</b>	<b>men</b>	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>women</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>relatives to EU / EEA citizens</b>	<b>men</b>	2	2	5	3	16
	<b>women</b>	5	5	15	16	19
<b>students EU / EEA citizens</b>	<b>men</b>	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>women</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>non EU / EEA citizens resident in another EU country</b>	<b>men</b>	0	5	5	9	6
	<b>women</b>	0	2	3	8	5
<b>sufficient funds EU / EEA citizens</b>	<b>men</b>	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>women</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>labour, familie members to non-EU / EEA nationals</b>	<b>men</b>	14	18	20	25	16
	<b>women</b>	35	39	52	56	24
<b>familie members to non-EU / EEA nationals</b>	<b>men</b>	292	188	201	174	186
	<b>women</b>	259	194	212	180	197
<b>relatives to refugees</b>	<b>men</b>	1	1	3	0	3
	<b>women</b>	2	1	5	1	1
<b>adopted children non EU / EEA citizens</b>	<b>men</b>	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>women</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>convention refugees</b>	<b>men</b>	1	2	0	2	0
	<b>women</b>	0	0	0	0	1
<b>persons in need of protection</b>	<b>men</b>	1	0	5	0	0
	<b>women</b>	3	1	5	0	0
<b>particularly distressing circumstances</b>	<b>men</b>	8	13	5	7	9
	<b>women</b>	7	18	10	3	7
<b>permit under a temporary law non EU / EEA citizens</b>	<b>men</b>	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>women</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>other permits, refugees non EU / EEA citizens</b>	<b>men</b>	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>women</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>other permits non EU / EEA citizens</b>	<b>men</b>	4	1	2	4	2
	<b>women</b>	1	4	3	1	1
<b>residence permit</b>	<b>men</b>	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>women</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>unknown</b>	<b>men</b>	11	5	6	26	9
	<b>women</b>	16	2	9	24	16
<b>Total:</b>		<b>745</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>603</b>

<sup>200</sup> Statistics Sweden. Population Statistics. Retrieved from: [http://www.scb.se/sv\\_/](http://www.scb.se/sv_/).

Much like in Denmark, family reunification programs are the main source of new migrants. This holds for all migrants in Sweden.<sup>201</sup> This reinforces the demographic profile of the BiH diaspora in Sweden as conflict-generated rather than economic, etc. as individuals are not arriving on grounds of work visas, but rather through familial ties such as marriage. In 2017, there were 196 work permits issued to BiH citizens in Sweden.<sup>202</sup> The table below indicates grounds for settlement noted by BiH citizens in Sweden between 2012 and 2016, according to Statistics Sweden.

Sweden made 149 asylum decisions regarding BiH citizens in 2017. Of those, only one individual was granted asylum, 100 were rejected, and the rest were excluded for multiple reasons. Of the 51,540 total asylum decisions brought by Sweden in the same year, this is representative of a very low number of asylum applications by BiH citizens, as well as their high level of rejection, with less than 1% success rate. However, even at an average time of 170 days for decisions to be made, there were nonetheless still 119 BiH citizens who applied for asylum in Sweden in 2017.

BiH Swedish diaspora members live all over Sweden. However, much like other migrant groups, they are concentrated populations in Gothenburg, Malmö, and Stockholm. There are smaller BiH diaspora clubs and associations in the majority of Sweden's municipalities, with more prominent examples in places such as Borås, Örebro, Växjö, Motala, and Norrköping.<sup>203</sup> Though Sweden attempted to disperse BiH refugees across the country, due to job availability, as with other migrants, cities have remained the top destinations and concentrated centers of migrant populations. Below is the breakdown between each of Sweden's counties and the city within that county that has the largest number of BiH born individuals living within as of December 31, 2016.<sup>204</sup>

<b>Total</b>	<b>58,181</b>
<b>Stockholms län</b>	<b>7,163</b>
Stockholm	3,253
<b>Uppsala län</b>	<b>951</b>
Uppsala	707
<b>Södermanlands län</b>	<b>1,379</b>
Eskilstuna	418
<b>Östergötlands län</b>	<b>4,270</b>
Norrköping	2,175
<b>Jönköpings län</b>	<b>5,071</b>
Värnamo	1,253
<b>Kronobergs län</b>	<b>2,100</b>
Växjö	1,105
<b>Kalmar län</b>	<b>1,796</b>
Kalmar	533
<b>Gotlands län</b>	<b>29</b>
Gotland	29
<b>Blekinge län</b>	<b>1,025</b>

<sup>201</sup> Statistics Sweden. Population Statistics. Retrieved from: <http://www.scb.se/sv/>.

<sup>202</sup> Statistics Sweden. Population Statistics. Retrieved from: <http://www.scb.se/sv/>.

<sup>203</sup> Karabegovi, D. 2016.

<sup>204</sup> Statistics Sweden 2017, <http://www.scb.se/sv/>.

	Karlskrona	450
<b>Skåne län</b>		<b>13,745</b>
	Malmö	6,330
<b>Hallands län</b>		<b>1,652</b>
	Halmstad	1,010
<b>Västra Götalands län</b>		<b>13,278</b>
	Göteborg	7,032
<b>Värmlands län</b>		<b>688</b>
	Karlstad	389
<b>Örebro län</b>		<b>2,199</b>
	Örebro	1,597
<b>Västmanlands län</b>		<b>1,346</b>
	Västerås	759
<b>Dalarnas län</b>		<b>387</b>
	Falun	110
<b>Gävleborgs län</b>		<b>438</b>
	Gävle	161
<b>Västernorrlands län</b>		<b>234</b>
	Sundsvall	115
<b>Jämtlands län</b>		<b>52</b>
	Östersund	23
<b>Västerbottens län</b>		<b>195</b>
	Umeå	101
<b>Norrbottnens län</b>		<b>183</b>
	Luleå	80

### Repatriation

Much like other Scandinavian countries, Sweden has a repatriation scheme which allows for certain allowances for individuals returning to their country of origin, under similar conditions which include permit residence in Sweden being revoked. Other benefits of the repatriation scheme involve lump-sum payments which help individuals get set up once back in the country of origin. For example, the maximum allocation for adults is 10,000 SEK, whereas for children this is 5,000 SEK. As a result, these numbers are not particularly high as individuals often decide to simply maintain transnational lives between the two localities rather than repatriating. When compared with the number of individuals who immigrate to Sweden rather than emigrate from Sweden, they are much lower. During fieldwork, individuals in focus groups as well as during individual interviews felt connection to both countries and preferred to lead transnational lives between the two countries, or, if retired, spend a majority of their time in BiH while still retaining Swedish citizenship in order to be able to visit and return whenever they wished. Prior research has demonstrated similar sentiments.<sup>205</sup> Below is data provided by the Swedish Statistics Agency on the number of individuals from BiH who have immigrated to and emigrated from Sweden and were born in BiH. Overall, we can see that this number holds relatively steady approximately over the last two decades.

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<sup>205</sup> Eastmond, M. 2006.

Immigrations and emigrations by country of birth, sex, observations and year <sup>206</sup>									
Immigrations									
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>men</b>	489	355	340	360	490	432	549	551	609
<b>women</b>	579	363	328	370	409	362	485	456	484
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1068</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>899</b>	<b>794</b>	<b>1034</b>	<b>1007</b>	<b>1093</b>
Emigrations									
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>men</b>	116	102	145	145	144	133	125	138	130
<b>women</b>	120	76	127	135	114	107	95	128	101
<b>Total:</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>231</b>

### Educational Attainment

As in other countries of integration, BiH migrants are generally understood to have attained higher levels of education than other migrant populations and Sweden does not seem to differ in this, though detailed data is not collected by Statistics Sweden. The Swedish integration policy is highly ambitious and nearly all BiH diaspora members in Sweden, upon arriving to Sweden, were enrolled in Swedish language courses in order to better integrate into the society. The Swedish welfare state further ensures that refugees were well supported in their endeavors.

However, the Swedish school systems advocated for mother language learning for migrant populations. Bosnian language lessons within the school curricula in Sweden are allowed for children of BiH migrants. This effectively allows them to retain their Bosnian language skills and takes the burden off diaspora groups to provide such education in Sweden. The Bosnian language teachers are diaspora members themselves and often work in multiple schools within localities as students are dispersed all over rather than living in particular neighborhoods. For example, one teacher who was interviewed covers six different schools during each week, with varied numbers of students in each class. Several interviewees confirmed that the interest for Bosnian language learning in schools wanes as students become older, and thus the most concentrated mother language learning happens during the elementary school and middle school periods, rather than at the high school level.

Bosnian language teachers in Sweden interviewed also noted the increase of children attending Bosnian language lessons who have only one parent with BiH heritage over the last decade. From a homeland perspective, this is encouraging news as children who have only one BiH born parent continue to have connection with BiH and thus remain engaged as second-generation BiH migrants with the potential to contribute in multiple ways.

According to the Association of Bosnian Language Teachers, there were 16,070 students attending schools in Sweden who speak either Bosnian, Croatian, or Serbian. As noted previously, of these, only 5,300 are enrolled at the high school level. It is nearly impossible to delineate which of these individuals are Bosnian, Croatian, or Serbian citizens. Of the total number, 8,289 or 51.6% attended language lessons in Bosnian, Croatian, or Serbian according to Sweden's Ministry of Education during the 2017/2018 school year. It is important to note at this point that these lessons do not only account for language learning,

<sup>206</sup> Statistics Sweden. Population Statistics. Retrieved from: [http://www.scb.se/sv\\_/](http://www.scb.se/sv_/).



but also provide historical and geographical background about the homeland and are meant to find connection between second generation diaspora members. As such, this kind of education should be further encouraged in order to maintain links with second generation individuals. One interviewee noted that she preferred spending time in BiH in large part because it allowed her the opportunity to speak more Bosnian than she does in Sweden, but that she would not feel as confident in her speaking abilities if it were not for Bosnian language education and the involvement of her parents.

### **Communication Patterns**

Communication with BiH is often through familial connections via modern communication technologies such as Viber and Skype, with Facebook being another option individuals often noted as making it easy to stay in touch. When it comes to news consumption, Facebook groups and friends' posts tend to be the most informative in addition to popular news media, much as is read in BiH with *Klix.ba* and *Oslobođenje* being singled out most often. Facebook groups in Sweden for diaspora organisations, as well as particular Swedish localities, such as Malmö, have attracted large following and provide a worthwhile outlet for diaspora to communicate with one another but also to share particular information. Prior diaspora campaigns related to particular grievances of the diaspora, such as the streaming of a genocide denial film on Swedish National Television, attracted many Facebook group followers and the platform remains as a communications tool among individuals even though the campaign has long been completed.<sup>207</sup> Communication among diaspora can be related to practical issues such as housing tips in large cities like Stockholm and Malmö, or other related things to life in Sweden, promoting the BiH Swedish community by sharing positive news about members, or relaying important news that is considered relevant to the community. Often, these Facebook groups are closed and monitored by diaspora organization leaders in order to ensure content is relevant.

Increasingly, there is also transnational engagement between Facebook and other social media, evident through a multitude of BiH themed groups, meme generating websites, and the like. In turn, organizations have tried to foster online support and development of a diaspora community online. In Sweden, due to the amount of e-services available, interviewees respond being much more comfortable using the same and increasingly frustrated when they do not have the same services available in BiH. This relates to government services such as obtaining basic documents, to banking, to the lack of e-mail communication when contacting BiH institutions and government agencies.

### **Remittance/Investment Volume**

All of the individuals interviewed remit back to the homeland through their familial ties and own property back in Bosnia and Herzegovina they often return to. While some have purchased apartments in Sarajevo rather than in their original places of origin, they nonetheless spend time there as well, usually on an annual basis. As almost a quarter of the BiH Swedish population is from Banja Luka, diaspora is known to spend time in particular areas of the city during the summers and use these as meeting points to socialize with old friends and to meet other diaspora members. These include beaches, restaurants, and particular coffee shops.

The APU Network is actively working on establishing a group of business people who would focus on investment opportunities in BiH and help to foster entrepreneurial spirit in BiH.

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<sup>207</sup> Karabegovi , D. 2016.

While still in the initial phases, they represent a promising collection of like-minded diaspora members who are ready and willing to invest. Considering that such diverse groups that are nonetheless autonomous are rare in the diaspora, they represent great possibility even though they are at a nascent stage, and also a promise of longevity for the second generation as the group is relatively young.

Examples have already proven to be potent within the BiH economy, with companies like Softhouse Consulting opening up local offices and hiring local workforces, taxi companies outsourcing their call center to Banja Luka, and construction firms completing homes and renovations projects in Sweden using resources and labor from BiH. Beyond this, a networking and digital business space have recently opened through a BiH Swedish consulting agency, SEEBA, in Sarajevo, thus cementing the relationship between Sweden and BiH further. Moreover, these companies all offer social corporate responsibility in varied ways, fully understanding their impact on the local community and have a desire to contribute to the further growth of BiH's economy.

Beyond the examples noted above which are of a business nature, there have been numerous humanitarian projects organized by the BiH Swedish diaspora over the years aimed at fostering the growth and improvement of the status of marginalized populations in BiH in a formal manner. Here it is most striking to highlight the work of "Nasa Djeca" or "Our Kids," a foundation that works primarily with at-risk and orphaned youth in the Mostar region and has demonstrated a commitment to this community, and to disadvantaged youth in BiH to an unparalleled degree. In fact, the organization is funded primarily through BiH Swedish diaspora donations and is headed by a volunteer committee based in Sweden of BiH diaspora members, including entrepreneurs and other diaspora leaders. Over the years, they have raised enough funds to rebuild the orphanage, employ a qualified team of professionals to create a safe environment for the children, ensure a quality level of care, and help orphans and children with special needs develop career readiness skills in trades such as hairdressing and IT. This amounts, on average, to £52,000 per year.<sup>208</sup> Not only does this demonstrate the level of diaspora engagement, but it also provides an opportunity to partner with diaspora actors on local development projects that have humanitarian elements in an effort to improve the lives of individuals across BiH.

## II. MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION EXPERIENCE

While exact numbers are difficult, it is estimated that about a quarter of individuals from BiH living in Sweden are members of voluntary diaspora associations. Many of these are supported by the Swedish state as a way of building social capital and engagement within local Swedish communities.<sup>209</sup> Within this organizational structure is the umbrella organization of *Savez Bosanskohercegovačkih Udruženja u Švedskoj* (The Alliance of Bosnian and Herzegovinian Associations in Sweden). Its member organizations are scattered across Sweden and are often focused on reinforcing the diaspora communities in which they are located. They are based on hometowns such as the *Savez Banjalučana u Švedskoj* (Association of Banja Lukans in Sweden), or as women's organizations, *Savez Žena u Švedskoj* (Association of BiH Women in Sweden), or as youth organizations, or general organizations for BiH migrants in particular Swedish localities as a place to gather. Among

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<sup>208</sup> Karabegović, D. 2017.

<sup>209</sup> Jane Teorell provides an overview of voluntary associations in Sweden. See Teorell, J. 2003.

these are local clubs which combine the name of the Swedish town and something symbolic of BiH, such as *Ljiljan Motala* (Motala Lillies).

There are over 100 of these organizations, often in each Swedish municipality, sometimes even multiple organizations within certain cities. Its members are representative of all ethnic backgrounds and are most often of the first generation of BiH conflict-generated individuals. The second generation is often unrepresented, underrepresented, or simply absent from these organizations due to a lack of engagement on their part and an emphasis on building their lives out in Sweden. Religiously based organizations, whether mosques or churches, also offer spaces for diaspora members to meet one another and often encourage engagement to the homeland, though they are rarely the only focus of the individuals' lives in Sweden, as noted by interviewees. This also leads to many Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats being absorbed into Serbian and Croatian diaspora organizations respectively, with diaspora organizations that are *not* Bosnian having a greater proportion of Bosniaks than Bosnian Serbs or Bosnian Croats. While Bosniaks are usually understood to include Muslim minorities from Serbia and Montenegro, Bosniak associations in Sweden consist almost exclusively of individuals from BiH or with BiH backgrounds.

While the number of these organizations is relatively high and demonstrates that individuals are organized in a more coherent way than in other countries, sustained work and connection to the homeland is quite limited. Rather, the organizations and associations and clubs focus on fostering community within the diaspora community and retaining BiH culture and language among each other. This is a formidable task that numerous individuals participate in, but that nonetheless remains difficult to measure regarding impact on the homeland. One participant noted the lack of resources available in BiH to help with these efforts, and the importance of being funded by Swedish resources in providing the ability to continue to organize and foster connections among the BiH communities in particular Swedish localities.

While many echoed concerns from their initial time spent in Sweden, being disoriented and not belonging, under trauma, and not speaking the language, most retain gainful employment almost two decades after settling in Sweden. Over time, they start to feel a sense of belonging within the communities in which they find themselves.<sup>210</sup> As a minority group in Sweden, BiH migrants can admit their children to Bosnian language courses through the Swedish school system, and nearly all interviewees with children have done so, with some who have even taught themselves. This helps the second generation maintain a connection to the homeland, and to form friendships with others who they might not otherwise get to know. The BiH community is generally considered as a model of integration within Sweden. The BiH integration experience in Sweden is often examined through the lens of employment, where BiH migrants fare relatively well in comparison not only with migrants, but also with native Swedes.<sup>211</sup> Examples of successful individuals within the BiH Swedish diaspora are plentiful including politicians, writers, and activists. Together, they have a strong platform to promote BiH and to position narratives about the country in particular ways. Due to their high levels of economic integration, they also demonstrate more reconciliatory attitudes in comparison to individuals back in the homeland, as previous research has demonstrated.<sup>212</sup> At the same time, through their networks developed over the last few decades, they have managed to raise their profile and increase both education and employment possibilities for one another, as noted by interviewees.

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<sup>210</sup> Frykman-Povrzanovi, M. 2001.

<sup>211</sup> Ekberg, J. 2016.

<sup>212</sup> Hall, J. and Kostic, R. 2009.

Individuals within the BiH diaspora community in Sweden know each other and have built networks, collaborating on projects most often focused on highlighting the diaspora community in Sweden, and promoting their homeland in a positive light, through cultural events as well as participation in different associations which represent a constitutive part of Swedish social life. During the early 1990s, they were instrumental in helping to open a BiH Embassy in Sweden, and some served in different capacities over the last twenty years as translators, and advisors, whether informally or formally. A majority cited using the diaspora networks they have built in Sweden to engage with citizens in BiH outside of their own familial and friendship ties in BiH today. They have created and continue to publish a range of periodicals for the consumption of the BiH diaspora which, deduced from interviews, is often their main source of keeping up with the situation at home. In the past, they have undertaken voter registration drives and often attempt to spend at least a few weeks in BiH every other year, if not on an annual basis. These spontaneous activities have helped to contribute to building a translocal community based on the Swedish BiH migrants who are active within these organizations.<sup>213</sup>

One of the most relevant and best organized diaspora associations across Sweden interested and focused on strengthening the homeland-hostland development relationship is the APU Network. The APU Network was formed in the early 2000s through informal gatherings of BiH Swedes enrolled as students at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Stockholm. APU, an acronym, stands for *Akademici*, *Poduzetnici*, and *Umjetnici*. Translated it means academics, entrepreneurs, and artists, highlighting the founders' belief that there is a need for collaboration among these three fields among diaspora members. According to the organization's President in 2014, by calling it a network, they wanted to emphasize the importance of it being "transparent, dynamic, social, flexible and effective."<sup>214</sup> There are a little over 300 members who pay annual dues, which go towards the events and activities the network coordinates, though this number varies and has risen over the years. Through socializing, the group found that they were interested in carrying out projects and ideas to support both the BiH Swedish community as well as their homeland. Understanding that for it to be successful, they needed more of the community members to be engaged, the idea of the APU network came to light.

The group initially aimed to promote relationships between Bosnian Swedes in the three fields mentioned earlier, and to promote entrepreneurship and education in their homeland, as its members believe this is the prime way for the country to move forward. They have built their translocal community around their diaspora experience in Sweden as well as their shared experiences in Prijedor, Banja Luka, Sarajevo, and other cities.<sup>215</sup> When asked about the importance of their homeland locality in their relationships, interviewees noted that their experience in Sweden brought them together more than their lives in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as many of the members were too young to have established networks "back home." In Sweden, by virtue of sharing the belief that they wanted to connect with one another and help create a more positive environment in their homeland, they worked to create new networks primarily amongst each other, and then with individuals, organizations, localities, and BiH institutions in BiH. Its membership base includes also a youth section and is representative of the larger BiH population living in Sweden in terms of age, sex, and ethnic background. However, they all stress firstly their BiH background and belonging to

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<sup>213</sup> Karabegovi, D. 2016.

<sup>214</sup> Respondent SWE14 (2014) Interview in June, Stockholm, Sweden.

<sup>215</sup> Halilovich, H. 2013a.

BiH rather than other identities. As noted previously, the majority of them have also been educated in Sweden.<sup>216</sup>

While the network is expressively apolitical in the sense that its leadership and members do not officially endorse any political candidates, do not campaign on their behalf, and are distrustful of what they consider a hostile political climate in their homeland, its mobilization is nonetheless political in the sense that it provides a valid platform for diaspora voices to be heard both in Sweden as well as in BiH. In activist based initiatives, they approach many of their initiatives and projects utilizing the framework of human rights and discrimination, genocide awareness, and democracy promotion. In this sense, they consider the importance of transitional justice and peacebuilding agendas in their homeland and choose to incorporate it into their activities. Examples have included organizing BiH Statehood Day celebrations regularly on March 1<sup>st</sup> in Stockholm for the community, planning large Srebrenica Genocide commemoration events with prominent speakers and activists on an annual basis, and promoting the potential of BiH in Sweden in the media and through their own successful examples.

Over time, the aim of the volunteer-based network has also become to foster public debate in Sweden not only about their homeland, BiH but also about how BiH migrants contribute to Swedish society. Thus, they remain devoted to encouraging their unique perspective as BiH migrants in Sweden, as well as strengthening Swedish and BiH economic development. According to members interviewed, they envision the network acting as a bridge between Sweden and BiH in helping to strengthen the relationship between the two countries. Over the last few years, the group has worked hard in order to become a viable partner for a variety of collaborations in both Sweden and BiH. The APU network was the only group invited from Sweden for a roundtable discussion and meeting about diaspora engagement and investment in 2014.<sup>217</sup> Since, they regularly organize meetings in collaboration with the Swedish Embassy in Sarajevo as well as with local organizations, and international partners working in BiH. They have established themselves as the main contact point for the BiH diaspora in Sweden, and have well established links in Stockholm and Gothenburg, as well as in Malmö, all cities with high BiH populations.

The APU network is considered a partner and valuable interlocutor by the Swedish Embassy in BiH. They were instrumental in gathering funds after the floods in the region devastated BiH in spring of 2014, raising more than 755,000 SEK (close to 60,000 GBP) from Sweden in their aftermath. This shows its capacity and ability to react to events in the homeland.<sup>218</sup> Here again, they demonstrated no prejudice towards raising money for communities across the country. The whole country suffered from the floods, this is not about the RS or the Federation.<sup>219</sup>

Diaspora members in Sweden have also demonstrated their political engagement, both on the Swedish stage as well as the BiH political scene. Aida Hadzialic, Jasenko Selimovic, Alen

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<sup>216</sup> Karabegovi , D. 2016.

<sup>217</sup> Participant Observation at Bosnian Swedish APU Annual Event, June 2014, Stockholm, Sweden; Participant Observation at Roundtable Event organized by Bosnian Government with APU Invited Members in attendance June 2014, Sarajevo, BiH. Respondent SWE12 (2014) Interview in June, Stockholm, Sweden. Further Interviews completed in September 2017.

<sup>218</sup> The role of critical events for diaspora mobilization is developed further in a joint paper comparing the Bosnian and Iraqi cases. See Koinova, M., Karabegovi , D. and Kadhum, O 2016.

<sup>219</sup> Karabegovi , D. 2016.

Musaefendic, Anna Ibrisagic, and Jasenko Omanovic serve as examples of BiH Swedish individuals who are highly engaged in Swedish politics with political parties that span the spectrum. Of the three, Jasenko Selimovic has been vocal in the European Parliament supporting BiH's potential entry to the EU and generally voicing support for the country as well as organizing visits to Brussels for BiH Swedish diaspora members. There are also several elected officials at more local levels of government in Sweden with BiH roots and BiH Swedes working in the Swedish government in various roles. Further, there are individuals with BiH heritage that are recognized in Swedish society for their high level of journalism and engagement who in turn shape Swedish political debates, such as Negra Efendic who writes for one of Sweden's largest daily newspapers, SvD, Haris Grabovac who writes for EXPO.

On the BiH level, the Party of the Diaspora BiH, or Stranka Dijaspore BiH (SDBiH), was formed in 2007 in Gothenburg, Sweden. The party's founders are BiH diaspora members who felt unrepresented by the local politicians in their homeland. In particular, their platform consists of increasing representation of BiH diaspora citizens in BiH as well as BiH citizens on a civic basis rather than on an ethno-national basis. They want to strengthen the relationship between the diaspora and the homeland in more formal ways as a political party in power. At the inaugural event of the party, around 120 individuals gathered in Gothenburg to show their support. Its leadership at the time was based in Sweden, with the exception of one individual, Senada Telalovi Softi, based in Australia. By 2014, it ran 146 candidates at all levels of government in BiH, and won two seats, one in the National Assembly in the Federation entity of the country, and the other at the cantonal level in Gorazde. They boasted of having over 10,000 members worldwide, though this was more difficult to translate to votes during the elections.<sup>220</sup>

On a final note, it is interesting to note that when speaking about integration, individuals with BiH descent are well represented in Swedish society, particularly in the public sphere including the aforementioned, as well as athletes, academics and others. Perhaps the most famous example is Zlatan Ibrahimovic, although Anel Ahmedhodzic, Muamer Tankovic, Riki Cakic, Jasmin Sudic, Amir Suljic, Elmin Kurbegovic, Denis Velic, Mirza Halvadzic, Branimir Hrgota, Zlatan Azinovic, Anes Mravac, Denni Avdic, and Nera Smajic are also Swedish Bosnian footballers. Midhat Ajanovic and Borislav Arapovic are both well-recognized writers in Sweden. This short list provides only a tertiary overview of individuals of BiH descent in Sweden or those who were born in BiH and call Sweden their home today, as representative of the greater diaspora community.

### **III. POTENTIAL OF BiH DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT**

As noted throughout this chapter, there is much potential from the BiH diaspora in Sweden. Some of this potential has already been realized and there should be emphasis on sustaining and strengthening it further.

#### **Barriers to Engagement of BiH diaspora**

Nonetheless, there remain barriers to the engagement of BiH diaspora. Diaspora members in Sweden, much like in other countries in Europe, echoed the importance of capacity building initiatives in BiH prior to greater investment, as well as a general improvement in the business environment in BiH. Interviewees were eager to bring Swedish businesses to BiH,

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

and have already demonstrated their capacity in doing so.<sup>221</sup> This demonstrated willingness of diaspora actors provides an opportunity for growth for BiH's banking sector, legal sector, as well as industries, in collaborating. While more streamlined and easier to understand banking infrastructure would be beneficial, as noted by several diaspora entrepreneurs during interviews, some also noted their lack of clarity about how taxing structures worked when initially starting their businesses. They noted that they spent excessive amounts of time in order to better understand these systems. Along these lines, diaspora perceive corruption in BiH when it comes to engagement, investment, etc. that they are uncomfortable with and uninterested in being engaged in. They noted that there were few incentives provided to them and that this might be one way to attract more business in BiH in the future. There is less engagement and awareness of relevant BiH institutions that focus on investment opportunities.

Interviewees also repeated that there is a lack of transparency in business and governmental interactions in BiH. This is in large part a reflection of their embeddedness in the Swedish system and their integration within the same. Thus, this leads to frustration on the diaspora's part when it comes to engaging with the bureaucracy or business environment in BiH as things are not electronically available, information is not updated, and individuals, whether in business or in institutions do not respond to e-mails on time. More streamlined capacities and trust, whether in banking, investment, among government institutions, or communications would greatly improve the potential of BiH diaspora engagement by signaling that there is opportunity and a willingness to meet diaspora half-way.

#### **Relations with BiH Consular and Diplomatic Missions in Sweden**

Diaspora interviewees noted the importance of the support of the BiH Embassy in Stockholm through the attendance of the Ambassador at a variety of events, in Stockholm and beyond. For them, this provides a direct link to the homeland and a channel to engage further and this should be continuously fostered. The Embassy in Stockholm serves all of Sweden, with Ambassadors known to be historically very engaged and attending diaspora events. While the Embassy is considered a mini Embassy with few staff and limited resources, they have developed strong links with the APU Network as well as a variety of other diaspora organizations and are generally considered as inviting. For example, APU Network members have collaborated with Embassy staff in order to update the Embassy's website and make it more user friendly. The Embassy space is limited and hence events are not organized at the Embassy, although they are open for collaborations. As with other BiH Embassies that serve large diaspora populations, the Embassy staff is aware of the limitations of its services when it comes to serving citizens abroad. For example, it is not possible for the Embassy to secure certain documents in order to register the birth of children to BiH born parents in Sweden, and they are unable to issue most documents except for passports, which are much costlier than when applied for in BiH.

#### **IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on findings from both the qualitative and quantitative data of this project, it is clear that many of the recommendations for engaging BiH diaspora in development activities is contingent on recommendations for improving BiH diaspora relationships with the homeland and increasing trust between the same. Despite current shortcomings, BiH diaspora would

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<sup>221</sup> Softhouse Consulting is one of several companies that have opened offices in BiH with headquarters in Sweden. There are other examples such as System Verification, for example.

like to see their ties with the homeland strengthened, and would like to be an active participant in the future of BiH. Recommendations for areas of improvement include:

**1. Increase the engagement and presence of BiH institutions in the BiH diaspora in Sweden.** The BiH Embassy in Stockholm should be further supported and link diaspora members with a variety of BiH institutions at all governmental levels, as well as support the community in Stockholm and beyond by supporting cultural events and collaborating with diaspora members on initiatives regarding the homeland. One potential option to consider is to have a regional hub Embassy in Malmö for example which would serve Scandinavia and to open several General Consulates considering the distribution of the BiH diaspora population in the Scandinavian countries.

**2. Fostering stronger cultural links between BiH and BiH diaspora in Sweden.** Members of the Swedish diaspora emphasized the importance of maintaining cultural links to BiH. Diaspora organizations as well as individuals have successfully supported a number of cultural events including theatre and music performances throughout Sweden. Officially supporting such initiatives is of benefit to BiH as a homeland as it provides a platform for engaging with diaspora beyond established channels and often attracts those who might not otherwise be engaged within the diaspora community. An interviewee noted the comparative example of the BiH Embassy in the US that supported and helped organize for a concert by Amira Medunjanin, a well-known Sevdah singer in D.C.

**3. Capitalize on the emotional connection that the first generation BiH diaspora in Sweden holds for BiH, and their localities and communities in particular.** Individuals who have acquired capital in Sweden are most likely invest in places in BiH where they grew up. This is particularly true of first generation BiH diaspora.

**4. Create opportunities for capacity building in investment, banking, and human resources between BiH and Sweden,** thus creating a more secure economic and political environment for investment.

**5. Build e-service options for diaspora engagement with BiH Institutions in order to encourage a more secure economic and political environment.** Creating systems that provide diaspora a way to provide feedback and thus demand accountability from different institutions in BiH would go a long way in building the diaspora's confidence in collaborating, investing, and working with local actors in BiH. This can be in the form of submitting complaints, or increasing the level of e-services which help to track existing claims, request, and tasks.

**6. Develop programs and activities to foster stronger relationships between BiH diaspora and local individuals, both in the first and second generation.** Encouraging potential business mentoring opportunities between those who are already successful and potential investors and diaspora entrepreneurs, in order for learning exchanges to happen, would be a way to minimize difficulty and ease processes.

**7. Encourage and simplify diaspora citizen participation and better integrate diaspora individuals into the BiH political scene.** On a more general level, diaspora voting and citizenship claims should be taken more seriously at all levels of government and accounted for both during campaigns. This moves beyond introducing diaspora representatives in government, but requires active collaboration and coordination between different agencies,



institutions, and ministries in BiH, rather than competition, lack of engagement, or outright dismissal which many diaspora members have experienced over the last three decades, despite their continued desire to engage with their homeland.

**8. Integrate sustainable connections between BiH institutions at all levels and diaspora organizations and individuals.** Investment in social programs and education for youth in BiH is of particular interest for the BiH diaspora, as evidenced through sustained work of organizations such as *Nasa Djeca*. These initiatives should be more formally supported and acknowledged by BiH institutions as well as connected with other relevant actors in BiH as it combines the potential for the diaspora ó development nexus to be developed through the knowledge, interests, and resources of the diaspora actors as well as collaboration on the ground. This includes not only knowledge-transfer opportunities, but also creates lasting bonds between diaspora members and local populations, including in the second generation.

**9. Provide direct support for supplementary education in the diaspora as well as the establishment of programs in BiH.** One of the main issues that was echoed throughout focus groups as well as interviews was the importance of Bosnian language learning and the second generation's ability to retain some connection to BiH. Bosnian language teachers in the Swedish school systems as well as individuals who were part of diaspora organizations continued to repeat that they would like to see more programs that connect the second generation to BiH. Several ideas were suggested, including more opportunities for student exchange, summer programs geared for diaspora members to meet other diaspora members as well as individuals from BiH of the same age, including language lessons in the summer as well as other forms of childcare for younger children. This represents an entrepreneurial opportunity for BiH as well as an opportunity for higher education institutions to provide programming. Collaborations of this kind should be considered in addition to summer programs for younger children including volunteering opportunities in BiH and day-trips to get to know their country better.

**10. Establish formal procedures for BiH diaspora to transfer academic knowledge, practice, and skills.** In relation to knowledge transfer opportunities, BiH Swedish diaspora members noted their interest in giving guest lectures or organizing workshops in their chosen professions to professionals in BiH or to students, depending on their field. This is an untapped opportunity where diaspora is willing and interested in giving back but where there is currently not an outlet or a partner to help organize such events. Multiple interviewees noted their frustrations at trying to implement something on their own and being unable to due to logistical difficulties, lack of support from institutional actors, or simply, lack of networking connections to establish initial contact. These are all easily resolvable through either MHRR contacts, or similar venues, to act as mediators in helping to strengthen diaspora homeland links.

## CHAPTER X

### Country Report: Switzerland

#### Summary

The report is based on data collected in Switzerland (Zurich and Bern) in September 2017, involving one group interview with citizens and representatives of various associations of citizens in Zurich, and one participant observation in Bern. This was complemented by individual interviews with a diaspora organization leader in Bern, two university-based social science researchers, and two diaspora businessmen working in Zurich and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as BiH Embassy representatives.

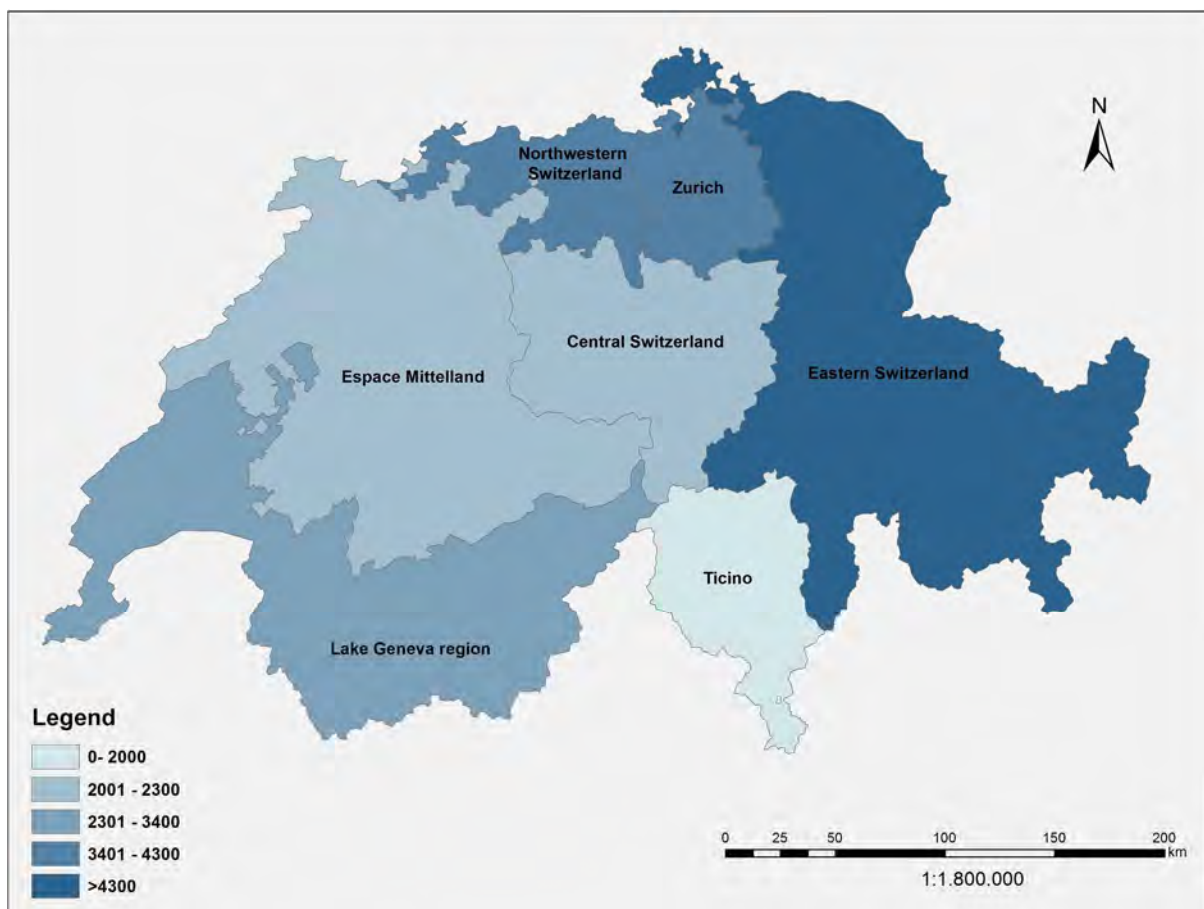
Initial analysis indicates that BiH diaspora in Switzerland are fragmented and heterogeneous. They are numerous and influential, but sometimes pursue conflicting interests. Overall, the majority of interviewed diasporans claim commitments to family members in BiH, which potentially makes them aware of local needs and interested in developing stronger ties with various community initiatives.

Data collected during the interviews and focus groups indicated that the greatest challenge for BiH citizens to fully integrate into the Swiss system are high barriers of economic self-sufficiency. Most of the highly educated BiH migrants faced difficulties with diploma recognition upon arrival to Switzerland. Quick adaptation to new conditions is additionally obstructed by lack of knowledge of local languages and dialects, four official languages, and 26 recorded cantonal variants of language.

Their role in promoting and actively participating in local development in BiH can best be described as ambivalent. Some of them provide assistance by helping locals leave BiH, others promote sustainable development by investing not only in business, but also in training programs to keep the young and highly skilled workforce employed in companies they have established. A major incentive for non-profit oriented work is aimed at promoting social change, as evident in the examples of collective relief donation sent to several regions in Bosnia and Herzegovina during recent heavy floods in 2014.

## I. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Map 12. Distribution of BiH diaspora in Switzerland by region<sup>222</sup>



### Background and Literature Review

Research on BiH migrants in Switzerland exists, but is limited in size.<sup>223</sup> Common points relate to the analysis of BiH diaspora's integration in Switzerland and their potential for contributing to the development of BiH.

According to the available official data for 2010, there were some 35.000 BiH nationals living in Switzerland. The World Bank furnished an estimate of 52.078 persons from BiH residing in the country<sup>224</sup>, including those who were naturalized. The Eurostat Population Census (2011) indicates 29.416 BiH citizens living in Switzerland, while a total of 51.250 them had BiH citizenship at birth. It is estimated that around 25.900 people of BiH origin have acquired the Swiss citizenship<sup>225</sup>. Available reports of the Swiss Federal Statistics

<sup>222</sup> Note: This map represents a *general estimate* of the BiH diaspora distribution in Switzerland. The estimate for each canton was arrived at using a combination of respective community self-report, data from Zusammenstellung des Statistikdienstes des Staatssekretariates für Migration (2017), Iseni et al. Report (2012).

<sup>223</sup> For instance, Behloul, S. 2011 and Iseni, B. et al. 2012.

<sup>224</sup> World Bank Report available at <http://go.worldbank.org/JITC7NYTT0>

<sup>225</sup> Swiss citizenship law allows applicants to have dual and multiple citizenships or to keep their initial citizenship when applying for the Swiss. Citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina do not have to give up BiH when they acquire the Swiss citizenship.

Office indicate that approximately 34,000 BiH citizens live in the country, while a total of 2,714 of Bosnians-Herzegovinians have refugee status in Switzerland<sup>226</sup>.

There are several associations and organizations of BiH migrants registered in Switzerland. Available data indicate that the majority of ethnic Serbs and Croats from BiH prevalently join diaspora organizations of immigrants from Serbia and Croatia, respectively. There are only a few associations that have members coming from all three major ethnic groups in BiH. Diaspora members, depending on their respective religious and national affiliation, also join different religious and ecclesiastical communities in diverse local Swiss communities.

Switzerland is the first country that concluded the Migration Partnership Agreement with BiH, and the only that has included the field of migration as a component of the Swiss development assistance program in Bosnia and Herzegovina. BiH and Switzerland have also concluded several bilateral agreements: the Agreement between the Council of Ministers of BiH and the Swiss Federal Council on technical, economic, financial and humanitarian cooperation; Agreement between BiH and Switzerland on improvement and reciprocal protection of investments; Social Insurance Convention; and Amendments to the Social Security Convention.

### Up-to-date Demographics

There are 31,089 BiH nationals registered in Switzerland as of mid 2017.<sup>227</sup>

Total number of BiH citizens in Switzerland, including foreigners residents and asylum seekers, 31.07.2017.<sup>228</sup>

<b>Total stats on foreign residents</b>	<b>30.504</b>
Residential (C)	25.169
Refugees that are admitted to a legal status (C)	1.627
Non-residential (temp residence) (B)	5.321
Those who are admitted as refugees (B)	2
Short term residents (L >=12 Months)	14
-----	
<b>Total stats on foreign residents (L &lt; 12 Months)</b>	<b>77</b>
-----	
<b>Asylum seekers (N)</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Provisional legal status (F)</b>	<b>478</b>
Admitted refugees within this category (F &FL)	10
-----	
<b>Total BiH nationals in Switzerland</b>	<b>31.089</b>

<sup>226</sup> UNHCR's Central Office of Statistics reports that 1997 and 2006, the number of official recognized refugees from BiH was 5.500-5.952.

<sup>227</sup> Zusammenstellung des Statistikdienstes des Staatssekretariates für Migration (October 2017), based on the number of residence permits issued. Additionally, there are 441 BH citizens registered as asylum seekers.

<sup>228</sup> ZEMIS data in German: ausländische Wohnbevölkerung (mit den Aufenthaltstitel C, B, L >=12 Monate), die nicht ständige ausländische Wohnbevölkerung (Aufenthaltstitel L < 12 Monate) sowie Personen aus dem Asylbereich (Ausweis N, F sowie F Flüchtlinge).

The number of BiH citizens who have acquired Swiss citizenship between 2002 and mid-2017 is represented by the table below.<sup>229</sup>

	<b>Regular citizenship procedure</b>	<b>Facilitated procedure</b>
2002	1.742	116
2003	2.157	111
2004	2.308	60
2005	2.734	53
2006	3.082	65
2007	2.933	75
2008	2.792	59
2009	2.326	78
2010	1.849	75
2011	1.525	101
2012	1.068	90
2013	1.065	106
2014	829	133
2015	971	132
2016	824	133
2017	340	71

Number of applicants who started the citizenship procedure between 01.01.2000 until 30.06.2017<sup>230</sup> is as follows:

	<b>Regular procedure Art.13</b>	<b>Facilitated procedure Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
2000	1.074	165	1.239
2001	1.197	142	1.339
2002	1.989	119	2.108
2003	2.434	96	2.530
2004	3.161	106	3.267
2005	2.578	94	2.672
2006	3.461	108	3.569
2007	2.354	102	2.456
2008	2.878	92	2.970
2009	2.180	114	2.294
2010	1.465	137	1.602
2011	1.314	123	1.437
2012	954	139	1.093
2013	914	138	1.052
2014	845	142	987
2015	1.048	173	1.221
2016	818	186	1.004
2017	432	93	525

<sup>229</sup> The BiH Embassy in Switzerland has issued a total of 23.301 passports to BH citizens residing in Switzerland (as of October 2017).

<sup>230</sup> Data issued by ZEMIS, on 21.08.2017.

Working permit seeking procedures in Switzerland are divided into two main categories: those who seek jobs within a planned workforce cohort *L* (>4 to 12 months) or a residence permit *B* (>12 months); and those who seek jobs individually (outside of a planned cohort) *L* (max. 4 or 8 Months). The number of working permits issued from 2008 until the end of 2016 is as follows:

Year	Cohort L and B <sup>231</sup>	Outside of a cohort L <sup>232</sup>
2008	13	45
2009	13	59
2010	7	75
2011	28	81
2012	13	88
2013	17	47
2014	16	78
2015	13	79
2016	22	191

### Generations of Migrants

The first two waves of migrants who arrived to Switzerland are represented by ‘‘guest workers’’ and their families. The first wave, predominantly economic in nature, dates back to 1960s. Access to the Swiss job market was mainly open to seasonal immigration of migrant workers who spent several months a year in the country. The number of workers was directly linked with the agreement between Switzerland and SFR Yugoslavia to bring in a contingent work force, signed in 1965. In spite of the efforts put into implementing this agreement, the number of migrants remained low. According to the Yugoslav census of 1971, only 1.5% of all Yugoslav migrants from BiH worked in Switzerland. The bulk of them relocated to work in Germany (71%) and in Austria (17%).

The second wave dates back to the 1980s. Similar to the initial migration trend, it largely involved unskilled workers in construction, the service and hotel industries, agriculture and farming. In total, the number of persons from BiH exceeded 12.000, or almost 20% of the total number of Yugoslav immigrants in Switzerland. The number of immigrants increased to 60.916 in the 1980s. According to official Yugoslav statistical sources, a total of 234.213 citizens of BiH, 61% male, migrated to Switzerland in 1991.<sup>233</sup>

The third wave of migrants arrived in Switzerland between 1992-94, as conflict-generated migrants and refugees and asylum seekers. Swiss asylum law was amended for this population, which were considered ‘‘violence refugees’’ (*Gewaltflüchtlinge*). They were defined allowed to stay and can be granted for the duration of a generalized risk, especially during a war or a civil war and in situations of generalized violence according to the same law.<sup>234</sup>

<sup>231</sup> In German: kontingentierte Kurzaufenthaltsbewilligungen L (> 4 bis 12 Monate.) und Aufenthaltsbewilligungen B (>12 Monate.)

<sup>232</sup> In German: unkontingentierte Kurzaufenthaltsbewilligungen L (max. 4 bzw. 8 Monate.)

<sup>233</sup> cf. Iseni, B. et al. 2012: 26-27.

<sup>234</sup> Swiss Asylum Law, 1998, Article 4.

After 1995, there was also a wave of those sought to reunify with their families. From 1996 onwards, the Swiss Federal Council decided to terminate its provisional collective asylum for BiH refugees and set deadlines for their progressive return. The number of new asylum applications from BiH citizens still fluctuated close to 1800 people a year between 1996 and 2002, before scaling down to a lower level (1506500 applicants) in 2012.<sup>235</sup>

Number of refugees from BiH to Switzerland during 1992-1995<sup>236</sup> is as follows:

<b>Host country 1992-1995</b>	<b>Number of refugees registered between 1992-1995</b>	<b>Change in reception country</b>	<b>Refugees repatriated to BiH</b>	<b>Number of refugees in host countries in 2005</b>
Switzerland	24,500	2,600	11,000	10,900

According to available data, the two countries that were most active in repatriating BiH refugee migrants in the past were Germany and Switzerland.<sup>237</sup>

### **Diaspora Associations**

BiH diaspora in Switzerland is organized into various associations and clubs, mostly operating on an ethnic or religious basis. According to the available data, a large number of BiH citizens are not involved in the work of any BiH association registered in Switzerland, while the majority of Croats<sup>238</sup> and Serbs originating from BiH, are involved in the work of the associations gravitating towards promoting culture and interests of Serbia and/or Croatia. There are various organizations of BiH emigrants, with a wide range of activities, and there are almost no alliances. There are also a few organizations that promote BiH values within Swiss Society in the field of science and culture Matica BiH, Terra Nostra, i-platform).

The largest association of Serbs in Switzerland is the Serbian Cultural Association (SKS)<sup>239</sup>, while most Croats associate with the Croatian Cultural Union (HKZ). Most Bosniak associations are organized within the Islamic Community of Bosniaks in Switzerland (IZBCH).<sup>240</sup> There are also diaspora associations representative of large translocal communities such as those from the Srebrenica area who have been instrumental in assisting their members with employment and other matters as well as helping local returnee communities back in BiH.<sup>241</sup>

<sup>235</sup> Iseni, B. et al. 2012: 31.

<sup>236</sup> Valenta, M. and Ramet, S. 2011: 4.

<sup>237</sup> Al-Ali, N. et al. 2001: 617.

<sup>238</sup> There are about 50 Croatian associations in Switzerland, and 13 Croatian Catholic missions.

<sup>239</sup> The Serbian Orthodox Church (headquarters in Zurich) has a very important role in the gathering of the Serbian people in Switzerland. Other Serbian associations registered in Switzerland are: Nemanji i Humanitarian Organization - Ticino, Humanitarian Organization for Modrica - Spreitenbach, Serbian Women's Culture Association - Bern, Association of Serbian Folklore - Ciri, Serbian Students of Switzerland Zurich, Mauritian Association in Switzerland - Wettingen, Association of Prnjavorans in Switzerland - Zurich, The Association of Serbian Writers of Switzerland - Dubendorf, the Serb Community of Switzerland, Winterthur.

<sup>240</sup> IZBCH operates in Koblenz, Geneva, Lausanne, Yverdon, Neuchatel, Bern, Lucerne, Kussnacht, Goldau, Zug, Ricken, Schieren, Wettswil, Bischoffzell, GAM, Heiden, Buchs St. Galen, Chur). Other Bosniak Associations are: Matica BiH in Switzerland, gathering all ethnic groups from BiH, Institute Adil beg Zulfikarpasic, BNF (Bosniak National Foundation), Youth humanitarian organization for the Bugojno, Donji - Gornji Vakuf region, Boson Ticino (Bosnian cultural center), Heart of Cazin, and others.

<sup>241</sup> Karabegovic, D. and Koinova, M. 2016.

One organization that stands out is i-platform (i-diaspora), established in cooperation with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) following the 'Population of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Switzerland' study published in 2014. The organization seeks to strengthen the existing engagement of formal associations of emigrants, informal groups and individuals towards homeland from all generations of Bosnians-Herzegovinians in Switzerland. The Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Bern is actively involved in the work of the i-platform, especially in the realization of projects related to economic cooperation between Switzerland and BiH. The Swiss government agency for development has been intensely interested in developing this cooperation given that there are around 60.000 BiH migrants in the country, and it is estimated that half of them have dual citizenship. Joint cooperation is reflected through participation in the Forum on the Benefits of Investment in BiH, and in economic and trade fairs.

### **Educational Attainment**

In Switzerland, the main responsibility for education – especially for primary and secondary education – lies with the cantons. The Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education (EDK) is in charge of coordinating their work on the national level.<sup>242</sup> Foreign-language speaking children are provided with support measures in the language of instruction. Students with a first language other than the language of instruction can attend voluntary instruction in their language of origin (in German: Heimatliche Sprache und Kultur - HSK). State institutions, some non-state bodies of migrant communities, and certain cantons (through school communities or charities), offer additional language instructions.

The cantons<sup>243</sup> are responsible for the regulation of the courses in the language of origin, but there are no national statistics on the number of children attending these courses.<sup>244</sup> There are supplementary schools for Bosnian language learning. The students are most Bosniak, while children of Serb or Croat origin, on average, attend supplementary schools taught by teachers following the curricula and educational programs approved by relevant institutions in Serbia and Croatia, respectively.

The BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs has provided free textbooks for distance learning of BCS languages. Interlocutors at the BiH Embassy in Bern report that it is still necessary to teach all three languages and both scripts in supplementary schools. It is also important to optimize supplementary school teaching methods for all children who cannot attend lessons in remote places, and enable them to learn via online tools. It is therefore an imperative to initiate negotiations aimed at concluding bilateral agreements between BiH and Switzerland in the fields of science, education, culture, and sports.

### **Geographic Distribution in Switzerland**

As illustrated on the map at the beginning of this chapter, approximately 65% of the BiH population is concentrated in just seven Swiss cantons. Most of them live in St. Gallen

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<sup>242</sup>Some general information on the Swiss education system can be found here: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Switzerland:Overview>

<sup>243</sup> A more detailed insight in how these courses are provided can be found on some cantonal websites: Zurich: [https://vsa.zh.ch/internet/bildungsdirektion/vsa/de/schulbetrieb\\_und\\_unterricht/faecher/sprache/heimatliche\\_sprache\\_kultur\\_hsk.html#a-content](https://vsa.zh.ch/internet/bildungsdirektion/vsa/de/schulbetrieb_und_unterricht/faecher/sprache/heimatliche_sprache_kultur_hsk.html#a-content)

Basel-Stadt: <https://www.edubs.ch/unterstuetzung/sprachen/hsk/sprachen>

Bern: [http://www.erz.be.ch/erz/de/index/kindergarten\\_volksschule/kindergarten\\_volksschule/interkulturelle\\_bildung/hsk-unterricht.html](http://www.erz.be.ch/erz/de/index/kindergarten_volksschule/kindergarten_volksschule/interkulturelle_bildung/hsk-unterricht.html)

<sup>244</sup> The only available information on the languages covered in the cantons (in German only): <http://www.edk.ch/dyn/18783.php>. See also: <http://www.edk.ch/dyn/19191.php>



(4,802), while others are in Aargau (4,267), Zurich (4,039), Vaud (3,342), Lucerne (2,279), Bern (2,065) and Ticino (1,938).<sup>245</sup>

The bulk of the pre-conflict migrants from BiH who reside in Switzerland came from the Croat ethnic group, municipalities like Odfak, Travnik, Modri a, Tomislavgrad, Grada ac, and Bosanski TMac. Those from the Serb ethnic group come mainly from Lopare, Banja Luka, Bijeljina, Odfak, Zvornik, and Prnjavor, and those from the Bosniak ethnic group, from Sanski Most, Prijedor, Biha , Lopare, Travnik, and Klju .<sup>246</sup>

The Central Electoral Commission of BiH<sup>247</sup> reports that the number of registered BiH voters in Switzerland has slowly grown in the past four election cycles. Still, the total number is relatively low compared to the number of voters who have the rights to register. The numbers are below as follows. It is important to note here that the number of registered voters is still higher than the number of individuals who end up voting in each election in the end, which is usually around 65% to 70%.

2769 voters registered in 2010 General Elections  
3127 voters registered in 2012 Local Elections  
3140 voters registered in 2014 General Elections  
4583 voters registered in 2016 Local Elections

## II. MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION EXPERIENCE

All available reports and studies point to the fact that a vast majority of BiH citizens have successfully integrated into Swiss society. Local Swiss institutions have efficiently managed and helped in solving many challenges related to the integration challenges of Bosnians-Herzegovinians by settling them together in communities and encouraging them to learn one or more official languages spoken in Switzerland. Numerous associations of BiH citizens also efficiently supported their transition and integration.

Most BiH migrants, including those who have arrived in Switzerland during the 1990s or more recently, lead fairly comfortable lives. Low-skilled BiH migrants face the same challenges as any other migrant group in Switzerland. For those who obtained higher education, there earn average or above average incomes, and have the ability to easily change work, and get promoted. BiH migrants mostly reside in urban centers or suburbs, and their social, economic, and political engagement mostly takes place on cantonal levels, while only a smaller group of people operates in more cantons or in Federal level.

There are no restrictions on holding dual citizenship in Switzerland, which means that BiH migrants did not have to renounce their BiH citizenships. Effectively, local interlocutors claim that many feel this as a symbolic connection that allows them to politically mobilize when necessary, as opposed to their relatives in Germany or Austria, who might feel disenfranchised and detached from local politics in BiH due to more restrictive country of settlement citizenship regimes.

Local interlocutors emphasize the importance of involving art and religious communities in diaspora activities in BiH. Incentivizing dialogue around the needs of local communities

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<sup>245</sup> Iseni, B. et al. 2012: 44.

<sup>246</sup> Iseni, B. et al. 2012: 28-29.

<sup>247</sup> Issued by Branko Petic, Member of the CIK BiH, document number: 04-50-2-274/17, September 2017.

through more engaged work of religious institutions could lead to various innovative opportunities for voluntary work, charity, but also business.

The return to BiH, if all considered as an option, usually takes place during migrants' retirement, mainly because they are not able to continue paying high rents in Switzerland with pensions that are significantly lower than previously earned personal incomes. The return trends are evident from the number of residence certificates issued by the BiH Embassy in Switzerland, a condition for obtaining a customs privilege when entering BiH.

### **III. POTENTIAL OF BIH DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT**

The BiH Embassy in Bern reports that more than thirty consultations and information events with diaspora associations, representatives of government authorities, NGOs and other interested individuals have taken place in Switzerland and in BiH since September 2015 in order to gather relevant information on diaspora investment potentials and open up communication channels with BiH authorities.

Interviewees claim that most individuals with high solvency who potentially ready to invest money in BiH, especially those belonging to early arrival and conflict-generated diaspora groups, maintain a certain level of distrust towards their partners in BiH. In their view, BiH and local governments are unable or not ready to prioritize removal of administrative barriers and create conditions for easier investments. They noted insufficient degrees of transparency of competent institutions, as well as within the business sector. Another concern is an inflexible state of economy and its inability to adapt to changes in regional or international economic trends. On top of that, there are various political, economic, and legal confines that affect diaspora business decision-making process.

One of the main challenges is finding a qualified and motivated work force that would remain loyal and dedicated to building local companies according to interlocutors. Furthermore, they perceived tensions and negative perceptions of diaspora investments that employed a local work force i.e. the limits of their active employment and professionalization. Interlocutors encountered many instances when their investment in BiH is perceived as utilization of local resources rather than bona fide investment aimed at both generating income (business), or contributing to the local development of their communities of origin (local growth).

Many claim that it is important to realize that diasporas are not closed units, and they often do not share common interests. Local interlocutors emphasize the prominence of developing social capital - social networks, especially in providing financial, social, and even symbolic support to the local communities. In that sense, local communities in BiH should strive to develop not only relationships with diaspora communities abroad, but also to cultivate relationships with locals who have family members in diaspora, to foster local norms, and build higher levels of social trust.

Some believe that the idea of capital or skills transfer from diaspora is misplaced. A substantive amount of money has been invested in BiH through various training programs, human resource capacity building, skills enhancement programs, etc. This means that all types of skills are not necessary, nor that there is a large pool of candidates that could provide skill transfer for free or at lower rates than any other foreign expert available in the field. Also, what is seen as beneficial locally in BiH might not be truly effective as a solution coming from abroad.

## IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**1. Develop a sectorial approach to provide information to diaspora:** Fieldwork in Switzerland demonstrated that BiH diaspora considered themselves as generationally divided, more so than in other countries, in part due to historic migration waves. Thus, interlocutors noted that the information should be gathered and disseminated to diaspora communities in relation to their social status, age, socio-political interests, business opportunities, etc. They argued that not everyone is interested in everything happening at local communities in BiH, and that information needs to be systematized and tailored to enable diasporas to read and learn about the matters that concern and interest them. This also presumes engagement of local governments and other relevant agents at local communities across different generations of diasporans. Investing time and effort to talk to 3 generational audiences, instead of one might open up more structured opportunities to discuss concrete investments and towards improving policy predictability.

**2. Create a comprehensive database at the local community level for individuals, associations, and businesses:** According to interlocutors, local communities in BiH need to take proactive steps towards organizing their data on diaspora capacities and potential for cooperation in various sectors of local growth they wish prioritized and pursue in their mid- and long-term development program. State level institutions, in close cooperation with entity level governments, should seriously consider organizing a comprehensive diaspora census, to finally get up-to-date reliable data on socio-economic capacity of the population. This would be important for both knowing what kind of services can be provided to them, and in measuring what is their capacity to actively contribute to country's reforms at all levels of governance.

**3. Utilize religious organizations in BiH and in Switzerland to promote diaspora engagement:** This aspect of strategizing the relationship with diaspora communities has often been overlooked by BH policy-makers. Thus, a lost opportunity to officially channel and streamline their policy ideas related to improving the cooperation prospects to a large number of diasporans who are actively involved in religious associations, have proven record of humanitarian and voluntary work in BiH, and are potentially willing to engage more in other forms of assistance.

**4. Promote diaspora-friendly bank offers:** BiH diaspora in Switzerland argued that the banking sector in BiH needs to step up and provide adequate solutions for more efficient and cost-effective money transfer and exchange, even for smaller amounts. This could provide incentives for affluent diasporans to invest more money in developing the banking sector, which would stabilize the crediting system. Removing high transaction costs and providing other types of incentives for remittance receivers could boost the frequency of money transfers from abroad, and help to decrease the number of unrecorded transactions.

**5. Enhance coordination between public and private employment sectors in BiH and Switzerland:** State-level institutions need to actively pursue concluding international agreements with Swiss government aimed at facilitation of access of BiH human resources to Swiss job market, as well as easier access of Swiss companies to the BH market. Agreements should serve to promote opportunities for transfer of skills, knowledge, know-how, training programs, cross-border connectivity, exchange of good practices, portability of benefits and security for workers, as well as developing digital platforms for other commercial activities.

**6. Provide second and third generation diaspora community members in Switzerland with more engagement opportunities:** State-level institutions should put more effort into long-term planning and coordination of activities aimed at ensuring that younger generations of migrants feel and practically stay connected with current events in BIH, through providing them with chances for active learning of local languages, fully funded student and high-school exchange programs, and summer programs. More opportunities for utilization of their skills has to be put in place to promote growth agenda and skill mobility, as well as an effective use of IT and other disruptive technologies to aggregate investment supply.

## CHAPTER XI

### Country Report: The United States

#### Summary

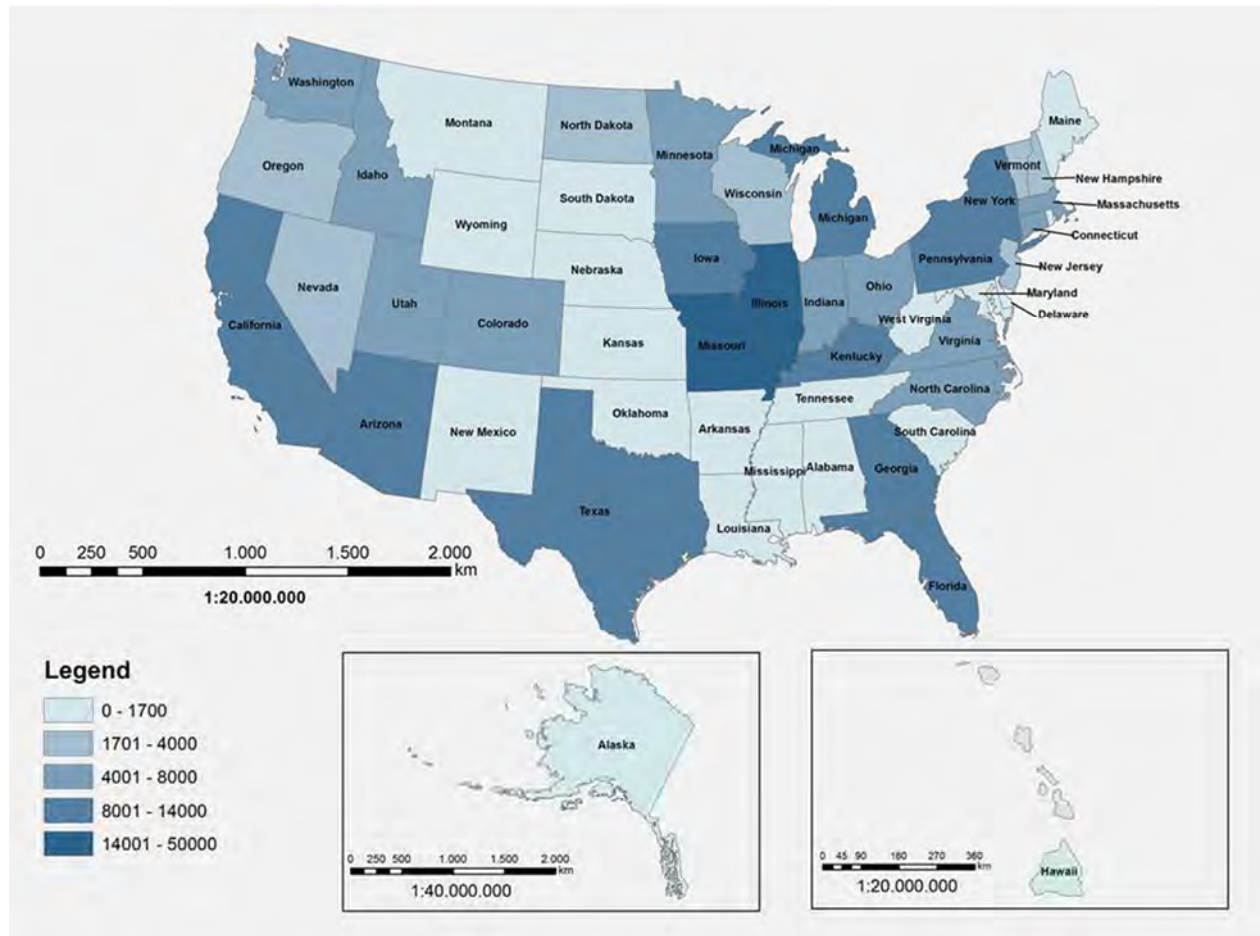
This country report is based on qualitative data collected between August and November 2017 among the members of the Bosnian-Herzegovinian (BiH) diaspora in the United States (US). The data was gathered via face-to-face interviews (in-person, via telephone and Skype, and email communication) and focus groups, conducted with BiH diaspora members, leaders, youth, women's organization, and businessmen, resulting in several hundred individuals who took part and provided their feedback. Participants represented all three constituents of BiH—Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats—as well as other minorities.

The majority of face-to-face interviews and focus were conducted in St. Louis, MO, Atlanta, GA, and Chicago, IL, where large BiH diaspora communities reside. Between the three cities, a total of 8 focus groups (youth, BiH diaspora women's organization, businessmen, and a mixed diaspora community group) were run. Each focus group consisted of 6-10 individuals. In terms of face-to-face interviews, 33 in-depth interviews were conducted, with each interview lasting anywhere from 45 minutes to 2 hours. Shorter interviews, over the phone conversations, and email exchange related to the project were also conducted with another 30-35 individuals. Additionally, participant observation and conversations about the project were carried out at several community events including a Bosnian and Herzegovinian Festival attended by several thousand BiH diaspora members, a community picnic, and a book promotion event. Finally, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 3 staff members of the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Washington D. C., 3 staff members of the Consulate General of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Chicago, and 2 staff members the Advisory Council for Bosnia and Herzegovina (ACBH) in Washington, D. C. As part of the project, over 50 different organizations were contacted and their assistance and participation solicited.

The majority of BiH diaspora members who migrated to the US, mostly though not exclusively as refugees during the late 1990s, are now US citizens, and have largely integrated in the American community (hold steady jobs, have opened up businesses, own real estate). Many expressed interest in investing in BiH, but felt limited by forces internal to BiH, such as political and bureaucratic barriers. Analysis of qualitative data points to diaspora engagement in BiH that is primarily family-based and usually related to remittances and other forms of personal financial aid. Community-based diaspora engagement also exists and focuses on promoting initiatives in aid to BiH of several different forms, and politically-based and transitional justice matters. The findings point to relatively low level of confidence in and trust towards government institutions, and political and social developments in BiH. Despite a number of barriers and challenges, however, a good number of BiH diaspora would like to see ties between BiH diaspora in the US and BiH strengthened, and are ready to help BiH develop.

## I. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Map 13. Estimated Distribution of BiH diaspora in the United States<sup>248</sup>



### Background and Literature Review

Of the approximately two million people who originate from BiH and who live outside of their native country<sup>249</sup> (a number representing almost half of the country's total population), 2010 US Census data shows that around 125,793 of this total are resettled in the US. However, a combination of BiH diaspora self-report, data from various news and literature sources, and US Census data, provide a more realistic picture and suggest the number of migrants from BiH in the US to be much higher, at approximately 300,000 to 350,000. Reasons for the discrepancy in number are that only individuals reporting BiH as their country of birth are included in the US Census number, and their American-born children are not counted as migrants from BiH even though many may identify as Bosnian and Herzegovinian. Also, a number of migrants from BiH who arrived to the US prior to the early 1990s indicated Yugoslavia as their place of birth, and migrants from BiH are therefore consumed by this number.

<sup>248</sup> Note: This map represents a *general estimate* of the BiH diaspora distribution in the US. The estimate for each state was arrived at using a combination of respective community self-report, data from various news and literature sources, and the US Census data.

<sup>249</sup> Kovacevic, D. 2017.

The arrival of BiH migrants to the US occurred in several historical waves of migration. A number of descendants from Croats and Serbs emigrated as early as the late nineteenth century following the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires and in search for economic opportunities.<sup>250</sup> The second wave of migration occurred after World War Two, and was followed by a third and largest wave occurring during the late 1990s and early 2000s. The last and third wave is characterized by an influx of refugees from BiH, majority of who were Bosniaks, followed by a smaller number of BiH Croats and Serbs.

Exact immigration numbers on migrants from BiH are difficult to come by. In the early 1900s, some of the first migrants from BiH in the US who were actually BiH Croats were listed as Yugoslavs, and prior to BiH's independence the number of migrants from BiH was not available separately from Yugoslavia.<sup>251</sup> In the late 1990s, refugees from BiH represented the third-largest group of refugees entering the US,<sup>252</sup> and were resettled into mostly urban communities throughout the US. It should be highlighted that much of BiH migration to the US occurred in late, rather than early, 1990s, as a result of European countries repatriation policies on refugees from BiH who had migrated to those respective countries during the war, and the Dayton Peace Agreement that was signed in 1995. For instance, a number of refugees from BiH were initially resettled in countries such as Germany before moving to the US. Therefore, US Census numbers of migrants from BiH to the US in the first half of 1990s are not accurate estimates of the current number of migrants from BiH resettled in the US; they resettled in larger waves later and well into 2000s via the family reunification aspect of the resettlement program, which allowed immediate family members to petition for reunification.

The US Census estimates that 37,000 refugees from BiH and asylum seekers obtained legal permanent resident status between 1992 and 2000, and between 1996 and 1999 alone, 30,000 refugees from BiH were recorded to have migrated from Germany to the US.<sup>253</sup> Between 2001 and 2008, estimates show that 81,000 refugees from BiH and asylum seekers obtained legal permanent resident status.<sup>254</sup> Whereas the 2010 US Census Data reported 125,793 individuals in the US who were BiH-born, this number, according to the subsequent Census Bureau estimates decreased to 122,529 in 2011, 121,938 in 2012, 112,240 in 2013, 111,317 in 2014, 107,969 in 2015, and more recently to 101,638 in 2016.<sup>255</sup> This downward trend supports the fact that the majority of BiH diaspora members who migrated to the US in late 1990s entered as refugees. Also, in 2000 the US halted all refugee resettlement programs for migrants from BiH. Currently, most first generation BiH migrants are US citizens, have largely integrated in the new homeland, and those who are BiH-born are slowly decreasing in number due to mortality. In contrast, their children who are American-born and mostly identify as "Bosnian-American" or "American-Bosnian" (and are counted as American-born by the US Census), are increasing in number.

In terms of age distribution, 2016 American Community Survey estimates (see Figure 1), show that the majority of BiH diaspora who are BiH born are middle-aged, between ages 25-

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<sup>250</sup> Coughlan, R. 2014.

<sup>251</sup> Singer, A.W. and Jill H. 2017.

<sup>252</sup> Valenta, M. and Strabac, Z. 2013.

<sup>253</sup> Valenta, M. and Ramet, S. 2011.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> U.S. Census Bureau 2016.

45, with the median age 42.8 years. Gender wise, there are slightly more female migrants from BiH who were also born in BiH (see Figure 2).

Figure 1: Age of BiH born migrants in the US (n=101,638)<sup>256</sup>

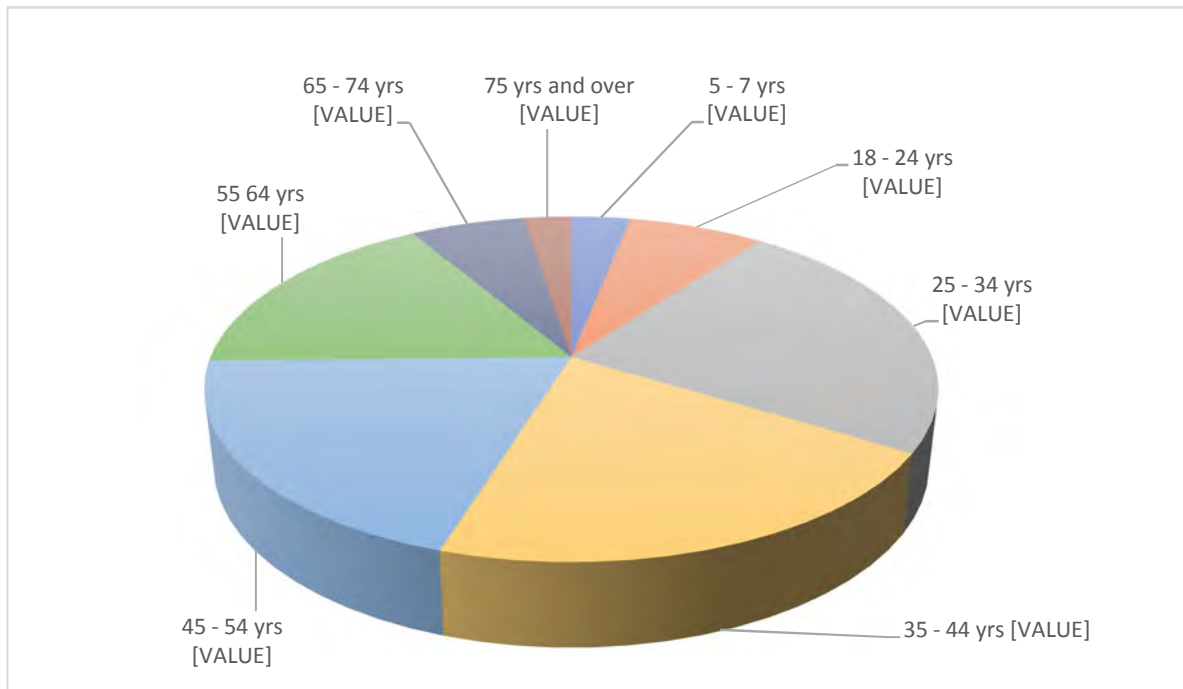
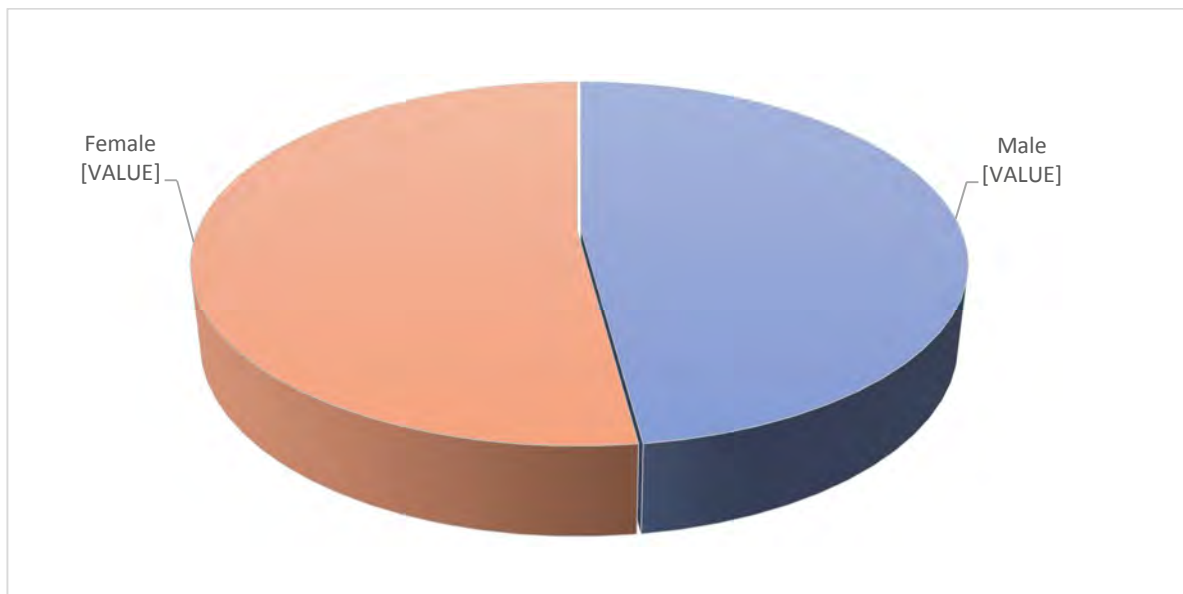


Figure 2: Sex of BiH born migrants in the US (n=101,638)<sup>257</sup>



In terms of geographic distribution, migrants from BiH who arrived to the US as refugees were resettled in mostly large urban communities such as St. Louis, New York, Chicago,

<sup>256</sup> U.S. Census Bureau 2016, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

<sup>257</sup> U.S. Census Bureau 2016, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates



Jacksonville, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, St. Petersburg, Richmond, Atlanta, and Louisville, as well as a number of smaller urban communities throughout the US. According to the qualitative data gathered via face-to-face interviews and focus groups, the majority of BiH diaspora in the US was resettled in urban areas as was crafted by US officials and resettlement agencies, and the majority continues to live in these same urban areas where they were initially placed. Some, however, report moving to other larger urban areas in the US that have large BiH ethnic enclaves, such as St. Louis or Chicago. The exact number of migrants from BiH in specific US locations can only be estimated, as migrants from BiH are classified as Caucasian in the US Census Data and place of birth is the only viable method by which one can arrive at an estimate. This estimate, of course, remains problematic as most migrants from BiH who arrived as refugees have been in the US twenty plus years and their children are American-born. Nevertheless, estimates point to at least several thousand migrants from BiH in each larger urban community listed above, as well as to the existence of established ethnic enclaves. These ethnic enclaves include BiH-born migrants who do not exclusively identify with and/or belong to BiH diaspora and respective organizations, but who may identify with Serbian and Croatian diaspora. Recently arrived Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs will have been absorbed by ethnic enclaves that were formed by their predecessors in earlier times; Bosnian Muslims had to create their own communities from the outset.<sup>258</sup>

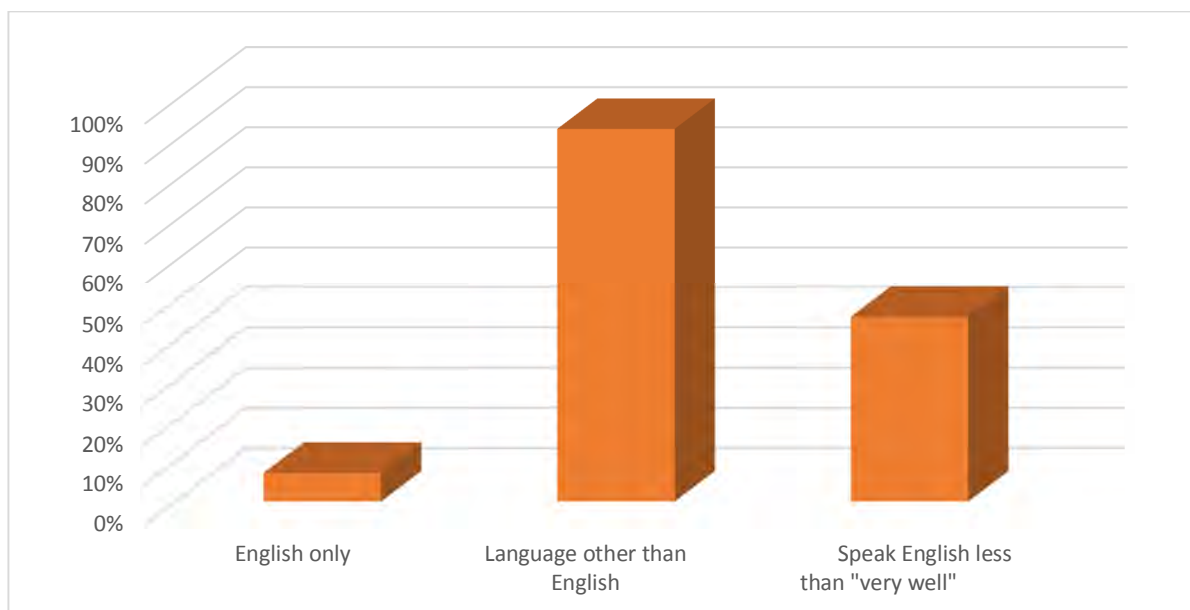
The reception of BiH diaspora in the US has been very positive. Many quickly found jobs, placed their children in schools, and found housing self-sufficiency was encouraged. Learning the English language was also promoted, with various English as a Second Language classes being offered free of charge. While the English language proved to be a challenge, and remains so for the elderly in particular, most of those who initially resettled were able to learn enough English to hold jobs, or found jobs in large factories alongside other migrants from BiH where their native language, rather than English, was dominant. The 2016 American Community Survey estimates (see Figure 3) show that almost 50% of BiH-born migrants in the US speak English less than "very well," suggesting that fluent English is still a challenge for some BiH-born migrants even today.

*Figure 3: Language spoken at home and ability to speak English of BiH-born migrants in the US (n=101,605)*<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> Coughlan, R. 2014: 105.

<sup>259</sup> U.S. Census Bureau 2016.



An additional factor favoring resettlement was that refugees in the US are able to obtain permanent residence status, or "green card," after one year of residence, followed by application for citizenship after five years. As such, most migrants from BiH became US citizens in the five to ten year period following their resettlement, and consequently had no fear of being sent back to their home country. By 2010, approximately 55% of BiH diaspora had US citizenship, and this number has steadily increased.<sup>260</sup> More importantly, citizenship allowed migrants from BiH access to affordable education, participation in civil and political life, and ability to travel worldwide without a visa. Almost all migrants from BiH have by now obtained US citizenship and the majority maintains dual citizenship with BiH. In 2013, 65% reported having dual citizenship.<sup>261</sup>

A large number of BiH diaspora have been very successful in the US in areas ranging from politics to music and art. Examples include Anesa Kajtazovic (Velika Kladuša) who came to the US as a refugee in the late 1990s. She is a former member of the Iowa House of Representatives and was the youngest woman ever elected to the Iowa legislature and the first BiH-born migrant elected to any public office in the US. Another success story is Vedad Ibić (Vlasenica), a BiH-born professional soccer player, among a number of others. In general, BiH diaspora in the US moved relatively quickly through the acculturation process, assimilating into the middle class, or pursuing upward mobility. Coupled with a strong work ethic and personal resilience, an often cited reason for this success story is that "Bosnians are white Europeans whose reception in the country was decidedly positive."<sup>262</sup>

St. Louis, Missouri is a good example of an established ethnic enclave of migrants from BiH. The city and the surrounding area have the largest BiH diaspora outside of BiH, increasing from secondary resettlement and family reunification programs. BiH diaspora represents approximately one in six St. Louisans; among non-English languages spoken in the area, Bosnian ranks second only to Spanish. There are reportedly anywhere between 40,000 and 60,000 resettled refugees from BiH, with the exact number remaining unknown. The first refugees from BiH came to St. Louis via US resettlement agencies who saw the city losing its

<sup>260</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>261</sup> Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees (MHRRBiH) 2014.

<sup>262</sup> Coughlan, R. 2014:105.

population, economic base and cultural character. The International Institute in St. Louis assisted with the resettlement and initially helped organize the few existing and local migrants from BiH to help welcome newly arriving refugees and assist them in resettling. Today, parts of St. Louis for which BiH diaspora is credited with revitalizing is called "Little Bosnia," and is laced with ethnic businesses such as bakeries, restaurants, travel and insurance agencies, and grocery stores.<sup>263</sup> BiH diaspora presence in St. Louis has received much attention from local city government, politicians, researchers and academics around the US and the world, as well as various service agencies and nonprofit organizations. The BiH community in St. Louis has been recognized for its positive influences on the area, bringing with them a strong network of social support, strong work ethic, and various other trades. Migrants from BiH in St. Louis have been labelled as a story of "a successful refugee integration," as is the case in many other communities in the US that have a high number of refugees from BiH. The BiH diaspora in St. Louis has achieved "remarkable success in business, media, education, and the arts," [but] "despite their numerous accomplishments, Bosnians have not forgotten the circumstances that brought them here," and "while tragedy and sorrow created the Bosnian community here, new beginnings and opportunities are building a brighter future for the Bosnians and for all those who now call them neighbors and friends."<sup>264</sup>

### **Diaspora Associations**

BiH diaspora associations in the US are primarily organized along ethnic boundaries, as is the case in other nations around the world with a large number of migrants from BiH. Following the third and largest wave of refugees from BiH resettling in the US in the late 1990s, organization around ethnic boundaries occurred spontaneously and immediately. BiH Serbs and Croats were mostly absorbed by associations set up by Serbians and Croatians whom they identified with more, while Bosniaks created their own associations. One of the main reasons for diaspora organization around ethnicity was that BiH refugees fled their homeland where war was just ending and where they were deeply disappointed in inter-ethnic relations. Additionally, at this time there was lack of support and organization from BiH as to inter-ethnic and national interests.

The Serbian and Croatian churches as well as the Islamic Community Centers in the US whom different groups of BiH diaspora identify with are much more than places of worship, and serve as "community centers" that house and host a wide range of other social activities such as folklore, sports clubs, language and religious studies, and women's organizations. Examples include the Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church, the Bosnian Islamic Center, and the St. Joseph Croatian Catholic Church, all of which are in a relatively close geographic proximity in St. Louis. Likewise, in Atlanta, the STS Peter and Paul Serbian Orthodox Church and Community of Bosniaks Georgia co-exist as outlets for BiH diaspora. In Chicago, the Congress of North American Bosniaks (CNAB), Serbian-American Congress, and the Croatian Ethnic Institute act as three different politically-oriented organizations catering to different BiH ethnic groups.

BiH diaspora in the US also tends to organize around regional belonging and/or neighborhood belonging from their pre-war time in BiH, as well as around a common experience such as concentration camp experience during the 1992-1995 war. Most refugees from BiH who migrated to US in the late 1990s came from the western and eastern BiH, and

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<sup>263</sup> Halilovich, H. 2013a.

<sup>264</sup> Terry, E., Wright, J., and McCarthy, P. 2015:117.

several from central BiH. Place of origin and regional belonging is exercised through activities shared by organizations such as the Kozarac Association of Chicago which serves people from Kozarac, and Association of Srebrenica Survivors in St. Louis that brings together those who survived the Srebrenica genocide, just to name a few examples.

Additionally, there are a number of BiH diaspora associations, both local and national, that actively seek to incorporate all ethnic groups from BiH. Associations include women's organizations and various professional organizations. Most notable example is the Bosnian-Herzegovinian American Academy of Arts and Sciences (BHAAAS), founded in 2007, whose mission is advancement and development of arts and sciences in the BiH diaspora in the US and Canada. The academy also provides connections between BiH scientists, artists and professionals in North America and builds bridges of cooperation with the homeland.

The findings from both the qualitative and quantitative data indicate that the majority of first generation migrants from BiH are actively engaged in diaspora organizations and associations, ranging from religious and cultural centers to regional associations. Participation in diaspora associations' activities is a way to stay in touch with their homeland, by the way or sharing news, stories and events with others who attend. This includes celebration of BiH holidays and keeping up with BiH politics – all the respondents who were interviewed said while they celebrate some US holidays, they celebrate most BiH holidays.

### **Educational Attainment**

Though in comparison to other refugee groups from other parts of the world, migrants from BiH tend to be more educated, this was not the case with migrants from BiH to the US, as indicated by the 2000 US Census. Migrants from BiH were found to have the lowest levels of educational attainment, with only 4.4% of Bosnian migrants to the US having a graduate degree, and only 74.8% holding a high school diploma or better.<sup>265</sup> These numbers remain similar in the 2016 American Community Survey estimates (see Table 1), where only 6.9% of BiH-born migrants have a graduate degree, and 75.4% hold a high school diploma or better.

*Table 1.* Educational attainment of BiH born migrants in the US<sup>266</sup>

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	
Population 25 years and over	91,260
Less than high school diploma	14.6%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	35.9%
Some college or associate's degree	25.2%
Bachelor's degree	17.4%
Graduate or professional degree	6.9%
High school graduate or higher	85.4%
Male, high school graduate or higher	86.8%
Female, high school graduate or higher	84.1%

<sup>265</sup> US Census Bureau 2016.

<sup>266</sup> US Census Bureau 2016.

Bachelor's degree or higher	24.3%
Male, bachelor's degree or higher	23.0%
Female, bachelor's degree or higher	25.4%

When it comes to school enrollment of BiH-born migrants (see Table 2), of the 11,206 individuals enrolled in school, the largest percentage (68.7%) are enrolled in college or graduate school. It follows then, that a good number of BiH-born migrants enrolled in college tend to be nontraditional students, meaning that they are pursuing college-level education at a later age than is typical for a traditional college student in the US.

*Table 2. School Enrollment of BiH born migrants in the US<sup>267</sup>*

Population 3 years and over enrolled in school	11,206
Nursery school, preschool	0.0%
Kindergarten	2.7%
Elementary school (grades 1-8)	8.9%
High school (grades 9-12)	19.8%
College or graduate school	68.7%
Male 3 years and over enrolled in school	5,013
Percent enrolled in kindergarten to grade 12	34.5%
Percent enrolled in college or graduate school	65.5%
Female 3 years and over enrolled in school	6,193
Percent enrolled in kindergarten to grade 12	28.8%
Percent enrolled in college or graduate school	71.2%

### **Socio-economic and Professional Parameters**

The analysis of where and how BiH diaspora are positioned socio-economically and professionally showed that migrants from BiH have professionally been relatively successful in the US. According to the 2016 American Community Survey estimates (see Table 3), most BiH-born migrants are employed, and unemployment rate in this group is generally low. All migrants from BiH report feeling that the US is indeed a "land of opportunity," where it is possible to advance professionally if one "works hard." However, many also feel that it is important to control how much one works, and express valuing time with family even if that means lower earning. As one respondent stated, "US offers many opportunities but you may find yourself owning a working suit and a pajama only."

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

Table 3. Employment status of BiH born migrants in the US<sup>268</sup>

Population 16 years and over	100,031
In labor force	74.1%
Civilian labor force	74.0%
Employed	71.1%
Unemployed	2.9%
Unemployment Rate	3.9%
Armed Forces	0.1%
Not in labor force	25.9%

To put migrants from BiH success into context, it is important to consider the early years when they arrived to the US:

Most took jobs that many others would not, from cleaning to truck driving. Some did manage to establish for themselves a creative space as artists or university lecturers. Others did feel needs as doctors and nurses in America's hospitals.... *Grbic Restaurant* in Saint Louis was one of the first examples of small business enterprise, and now Bosnian Americans own/operate everything from logistics and trucking to construction and high-tech development. Many Bosnian Americans have served in the US military, recognized for courage and commitment to duty, while others are part of America's law enforcement. Now, many multi-generation established Americans have also come to study and work with the BiH community<sup>269</sup>

A significant number of BiH-born diaspora businessmen hold jobs in areas such as trucking, real estate, insurance, construction, housekeeping, and other service-type jobs (see Table 4). This is particularly true of first generation diaspora members who resettled in the US in their late 20s, 30s, or 40s. While a select few obtained additional education and pursued university diplomas since resettlement, some opened own businesses using skills they already had or developed on their own upon resettling (see Table 5). For instance, a large business owner in St. Louis described how he started his business "I saw a gap and thought why not try and fill it, what can I lose by trying to open my own business and do what none has thought of doing? so I focused and slowly built it up? it is a worth almost a million dollars today." It is important to note here that many low-skilled and unskilled jobs that were typically lower paid jobs in BiH tend to be well paid and valued jobs in the US. For example, many migrants from BiH work in private and commercial housekeeping, and are able to support whole families on respective incomes. A number of migrants from BiH also started their own cleaning, heating and cooling, and repair/general maintenance companies and employ several individuals.

Table 4. Occupation of BiH born migrants in the US<sup>270</sup>

Civilian employed population 16 years and over	71,134
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	28.7%

<sup>268</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>269</sup> Sacirbey, M. 2015.

<sup>270</sup> US Census Bureau 2016.

Service occupations	17.9%
Sales and office occupations	20.8%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	7.7%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	25.0%

*Table 5. Class of worker of BiH born migrants in the US<sup>271</sup>*

Civilian employed population 16 years and over	71,134
Private wage and salary workers	86.1%
Government workers	7.7%
Self-employed workers in own not incorporated business	6.1%
Unpaid family workers	0.2%

The dominant industry sectors in which the majority of BiH-born migrants work are educational services and health care and social assistance, manufacturing, retail trade, and transportation and warehousing, and utilities (see Table 6).

*Table 6. Industry of BiH born migrants in the US<sup>272</sup>*

Civilian employed population 16 years and over	71,134
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.3%
Construction	5.1%
Manufacturing	16.4%
Wholesale trade	1.3%
Retail trade	13.2%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	11.6%
Information	1.7%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leas	7.0%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative	10.0%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	19.0%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and	8.4%
Other services (except public administration)	3.9%
Public administration	2.2%

Those migrants from BiH who had an opportunity to pursue further education and obtain US university diplomas tend to be BiH diaspora members who already had university degrees from BiH and whose degrees demanded extra education or training in order for them to be able to practice in the US. For instance, in order to be able to practice in the US, a married couple both of whom were medical doctors in BiH was required to pass several medical exams in English language, as well as to complete a 4-year medical residency program. The

<sup>271</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>272</sup> *ibid.*

medical doctor reported high stress during those several years, time away from family, financial burden on the family, and difficulty in adjusting to the new system. In fact, the cost of getting retrained and recertified to be able to practice in the US was so high, that one of the partners decided not to pursue the same route and hence has never made use of the medical degree obtained in BiH. Examples such as these describe the downward mobility that some BiH diaspora also experienced, and settled for lesser jobs than they were trained for. Additionally, it is important to note that the language barrier played an important role in this downward mobility.

Ethnic enclaves and nostalgic connection to cultural heritage remain important to all first generation migrants from BiH. A primary way of maintaining a connection to homeland is via family and/or friends back in BiH with whom they regularly keep in touch via phone and/or social media, and whom they visit whenever circumstances and finances allow. Those who still have nuclear family members in BiH, such as parents and/or brothers and sisters, report more frequent visits to homeland than those who do not have nuclear family members in BiH. As one participant put it, "I visit BiH while my parents are still alive as I do not want to regret the time not spent with them after they are gone, who knows if I will visit BiH as often as I do now, maybe I will vacation in Mexico." Patterns of interaction with family and friends in BiH, therefore, are individual- and family-dependent, and range from those who visit BiH only once in a few years to those who are fortunate and able to visit once a year. Those who do visit have to save and use their limited annual leave to spend time with their friends and family in BiH. Three most often cited reasons for why they do not visit BiH more frequently are costs involved in traveling with their families, lack of immediate family members who still live in BiH, and in some cases a way to repress memories connected to war trauma (such as in the case of some Srebrenica survivors, for instance).

In contrast to first generation migrants from BiH, second generation individuals report interest in, but not necessarily nostalgia for, "the homeland of their parents." They are less likely to be engaged in ethnic BiH organizations and associations, with the exception of college student-type organizations such as the Bosnian Student Associations that exist on several US college campuses in urban areas with a high number of migrants from BiH. They are also less likely to report interest in BiH politics, citing them as "complex and corrupt."

In terms of remittances, most members of the BiH diaspora interviewed via face-to-face interviews and focus groups said that they send money to families and friends in BiH, and some reported being sole sources of income for family members in BiH, particularly in cases of those who have elderly parents in BiH. Sending patterns include money transfers via services such as Western Union, bank wire transfers, or provision of credit cards to family members in BiH. Some report sending money to help families in BiH on a monthly basis and some every several months. This pattern is consistent with the Central Bank of BiH estimate on BiH diaspora and that "last year they transferred 2.4 billion Bosnian marks (around 1.2 billion euro) in remittances from abroad, which together with foreign pensions which are paid in Bosnia and Herzegovina amounted to 3.6 billion marks or 1.8 billion euros."<sup>273</sup>

### **BiH Diaspora in US and Development Initiatives**

Migrants from BiH in the US already engage in several development initiatives in BiH. While most of these initiatives tend to be centered in geographic localities and regions they call home, migrants from BiH frequently support various humanitarian causes in BiH.

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<sup>273</sup> Kovacevic, D. 2017.



Local restaurants, supermarkets, coffee houses, businesses, and diaspora organization regularly collect donations for various humanitarian causes in BiH. Additionally, a number of supermarkets that sell products from BiH operate as successful and large import businesses. A notable example includes Europa Market Import Foods in St. Louis who are not only the largest importers of fine foods from Central and Eastern Europe, but also national distributors.

Another major contribution to development comes in form of remittances and via diaspora tourism to BiH, typically during the summer months. Remittances and diaspora visits to homeland provide a major financial boost to BiH economy. Similarly, transfer of knowledge is contributing to development via various professional and academic conferences, classes, workshops, data sharing, student and faculty exchange programs, internships, and intellectual diversity. Several US universities have established student exchange programs with BiH, and organizations such as the Bosnian-Herzegovinian American Academy of Arts and Sciences (BHAAAS) have programs that provide connections and knowledge exchange between BiH scientists, artists and professionals in US and BiH.

In terms of businesses, willingness on the part of BiH diaspora in the US to pursue development initiatives with BiH is related to industry sectors they work in, occupation, and business size. Larger business owners who are in industries such as trucking and construction, for instance, cite lack of common ground/interest in terms of industry as a barrier. Some also view investments in BiH as a risk, further limited by a large geographic distance. Smaller businesses, interestingly, seemed more open to and interested in development initiatives, but cite lack of funds as a barrier to investment. By far, however, the most cited barriers to opening a business in BiH or investing money in BiH were the complexity of BiH bureaucracy, unstable economy, and lack of governmental and municipality support. Additionally, there is a general feeling among BiH diaspora in US that diaspora is not welcome by BiH, and that many opportunities for development and cooperation with diaspora are just lip service.

BiH diaspora interviewed in the US seemed very receptive to the idea of transfer of knowledge and short-term assignments as a way to build development initiatives with homeland. Many expressed enthusiasm for opportunities such as lecture exchange, sharing of knowledge both virtually and in person, and building on opportunities with youth, in particular.

The face-to-face interviews and focus groups conducted also revealed that a significant number of BiH diaspora members desire and dream of returning to BiH, but this desire was strictly limited to the age of retirement. Many first generation migrants from BiH foresaw splitting their retirement living between BiH and US. However, almost all cite difficulty leaving behind their children and grandchildren, who are now "Bosnian-American," and who "feel about Chicago as I feel about Prijedor." During focus group discussions, several stories were told of individuals who did return to BiH, but after unsuccessful reintegration into BiH and faced with multiple barriers to opening own business, again migrated back to the US. A select number of first generation migrants from BiH report having no intention to permanently return, even during retirement. Two major reasons cited in cases such as these was access to healthcare, and not wanting to relive memories of war.

The youth, on the other hand, most of whom were born in the US or left BiH at a very early age, clearly do not feel the same nostalgic connection to BiH as their parents do, and identify with the US as their homeland and cultural hub. They cite educational and professional

opportunities in the US as a key factor that keeps them from considering a move to BiH, though at the same time they express a level of responsibility towards and respect for BiH as their place of origin, particularly via their ethnic identity.

It is important to remember that the majority of migrants from BiH who resettled in the US arrived as refugees, meaning that they were forcefully and unwillingly displaced. And so while some have homes and property in BiH that they have rebuilt and invested in in the last 20-25 years, others have nowhere to return even if they should wish to. This context of i) coerced displacement, and ii) consideration of home and property in BiH, are important to consider when thinking about the willingness among BiH diaspora to participate in development initiatives in BiH. A level of trauma associated with both war experiences in BiH, displacement and relocation exists among a high number of migrants from BiH living in the US, and these factors may prevent them from exploring development initiatives with BiH. About a third of migrants from BiH interviewed remain suspicious of motives behind utilizing BiH diaspora for development, especially 20 plus years after resettlement. While unfortunate, this sentiment also provides a window of opportunity for communication between migrants from BiH in the US and BiH.

### **Attitudes of BiH Diaspora towards Government Bodies**

The findings from both the face-to-face interviews and focus group show that BiH diaspora in the US still maintains interest in BiH politics, even if less so than when they initially resettled in the US. Most follow BiH politics via social media, local ethnic radio stations (though these are slowly disappearing), a Bosnian-language TV program (BosTel), and through socialization with friends and family. By far, however, most watch BiH news, politics, shows, and events through IPTV whereby channels from BiH are available live. Many are likewise involved in the local BiH diaspora politics as well as politics of the US. With US citizenship came political responsibility which migrants from BiH in the US report exercising via voting and through community and neighborhood activities.

When asked about their feelings towards government institutions in BiH, the majority of migrants from BiH said they felt disfranchised and demoralized by BiH politics. They were particularly disappointed in lack of BiH policy towards and cooperation with diaspora. Most would like to see ties between BiH diaspora and BiH strengthened, via language schools, cultural activities, knowledge exchange, and economic cooperation.

In terms of feelings towards BiH consular and diplomatic missions/services in the US, BiH diaspora expressed concern for BiH diplomatic missions in the US being underfunded and therefore limited in the services they can provide and particularly the speed at which they can provide them. This sentiment was directly in line with what the US BiH consular and diplomatic missions reported ó being underfunded and therefore limited in their efficiency and communication with the diaspora, but still doing the best they can do. Both parties felt that there was much room for improvement which had to start with appropriate funding.

## **II. MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION EXPERIENCE**

BiH diaspora in the US has successfully integrated and assimilated into the mainstream US cultureô economically, socially and culturally. In many urban areas with a high concentration of migrants from BiH, such as Chicago and St. Louis, migrants from BiH have been described and used as a model of successful refugee integration. The influx of migrants from BiH into many of the nation's urban areas has stabilized neighborhoods, led to new

businesses, contributed to local culture, and enhanced the US image as a destination for migration. BiH diaspora has been described as having the 'invisible' advantage, whereby the success of migrants from BiH can partly be attributed to being Caucasian and looking like they fit in. Their invisibility has contributed to lower rates of discrimination, especially when compared to other refugee groups who may be nonwhite. The Muslim identity in the case of many Bosniaks, however, when made known, has been known to be cause for discrimination. A number of face-to-face and focus group participants knew of at least several cases of discrimination connected to Muslim identity of some Bosniaks.

BiH diaspora in the US is linked by its diaspora organizations, both local and national, as well as through social media, Facebook, ethnic radio and TV stations, and joint activities.

The number of BiH youth who immigrated to the US in recent years from BiH is relatively small, and is only the case in several marriages that have occurred between BiH diaspora resettled as a result of the war and BiH citizens. The majority of BiH youth in the US are children and young adults who are second generation Bosnians and Herzegovinians and who call themselves 'Bosnian-American' or 'American-Bosnian'.

### **Diaspora Cohesion and Self-management**

On many levels, cohesion and level of self-management of the BiH diaspora in the US is not a challenge in that BiH diaspora is generally collective, cohesive, and community oriented. This can be documented by a number of BiH diaspora organizations that exist throughout the US and that cooperate on various activities. One example is the Congress of North American Bosniaks (CNAB) which is a national umbrella organization, representing Americans and Canadians of Bosniak descent and origin. Its members include educational, veteran, religious, cultural, social, business, political organizations and individual members. Though challenges exist and politics run strong in many of the BiH diaspora organizations and communities, the existence of more than a hundred BiH diaspora organizations in the US is evidence enough that BiH diaspora is well established and has found their niche in the new homeland.

### **Policies and Programs to Promote Diaspora Networking**

The findings from both face-to-face interviews and focus groups show that the majority of diaspora organizations are self-sufficient in that they rely on local diaspora community donations and fundraising for their existence and functioning. Some select diaspora organizations also occasionally receive material and resource support from local bodies, such as via grants.

Current arrangements, programs and policies currently in place to promote diaspora networking and home country engagement include, i) humanitarian-based efforts (e.g. collection of donations for health emergencies), and disaster relief (e.g. flood relief), ii) some level of networking and information exchange among BiH diaspora religious institutions and BiH, iii) knowledge exchange and networking among BiH diaspora academics and BiH, and iv) contact with BiH diplomatic missions in the US for various services.

In terms of programs and policies promoting diaspora networking and BiH through BiH diplomatic missions, and according to the Embassy of BiH in Washington D.C., some of the efforts include an ongoing national program to secure textbooks for supplementary school for students with origins in BiH. Currently, supplementary language schools exist in the framework of religious or community centers only, as is the case of Chicago and Atlanta, for

instance, where language classes are offered via the Serbian Orthodox Church and Community Center for children of respective ethnic background. To complement the embassy efforts to secure textbooks is ongoing communication with BiH supplementary schools in the US to collect information on these schools, with the goal of gauging the role that BiH can play in this important segment of cooperation between BiH diaspora in the US and BiH. Every year, the Embassy of BiH in Washington D.C. collaborates with US government on a high school student exchange program between BiH and US, where approximately 20 students from each side spend one academic year in the US and BiH. Also, representatives of the Embassy, provided financial and schedule flexibility, regularly organize visits to large BiH diaspora communities in the US, and additionally meet with local and state US officials. The Embassy and Consulate additionally organize consular days in US communities with a large number of BiH diaspora, extending services, such as passport services, related to engagement with BiH. When possible, the embassy organizes events to promote art and culture of BiH (e.g. concerts, exhibitions).

### **III. POTENTIAL OF BiH DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT**

#### **Barriers to Engagement of BiH Diaspora**

Though BiH diaspora in the US has an overall relatively low level of confidence in and trust towards government institutions, and political and social developments in BiH, they would like to see their ties with BiH strengthened. Qualitative data collected shows that perceived barriers and preconditions necessary for the BiH diaspora to engage in projects and initiatives related to development in BiH are directly related to the sentiment that BiH has not made efficient use of its growing diaspora who call and feel BiH as motherland. For those who came to the US as refugees, some twenty plus years have passed with little to none effort made by BiH to integrate and collaborate with diaspora, let alone establish an official policy on cooperation with diaspora. Many of the migrants from BiH report cultural barriers and cite feeling that they will always be seen, by those who remained in BiH, as "outsiders" and "traitors" who "deserted" their native BiH. Many speak to the idea of being "culturally homeless," and belonging neither here nor there – when they are in the US, they are seen as Bosnian and Herzegovinian, and when in BiH they are seen as American. Identity struggles are also an issue for many of the children of BiH-born migrants, who grapple with trying to understand the cultural background and practices of their parents, but who are without a doubt very much American. Issues such as these act as barriers for BiH diaspora to participate in development of BiH.

Additional barriers to engagement documented in face-to-face interviews and focus groups include the perception of an underdeveloped and inefficient business environment in BiH, corruption on local and national level, bureaucratic barriers on national level and more importantly on municipal level, complex bureaucracy, legal uncertainty, and dissatisfaction and disillusionment with BiH political life.

#### **Relations with BiH Consular and Diplomatic Missions in the US**

The Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Washington D.C. and its Consular office, along with the Consulate General of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Chicago, serve as points of contact for migrants from BiH in the US. The Consulate General of BiH in Chicago provides consular services for residents of twenty four US states, while the Consular Services division of the Embassy provide services for the rest of the twenty seven states. Given the large number of states served and the limited number of staff employed by the two missions, services offered are many and varied, including passport services, shipment of

human/exhumed remains to BiH, renunciation of citizenship of BiH, consular will, birth certificates, travel documents, and visa information, among others.

As mentioned earlier, BiH diplomatic missions already have several programs and policies in place that promote diaspora networking and BiH, such as an ongoing national program to secure textbooks for supplementary school for students with origins in BiH, a high school student exchange program between BiH and US, regular visits to large BiH diaspora communities in the US, consular days in US communities with a large number of BiH diaspora, and art and culture events to promote BiH.

The BiH diplomatic missions have a strong relationship with the US government, and have done much to represent and promote BiH in the US. They are linked with several BiH diaspora organizations, and when possible partake in their activities. Likewise, while the diplomatic missions have via their programs and policies strengthened communication and collaboration between homeland and BiH diaspora in the US, barriers to enhancing cooperation between diaspora and BiH include limited number of diplomatic staff to serve the large and demanding US BiH diaspora, and lack of funding for their respective services and activities.

#### **IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on findings from both the qualitative and quantitative data of this project, it is clear that many of the recommendations for engaging BiH diaspora in development activities is contingent on recommendations for improving BiH diaspora relationships with homeland. Despite barriers and challenges, BiH diaspora would like to see their ties with homeland strengthened, and would like to be active participants in the future of BiH. Based on the above, recommendations for areas of improvement include:

**1. Foster a more positive relationship between BiH and BiH diaspora in the US.** The BiH diaspora in the US is made up of relatively educated, skilled, organized, and generally well-integrated first-generation migrants from BiH, as well as their second generation children who are even more educated. Increasing knowledge and awareness in BiH of the possibilities of the diaspora and its capacity provides a unique opportunity for BiH to intervene and promote development and cooperation between homeland and diaspora. Activities that promote diaspora in a positive light should be undertaken at local and national levels. These activities could include a media campaign promoting diaspora and their contributions to BiH via success stories. In sum, diaspora should be destigmatized in BiH.

**2. Capitalize on the emotional connection that the first generation BiH diaspora in the US holds for BiH, and their localities and communities in particular.** Individuals who have acquired capital in the US are most likely invest in places in BiH where they grew up (zavicaj). This is particularly true of first generation BiH diaspora.

**3. Develop programs and activities to attract BiH youth born outside of BiH.** Diaspora youth are a rich and untapped resource for development in BiH. Programs, such as summer curricula about BiH language and culture, would preserve youth's cultural identity while encouraging involvement in the future of BiH and simultaneously promoting long-term development and investment.

**4. Promote diaspora tourism.** Diaspora tourism is distinct from tourism in that it includes family visits, heritage tourism, medical tourism, and business travel by the diaspora. Also, diaspora tourists are unique in the way that they spend their money, and are more likely to infuse money and investment into the local economy when traveling to their home country than when other tourists visit that same country. Therefore, BiH diaspora can serve as a gateway to BiH for other tourists, in that they can help open markets for new tourist destinations in BiH. Several other nations, such as India and Africa, have decided to build economies through cultural connections and are already making use of diaspora tourism towards development.

**5. Increase the presence of the State of BiH in cities with large presence of BiH diaspora.** The government should work on implementing programs such as supplementary language classes for youth, cultural heritage and identity classes, organized exchange of students, and summer classes in BiH for BiH youth in the US. The lack of presence of the state of BiH has implicit consequences on the motivation of businessmen in diaspora for investing in business in BiH.

**6. Establish formal agreements between BiH and BiH diaspora in the US as to transfer of academic knowledge and practice.** Following the model of an organization such as the Bosnian-Herzegovinian American Academy of Arts and Sciences (BHAAAS) that provides connections between BiH scientists, artists and professionals in North America and builds bridges of cooperation with the homeland, BiH should establish formalized and incentivized agreements concerning transfer of knowledge between BiH and diaspora. Knowledge transfer should involve guest lectures, conferences, mentoring initiatives, collaboration on research projects, and training workshops, among others.

**7. Establish a more secure economic and political environment for business investments.** Barriers to investment in BiH by diaspora can be alleviated by debureaucratizing and simplifying economic and political environment related to starting and running a business in BiH.

**8. Create promotional material on success stories of the US BiH diaspora investment in BiH.** Promotional material would provide those who may be considering investment in BiH with both motivation and an example of how someone else succeeded. It would also break down some of the barriers connected to engagement of BiH diaspora.

**9. Form an advisory committee of educated business entrepreneurs from the US BiH diaspora that would monitor the work of ministries and offices in charge of business activities and environment in BiH.** This committee would act as an advisory committee to bridge gaps in knowledge and experience surrounding business investing, and would, after a certain period of time, identify gaps, opportunities, and submit recommendations for improvement.

**10. Establish and formalize an official channel of communication between BiH government and the US BiH diaspora business people interested in investment in BiH.** Currently, no official communication channels between US BiH diaspora businesses and BiH exist, as BiH has no office specifically dedicated to diaspora or a coordinated approach to diaspora, as do many other countries. Independent business owners use own channels of communication in BiH in order to start a business. A committee should be formed within BiH that will serve as a point of contact for anyone interested in investing in BiH. Their role

should be to offer advice and resources on how to start a business in BiH, making the process easier, faster, and less bureaucratic. Additionally, this committee should initiate forming another US-based diaspora committee made up of businessmen who will coordinate investment efforts with the BiH committee. First steps of this process can be initiated through already established chambers of commerce, such as the Bosnian Chamber of Commerce in St. Louis.

**11. Increase diaspora involvement in BiH political life via simplifying election procedures.** One of the more complex and unaddressed issues when it comes to relationship between BiH and diaspora is the exercise of rights of diaspora, and voting and elections in particular. By simplifying election procedures for the diaspora and giving diaspora a voice in the political matters of BiH, businessmen would also be motivated to invest in BiH.

**12. Provide direct support to diaspora organizations.** Most diaspora organizations are self-sufficient and operate based on fundraising and donations. While BiH is not necessarily in a position to provide financial assistance to diaspora organizations, it can become more involved and interested in the work of diaspora associations, such as via promoting social, cultural and political values of BiH, and supporting supplementary language classes.

## CHAPTER XII

### Emigration of youth from Bosnia and Herzegovina, with focus on highly skilled migrants

#### Introduction

BiH is a country that is traditionally highly prone to emigration, having 38% of its population living abroad. Also, according to some estimates, around 20,000 people leave the country each year. Two negative trends of decreasing fertility rate and negative net migration flow will reduce labour force and human capital in the country. Consequently, the BiH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees (MHRR) has correctly identified emigration and young and highly skilled individuals from BiH as the most pressing migration issues, which deserves particular attention and for that purpose it requested this chapter to be produced within the framework of the 'Diaspora for Development' project.

Youth emigration is a global phenomenon. According to the UN estimates, there are 232 million international migrants worldwide, representing 3.2% of the world's total population of 7.2 billion (United Nations, 2013a). Out of that number, there were 28.2 million international migrants aged 15 to 24 worldwide, which is one-eighth of all international migrants. Migrants of age below 30 account for more than 30% of all migrants. Overall, the proportion of all young migrants is higher in developing countries than in developed countries. But, when disaggregated by sex, we can see that the proportion of female young migrants is higher in developed countries than developing countries. Also, youth migration due to studying is increasing. The number of students enrolled in tertiary education abroad increased from 2 million in 2000 to 3.6 million in 2010, which is an increase of 78 percent. The most popular destination for foreign students is the United States of America, accounting for 19 percent of the world total, followed by the UK (11 percent), Australia (8%), France (7%), Germany (6%) and Japan (4%).

As we can see, youth migration is a phenomenon and a policy challenge that all developing countries are facing. Overall, international migration is increased steadily over the years, and young migrants constitute a relatively large proportion of the migrant population. Also, migrants constitute a diverse group, their social, economic and educational backgrounds, the means/forms of migration, and their motivation for leaving all influence the scope, scale and type of migration.

Understanding the issue of migration of youth requires more than a simple presentation of facts and figures about migration. This chapter aims to offer evidence for a deeper understanding of challenges of migration of youth specific to BiH. In order to produce the most informative and relevant structure and contents of the chapter to the MHRR, the chapter intentionally puts more emphasis on topics that were covered to less extent in previously published reports. To focus on the most relevant topics for the users of the report, this chapter offers additional insights compared to previous reports by focusing more on underlying factors that generate such migration flows and important consequences produced by migration observed in BiH. Such an evidence should be more informative and emphasize the need for more comprehensive policies and coordination of different institutions in tackling the issue of youth migration. There is no single policy that is capable of reducing emigration, but the results can be achieved only in a multi-sectoral manner, by addressing the problems of low quality of education, barriers to transition of youth to employment, and improving rule of law and other conditions that would offer young people better prospects within the country. There is a need to foster the links between migration and development and building capacity for



well-managed migration. However, securing decent jobs at home is essential for sustainable labour market integration: parallel investments in education and labour market reforms can promote economic development of the country.

Based on the approach described above, this chapter is structured as follows. In the next section, we will present a brief review of the main indicators, trends and characteristics of emigration from BiH, with focus on young and highly skilled migrants. This section will be using the key migration indicators available in the Migration profiles of BiH (BiH Ministry of Security, 2017), databases and reports of Statistics Offices and other sources, as well as other reports published (e.g. IOM, 2011; Oruc and Mara, 2016; Mujic and Kurtovic, 2017), in order to produce the overview of the main characteristics of migration from BiH. Following three section will cover the entire migration process from migration intentions to migration experiences and challenges to experiences of living abroad and intentions to return. However, since other chapters of the report are focused on analysis of diaspora that covers experiences during and after migration, this chapter will put more emphasis and provide more information about the situation before migration and after return. Section 3 will present more detailed analysis of underlying conditions for emigration of youth. This chapter will address the key drivers of migration, such as overall macroeconomic conditions, labour market situation, education, as well as political situation and developments. The analysis in this chapter will rely on available secondary data and studies. Sections 4 and 5 will briefly describe the migration process from source to destination country, with focus on migration experiences and challenges of young people from BiH during and after migration. Section 6 will provide evidence on return intentions and experiences. Section 6 will conclude and offer some policy recommendations.

## **YOUTH AND SKILLED MIGRATION - BASIC FACTS**

This chapter focuses on youth in the context of migration: persons aged 15-30 years, while in some cases evidence used limits us to the youth 15-24 years of age. The reason is to cover as much of the relevant evidence available, but the age period that particular evidence refers to in each case is clearly explained.

Youth is at a pivotal stage of development when they make the transition from childhood to adulthood. During this period, young people and transit from dependence to independence /interdependence and make important decisions about their lives, particularly their ethical, social, economic, cultural, political and civic roles. Taking into account that it is difficult to determine with precision the drivers of youth migration, the chapter acknowledges that young people's motivations are often linked to the search for sustainable livelihoods, due to lack of employment and/or under-employment, absence of decent working conditions, and poor economic prospects in countries of origin. These drivers will be discussed in more detail in the next section of the chapter.

In this section, we provide introductory evidence on youth available from secondary sources, describing the magnitude and structure of youth emigration from BiH. The available evidence is not rich, particularly due to the lack of administrative data about migration. For the reasons explained in more detailed in the UNFPA's "Methodology of Collection, Harmonization, Exchange and Dissemination of Migration Statistics in Bosnia-Herzegovina" (2013), there are not yet regular reports on migration published by statistical institutions in BiH. The only statistics available are BiH Migration profiles published annually by the BiH Ministry of Security, where the chapter on emigration is prepared by the MHRR, mainly relying on

statistics of destination countries. Consequently, we refer here predominantly to ad-hoc research reports that provided evidence through their own surveys of migrants.

A survey of 1,216 long-term migrants from Bosnia who visited the country during the holiday season, conducted by de Zwager and Gressmann (2010), provides a set of interesting findings about characteristics of migrants. According to this study, migrants from Bosnia predominantly belong to the most economically active part of the population. Still, there are differences in the age structure of migrants, according to destination country. In case of the EU countries as destination, the average age is 41 years, whereas it is for the neighbouring countries 37 years. The surveyed emigrants are well integrated in the destination countries. Although they might have been irregular migrants at the beginning, they managed to regularize they stay relatively quickly (on average, in 2.4 years in EU, and 1.4 years in neighbouring countries). As a result, majority of them work in the formal sector. Forecast period of migration is relatively long (31 years). Although more than a half of respondents from the survey replied that they intend to return, majority of them stated that they do not intend to return to the labour market in BiH, but only after retirement in the destination country.

Based on an analysis of a DIOC-E database on immigrants to 31 OECD and 58 no-OECD countries in 2000, the report of Dumont et al. (2010, p. 24) informs that in the total stock of Bosnian immigrants to these countries, 51.4% of them are women, 11.9% are young people in the age 15-24, and the 11.2% of all Bosnian immigrants are tertiary educated<sup>274</sup>. Compared to the share of tertiary educated adults in Bosnia of 5%, the difference suggests an above average emigration of highly qualified people.<sup>275</sup> In terms of the destinations of tertiary educated migrants from Bosnia to other OECD countries, Katseli (2006) reported that 39.5% of them migrate to the Americas (mainly to the USA), 45.8% to the EU, 5.3% to other OECD members from Europe, and the remaining 9.3% to Asia. The report of Bhargava et al. (2011, p. 24) on the emigration of physicians, placed Bosnia among the top 30 countries, as their data from 2004 show that 12.2% of total number of physicians trained in the country resided abroad.

The IAB database about brain drain is one of the international data sources which allow us to provide a glimpse into the education structure of emigrants from BiH over time. The data, available since 1980, are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Emigration rates of 25+, by gender, country of origin and educational level to OECD countries<sup>276</sup>

	Total	Men	Women
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<sup>274</sup> In total population of BiH in 2015, according to estimates based on the HBS (there are no official figures), share of women was 51.1%, share of youth 14.7%, and share of tertiary educated was around 5% (BHAS, 2007).

<sup>275</sup> On the basis of an analysis of statistics from OECD Database on Expatriates and Immigrants, Katseli et al. (2006, p. 17) reported that in the EU-15, number of low educated adults from Bosnia was 182,651, or 12%. In Bosnia, this share is 10.2%. Also, he reported that the percentage of tertiary educated immigrants from Bosnia to EU-15 was 10.95%.

<sup>276</sup> For any given skill level and year, the emigration rate is defined as the total migrant population from a given source country divided by the sum of the migrant and resident population in the same source country. The data on the total number of residents aged 25 years and older in any source country by skill level and year are taken from Barro and Lee (2013) and United Nations Population Division (2011).

Emigration rates	Men and Women	World	Bosnia and Herzegovina	World	Bosnia and Herzegovina	World	Bosnia and Herzegovina
1980	Total	1,54%	14,57%	1,46%	21,64%	1,61%	7,02%
	Low	1,26%	14,99%	1,22%	23,32%	1,30%	7,96%
	Medium	1,39%	12,32%	1,13%	18,74%	1,74%	3,82%
	High	4,94%	26,60%	4,66%	27,95%	5,33%	23,46%
1985	Total	1,58%	13,78%	1,52%	15,70%	1,63%	11,94%
	Low	1,26%	16,49%	1,29%	19,57%	1,24%	14,22%
	Medium	1,35%	9,55%	1,03%	11,39%	1,74%	7,47%
	High	4,78%	25,64%	4,41%	23,68%	5,30%	29,17%
1990	Total	1,44%	14,08%	1,45%	15,71%	1,44%	12,49%
	Low	1,10%	20,43%	1,15%	22,82%	1,07%	18,70%
	Medium	1,20%	8,63%	1,07%	10,85%	1,35%	6,18%
	High	4,17%	22,35%	3,90%	21,67%	4,54%	23,55%
1995	Total	1,46%	19,63%	1,45%	21,56%	1,47%	17,82%
	Low	1,12%	31,67%	1,14%	36,42%	1,10%	28,26%
	Medium	1,15%	10,88%	1,07%	12,86%	1,25%	8,85%
	High	4,11%	33,51%	3,92%	32,28%	4,32%	35,34%
2000	Total	1,59%	21,45%	1,60%	23,40%	1,57%	19,64%
	Low	1,26%	34,67%	1,39%	39,49%	1,15%	31,45%
	Medium	1,16%	13,14%	1,04%	15,50%	1,32%	10,74%
	High	4,14%	35,31%	4,02%	34,40%	4,27%	36,54%
2005	Total	1,82%	19,94%	1,82%	21,26%	1,82%	18,75%
	Low	1,34%	34,80%	1,47%	37,46%	1,24%	33,15%
	Medium	1,31%	12,22%	1,20%	14,33%	1,46%	10,16%
	High	4,96%	40,40%	4,78%	39,34%	5,16%	41,69%
2010	Total	1,91%	19,65%	1,91%	20,88%	1,92%	18,54%
	Low	1,40%	36,18%	1,57%	39,50%	1,28%	34,17%
	Medium	1,29%	12,10%	1,19%	13,94%	1,40%	10,32%
	High	5,31%	43,01%	5,09%	42,63%	5,55%	43,43%

The figures show that BiH is a country where migration of low and highly skilled has been quite substantial and increasing over time. According to these figures, 43% of all highly skilled individuals from BiH currently resides abroad. The gender aspects of emigration are also evident. Gender differences were pronounced in the 1980s, where emigration rates of men were much higher and male emigrants were more educated, while in recent years this difference has almost disappeared. In overall, compared to the world figures, the emigration from the country has involved both the low and high skilled segments of the populations at a considerable rate. Notably, the highly skilled emigration has been eight times higher than in the rest of the world, implying severe consequences for human capital of the country.

On the other hand, the World Bank's figures are somewhat different and lower than the ones from the IAB database. The figures are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. International skilled migration<sup>277</sup> by age of entry in 2000<sup>278</sup>

<sup>277</sup> Beine, M., Docquier, F. and Rapoport, H. 2006.

	<b>Brain drain 0+</b>	<b>Brain drain 12+</b>	<b>Brain drain 18+</b>	<b>Brain drain 22+</b>
Bosnia and Herzegovina	23,9%	23,2%	22,9%	21,9%

The figures show that the emigration rates from BiH, controlling for the age of entry (including emigrants who moved after certain age) are not different, suggesting that the majority of emigrants from BiH move after they acquired their education in BiH. As discussed above, education is also one of the drivers of emigration of youth.<sup>279</sup> The following table presents the UNESCO figures about student mobility from BiH.

Table 3. Net flow ratio of internationally mobile students (inbound - outbound), both sexes, in %<sup>280</sup>

	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
Bosnia and Herzegovina	-6,26	-4,85	-3,16

According to UNESCO data, the total number of international students from Bosnia and Herzegovina in the world who enrolled in the studies abroad in 2015 amounted to 10,992. BiH citizens are studying in 37 countries and the largest number of students are enrolled in Serbia ó 5,704, Austria ó 2,355 and Germany - 624. In addition to these countries, a significant number of students decide to enrol in the studies in Italy, the USA, Turkey and Slovenia. These figures do not include a large number of students from BiH studying in neighbouring countries.

According to the figures presented above, we can conclude that the overall emigration rates of youth, despite being considerable, are not the main concern. The more important is the structure of emigrants who are much more educated than the population remaining in the country. If we take into account a well-known fact that emigration as an activity that involves risks is usually undertaken by more entrepreneurial individuals, we can see that such an emigration of best and brightest has important consequences for the country. Such an emigration will not reduce unemployment but in contrary can even increase it, as these individuals were supposed to be the ones who would generate new jobs if they remained in the country. Consequently, the youth retention measures should be the ones that will provide an enabling environment for the entrepreneurial highly skilled individuals to pursue their ambitions within the country and be adequately rewarded for their efforts.

## Drivers of Migration

<sup>278</sup> For any given skill level and year, the emigration rate is defined as the total migrant population from a given source country divided by the sum of the migrant and resident population in the same source country. The data on the total number of residents aged 25 years and older in any source country by skill level and year are taken from Barro and Lee (2013) and United Nations Population Division (2011).

<sup>279</sup> Definitions:

Brain drain 0+: stock of skilled OECD foreign-born adults by country of origin as percent of skilled natives (i.e. emigrants + adult residents). This upper-bound measure is taken from Docquier and Marfouk (2006).

Brain drain 12+: stock of skilled OECD foreign-born adults arrived in the destination country after age 12 as percent of skilled natives (i.e. emigrants arrived after age 12 + adult residents).

Brain drain 18+: stock of skilled OECD foreign-born adults arrived in the destination country after age 18 as percent of skilled natives (i.e. emigrants arrived after age 18 + adult residents).

Brain drain 22+: stock of skilled OECD foreign-born adults arrived in the destination country after age 22 as percent of skilled natives (i.e. emigrants arrived after age 22 + adult residents).

<sup>280</sup> Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics 2016

Part of the explanation of widespread migration creating brain drain for source countries may be due to pull factors such as wage differentials, differences in the quality of life, and educational opportunities for children and job security in the destination countries. Mujanovic (2013) has summarized results of previous surveys of youth into a set of factors which are the reasons for the current difficult position of young people in the labour market. These factors can be also applied to understanding of drivers of migration. Some of these are:

- 1) Difficult economic situation which has a negative impact on the new jobs creation;
- 2) Outdated and non-functional system of education (unpreparedness of young people for the labour market), which includes:
  - a) mismatch between skills gained and the needs of labour market;
  - b) lack of practical experience gained during education; and
  - c) difficult transition to employment (young people in BiH on average need more than a year to find a job);
- 3) This results in unfavourable labour market arrangements that young people need to accept, including work in the informal or non-standard forms of employment, work outside their field of study and even take jobs requiring lower qualifications than the ones they have.
- 4) Passivity and low mobility of young people, with majority of unemployed young people not actively looking for a job and not willing to accept job at a town or city different than their place of current residence;
- 5) Corruption, as it creates bad perception of the business environment in BiH, thus driving away foreign investors, who would have, by now, opened several thousands of new jobs if, for example, BiH was better ranked on the Transparency International Index.

The above factors are all present in BiH and can be considered important drivers of emigration. Difficult economic situation and delays in successful labour market transition of young people drives them to look for any prospects abroad. However, it has to be acknowledged that factors such as over-educated employment, non-standard forms of employment also force employed young people to seek better employment opportunities abroad. The main information explaining characteristics of these drivers will be described in the remainder of this chapter.

### Macroeconomic Environment

In global terms, and according to the World Bank methodology, BiH belongs to the group of upper-middle-income countries. However, development level of BiH is low by European standards. In 2014, the per capita GDP was 3,641 EUR, or 7,800 expressed in purchasing power standards, which is 28% of the EU (28) average.

Table 4. Main economic indicators for BiH<sup>281</sup>

Indicator	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016*
BH Nominal GDP (in KM million) 1)	24,780	25,346	26,210	26,193	26,743	27,304	28,659	30,389
current prices								
Real GDP annual growth (in %) 1)	-2.9	0.8	0.9	-0.9	2.4	1.1	3.1	3

<sup>281</sup> Source: BiH Central Bank 2017, Annual Report 2016

Current account balance in million KM	-1,588	-1,531	-2,483	-2,269	-1,415	-2,006	-1,576	-1,310
Current account balance as a percentage of GDP	-4.3	-2.4	-1.2	-2	-2.2	-2	0.7	-
Trade balance in million KM	-7,632	-7,426	-8,080	-8,002	-7,316	-8,101	-7,418	-7,199
Trade balance as a percentage of GDP	-30.8	-29.3	-30.8	-30.5	-27.4	-29.7	-25.9	-23.7
Unemployment rate (% , LFS)	27.5	27.5	27.7	25.4	24.7	24	23.2	n/a
Inflation	-0.4	2.1	3.7	2.1	-0.1	-0.9	-1	-1.1

According to the above indicators we can see that, although BiH is experiencing improving trends in the majority of indicators, the growth rate is still rather low given the gap between BiH and the EU average. The above indicators also show that the economic environment in BiH is not conducive to employment growth. In particular, there are two lines of constraints: i) low GDP growth which cannot make substantial impact on the overall employment, and ii) low elasticity of employment with respect to GDP growth, meaning that even the modest growth rates do not translate into higher job creation and employment (due to structural weaknesses).

### Unemployment

Although it has to be underlined that high emigration of youth is not driven by unemployment only and therefore this chapter covers different factors, youth unemployment still remains one of the most important push factors of migration.

The key figures about unemployment in BiH<sup>282</sup>, are presented in the set of tables below. The first table disaggregates unemployment rates by gender, area of residence, age group and education level.

Table 5. Unemployment figures by gender, age group and area of residence, by entity<sup>283</sup>

	FBiH	RS	BiH
<b>Total</b>	27.8	26.9	27.5
Male	27.2	25.2	26.5
Female	28.9	29.4	29.1
15-24	59.1	58.9	59.1
25-49	25.8	27.6	26.5
50-64	17.8	18.9	18.3
Urban	25.2	29.4	26.8
Rural	29.5	25.3	27.9

The table above shows that the unemployment rate is considerably larger among youth and women. The unemployment figures by education level are presented in the next table.

Table 6. Unemployment figures by education level<sup>284</sup>

<sup>282</sup> This analysis is mainly based on Domljan et al. (2015).

<sup>283</sup> Source: Own calculations from LFS 2013 data

Education level	FBiH	RS	BiH
No education	34.18	14.81	26.32
4 years of primary education	29.76	6.43	15.18
Less than full primary education	38.35	25.95	32.20
Full primary education	29.78	27.00	28.71
Secondary, 3 years	33.17	30.50	32.16
Secondary, 4 years	26.67	29.99	27.88
College (2 years post-secondary)	14.35	20.17	16.46
University	15.07	21.50	17.55
Postgraduate	16.67	3.85	12.79

The table above shows that the unemployment rate is generally larger among less educated people. From the data about share of each group we can see that the largest proportion of unemployed people are the ones with secondary education (above 70%). Interestingly, unemployment rate is lower among 2-year college graduate than 4-year university graduates. Unemployment figures by sex and age group are provided in the table below.

Table 7. Unemployment rate by sex and age group<sup>285</sup>

Age / Sex	Male	Female
15-24	59.01	59.24
25-49	24.30	29.86
50-64	18.68	17.51
65+	1.79	0.00

The table suggests that the unemployment rate is significantly larger among young people, and then decreases by each age group. Moreover, unemployment rate is larger among women for all age groups except the group above working age (65+).

As the unemployment of youth is of particular interest in this chapter, more detailed disaggregation of the unemployment figures for youth are presented in the following two table. In the first table, unemployment rates of youth by sex are presented.

Table 8. Share of youth unemployed in youth population, by sex and entity<sup>286</sup>

Share of youth unemployed in youth population (%)	Male	Female	Both sexes
FBiH	59.0	59.5	59.1
RS	59.1	58.6	58.9
BiH	59.0	59.2	59.1

The figures from the table show that the youth unemployment rate is slightly lower in RS, while it is also lower for women compared to FBiH where it is larger.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>286</sup> Source: Own calculations from LFS 2013 data

Analysis of duration of unemployment suggests that approximately 85% of men and 70% of women can be considered as long-term unemployed (looking for a job for more than 12 months), while among them the largest number of people is looking for employment between 2 and 4 years, and more than 10 years. When we analyse duration of unemployment by sex and entity, we observe large differences between the share of women in the group of unemployed people who are looking for a job for less than six months.

With regards to the methods of finding a job, 81% of respondents contacted an employment bureau, 19% of them contacted private job-seeking agency, 68% made a direct contact with an employer, 90% were looking for a job through their personal contacts with friends and relatives, 65% were reading job advertisements, 29% published their own job advertisement. More than a half (56%) of people are looking for a job with long-term contract, while more than half of them are willing to accept a part-time job. Only 1.7% of people are looking for a part-time job only.

The figures presented above show that the unemployment levels and prospected for finding a job are very important drivers of migration of young and highly skilled people. Consequently, any reforms and measures that will improve employability of young people will have a positive impact on retention of these people. However, we should not expect that employment programs for youth will significantly reduce migration, as unemployment is not the only driver of migration, but we can observe a considerable emigration of people who were employed while in BiH.

### **Education**

Development of human resources, investments in education, increase of labour force competitiveness, investments in research and development and employment of young people are some of the key elements to achieve social and economic stability and growth in the country and to reduce the emigration pressure. We are witnessing considerable emigration of students who move to other countries for studies, as presented in section 2, but remain there much longer. Consequently, education reforms and improvements in the quality of education are important factors that will reduce emigration pressure through studies abroad.

From a strategic perspective, development of human resources has become very important. An efficient and effective system of education and training is a key driver for adequate development of human resources, society as whole and economy, recognised as the pillars of development in the global economy. A high-quality education will enable each individual to maintain a high level of employability and provide companies with qualified labour.

The concrete problems, and numerous others, have been confirmed by some of the key actors and studies in the field of education in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These are some of the examples:

- 1) Insufficient quality of education contents, as textbooks and teaching methods do not focus on key competences and life skills, which represents the greatest problem considering that it directly hampers improvement of the quality of education,
- 2) Bosnia and Herzegovina spends approximately five percent of its gross domestic product on education, which matches the level of the countries in the region, but the structure of the expenditures is not adequate, considering that 77% of investments in education is spent on salaries of employees in this sector,



3)The education system, based on segregation, discrimination and separation of children from the youngest age, has a negative effect on the general quality of education

4) One of the concrete problems is the fact that the education system is based on teaching without practical work. As a result, young people are not adequately equipped for modern work requirements, i.e. they lack the knowledge and skills required in the labour market.<sup>287</sup>

Consequences of such policy are low quality of education, high unemployment rate and shortage of certain professions, reflected in the inability of a large number of companies to fill vacancies despite tens of thousands of educated young people who left the education system being available to employers.<sup>288</sup>

Poor education quality and a mismatch between labour market demand and supply are one of the biggest constraints to growth and employability in BiH. Even though some moderate steps forward in modernization of education system in past decade can be recognized, major challenges are still there, among which are an overly complex institutional setup and administrative fragmentation, rigidity of educational system, poor educational outcome, etc. BiH still lags behind its neighbours in educational enrolment rates with 89 % of gross enrolment rate in secondary education against 98 % in Slovenia and Croatia, with lower rates recorded only in Macedonia. The difference in the enrollment rate in respect of Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia is much higher if we consider tertiary education.<sup>289</sup>

Table 9. Education enrolment rates in BiH and other former Yugoslav countries<sup>290</sup>

Levels of education	Macedonia	BiH	Slovenia	Croatia	Serbia
Gross enrolment rate, secondary, total	83	89	98	98	92
Gross enrolment rate, tertiary, total	38	38	86	62	52
GPI, gross enrolment ratio in primary	1.02	1.00	1.03	0.99	1.00
Pupil-teacher ratio, primary	15	12.9	17	14	16
Pupil-teacher ratio, secondary	10.5	12.7	10.5	7.8	9.1

BiH is not far behind countries in the region when it comes to enrolment rates in secondary education. However, the educational attainment rates, even though they improved in last five years, are still low with 41.7 % of the persons in working-age having completed just primary education. There are several reasons for this discrepancy. In part it is likely to be a legacy of

<sup>287</sup>[http://fes.ba/files/fes/pdf/publikationen/2013/FES%20-%20studija%20o%20nezaposlenosti%20ENG%20-%202013\\_11\\_29.pdf](http://fes.ba/files/fes/pdf/publikationen/2013/FES%20-%20studija%20o%20nezaposlenosti%20ENG%20-%202013_11_29.pdf)

<sup>288</sup>[http://fes.ba/files/fes/pdf/publikationen/2013/FES%20-%20studija%20o%20nezaposlenosti%20ENG%20-%202013\\_11\\_29.pdf](http://fes.ba/files/fes/pdf/publikationen/2013/FES%20-%20studija%20o%20nezaposlenosti%20ENG%20-%202013_11_29.pdf)

<sup>289</sup> The difference is quite large although the rate of enrollment in tertiary education increased significantly in recent years.

<sup>290</sup> Source: World Bank data, <http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/bosnia-and-herzegovina/school-enrollment>, <http://www.factfish.com/catalog/education%20and%20science>

war, when destruction of school facilities and disruption of the education process led large numbers to drop out of school, having only attained basic education. The entrants in the labour force in the early years after the war were affected the most. Two other reasons are high drop-out rates and migration, especially among the young people.<sup>291</sup>

Table 10. Education attainment rates, 2013, percentages<sup>292</sup>

Population aged 15+		Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	All levels
<b>Working-age population</b>		<b>41.7</b>	<b>48.6</b>	<b>9.7</b>	<b>100</b>
	Men	31.5	58	10.5	100
	Women	52.5	39.5	8	100
<b>In labour force</b>		<b>19.7</b>	<b>63.9</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>100</b>
	Men	19	67.6	13.4	100
	Women	21	57.9	21.1	100
<b>Employed</b>		<b>19.5</b>	<b>61.7</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>100</b>
	Men	18.3	66	15.7	100
	Women	24.4	53.9	21.7	100
<b>Unemployed</b>		<b>20.3</b>	<b>69.7</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>100</b>
	Men	20.7	72	7.2	100
	Women	19.6	66.2	14.3	100
<b>Inactive</b>		<b>58.7</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>100</b>
	Men	46.9	46.1	7	100
	Women	66.1	30.9	3	100

Education level has close linkages with employment and labour force participation. The Labour Force Survey reports that in 2013, more than 79 % of the working-age population with primary education or less were out of labour force; and only 14.9 % of them were in employment. The small numbers of unemployed among those with only primary education is due to the wide-spread discouragement that stems from a low employability among people with primary or lower levels of education and results in high inactivity rates, especially women.

Selected indicators of the quality and quantity of education in BiH and comparison countries from the region are presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Selected education quality indicators, 2014 and 2015<sup>293</sup>

<sup>291</sup> ETF 2013.

<sup>292</sup> Source: LFS Report 2013

	Albania	Bosnia And Herzegovina	KOSOVO*	FYR Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia
Early school leavers (2015) (%)	21.3	26.3	-	11.3	5.7	7.5
% of age group 30-34 with tertiary education attainment (2014)	16.8 <sup>2</sup>	18.9	-	24.9	28.3	27.2
Share of students with low achievements (below level 2) in all three test areas (2015) (in %)	31.1	-	60.4	52.2	33	28,5 <sup>2</sup>

Early school leaving is a problem in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as over 20% of young people (18-24) who have finished lower secondary education do not participate in further education or training. There is clear positive correlation between low achievement and drop-outs. In addition, the share of individuals aged 30-34 who have attained tertiary education is low in all economies, especially Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania (see Education level has close linkages with employment and labour force participation. The Labour Force Survey reports that in 2013, more than 79 %t of the working-age population with primary education or less were out of labour force; and only 14.9 % of them were in employment. The small numbers of unemployed among those with only primary education is due to the wide-spread discouragement that stems from a low employability among people with primary or lower levels of education and results in high inactivity rates, especially women.

Selected indicators of the quality and quantity of education in BiH and comparison countries from the region are presented in Table 11.

Table 11). The enrolment rates for children from poor households whose parents have low levels of education are much lower than average, places them at a continuing high risk of poverty.<sup>294</sup>

### **Rule of law and EU integration**

According to a number of surveys of youth available, rule of law and EU integration are additional drivers of migration besides overall economic situation, employment and education explained in previous sections. In this section, we present a set of available

<sup>293</sup> Sources: Share of students with low achievements ó PISA (OECD, 2016); % of age group 30-34 with tertiary education attainment and early school leaving ó Eurostat database, Tables Candidate economies and potential candidates: education.

<sup>294</sup> ETF 2013.

indicators related to the progress of BiH and comparison countries form the neighbourhood towards EU integration, indicators about the quality of governance, as well as ranking of countries in global indices on governance and competitiveness. One of the indicators of improvement in the legal and institutional environment is the degree of progress towards EU integration, based on criteria for the establishment of functioning market economies. Since 2015, EU progress reports examine the state of play and progress of the economies in the three areas: public sector reform, rule of law and economic criteria.

Table 12: Progress in EU accession<sup>295</sup>

		<b>Albania</b>	<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	<b>Kosovo</b>	<b>FYR Macedonia</b>	<b>Montenegro</b>	<b>Serbia</b>
Public sector reform		3	1	2	3	3	3
Rule of law	Legal system	1	2	1	2	3	2
	Fight against corruption	2	2	1	2	2	2
	Fight against organised crime	2	2	1	2	2	2
Economic criteria	Functioning market economy	3	1	1	4	3	3
	Ability to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union	2	1	1	3	3	3

As the above table shows, BiH is performing worse than other countries from the region in the functioning of legal system and market economy, as well as in ability to cope with competitive pressures. Although being better than Kosovo. BiH is not performing better than neighbouring countries in fight against corruption and organized crime.

The next set of indicators are rankings of BiH and comparison countries form the neighbourhood in relevant worldwide indices.

<sup>295</sup> Source: Mojssojska-Blazevski (2016), based on the 2015 Progress Report for each EU Candidate country. Note: Early stage ó Some level of preparation - Moderately prepared - Good level of preparation - Well advanced

Table 13: Selected rankings of WB6 economies<sup>296</sup>

	<b>Albania</b>	<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	<b>Kosovo*</b>	<b>FYR Macedonia</b>	<b>Serbia</b>	<b>Montenegro</b>
Global Competitiveness Report 2016 (out of 138 economies)	80	107	-	68	90	82
Transparency International Corruption Perception (CPI) Index 2016 (out of 176 economies)	83	83	95	90	72	64
The Heritage Foundation Index of Economic Freedom (out of 186)	59	108	84	47	77	65
World Bank Ease of Doing Business Ranking (out of 190 economies)	58	81	60	10	47	51

Although all the countries compared perform relatively poorly on the Global Competitiveness Index, Heritage Foundation Index of Economic Freedom and World Bank Ease of Doing Business Ranking (except Macedonia), still we can see that BiH is ranked lowest in the region. The country needs further reforms to unlock the development potential and to support companies in improving their business sophistication. In the Transparency International's Corruption Perception (CPI) Index BiH is ranked around the regional average.

Another set of indicators measures the quality of governance using different indicators, including government effectiveness. The values of selected indicators for BiH and countries in the region are presented in Table 14. As we can see, the indicator on perception of government effectiveness, published by the World Bank, is lowest in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo\*. The World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report

<sup>296</sup> Sources: <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-competitiveness-report-2017-2018>; <https://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/overview>; <http://www.heritage.org/index/>; <http://www.doingbusiness.org/rankings>

provides an insight into perceptions of government efficiency and public sector performance. Table 14 shows that in the WB6 region perceptions of public sector performance is lowest in Bosnia and Herzegovina compared to other countries in the region. The same applies for labour market efficiency.

Table 14: Efficiency and effectiveness of WB6 governments, 2016<sup>297</sup>

	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo*	FYR Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia
Government effectiveness**	0.00	-0.43	-0.44	0.09	0.10	0.09
Government efficiency***	3.9	3.1	-	3.7*	3.9	3.4
Labour market efficiency***	4	3.5	-	4.1*	4.2	4

\* Data for 2015, since data for 2016 are not available

\*\* Government Effectiveness indicator captures perceptions of the government effectiveness by country's citizens. It includes quality of public services, quality of the civil service and the degree of its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies. Estimated value of the indicator gives the country's score on the aggregate indicator. It is presented in units of a standard normal distribution, i.e. ranging from approximately -2.5 to 2.5.

\*\*\* The indicators are calculated on a scale 1 to 7, where 1 and 7 still correspond to the worst and best possible outcomes. More details about calculation of these indicators are available at <http://reports.weforum.org/global-competitiveness-index-2017-2018/appendix-a-methodology-and-computation-of-the-global-competitiveness-index-2017-2018/>.

<sup>297</sup> Sources: öGovernment effectivenessö indicator, World Bank database, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#home>; öGovernment efficiencyö and öLabour market efficiencyö indicators ó World Economic Forum database <http://reports.weforum.org/global-competitiveness-index/downloads>

## MIGRATION EXPERIENCE

The experiences of migrant youth in destination societies vary greatly owing to differences in migration motives, gender and migration status. Prearrival and post-arrival experiences are crucial, as together they determine whether the migration process will have a positive or negative impact on the migrants. Although governments, including BiH government, do not clearly see their role in protecting and providing services to emigrants during the entire migration process, it should be emphasized and enhanced.

The structure of emigration from BiH is unknown, as there is no available data; however, we can identify two broad types of young emigrants, with completely different transition experience. First are low-skilled individuals and families, often from Roma community who seek asylum abroad, mainly in Austria, Germany, or Belgium. Second type, which is a majority of emigrants, are highly-skilled individuals from relatively better-off families who go abroad to study or find first or better employment. These individuals go abroad mainly through family and social networks, and recently also through employment arrangements with Germany and Slovenia. Gallup study indicates that potential migrants are often young, educated, single, underemployed and relatively financially well-off.<sup>298</sup>

The difficulties youth migrants encounter on arrival or in the short term usually differ from the long-term challenges they face as they settle into destination societies. Recent arrivals are likely to experience culture shock and loneliness. They often face problems finding accommodations and employment, overcoming communication barriers, coping with different weather conditions, and dealing with transportation issues. In the long term, they may face stereotyping, discrimination and abuse at work or in society at large. These challenges may interfere with their social and economic integration and limit their opportunities for development on a multitude of levels.

Social networks, both personal and institutional, often play an important role in facilitating the social and economic integration of youth migrants in destination societies. Establishing connections in new places helps newcomers settle in, while maintaining ties with their countries of origin eases the transition to a new place and provides emotional continuity. Young migrants lacking access to such support systems tend to experience slower or less effective integration and are more likely to be subjected to abuse and exploitation.

Many youth migrants struggle through a period of adjustment in their countries of destination and often lack the time and resources to actively challenge negative perceptions about them. Even when they have met their basic needs and are better situated in their host countries, they may be unwilling or unable to internalize certain cultural values that are very different from their own; this may extend through several generations. All of these factors distance migrants from native populations, perpetuating bias, ignorance and suspicion among the latter and effectively creating resistance to change in society which can result in tougher immigration policies and more difficult migrant adjustment experiences. To disrupt this vicious cycle, young migrants need to make their voices heard, to create support networks for new migrants, and to become actively involved in facilitating greater intercultural dialogue and understanding.

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<sup>298</sup> Esipova, Ray and Pugliese, 2011

## Preparing to Migrate

The public space in BiH is over-crowded by reports that 60% to 70% (depending on the source) of young people are interested in leaving the country.<sup>299</sup> However, the percentage of those who made any action towards emigration remains unknown and the actual emigration remains only a very small portion of that number.<sup>300</sup> Globally, findings from the Gallup studies (Esipova, Ray and Pugliese, 2011) on potential migrants worldwide reveal wide gaps between those who express the desire to emigrate, those who are planning to move within the succeeding 12 months, and those actively engaged in preparations to migrate. A 2011 Gallup World Poll carried out in 146 countries estimated the number of individuals dreaming of permanently leaving their countries at a staggering 630 million. However, out of that total, only 48 million were planning to move within the year, and only 19 million were actively preparing to emigrate.

Young people in BiH, although there are certain information available<sup>301</sup>, still make their migration decisions based on lack of information or inaccurate information. This can be seen from a number of cases of abuses of workers from BiH in other countries<sup>302</sup>, despite the information campaigns by the BiH Agency for Labour and Employment, which is in charge of regulation of employment of BiH workers abroad. Positive experiences of young people who move to Germany or Slovenia to work temporarily should be promoted better in order to channel young people interested in emigration toward arrangements that will assure protection of their human rights.

Integration of migrants and return intentions, as another stage of the migration process, is covered in other chapters of the report that analysed data from BiH diaspora (including young emigrants) and will not be discussed here.

## Obstacles to Return

Despite the establishment of the Center for information and diploma recognition in the field of higher education, BiH still has no functional system for diploma recognition and accreditation. This issue is still regulated on the lower levels of government (ministries of education and universities), which at the same time don't have a unified and efficient procedures across the country. This administrative problem can greatly hamper the transfer of knowledge and obstruct the possibility for a self-determined desire to relocate. Failure to take into consideration that the first necessary step to even provide accesses to permanent employment is the diploma/qualification recognition, creates a negative perception by the diaspora about their country of origin. Further issues related to the facilitation of return of the BiH diaspora is the existing Law on BiH citizenship. Reiterating what is stipulated in the BiH Constitution, this law conditions that a citizen loses his/her BiH citizenship upon the adoption of a foreign citizenship, with the exemption of those citizenships where bilateral agreements between states exist.

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<sup>299</sup> MDGF, 2012

<sup>300</sup> This does not mean that even with the current number is not worrying and does not require immediate action, just that not everyone dreaming of emigrating will actually do it.

<sup>301</sup> For example, the MIDWEB project has established Migrant service Centres across the Western Balkans region that provide information to young people interested in return.

<sup>302</sup> Some examples can be found on the following links: <https://www.nezavisne.com/novosti/hronika/Optuzeni-da-su-slali-radnike-u-ropstvo-u-Azerbejdzan/250968>, [https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/bih\\_radnici\\_fima\\_nahil\\_denis\\_cokovic\\_prevara/2197475.html](https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/bih_radnici_fima_nahil_denis_cokovic_prevara/2197475.html), <https://studomat.ba/buka-istrazivanje-posao-u-inostranstvu/7528/>



## CONSEQUENCES OF YOUTH EMIGRATION

### **The Impact of Youth Migration on Individuals and Communities**

Migration affects both the young migrants themselves and those young and old persons left behind. It has a direct and often profound impact on migrants and their immediate families, but the wider community can be directly or indirectly affected as well. The consequences are complex, context-specific and subject to change over time. They may be influenced by factors such as the type of migration, migrant category, national migration policies, and programmatic interventions that are in place in origin, transit and destination societies or countries.<sup>303</sup> Staying connected with family members, peer groups and home communities through the exchange of information, ideas, and remittance flows is critical to producing positive development outcomes at the individual, family, community and societal levels.

The literature on youth migration and its development impact at the household level and in countries of origin and destination is sparse. Limited information available indicates that young people and the families they leave behind sometimes see migration as a strategy for improving their livelihood prospects. In certain settings, migration constitutes an important stage in the transition to adulthood and an opportunity for independent income generation. By taking advantage of new opportunities for employment, education and skill development in their destination countries, young migrants can shape their own futures. When youth migrate, they tend to improve both their own financial situation and the economic circumstances of their families through the income they earn and the remittances they send home<sup>304</sup>. In some settings migration may also strengthen young women's decision-making authority within families and society, contributing to greater gender equality and reinforcing equitable gender norms. However, the negative effects of such flows on countries of origin should not be ignored. One of the most serious adverse effects of emigration, particularly of young and highly skilled individuals, is human capital flight (brain drain), which deprives countries of origin of the economic and social contributions of their best educated and most highly skilled citizens. Still, we can conclude from the limited evidence that international migration can improve the social and economic welfare of young migrants and also offset some of the loss of skilled labour through emigration. Migrants often return with enhanced skills, business networks and knowledge, the transfer of which benefits the society of origin over the long-term, effectively resulting in 'brain gain'. Remittances, in addition to the knowledge, skills and investments made or sent home by young migrants in their country of origin, contribute meaningfully to enhancing economic growth and reducing poverty. At the country level, remittances from diaspora youth communities may be channeled into basic infrastructure projects such as bridges and schools, improving local development in countries of origin. Consequently, national policies of migrants sending countries should take that into account and not focus on policies that aim at retaining people at home. It should rather attempt to utilize all the possible advantages of such flows of people and make them beneficial for both the country and the individuals.

International migration of youth can have a positive impact on young people by opening up new opportunities, a path to participate in higher education, a better and decent job, a chance to gain professional experience or to pursue personal development, by building self-confidence, and allowing them to acquire skills and competencies beneficial to themselves

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<sup>303</sup> <http://www.unworldyouthreport.org/images/docs/fullreport.pdf>

<sup>304</sup> <http://www.unworldyouthreport.org/images/docs/fullreport.pdf>

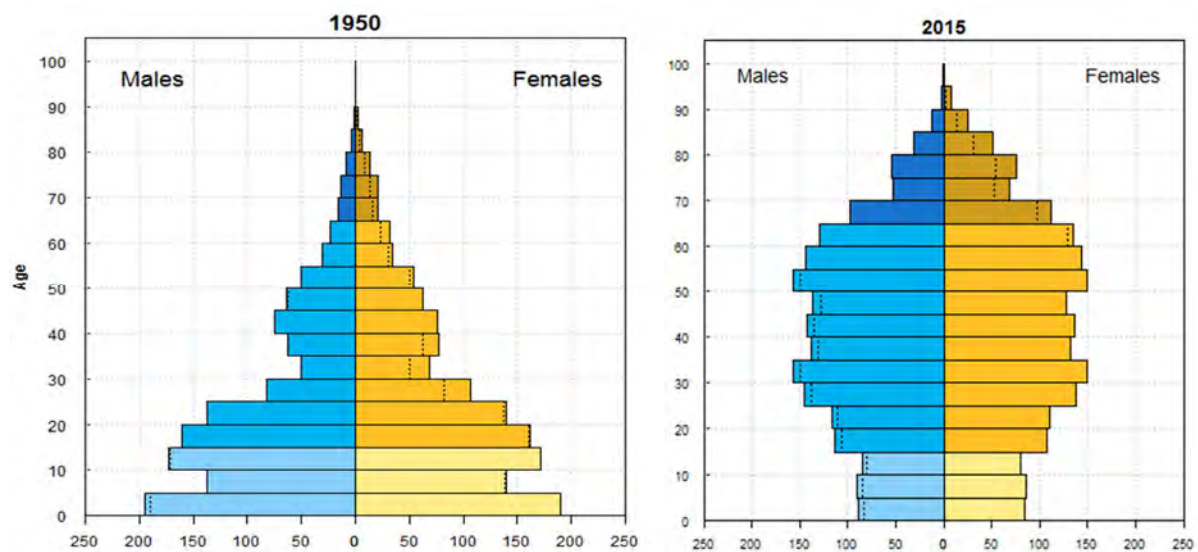
and their countries and communities of origin as well as destination. However, for some young people, especially young women and those in irregular situations, the migration process confronts them with particular challenges and vulnerabilities. Such vulnerabilities include discrimination based on gender and migration status.

### Demographic Changes

Negative migration balance and emigration contribute to population ageing, given the selective nature of migration and the fact that emigrants are predominantly young and of working age. It also contributes to the faster dismantling of traditional multigenerational family patterns, influences the growth in the share of elderly households and generates increasing demand for care services, which are otherwise normally provided within the extended family (Matkovic, 2017). The fact that emigration implies strong brain drain raises the issue of prioritising investments within the education sphere (e.g. early childhood development versus higher education), and policies to attract returnees and/or exploit the advantages of the highly-educated diaspora come into consideration.<sup>305</sup>

The population structure of BH shows similarities with the EU population structure with low fertility rate and growing population of old people 65+ (first chart of Figure 2). Compared to the figure of 1.7 in 1990 (World Bank's WDI database), fertility rate in BiH today is considerably lower at 1.22 (second chart of Figure 2.) and is among the lowest<sup>306</sup> in the world (UNFPA, 2014). EU average is 1.5. This is still well below the replacement rate of 2.16. Average global fertility rate is 2.5 (UN, 2014). Median age of population is 39 years (UN, 2014). First, figure 2 shows the population pyramid in BiH.

Figure 1. Population by sex and age group, 1950 and 2013



Comparison of the two population pyramids shows significant change in the lower part of the pyramid, which is becoming thinner, suggesting that the decrease in fertility rate leads to ageing of population and overall increase in the dependency ratio. The consequence can be seen through widening of the top part of the pyramid. Such an observed change in the

<sup>305</sup> cf. Gedeshi and Jorgoni, 2012; Zeneli, Cosic, Dzebo and Zmejkoski, 2013.

<sup>306</sup>In fact, it is officially the lowest figure in the world, according to UNFPA (2011). However, other sources suggest that fertility rate in BiH is 1.3.

population pyramid will produce long-term effect through the continued trends of worsening dependency ratio and average age of population.

Demographic processes lead to labour force decline and increase in the old age dependency ratio, which not only affects the economic performance of a society, but also reduces the potential for social security funding, which is heavily reliant on labour taxation. The pressure towards the social funds (mainly the pension and health fund) are increasing in the wake of population ageing. In the longer term, labour force ageing, as part of the phenomenon of population ageing, requires higher financial allocations for retraining and further training of workers, and possibly also for unemployment and disability benefits, as a way to support prolonged labour market participation of the elderly. Long-term prospects give even more cause for concern, as depopulation and pronounced population ageing are expected to affect all parts of the Western Balkans. The ageing population will also require the WB6 to focus more on activating the population, in the wake of large inactivity rates.

## CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Emigration of youth and highly skilled individuals from BiH, as a country that is traditionally highly prone to emigration, remain a challenge for policy making and makes a considerable impact of human capital, economic development and demographic structure of population in BiH. The reasons for such trends can be found in an adverse economic situation, extremely high youth unemployment rates, low quality of education, as well as political instability.

1. Available migration data provides mainly statistics on stocks available from statistics reports of destination countries, revealing little about migrants' age, sex, education or other important factors. **Good governance policy and practice require a stronger evidence base on migration by collecting and disseminating detailed data** disaggregated by age and sex, country of birth, country of previous residence, country of citizenship, education, occupation, employment status, qualifications and skill level. Relevant information will help design and implement effective policies for youth migrants. Qualitative as well as quantitative research is needed. Consequently, more efforts should be put in improving collection and analysis of migration data, with focus on administrative and survey data already available at BiH institutions.

2. As the combination of evidence about different issues related directly or indirectly to emigration of young and highly skilled people from BiH, addressing this issue requires a whole **range of policies** that should tackle the problem from different angles and treat not only symptoms but also different causes discussed in this report. Furthermore, **coordination among these policies** needs to be established and assured. **Promoting cooperation** at all levels - local, national, regional and international - as well as strengthening meaningful youth participation in the migration policy debate and programmes will be critical to managing migration to harness the development potential of youth migration while mitigating associated risks. BiH policy towards diaspora should not be concentrated within any single institutions but should be **inclusive** and cover all relevant institutions, youth organizations, other CSOs, and diaspora organizations.

3. High unemployment rate among youth, as well as unfavourable labour market arrangements for employed, are one of the key drivers of migration. Such a situation requires

**more investments in active labour market programs (ALMPs) targeting youth.** Active labour market measures can encourage labour-market participation, provide short-term employment opportunities and spur entrepreneurship, but they need to be financially sustainable and coordinated with policies that increase the demand for labour. Programmes to support the youth entrepreneurship can also have significant impact on reducing the migration pressure among own people.

**4. Education needs to be more (quickly) adaptive to the labour market needs and changes.** Education policies particularly need to follow the requirements of industries that are identified as the ones with productive employment potential. Such a role of the education system needs to be implemented not only through formal education, but also through more active participation in non-formal education and skills upgrading. In particular, there is an obvious room for **qualitative improvement of the VET system.** Better quality of education will reduce pressure for migration of students, while better matching between skills obtained and labour market needs will improve employability and reduce duration of transition to employment among recent graduates.

Finally, according to the figures presented above we can conclude that the overall emigration rates of youth, despite being considerable, are not of the main concern. The more important is the structure of emigrants who are much more educated than the rest of the population remaining in the country. If we take into account a well known fact that emigration as an activity that involves risks is usually undertaken by more "entrepreneurial" individuals, we can see that such an emigration of "best and brightest" has important consequences for the country. Such an emigration will not reduce unemployment but in contrary can even increase it, as these individuals were supposed to be the ones who would generate new jobs if they remained in the country. Consequently, **the youth retention measures should be the ones that will provide an enabling environment for the entrepreneurial highly skilled individuals to pursue their ambitions within the country and to be properly rewarded for their efforts.** Successes with start-up incentives for bright young IT professionals can offer a direction for future initiatives targeting young people and offering them good alternatives to emigration.

## CHAPTER XIII

### Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

The qualitative and quantitative data gathered in the ten target countries yields several general conclusions which point to the commonalities among the diaspora communities but also draws attention to specific local issues that may not be relevant within all contexts. While it is important to acknowledge that some **general policy recommendations need to be considered along those specified for each researched country**, what follows are several broader topics around which the specific recommendations center.

Furthermore, in the process of crafting the recommendations, it has become clear that certain suggested interventions rely on existing institutions and resources while others demand either a change of the same or introduction of new ones, including new initiatives, services, and strategies so as to improve the overall relationship between BiH and its diasporic communities. For that relationship to flourish, BiH diaspora needs to be supported in making the best out of their lives in host countries while at the same time encouraging them to keep their identity strong and their relationship with BiH productive.

**1. Establish formal and inclusive channels of collaboration with the BiH Diaspora.** The research findings reveal a great diversity and vibrancy among BiH diaspora populations. The scale of it can be assessed in several ways: cultural, religious, and economic; the circumstances and duration of resettlement in host countries; the degree of integration and attachment to BiH identity, and so on. To foster and enhance the relationship with global BiH diaspora, it is of utmost importance to **establish formal and inclusive channels** of identifying, understanding and recognizing this diversity and engage its constituencies. The country chapters recommend an **inclusive definition of BiH diaspora**, comprising of war-related emigrants but also their descendants and previous generations of BiH migrants who maintain their Bosnian identities.

This can be done through more **systematic and active engagement of BiH diplomatic missions**. Consular activities, social networks and other efforts to liaison with the diaspora can ensure that the relationship remains active and responsive to all age groups, genders, and other relevant backgrounds.

In BiH, establishing a **state institution for diaspora**, such as a Ministry or Office for Diaspora Affairs, which can initiate and regularly maintain comprehensive diaspora consensus, generate and deepen mutual trust, and work to harness the potential for more sustained forms of interaction was identified throughout our research. BiH diaspora should be treated as both an asset and a responsibility. If the MHRRBiH is to continue working with the diaspora, it requires **better resources and adequate staffing** in order to fulfil its mission of representing the diaspora population across the world.

**2. Connecting with the Diaspora.** The findings point to the need for BiH to communicate more effectively and comprehensively with its diaspora, and to **facilitate steady intra- and inter-diasporic contact** by making better use of media, new technologies, and local outlets. The necessity to improve communication is to both understand better the issues that affect the diaspora in all its diversity and to **enable access of information** to a range of topics and news in BiH that are of relevance to the diaspora. Successful and ongoing investments of BiH

diaspora in BiH should be a **regular topic of media interest**. Likewise, **return and repatriation**, including training and investment opportunities, should be regularly addressed. Media outlets in BiH can work on a **more positive image of diaspora** and its ongoing investments in the BiH economy, featuring different success stories.

TV, radio stations, print and online publications and webportals can all be used to achieve such connectivity. Many diasporas in western countries have **dedicated programs** on local TV stations and utilize various hubs of information to spread the news about the homeland; this can be encouraged of BiH diaspora and reciprocated on media channels in BiH.

BiH policy makers can engage diaspora community centers, religious and educational organizations to **streamline their policy ideas to individuals and groups** who have engaged in humanitarian or voluntary work in BiH and are willing to do more. Different levels of governments need to make a **more sustained effort to promote local initiatives** among the diaspora and mobilize them in a mutually supportive way.

**3. Facilitate economic engagements between diaspora and BiH.** Reaching out to diaspora to **build new business networks** that can benefit local and regional developments should be a high priority. Efforts to **mobilize diaspora investments** need to be made in both private and public sectors and communicated through multiple media outlets. This can include support for online mentoring and job training programs, exchange of information, and regular announcements of opportunities in the professional and economic market.

An ongoing obstacle articulated among existing and potential diaspora investors are bureaucratic obstacles, an unfavorable tax climate, poor governance of public projects and general disconnect among different sectors and levels of economic activity, all which reduce the scope and quality of investment. These **impediments to investments need to be removed**.

To gain the trust of the diaspora an effort must be made to **communicate** better the sectors where investments can be made; to **formalize and regulate** the process of investment; **educate** about various sustainable investment opportunities with low financial risks; **be more aware** of different opportunities and commitments for first and second-generation diaspora investors, and **support** greater women's and youth participation in economic activities.

BiH needs to **enhance diaspora tourism** and encourage local businesses and community sectors to be its drivers. Diaspora tourism is diverse and includes family visits, heritage tourism, medical tourism, and business travel. Moreover, thanks to the BiH diaspora, many other tourists visit BiH as well. Understanding and enhancing the role of diaspora can pave the way for opening up new markets and further strengthening the tourism sector.

An important issue for first-generation diaspora is fostering strong ties with places of origin (the town, village or region of birth) aka *zavičaj* and to many, this is the vital hub of connection with BiH both emotionally and economically. BiH government can **support local authorities and businesses** in BiH to recognize such ties and **create channels of communication** that would facilitate them and create structures of mutual support, including a steady opportunity for economic benefits. Furthermore, to facilitate a more sustainable return of the first-generation migrants (including those of a retirement age), the BiH government needs to **initiate signing, ratification and implementation of relevant bilateral exchange agreements** between BiH and the countries with a large number of BiH

migrants, which would enable transfer of social and healthcare benefits from the diaspora destinations to BiH.

**4. Political participation.** The question of political engagement is repeatedly articulated among BiH diaspora as a priority. Findings reveal a general feeling that not enough is done to give the diaspora a more vocal presence in political life or facilitate their participation. Diaspora needs to be actively incorporated into participation in political decision-making in BiH.

Related to this is, **exercising voting rights** through easier registration procedures, easing or potentially removing active voting **registration requirements**, and encouraging **simpler online voting methods**. A more concerted outreach by political parties, consular and embassy staff, and media outlets can help better reflect the diaspora voice in political processes and ensure an informed flow of information regarding responsibilities and rights during elections.

BiH government, through consular services, should encourage all those born in BiH and those of BiH descent to register their name and place of residence and **enroll in BiH citizenship**. Consular offices should be well equipped to handle such requests and **make this process easier**. As it is, the enrollment is cumbersome and requires multiple visits for bureaucratic and administrative purposes, which discourages many who are eligible to realize their BiH citizenship.

**5. Intellectual/academic and cultural exchange.** BiH government needs to launch and foster initiatives for the **transfer and dissemination of knowledge** by hosting regular workshops, congresses, and lectures to connect Bosnian intellectuals, artists and professionals across the world. Some professional diaspora associations have formed and reached out to BiH government's offices and peer groups (e.g., BHAAAS), but such initiatives need to be collaborative, involving BiH academic, professional institutions to attract BiH peers working abroad. Sustained funding for such initiatives should be secured.

A commonly referred issue among the academic and professional members of the BiH diaspora is the problem with the **recognition and nostrification of diplomas**, academic degrees and professional qualifications obtained in diaspora. This **process needs to be simplified and centralized** as it has been the case in other countries in the region and internationally.

A provision ought to be made for **collaborative projects that target diaspora youth**, who are a rich and untapped asset for the future of BiH and aim at deepening ties with the young, non-BiH born diaspora. Programs to bring them on short **educational immersion visits in BiH** history and culture will enhance and preserve their cultural identity while encouraging future involvements in BiH.

The BiH Government (including MHRR and Ministry for Civil Affairs) needs to **promote and enhance education about BiH** culture and heritage, including language, by relying on the educational systems available in each country. Providing textbooks that is already done in some countries must be supplemented by other resources, including online teacher training. These **resources need to be tailored to the diaspora** and relate to the lived experiences of BiH migrants across generations and different diasporic localities, languages, and cultures.

**Supporting cultural and sports events** and marking important dates annually can be an effective way of fostering BiH identity. These can also include **connecting artists in BiH with those in the diaspora**, introducing their work to the BiH audience, and engage partner groups and organizations in host countries for collaborative initiatives. **Supporting exhibitions, film festivals/screenings and literary events to and from BiH** will add content to many aspects of relations with the diaspora. Such events will attract wider audiences and **put BiH and its diaspora on the international scene**, much in the same way as marking some cultural holidays of other diaspora groups. Aspirational examples include the Hindi Diwali festival of lights; Irish St. Patrick Day; or German Oktoberfest. These are organized on an annual basis and in many countries and introduce diaspora cultures to host countries.

BiH should also **promote cultural exchanges** between BiH and diaspora populations **focused on young people and students** through study abroad and educational stays for students from BiH in diaspora communities/families as well as Au pair engagements in order to foster the maintenance of BCS languages in the diaspora; and to establish formal processes and procedures (including info- and registration portal for host families and guest students) for these and similar exchanges.



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