



# The Image of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its Citizens in Croatia and Serbia

Božo Skoko, PhD



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AND ITS CITIZENS IN  
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# Foreword

The image of a country plays an increasingly important role in contemporary international relations. It has been proved that the reputation of a country reflects directly on its status on the political and economic stage, primarily through the number of foreign tourists, the level of foreign investment, the marketing of its products to foreign markets, and its influence in international forums and associations.

As regards the image of Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. what others think and feel about it, we need to consider how our country is perceived in the region and above all in Croatia and Serbia. These are the two countries that Bosnia and Herzegovina shares almost its entire border with, and which are thus exceptionally important economic and political partners, permanently linked to the development of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is why (due to the absence of similar studies) we conducted a survey in order to find out at first hand how Bosnia and Herzegovina is perceived in its neighbourhood, what are its greatest potentials, perceived shortcomings and potential.

The survey, organized by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, was conducted in the autumn of 2011 by Millenium Promocija Agency (with offices in Zagreb, Belgrade and Mostar) in collaboration with the IPSOS Puls Agency.

The lead researcher and the survey analyst was Božo Skoko, PhD, an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of



Zagreb. Skoko is the only regional expert who has systematically dealt with issues related to the image of countries in the Western Balkan region.

The survey has revealed and confirmed several significant indicators that can be used in the long term as a basis for building a new regional image of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as higher quality relations between the countries of the region.

In the following pages we will present the results of the survey together with an analysis of political and economic relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina with Croatia and Serbia, and a theoretical overview of the importance, means and possibilities of creating a country image. Perhaps some views of citizens of Serbia and Croatia will appear unusual, provocative, or even offensive. However, this is the reality that we have to take into account. Image is formed as a consequence. Often it is not based on facts but on impressions, stereotypes, information, as well as misinformation, and it takes a lot of effort to change these.

The famous British theoretician of national identity and image, Simon Anholt, claims that the precondition for a true change of image is a change in behavior of the country. It is the past and current behavior of the country, or its lack of behavior, that creates its reputation. Almost every place on Earth gets the image it deserves and it is simply naive to imagine that the image of the place can be changed without a change in behavior. It is not that the public is stupid or ignorant, or that the media has somehow failed to tell the truth about the place; it is usually that the country simply is not doing enough *new things* to capture anyone's attention or prove that the place has a relevance to the lives of the people it is trying to talk to. Only new and interesting things get adequately reported in the media because they are the only things that people are always interested in. This text gives us an opportunity to ask ourselves what we in Bosnia and Herzegovina have done in the past years to send across our borders the image of a new and different country.

Tanja Topić  
Friedrich Ebert Foundation

# Abstract

Citizens of Croatia and Serbia are considerably oriented towards Bosnia and Herzegovina and are significantly linked with it by their origin, relatives or friends. A total of 41% of respondents in Croatia and 35% of respondents in Serbia were either born in Bosnia and Herzegovina or are of BiH origin, or have families and relatives in BiH. However, if we take this fact into account, the number of those that stayed in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the past 15 years for various reasons – ranging from visits to relatives to business trips and tourist visits (31% from Croatia, 26% from Serbia) – appears to be small. Bosnia and Herzegovina obviously must become more attractive and give citizens of neighboring countries better reasons to visit since it is such visits that most directly contribute to breaking down of prejudice and building of links.

Our study of associations of Bosnia and Herzegovina revealed that its leading association for respondents from both Croatia and Serbia is with “burek and ćevapi”<sup>1</sup> as symbols of specific BiH cuisine. However, this association is much more prominent with respondents from Croatia (27%) than is the case with respondents from Serbia (18%). “War” is a very strong association for respondents from Serbia (13%) unlike those from Croatia (3%). The second most frequent response is “humour and stress-free life” – 16% in Serbia and 13% in Croatia. This is followed by “political tensions” (12% in both Serbia and Croatia), multiculturalism

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1 Burek is a kind of meat pie and ćevapi are grilled meat balls (translator).

(12% in Serbia and 10% in Croatia), “two entities and three peoples” (11% in Croatia and 10% in Serbia). The least prevalent association is the one with “Islam” (3% in Serbia and 1% in Croatia). It is obvious that, in spite of war and its consequences, Bosnia and Herzegovina sends out strong and positive vibrations related to lifestyle (with good food, low stress and lots of humor) and human values, all of which should certainly be used in creating its new image. However, war as a category is still strongly present, especially in Serbia.

With respect to the greatest potentials of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the most attractive to citizens of both neighbouring countries is the human potential (37% in Croatia and 36% in Serbia), followed by nature (21% in Serbia and 20% in Croatia) and lifestyle (13% in Serbia and 12% in Croatia).

The study showed that Sarajevo is the largest and at the same time the only top destination for both neighboring nations. It is followed by Mostar, which is, as can be expected, attractive to Croatians (together with Međugorje), and to a certain degree to Serbians (along with Banja Luka).

Studying the image of Bosnians and Herzegovinians irrespective of their nationality, we have established that Bosnians are somewhat more positively perceived in Croatia than Herzegovinians, whereas in Serbia both Bosnians and Herzegovinians have a fairly equal image. Croatian respondents more frequently consider Bosnians to be fun, honest and modest, and less frequently find them advanced and traditional. They more often consider Herzegovinians to be traditional, advanced and resourceful, and less often find them modest, fun and honest. Traits similar to those attributed to Bosnians by Croatian respondents are attributed to them by respondents from Serbia. They even find Bosnians somewhat more sincere and loyal than Croats from Croatia consider them to be. As regards Herzegovinians, it seems that they have a somewhat better image in Serbia than is the case in Croatia. Serbian respondents, unlike those from Croatia, attribute to them the quality of modesty. Also, Serbians

consider Herzegovinians to be honest, sincere and loyal to a greater extent than Croatian respondents do. When Herzegovinians and Bosnians are compared, there is less of a difference between them according to respondents Serbia than those in Croatia. In fact, in many respects there is no difference at all. Admittedly, Serbians do find Herzegovinians to be more resourceful, advanced and traditional than Bosnians, and they find Bosnians more fun, sincere and modest than Herzegovinians. There are no major deviations with respect to demographic indicators.

In order to find out the opinions of citizens of Croatia and Serbia about Bosnia and Herzegovina, we tested the most frequent claims about the past, present and future of the country appearing in the media, asking respondents to indicate to what extent they agree or disagree. If we summarize their views, we could say that both countries perceive the natural diversity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its rich cultural and historical heritage to the fullest extent. In addition, they consider BiH to be a land of diversity, bringing together the East and West, Christianity and Islam. This appears to be a good potential for the future in terms of tourism development, as well as creating a modern identity and image of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The most prominent differences between the views of Croatian and Serbian citizens are related to their interpretation of the recent war and the position of BiH Croats. However, even in these respects there is a significant number of respondents in Serbia that agree with those from Croatia.

Citizens of Croatia and Serbia give the political and economic relations of their countries with Bosnia and Herzegovina a modest score of 3. Moreover, when we analyzed their perception of the policies of their countries towards Bosnia and Herzegovina and their fellow nationals there, it turned out that a relative majority of Croats in Croatia (approximately 40%) believe that the Republic of Croatia does not sufficiently help Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As regards the relations of Serbia

with Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as many as 52% of citizens of Serbia believe that the Republic of Serbia does not sufficiently help Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

When we tried to explore perceptions of mutual relations among the three peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there was a considerable difference of opinion among respondents in Croatia and Serbia. Nevertheless, the relations deemed to be best are those between Bosniacs and Croats. As many as half of the respondents in Croatia perceive the relations between Croats and Bosniacs as best (51%). The same opinion is held by 36% of Serbians. Relations between Serbs and Bosniacs are positively perceived by as many as 29% of respondents in Serbia and only 5% of respondents in Croatia. It is interesting to note that relations between Croats and Serbs are viewed much more optimistically in Croatia than they are in Serbia. They are deemed to be best by 15% of respondents in Croatia and 9% in Serbia.

Finally we explored how the citizens of Croatia and Serbia see the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the next 10 years. Over half of citizens in both Croatia and Serbia are pessimistic: the deeply held belief that no significant changes will take place is shared by 42% of Serbians and 39% of Croatians. Another group believes that Bosnia and Herzegovina will remain an international protectorate. This belief is more frequently held by Croatians (17%) than by Serbians (12%). Serbians more often hold the belief that Bosnia and Herzegovina will become/remain a "divided country" (15% Serbians and 9% Croatians). A roughly equivalent number of Croatians (11%) and Serbians (13%) believe that Bosnia and Herzegovina will become a confederation of three or more entities. The same applies to the belief that Bosnia and Herzegovina will become a united civil state (10% of respondents in both Croatia and Serbia). Such pessimistic attitudes are not surprising given the impulses, messages and images that citizens of Croatia and Serbia receive from Bosnia and Herzegovina, which speak least of unity and a clear vision for the future of the country.

# **1 THE IMAGE OF THE COUNTRY AND NATION: *HOW IS IT CREATED, HOW IS IT CHANGED AND HOW IS IT MEASURED?*<sup>2</sup>**

## **1.1. Why is Country Image Important?**

*All responsible governments, on behalf of their people, their institutions and their companies, need to discover what the world's perception of their country is, and to develop a strategy for managing it. It is a key part of their job to try to build a reputation that is fair, true, powerful, attractive, genuinely useful to their economic, political and social aims, and which honestly reflects the spirit, the genius and the will of the people. This huge task has become one of the primary skills of government in the twenty-first century. (Anholt, 2007, 1)*

Ever since there have been leaders, there has been an awareness of the power of an image, i.e. a reputation as an aid to achieving one's political, social, economic and cultural aims – is a claim made by Simon Anholt, one of the most famous theoreticians of national identity and image management. However, the need for the systematic

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<sup>2</sup> This theoretical chapter is mostly taken from the author's book *The Country as a Brand* (Matica Hrvatska, Zagreb, 2009)

nurturing of these segments of a country's assets is, in the present time, obviously greater than ever.

*Today the world is one market. The rapid advance of globalization means that every country, every city and every region must compete with every other for its share of the world's consumers, tourists, investors, students, entrepreneurs, international sporting and cultural events, and for the attention and respect of the international media, of other governments, and the people of other countries.* (Anholt, 2007, 1) The markets of individual regions or countries, whether they are markets for products, for services, for ideas, for culture, for power or for attention, are rapidly expanding and fusing into a single community. In such a globalized market environment, *only those global players – whether they are countries, cities, corporations, organizations, religions or NGOs – with the ability to approach a wide and diverse* (and often uninterested, author's comment) *global marketplace with a clear, credible, appealing, distinctive and thoroughly planned vision, identity and strategy can compete.* (Anholt, 2007, 21).

In addition to globalization, the past few decades have witnessed major changes in the social and political structure of modern society. The rapid development and an increasing influence of the media, global public opinion and market forces on international affairs affect consumer behavior, decision-making, as well as the functioning of political and economic institutions and individuals, with image gaining dominance over facts and reality.

In this busy and crowded marketplace, most people and organizations do not have time to learn about what other places and countries are really like. As Anholt puts it, we all navigate through the complexity of the modern world armed with a few simple clichés, which form the background of our opinions, even if we are not fully aware of this and

do not always admit it to ourselves: Paris is about style, Japan about technology, Switzerland about wealth and precision, Rio de Janeiro about carnival and football, Tuscany about the good life, and most African countries are about poverty, corruption, war, famine and disease. As Šiber (2003, 171) puts it, in everyday life the individual has neither the time nor the will or the adequate cognitive capacity and knowledge to enable his/her objective, elaborate and meaningful judgement.

Supporting this claim is the fact that there are over 200 countries in the world and we are by the minute becoming more overwhelmed by thousands of different messages and are much too busy worrying about our lives to make more effort trying to form complete, balanced and informed views about six billion other people. *We make do with summaries for the vast majority of people and places – the ones we will probably never know or visit – and only start to expand and refine these impressions when for some reason we acquire a particular interest in them. When you haven't got time to read a book, you judge it by its cover.* (Anholt, 2007, 1)

In view of all the above it is obvious that nowadays countries and nations must become aware of their demanding environment and clearly define who they are and what they want, what they can offer to the world, why they should be important to someone and why they should be respected. They must find a way to capture the attention of others and tell them the story about their country, and win their share of fans, customers, lobbyists or friends, or at least reduce the number of their enemies.

To have an image management strategy means to know exactly what talents, qualities or advantages we possess, to know how to use them and show them to the world. In order for a destination to be able to effectively compete with others, it must be distinguishable in one way or another – by its values, people, products, natural potentials, ambi-



tions, culture, history, or by a combination of all these aspects. It takes knowledge to be able to shape all these advantages into a unique, true, distinctive and attractive combination and transform them into a powerful tool of promotion and success.

At the same time, the degree of success of countries in the international market will depend less and less on military strength and political power, while what becomes increasingly important is their image, that is the impression – which their products, leaders, sportsmen, culture and lifestyle – leave on millions of people: their potential visitors, customers, investors and supporters from other countries. This is evidenced by a number of studies and theories, such as Joseph Nye’s theory of countries’ *soft power* (Nye, 1990; 2003). It is due to the strengthening of this so-called soft power at the expense of political, economic or military power that many destinations base their identity and image management strategy on cultural, social or even spiritual qualities that help them differentiate themselves from all the others. As a result of good identity and image management, even small and poor countries can find ways to break out of their burden and enter global affairs.<sup>3</sup>

Many scholars agree that the reputation of a country has a direct and measurable impact on just about every aspect of its relations with other countries and their inhabitants, and plays a critical role in its economic, social, political and cultural development. It is most often stated that image helps countries in the marketing of their products to foreign markets, attracting tourists, attracting foreign investment and winning tenders in foreign countries, attracting talented immigrants, cultural and sporting events, and winning respect in international relations and through their values.

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3 [http://www.earthspeak.com/Why\\_is\\_branding\\_so\\_important.htm](http://www.earthspeak.com/Why_is_branding_so_important.htm)  
March 5th 2007.

*Whether we're thinking about going somewhere on holiday, buying a product that's made in a certain country, applying for a job overseas, moving to a new town, donating money to a war-torn or famine-struck region, or choosing between films or plays or CDs made by artists in different countries, we rely on our perception of those places to make the decision-making process a bit easier, a bit faster, a bit more efficient.* (Anholt, 2007, 7).

These clichés and stereotypes – whether they are positive or negative, true or untrue – fundamentally affect our behavior towards other places and their people and products, Anholt believes. It may seem unfair, but there is nothing anybody can do to change this. It is very hard for a country to persuade people in other parts of the world to go beyond these simple images and try to understand the rich complexity that lies behind them. Some very progressive countries do not get nearly as much attention, visitors, business or investment as they need because their reputation is weak or negative. At the same time, others are still trading on a good image that they acquired several decades or even centuries ago, and today do relatively little to deserve this image. The same is true of cities and regions: places with good, powerful and positive reputations find that almost everything they undertake on the international stage is easier; and places with poor reputations find that almost everything is difficult, and some things seem virtually impossible.

Given all the above, as Anholt says in the quotation from the beginning of this study, *all responsible governments, on behalf of their people, their institutions and their companies, need to discover what the world's perception of their country is, and to develop a strategy for managing it.* He believes that a key part of their job is to try to build a reputation that is fair, true, powerful, attractive, genuinely useful to their economic, political and social aims, and which honestly reflects the spirit, the genius and the will of the people. It seems that this truly becomes a primary task of national governments in the 21st century.

Following the example of Spain, Great Britain, Ireland and others, many European transition countries whose reality changed dramatically (e.g. due to the fall of communism) started seeking ways to present their tourism potential, attract investment or develop their own brand for both the domestic market and export. There is no doubt that these countries include Croatia, which used its natural attractions and tourism potentials to suppress associations with war, and managed to win the title of one of the most beautiful European holiday destinations. However, the question arises as to whether this is sufficient to also attract foreign investment, enable the marketing of its products to foreign markets and the like. Clearly it is not. Attracting attention and telling the story of the country's potentials is only the beginning. In the competition-oriented economic environment with rapid and turbulent changes, these newly emerged nations compete both with each other and with older well-established nations.

Until recently, the image of a country and its influence on its political and economic position in contemporary international relations remained a rather neglected area of scholarly research. However recent years have witnessed the publication of a significant number of research papers dealing with these issues, showing that the power of image becomes increasingly important in the globalized society through communication networks, and has a direct impact on the success of a country and the achievement of its national goals. One of the most researched areas related to the power of image is the so-called 'country of origin' concept. The literature in this area shows that consumers develop stereotypical images of countries and/or their products, which consequently influence their purchase decisions (e.g. Baughn and Yaprak, 1993; Heslop and Papadopoulos, 1993; Saghafi and Rosa, 1997). Han (1989) proposes that there are two specific ways in which consumers use country image: as a 'halo' and as a 'summary construct'. He concludes that, when consumers are not familiar with products, they turn to country image to infer

the quality due to their inability to detect true quality (halo). The halo indirectly affects consumers' brand attitude through their inferential beliefs. As consumers become familiar with a country's products, the country image is used as a construct that summarizes their beliefs about product attributes; image then directly affects their brand attitude (summary construct).

It is due to these and other factors that the management of the image and reputation of their countries becomes a priority of governments and government institutions of a growing number of both developed and less developed countries as they try to improve their international reputation, increase their exports or attract foreign investors and tourists.

Most countries try to promote their products and services and steer their reputation through various institutions, so that the tourist board usually presents the country to holidaymakers and business travellers, the foreign investment promotion agency promotes the country to foreign companies and investors, cultural institutes build cultural relations with other countries and promote the country's cultural and educational products and services, and exporters promote their products and services abroad. Meanwhile the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presents its policies to the public abroad in the best possible light, and sometimes attempts to manage the national reputation as a whole. In most countries there are many other bodies, agencies, ministries, special interest groups, non-governmental organizations and companies all promoting their version of the country. However since the activities of all these institutions are often poorly coordinated or not coordinated at all, the results of their efforts tend to be limited. Since most of these bodies - official and unofficial, national and regional, political and commercial - usually work independently and sometimes in isolation, they may send out conflicting and even contradictory messages. As a result, no consistent picture of the country emerges, and its overall reputation stands still or moves backwards.

This why efforts are nowadays focused on enhancing the country's identity as well as coordinated and systematic promotion of the country, harmonized with an overall national strategy, i.e. clear goals for the country's society and economy, and its political and cultural relations with other countries. The management of national identity, i.e. positioning, promotion and management of its image, is also known as *branding*.

The concept of brand management or country *branding* originated from management of commercial brands and corporate branding, which have functioned in the market for over a century. As differences between countries and multinational corporations grow smaller and smaller with respect to their power and influence, as well as their behavior in global relations, the theories and techniques that had until recently been used mainly in the business sphere are increasingly emerging as competitive tools and agents for change both within countries and in their relations with others.

Numerous successful examples of countries which boast "super brands" include Great Britain, Switzerland, Canada, Italy, Sweden, Germany, Japan, France, Australia and the United States.<sup>4</sup> *Brand Finance* Journal has already carried out their valuation in billions of dollars (from \$18 trillion for "Brand America" to \$43 billion for "Brand Poland") as the real contribution of the brand to the nation's economy, as well as a proof that "protecting and enhancing the nation brand, this most valuable of assets, is surely one of the primary responsibilities of governments in the 21st century" (Anholt, 2007, 44).

Bearing witness to the importance of image management at all levels – from countries and regions to cities, is the fact that in 2003 the Mayor of New York appointed the City's first chief marketing officer. In his job description it was stated that he was to "offer the city, its attractions and its unique charisma as a brand that can be traded".

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4 Nation Brands Index, overall ranking, [www.nationbrandsindex.com](http://www.nationbrandsindex.com), 2007.

The question that arises at the end of this overview is: are there any alternatives to managing national identity and image, or is it the case that all countries and nations are forced to undertake *branding*? The alternative to undertaking nation branding is not *not* undertaking nation branding. In fact, nation branding is as much proactive behaviour as self-defence. It is the necessary response to (or the prudent protection against) the naturally trivializing tendency of international public opinion. As long as public opinion matters – and it matters terribly, because the public is the market – it is not only legitimate but also vital for countries to do whatever is in their power to ensure that public opinion is as fair, accurate and positive as it possibly can be. Countries which do not do this run the risk of being saddled with a brand which does not suit their aims or interests at all, and which is very likely based on ignorance, hearsay, confusion or long-past events.<sup>5</sup> In fact, if a country does not brand itself, somebody else will do that, against its will and interest. If we fail to tell the story about ourselves, somebody else will tell it. And that somebody does not necessarily have to be well-intentioned. However, in order for us to be able to know what direction to take in managing our own identity and image management, we must know what our image currently is in the international public, i.e. how others see us, what they like and what they resent.

## **1.2. Definition and Research of Country Image**

There are many definitions of country image. Nagashima is one of the first marketing researchers that studied the image of countries. His definition of the term “country image” is: *the picture, the reputation the stereotype that businessmen and consumers attach to products of a*

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5 Simon Anholt in the Editorial Preface of the journal *Place Branding* (1), January 2006.

*specific country. This image is created by such variables as representative products, national characteristics, economic and political background, history and tradition (Nagashima 1970, 68).*

*Kotler et al. (1993) define country image as the sum of beliefs and impressions that people have of a place/country. Images represent a simplification of a large number of associations and pieces of information connected with the place. They are a product of the mind trying to process and “essentialize” huge amounts of data about a place/country (Kotler et al., 1993). Martin and Eroglu (1993) define country image as the total of all descriptive, inferential and informational beliefs one has about a particular country.*

Kotler and Gertner (2005, 42) claim that a country’s image results from its geography, history, proclamations, art and music, famous citizens and other features. They stress that the entertainment industry and the media play a particularly important role in shaping people’s perceptions of places, especially those viewed negatively. Not only are product categories such as perfumes, electronics, precision instruments, wines, cars and software strongly identified with certain places, but also societal ills such as AIDS epidemics, political riots, human rights violations, attacks on the environment, racial conflicts, economic turmoil, poverty and violent crime. All of these have been repeatedly and strongly associated with certain locations. Of course, different persons and groups hold different stereotypes of nations since the mental phenomenon is inherently subjective. Sometimes they are very widespread however, and pervasive across elements of the same group. They are social cognitions, mental representations shared by members of a given society. The authors emphasize that country images, or knowledge structures related to places/countries or perceptions of places, are mainly used as short-cuts for information processing and decision heuristics. They also claim that country images are likely to influence people’s decisions related to purchasing, investing, changing residence and traveling. (Kotler and Gertner, 2005, 43)

In a cross-cultural psychological study, Forgas and O'Driscoll (1984) find that there are psychological links between a person's nation perception style and his or her values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviour. Their findings confirm that perceptions and attitudes people have about other nations may influence their economic decisions, such as purchase decisions.

This is consistent with the literature on the 'country of origin effect'. Various research studies in psychology, political science and sociology reveal that, in the development of a country image, individuals are likely to focus on variables such as: (1) degree of economic development, (2) level of education, (3) affluence, (4) size, (5) population density and (6) political orientation (Russett 1967; Sawyer, 1967; Woliver and Cattell, 1981; Allred 1997). In the literature of social psychology, although there are slight variations depending on countries included in studies, the following dimensions largely overlap in the quoted literature: economic development, political environment, cultural development and geographical position, race and ethnicity, and sensitivity to country and people (Forgas and O'Driscoll, 1984; Jones and Ashmore 1973; Kelman 1965; Robinson and Hefner, 1967; Wish, Deutsch and Biener, 1970). (Allred, 1997, 45)

Kelman's cult book *International Behavior* (1965), while dealing mainly with the topic of international behaviour, summarizes a large part of research to date on the creation of a national image. In addition to the already mentioned economic, political and cultural dimensions, he concluded that forming of international image is related to international contacts, international events and international conflicts.

In support of the dimension of international conflict, Driver (1962) establishes that country image becomes more concentrated, simple and susceptible to evaluation as *conflicts* between countries increase. The research of Papadopoulos and Heslop (1986) supports Kelman's emphasis



on impact of international contact on country image. They find that the views of consumers who have traveled to a country differ from the views of those who have not. Clearly travel is a factor affecting the formation of the perception of a country. More recent literature also supports Kelman's dimensions of international events. Brunner, Flaschner and Lou (1993) found that the event from June 1989, when the Chinese government suppressed the pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square, this negatively affected the image of China. The event curtailed sales of Chinese products even more than American sanctions did. On the other hand, the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games contributed to creating a more positive image of South Korea and this event is associated with the increase of sales of South Korean products in the United States (Jaffe and Nebenzahl, 1993).

The studies of Wang and Lamb (1980 and 1983) show that American consumers' willingness to buy foreign products is partly determined by the economic, political and cultural characteristics of their country of origin. Papadopoulos, Marshall and Heslop (1988) and Papadopoulos, Heslop and Berács (1990) demonstrate that such factors as economic development of a country and consumers' affective feelings towards its people influence product evaluations. Wall and Heslop (1986) too find that country images are closely related to the level of political development. In another study, Wee and Paloheimo (1989) examined Chinese managers' perceptions of foreign investors from the United States, Japan, Singapore and West Germany and asserted that the selection of a joint venture partner can be influenced by perceptions of the partner's country image (in: Wee, Lim and Tan, 2003, 314).

Generally, in literature pertaining to public relations and marketing as well as other cognate areas, economic development, politics and culture have appeared repeatedly as important dimensions of country image. Some of the literature also emphasizes conflict, i.e. how much countries

have in common, to what extent they agree on important issues and to what extent they like each other, as a key part of country image.

Discussions with groups of respondents revealed that economy, politics and culture are important, but their answers helped to identify another two important dimensions that deserve interest: working environment and environmental protection (Allred, 1997, 47). Dimensions used until now for measuring of country image are basically linked with perceptions of products rather than direct perceptions of peoples and countries, as well as with the extent of the development of countries (Cattlin, Jolibert and Lohnes, 1982; Han and Terpstra, 1988; Heslop and Papadopoulos, 1993; Jaffe and Nebenzahl, 1984; Johansson and Nebenzahl, 1986; Nagashima, 1970, 1977; Narayana, 1981; Papadopoulos and Heslop, 1986; White, 1979).

Attitudes towards the countries and people producing concrete products have rarely been included in research on country image (Heslop and Papadopoulos, 1993). Notable exceptions are the studies conducted by Martin and Eroglu (1993) and Wang and Lamb (1983). Wang and Lamb (1983) classified 36 countries into three levels of political and economic development and six cultural regions. Using an analysis of variance method, they found that willingness to buy foreign products is related to political, cultural and economic dimensions of the country. More specifically, their findings showed that respondents were most likely to purchase products of economically highly developed and politically liberal countries belonging to European, Australian and New Zealand cultures.

Martin and Eroglu (1993) used American consumers' image of Japan alone to develop a measure that involved economic, political, technological and social dimensions of desirability (which includes factors of quality of life, standard of living and level of urbanization). The dimension of social desirability was not confirmed by factor analysis. A possible expla-

nation for this could be related to the country that was studied. In other words, quality of life might not be an important factor in consumers' image of a superpower country such as Japan with a high standard of living, but in the case of developing countries this factor might represent an important dimension related to country image.

In their study of the image of eight developed countries, Heslop and Papadopoulos (1993) measured country image based on the main dimensions of Nagashima's (1970) attitudes towards products. However, unlike most other studies that followed Nagashima's work, these two researchers included some specific dimensions of attitudes towards countries and their people. Using these dimensions, they discovered that good products come from well managed, technologically advanced countries with hard-working people that have refined tastes, and who are likable, trustworthy and respected for their role in world politics.

In addition, in the study of Heslop and Papadopoulos, culture is not defined simply by geographical region (as defined by Wang and Lamb, 1983) but is measured through questions about people's refined tastes, their trustworthiness, industriousness and likability.

Based on all the above-mentioned deficiencies in research, Allred (1997) conducted a study whose goal, inter alia, was to carefully analyze dimensions forming the image of a country and develop a scale to measure them. He thus arrived at a minimum of seven dimensions specific to a country and people, based on which consumers in other countries perceive products from the given country. These are: *economy, environment, politics, labor, conflict, work culture and vocational training*.

In general, most studies dealing with country image focus on exploring perceptions of products and linking them directly to the image of countries. This is the so-called 'country of origin effect', which has been

the subject of extensive research in the last three decades. In 1993, a book edited by Papadopoulos and Heslop was published, representing the first research on the subject. In 1994, Peterson and Jolibert found 184 articles published in academic journals, dealing with the country image effect.

*Country of origin has become an integral part of the repertory of extrinsic cues to product evaluations, along with price, brand name, packaging and seller, as opposed to the study of qualities of the product such as materials, design, style, workmanship, color and smell. Country-of-origin studies have been developed for a variety of durable and non-durable consumer products, including cars, electronics, apparel, smoke detectors and pickles.* (Kotler and Gertner, 2005, 43). Findings have consistently confirmed the fact that consumers use country of origin information as an indicator of quality. Studies focused on the way in which a simple manipulation of the country of origin or the “Made in” label influences people’s beliefs even when they are given a chance to see, touch, feel and taste the very same physical product (Nagashima, 1970; Terpstra, 1988; Chao, 1989; Hong and Wyer, 1990; Wall et al., 1991; Johansson et al., 1994; Jaffe and Martinez, 1995; Liefeld et al., 1996; Li et al., 1997; Papadopoulos and Heslop, 2000).

Although this study is not focused exclusively on exploring the economic dimensions of image that could influence consumers and their decisions to purchase Bosnian and Herzegovinian products, the results and methods used in previous studies, including the one conducted by Allred, provided us with guidance on the development of a methodology for exploring much wider beliefs and opportunities. In designing our research we found a number of other studies helpful and which explored other dimensions of image and its influence on various areas of activities in a country – from sport and tourism to culture (e.g. Gartner, 1986; Chon, 1991; Gartner and Shen, 1992; Pantzalis and Rodrigues,

1999; Wee, Lim and Tan, 2003; Kim and Morrison, 2005; Jun and Lee, 2007, Skoko 2010. etc.),

When designing the methodology, we drew on special guidance in the research and works of Simon Anholt (2004, 2006, 2007), as well as of his *Nation Brand Index* where he studies modern countries' mutual perceptions of their *cultural, political, commercial and human assets, investment potential, and tourist appeal*. The results are translated into an index of national brand power, i.e. a barometer of global advantage. Also helpful was his concept of competitive identity (Anholt, 2007), which is used to study and measure the identity and image of countries based on the following parameters: *brands, politics, investment, culture, people and tourism*. In fact, although it would seem on the one hand be too much and on the other insufficient to study the relations between countries and peoples on the territory of the former Yugoslavia based on these parameters alone, we tried to incorporate them in our research and at the same time add some other aspects such as stereotypes, associations and ties.

In designing our methodology, we were also guided by the results of Kelman's research (1965). In addition to economic, political and cultural dimensions, he linked the formation of countries' international images with international contacts, international events and international conflicts as well. Given that on the territory of the former Yugoslavia we have experienced and are experiencing at least two of the stated dimensions, we wanted to study to what extent the war affected the mutual relations and to what extent family and other ties influence an improvement in the perceived image of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

### 1.3. Creating a National Image

Forming of a national image is a rather complex process. It is influenced by numerous factors, from the level of available information and ways in which a country communicates in international relations, to its charm or people's emotional feelings about the country. Stereotypes may play an important role in creating a national image, since these tend to linger for decades and even centuries. *These stereotypes that are the reputations of countries, whether good or bad, seldom really reflect the current reality of the place.* (Anholt, 2007, 27). A common reason for this disconnection between image and reality is simply time: a place may be changing quite quickly, but its image can lag behind by years or decades. *National image is like starlight which, by the time it reaches us on Earth, is only the distant echo of an event that started and finished long before* (Anholt, 2007, 27). Part of the reason an image may change so slowly is because we, the public, are so attached to our beliefs and we carry on believing the same things we have always believed about places and change our views slowly and reluctantly. Anholt adds that those simple narratives that we all hold in our minds about places only change if something changes quite dramatically in the real world. It is only then that we are prepared to alter those stories or replace them with new ones.

Thus we usually remember countries for the last big event that we associate with them or that enabled them to receive global exposure. In the modern busy world suffering from communication overload, unless we are forced to do so, we seldom find time to devote more careful attention to life and progress in other countries.

Therefore Anholt (2007, 27) claims that even if a country does devise and implement the perfect export strategy, the perfect foreign direct investment strategy and the perfect economic development strategy,

it might still be years or even decades before the world actually gets around to revising its opinion about the place, and thus changing its behavior towards that place.

The author adds that a country can behave impeccably for decades and yet still be saddled with a bad reputation which was formed long ago, and may not have been fair even then. This is quite common. National images take a long time to form. They are made out of clichés and prejudices which sometimes seem *rusted* into place. In such cases it is obvious that the country's impeccable behavior simply isn't being noticed, and can't be depended on to shift the negative perception. Surely the government of such a country is justified in trying to act directly on its reputation. But in order for it to be able to do so, it must understand how and through which communication channels the country image is formed. In fact, most countries communicate with the rest of the world, and so deliberately or accidentally create their reputation. Anholt (2007, 25) singles out six natural channels through which a national image is created.

1. *Their promotion of tourism* as well as *people's first-hand experience* of visiting the country as tourists or business travellers. This is often the loudest voice in branding the country, as the tourist board usually has the biggest budgets and the most competent marketing experts.
2. *Their export products*, which represent powerful ambassadors of each country's image abroad, but only *where their country of origin is explicit*; if nobody knows where a product comes from, then it can not affect their feelings about that country. However, when its provenance is strongly branded, such as Mercedes (Made in Germany) or Sony (Made in Japan) or Red Stripe (Made in Jamaica), it can speak just as loudly as tourism campaigns.
3. *The policy decisions of the country's government*, whether it is foreign policy that directly affects overseas populations, or domestic policy that gets reported in the international media.

4. For business audiences, *the way the country solicits inward investment*, recruitment of foreign talent and students and *the presence of foreign companies in the country*.
5. Through *cultural exchange and cultural activities* as well as cultural exports: a world tour by a sports team, the recordings of famous musicians, the works of poets, authors and film-makers. Even a cultural product as lightweight as *Crocodile Dundee* or *Madagascar* can play a role in building the reputation of a country.
6. *The people of the country* themselves: the high-profile leaders, the media and sports stars, as well as the population in general; how they behave when abroad and how they treat visitors to their countries.

To put it simply, according to Anholt (2007), people's perceptions of the country are formed by:

- the things that are done in the country, and the way they are done;
- the things that are made in the country, and the way they are made;
- the way other people talk about the country;
- the way the country talks about itself.

Once earned, the reputation of a country becomes quite immune to things that suddenly happen to the country, including wars, terrorist attacks and natural disasters, as well as propaganda and attempts at manipulation. For example, the terrorist attacks in Madrid and London, which attracted great attention worldwide, did not affect the perception of these two cities as safe places. Thus, according to the *Nation Brands Index*<sup>6</sup>, they were up high in the 11th and 12th places. In the same survey in 2005, New York was in the 23rd and Washington in the 19th place for safety.

To explain why such negative things that happen to a country often have a weaker impact on people's perceptions of the place than one

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6 Comp. [www.nationbrandsindex.com](http://www.nationbrandsindex.com); January 8th 2009.



might expect, Anholt (2007, 55) puts forward the following arguments: we are all subjected to so much news and information every day that we tend to process it at a fairly low level. Most of the time, we do not observe the international news in a very alert fashion; it is a distant spectacle that, no matter how shocking, does not really affect us very deeply. We may not register much more than the subject of the news item, and remember little about what has happened there, or whether it was good or bad. At the same time, we will continue to carry in our minds all other positive images of countries that have accumulated for years or decades.

In fact, more than one airline has, in the past, reported an increase in the number of its bookings immediately after highly-publicized accidents because the brand has had a huge amount of exposure so that it neutralizes even the fear of death. After the movie *Titanic* was released, although it is a film about a luxury ship catastrophe, a spike in the number of cruise bookings was recorded. The claim that “all publicity is good publicity” obviously contains at least a grain of truth. Even a natural disaster and a human tragedy on the scale of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami did far less damage to the images of the countries affected by it than people expected. As a reason, Anholt (2007, 56) proposes their high global exposure on television where, because of the shortage of current footage, a great deal of the broadcasted video material was made of library footage of the resorts before the disaster occurred. Within a year, most of the countries affected were quickly approaching a complete revival of their tourist statistics. There were appalling human and economic losses, but the nation brands survived. This is the proof that *the brand images of Sri Lanka, Thailand or the Maldives aren't to be found in those countries: they exist in the minds of millions of consumers, scattered around the world. The most valuable asset of those countries, their reputation, is safely distributed in a remote, secure, distributed location* (Anholt, 2007, 56).

## **1.4. Possibilities of Changing the Image of a Country and Nation**

Although images take a long time to form and in fact we do not know all the factors influencing them, they can be destroyed fairly quickly. Of course, in the case of countries with stable images and certain reputations in the international public, this happens much more slowly than is the case with lesser known countries. Also, the image of a country can change and improve, but this process requires a lot of effort and skill. This seems logical if we know that images are created artificially and people act based on what they believe to be true, not on what is true, so that "objective reality" plays a less important role in human life than "perceived reality" (Papadopoulos, 1993). It is for this reason that in recent years paramount importance has been attached to the 'creation' of image, i.e. the creation of a desirable picture in the public eye, which is often not consistent with reality at all despite people's belief in it. According to Boorstin (2000), image can be more or less successfully produced, improved, polished, renewed and refreshed.. In support of this claim, he states that image is synthetic, believable, passive, vivid, simplified and ambiguous. Image is synthetic because it is planned, i.e. created especially to serve a purpose, that is to make a certain kind of impression. Image in this respect, as the author states, is not simply a trademark, a design, a slogan or an easily remembered picture, but a studiously crafted personality profile of an individual, institution, corporation, product or service. It is a value caricature, shaped in three dimensions and completely synthetic. Hence an image is a visible public identity or a public portrayal of a subject as distinguished from an inward private character. Image overshadows everything that could be real. It is said that image is believable since it cannot take hold and it serves no purpose if people do not believe in it, if in their minds they do not make a certain picture stand for somebody or something. Image is passive since the image (picture) itself must be congruent with reality.

It is usually the case that some virtues are offered through image. Image finds its source in life and is a picture of it. However, once the image is there, once it becomes the more important reality, the corporation management and conduct becomes mere evidence of it, not vice versa. Boorstin adds that image, unlike reality, can be perfect since the process of creating of image represents the building of reputation, not character. He believes that previously there was a belief that the average person (or institution or country) aspired to perfect decency and reputation or simply tried not to be conspicuous. After the revolution of the technology of graphics (development of printing and media) we think of such a person as a 'conformist' – one who tries to fit into the images found all around him, i.e. those most often being presented in the media. This can be applied to states as well. The international public receives and perceives positively those countries that adjust their behavior to 'well-established standards' or a generally accepted image that is promoted by the international institutions and media, such as a democratic system in the country, the functioning of its legal system, respect for minority rights, freedom of the media and the like. Therefore, countries are not expected to do anything special except fit into the already existing image of a democratic country, i.e. be perceived as such by the international public. However, if a country would like to break out of this 'mediocrity' and become, let us say, even more popular and liked or recognizable in the world, it must work hard in order to (in addition to basic standards) give prominence to its advantages and make them recognizable and positively perceived in the international public. (Skoko, 2003, 105)

However, changing the image of a country is a much more demanding and complex project than changing the image of a product, corporation or a person. Various research studies have confirmed that it is difficult to change a stereotype about the country once it takes root. Still, there is more and more evidence that development of the economy combined with a strategic promotion can change the perception of a

country over time (Jaffe and Nebenzahl 1993; Nebenzahl and Jaffe 1991; Reiersen 1967). The dramatic improvement of the image of Japan in the last fifty years provides an excellent example of a country that was once associated with the manufacture of cheap trifles, and is now transformed into an economic power with the image of a manufacturer of some of the highest quality products in the world. (Brunner, Flaschner and Lou 1993; Damanpour 1993; Dornoff, Tankersley and White 1974; Nagashima 1977). Other countries are starting to achieve similar success using international events as a means of changing stereotypes and promoting of their new image in the world. Nebenzahl and Jaffe, mentioned above, noted that the 1988 the Seoul Olympic Games resulted in a more positive attitude among consumers of electronics towards goods produced in South Korea. On the other hand, 'spectacular' international events can bring about rapid changes for the worse in consumer attitudes. The above-mentioned longitudinal study conducted by Brunner, Flaschner and Lou showed that attitudes of consumers towards the quality of Chinese products, as well as their willingness to purchase them, underwent a significant change for the worse after the event in Tiananmen Square in June 1989.

Some recent studies suggest that it is good for nations to see themselves as 'products' (Chao 1989a, 1990; Graby 1993; Wee, Lim and Tam 1993). Graby (1993) warns that France is very much aware of the importance of building its image in order to increase its penetration of export markets. He also states that in order to promote this image countries need to accept that, at least as far as export markets are concerned, they essentially represent corporate entities. A special committee named "*Comite Image France*" was set up with a view to promoting the image of France abroad. Joint programs of governments and economic sectors aimed at the promotion of the national image must give answers to three basic marketing questions: (1) what is our message, (2) to whom should we communicate it, and (3) how shall we communicate it? (Allred, 1997, 29)

Bearing this in mind, countries, especially those recently developed, must pay special attention to the creation and promotion of their desired image including, where possible, the management of international events that might trigger immediate positive or negative reactions. Allred (1997, 29) takes Japan as a positive example of a country setting the standard that other countries should follow. The author adds that, in spite of their limited economic development, countries such as South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and Brazil achieved success in changing and creating positive perceptions of the quality of their products, although only in the case of certain products, through careful management and promotion of their image abroad.

Kunczik (1989, 170) states that images of certain countries are often carried forward unchanged through generations, and are based less on knowledge and more on affect since the laws of logic do not apply to them. He adds that the criterion of "correctness" or "truthfulness" of an image does not lie in its overlap with reality but in its successful gain of control over its environment, and this might mean that people will accept an "incorrect" image since, if everybody shares the same opinion, they do not want to be exposed to unnecessary public opinion pressure by stating a different attitude. In another work, the same author claims that "creating of positive image can benefit those governments that pursue policies of openness since credibility of the communicator is extremely important for creating of a positive image". It is, therefore, possible to change image, but in order for that to happen it is necessary to create prerequisites, primarily through a new approach of the government, first to its own media and thereafter to the entire international public.

Supporting the claim of changeability of nation or country image is the study conducted in December 2002 by the independent *Pew Research Center* from Washington<sup>7</sup> in collaboration with the interna-

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7 <http://pewResearch.org>.

tional daily *International Herald Tribune*, which states that the image of the United States changed considerably in the course of 2002. The purpose of the survey was to find out what the world thought about the United States of America and other countries of the world. The survey included as many as 38 thousand persons from 44 countries from all continents and lasted for four months, from July to October 2002. According to the survey, the image and reputation of the United States “declined” significantly in 2002, mostly in Muslim countries but, surprisingly enough, in many other countries that had until then been American allies. As compared to 2001, the favourability ratings fell in 19 of the 27 countries where trend benchmarks existed. Although the majority of respondents in almost all countries supported the war on terrorism and American primacy in it, the threat of war with Iraq increased the concern that American foreign policy was overly aggressive, egoistic and did not take into account the interests of its friends and allies. Despite the fact that the terrorist attacks in New York on September 11th 2001 caused an outpouring of sympathy around the world (“We are all Americans” was a headline in the Paris daily *Le Monde* during this period), the initial compassion abated significantly in a number of countries. Obviously the change of the American image in the world was directly affected by the aggressive American foreign policy pursued by President George Bush, whose popularity in the USA was at that time quite high, which was not the case in the rest of the world. In 2002, Bush’s administration initiated additional efforts with a view to improving the USA image in the world and increasing the popularity of its policies (Skoko, 2004, 29).

Anholt claims that the precondition for a true change of image is a change in the behavior of the country. It is the past and current behavior of the country, region or city – or their lack of behaviour – that creates their reputation. Almost every place on Earth gets the image it deserves and it is simply naive to imagine that the image of the place can be changed without a change in behavior. It is not that the general

public is stupid or ignorant, or that the media has somehow failed to tell the truth about the place; it is usually that the country simply is not doing enough *new things* to capture anyone's attention or prove that the place has a relevance to the lives of the people it is trying to talk to. Only new and interesting things get adequately reported in the media because they are the only things that people are always interested in (Anholt, 2007, 35).

This thesis is supported by Kotler and Gertner (2005, 47), who claim that brand managers have no control over environmental factors that may keep tourists and investors away, such as natural disasters, political turmoil and economic downturns. It is even more difficult to control how the press and the media report on a country's problem, often creating or replicating stereotypes. It is for this reason that it seems futile to try to improve the image of a country without solving the problems that created it. For example, no advertizing or public relations will make an unsafe place safer or better for living. On the contrary, by giving tourists misleading information it is possible to damage the image because it will contribute to spreading their discontent and spoiling the country's image in their country of origin. Therefore, the image change is directly linked with political changes, i.e. national policies.

## **2. RELATIONS OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA WITH CROATIA AND SERBIA**

### **2.1. Relations between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina**

#### 2.1.1. Political Relations between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Relations between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are considered to be friendly and are in various ways permeated by the two countries' mutual conditioning and even interdependence – from geographical and geopolitical links to their interweaving histories in the past few centuries and the fact that Croats represent one of the three constituent peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia today share the largest part of their land borders with each other (932 kilometres in total)<sup>8</sup>. As a result of that, the majority of transport corridors from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Western Europe pass through Croatian territory, and the only access of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Adriatic Sea near the town of Neum is surrounded by the territory and territorial waters of the Republic of Croatia. On the other hand, the only land route connecting the southern part of Croatia with the rest of the country passes through the territory of

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8 [http://bs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bosna\\_i\\_Hercegovina](http://bs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bosna_i_Hercegovina), December 29th 2011.



Bosnia and Herzegovina, through the so-called Neum passage, which is the reason why the Croatian Government led by Zoran Milanović from the Social Democratic Party (SDP) believes it to be more practical to build the motorway Ploče-Dubrovnik (together with partners from BiH) via the territory of Herzegovina rather than via the Pelješac Bridge, i.e. the Pelješac peninsula.

A further contributing factor in mutual connections is the fact that Bosniacs represent a very active national minority in Croatia (it is estimated that around 40 thousand Bosniacs live in Croatia)<sup>9</sup>, and are listed in the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and represented in the Croatian Parliament. Croatia established official diplomatic relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina on July 21st 1992 at the time when war flared, which at the same time served as a way to confirm the territorial sustainability of the country. During the war, Croatia helped Bosnia and Herzegovina primarily through logistic support and caring for refugees, and thereafter through military support. Immediately following the establishment of their diplomatic relations, the Protocol on Economic Cooperation was signed between the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>10</sup> From 1992 to 2011, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia signed a total of 127 contracts and treaties on various forms of cooperation, of which 65 are still in force.<sup>11</sup>

The only thing that tainted the relations between the two countries is the Croat-Bosniac conflict (1992-1993) that arose during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in the course of which crimes were committed by both sides against civilian populations. There is also a conspiracy

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9 <http://bs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bo%C5%A1njaci>, December 15th 2011.

10 [http://www.mvpei.hr/CustomPages/Static/HRV/templates/\\_frt\\_bilateralni\\_odnosi\\_po\\_drzavama.asp?id=62](http://www.mvpei.hr/CustomPages/Static/HRV/templates/_frt_bilateralni_odnosi_po_drzavama.asp?id=62), December 28th 2011.

11 *ibidem*.

theory prevalent among the public about an alleged attempt to divide Bosnia and Herzegovina between the then Croatian president Franjo Tuđman and Serbian president Slobodan Milošević. This theory, however, lacks sufficient relevant facts to support it.

Certainly, the two most important agreements linking Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are: *The Agreement on the Establishment of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, known as the Washington Agreement from 1994, and the *General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, known as the Dayton Agreement from 1995, which stipulates the existing internal territorial and political division of Bosnia and Herzegovina into Republika Srpska (inhabited mostly by Serbs) and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, (inhabited by Bosniacs and Croats). The Washington Agreement was signed by BiH Croats, the Republic of Croatia and the representatives of Bosniacs, i.e. the Bosniac officials of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina on March 18th 1994 in Washington.

It was then that the ceasefire was agreed between the Croatian Defence Council (HVO) and the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina under the auspices of the United States of America. The internal structure of areas in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina with a majority Bosniac and Croat population was transformed into the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, consisting of federal units, that is cantons having equal rights and responsibilities. The system of cantons represented a specific protection mechanism aimed at preventing the domination of one people over the other. In fact, the Washington Agreement ended the Bosniac-Croat conflict, but it left many issues unresolved. Moreover, the agreement reached in Washington is, along with the Dayton Agreement, presently considered to be one of the most controversial political arrangements that resulted from the whole Yugoslav crisis. On March 1st 1994 in Washington, BiH Croats and Bosniacs signed the preliminary Agreement

on the establishment of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was to provide for the confederation with the Republic of Croatia. The Agreement was signed by Mate Granić, Haris Silajdžić and Krešimir Zubak. They agreed to establish a high-level Transitional Committee, which was to take immediate and concrete steps toward the establishment of the Federation and Confederation. The Committee began its work on March 4th 1994 in Vienna and sought to conclude by March 15th 1994 the Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; the Preliminary Agreement of the Confederation between the Republic of Croatia and the proposed Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; an Agreement concerning military arrangements in the territory of the proposed Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; transitional measures to expedite the establishment of the Confederation and Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including where possible the creation of governmental structures as outlined in the Framework Agreement, and any other measures determined to be necessary.<sup>12</sup> On March 18th 1994, the Framework Agreement on Confederative Relations between the Republic of Croatia and the Future Bosniac-Croat Federation in Bosnia and Herzegovina was signed by President of the Republic of Croatia, Franjo Tuđman, and Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Alija Izetbegović. The text of the Draft Constitution of the Federation of Croats and Bosniacs in Bosnia and Herzegovina was signed in Washington by the Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina Haris Silajdžić, and President of the Presidential Council of the Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia, Krešimir Zubak.<sup>13</sup>

On March 30th 1994 the Constituent Assembly of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted, by a large majority of votes, the Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina whereby the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was established on the territory with a majority Bosniac and Croat population. The Washington

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12 [www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washingtonski\\_sporazum](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washingtonski_sporazum), December 15th 2011.

13 Ibidem.

Agreement was supposed to be only the first stage of the talks, whereas the second stage was supposed to engage the Serb side in negotiations. According to this idea, today's Republika Srpska would not exist at all and the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina would be divided into cantons. There were some contentious parts, such as the agreement on the confederation of the Republic of Croatia and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which never became a reality. Then Croatian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mate Granić at one time stated that he had accepted the proposal although he was aware that, even if it were to be agreed, it would have never have become reality. Granić allegedly confirmed that this was a deception of representatives of the Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia, who obviously accepted the agreement due to this promise.<sup>14</sup> Thus the Washington Agreement actually remained incomplete, but it served as an introduction to the Dayton Agreement.

The Dayton Peace Agreement was reached on November 21st 1995 at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton in the US State of Ohio and it effectively put an end to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina that had lasted from 1992 to 1995. The Agreement primarily dealt with the future administrative and constitutional system of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the key actors of the Dayton conference were: Bosnian and Herzegovinian President Alija Izetbegović, Serbian President Slobodan Milošević, Croatian President Franjo Tuđman, and American negotiators Richard Holbrook and General Wesley Clark. The Agreement was formally signed in Paris on December 14th 1995. The most controversial effect of this agreement is the territorial division of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (covering 51% of the territory) and Republika Srpska (covering 49% of the territory). Although the agreement was considered to be temporary, the system has remained in place to date and has been the cause of a number of disagreements and instability. The Dayton Peace Agreement, which in a way made Croatia take on some responsi-

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14      *Ibidem.*

bility for the fate of Bosnia and Herzegovina, primarily for the position of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is today deemed inappropriate because it hinders any progress the country might make in terms of reintegration and reconstruction, and it thereby represents a stumbling block on the BiH path towards Euro-Atlantic Integrations. However, there is no alternative to it on the horizon. Although it is largely criticized by representatives of all three peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the official Serb politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina opposes its change since they see it as the fall of Republika Srpska.

After the turbulent 1990s, when official relations between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina experienced ups and downs, the last decade witnessed marked progress in their official relations. During the period 2000-2011, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia resolved a vast majority of outstanding issues, such as the disagreement about the border on the Una river in the area of Hrvatska Kostajnica, and the long-awaited ratification of the possibility of dual citizenship of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, which took place towards the end of October 2011. Still, further development of their bilateral relations depends on resolving several key issues.

The biggest challenge is the upcoming inevitable reform of the internal structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina, given that all three constituent peoples agree that the Dayton Agreement (which was originally intended as a temporary regime) needs to be replaced with a more permanent and sustainable system.<sup>15</sup> However, since the agreement can only be amended with the full consensus of all three peoples, it is clear that it will not be easy to reach. Also, the probability of the agreement being reached without the support and political will of the signatories to and guarantors of the Dayton Agreement – Croatia and Serbia, – is relatively small. It is therefore important to take into account the fact that all the

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15 <http://www.sda.ba/sulejman-redzic-daytonski-sporazum-treba-shvatiti-kaoprolaznu-fazu-u-evoluciji-bih/>, December 27th 2011.

representatives of relevant political options in Croatia believe that the Croat people in BiH effectively do not have equal status, and that its status as a constituent people is not sufficiently recognized. Additional reservations among Croatian political elites from Zagreb about Bosnian leaders were caused by the “outvoting” of Croat candidates when Željko Komšić was elected as the Croat member of the BiH Presidency (since he was not supported by the majority of Croat voters, it is deemed legal but not legitimate). Another factor is the disregard for the electoral will of Croat voters shown in the formation of the government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2010, when instead of the Croatian Democratic Union of BiH (HDZ BiH) and Croatian Democratic Union 1990 (HDZ 1990), i.e. parties that received the majority support of Croat voters, small Croat parties – Croatian Party of Rights (HSP) and Party for Work and Progress (RzB) got seats in the Federation Government. Additional mistrust was caused by the fact that the formation of the government at the state level was delayed for a whole year. Although eventually it was a representative of the strongest Croat party, the Croatian Democratic Union of BiH (HDZ BiH) that got the position of the prime minister, it is known that there were several attempts to impose different solutions.

In certain circles in Croatia there is a perception that during 1990s the government in Zagreb, headed by the first Croatian President, Franjo Tuđman, interfered excessively with the internal affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina and made representatives of Croats there overly dependent on Zagreb. In order to correct this mistake, in 2000 the new government headed by President Stjepan Mesić and Prime Minister Ivica Račan chilled their relations with BiH Croats considerably, thereby going to the other extreme. Thus, after direct political and financial support given during 1990s, as of 2000 Croatian support was transformed into the financing of humanitarian and cultural projects and incentives to economic cooperation. In political terms, Croatia declared developments in the entities as the “internal affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina” and forsook any interference with such events.

However, the critics of this shift in Croatia towards Bosnia and Herzegovina believe that it was politically extremely detrimental to Croatian interests and the position of BiH Croats, given that on their own they had not yet managed to secure an equal position in the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Croatian Prime Minister Ivo Sanader from the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) continued to pursue this policy, supporting the stability and integrity of the neighbouring country as well as friendly relations with it. He even verbally advocated the establishment of a third, Croat entity, but – as he did not want the internal problems of Bosnia and Herzegovina to hinder Croatia's path towards full European Union membership, he kept away from any concrete action aimed at seeking serious solutions at the international level. Moreover, in the period 2003-2010, a slight difference of opinion over the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina emerged between the Government (first headed by Ivo Sanader and then by Jadranka Kosor) and then Croatian President Stjepan Mesić, whose political views were much closer to Bosniac politics than the politics of BiH Croats.

An additional impulse for relations between the two countries was given by the third Croatian President Ivo Josipović, who intensified the dialogue with Sarajevo, as well as Mostar and Banja Luka in 2010. On behalf of the Croatian people, he publicly apologized for all the crimes that could be blamed on any of its members and pointed out the responsibility of all three peoples for crimes that had been committed as he visited sites of atrocities all around Bosnia and Herzegovina. On several occasions he has also – together with Croatian Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor – urged that the equality of all three peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina and respect for the rights of Croat people be secured, thus engaging in a much stronger dialogue with the Croat community in Bosnia and Herzegovina than his predecessor.

Croatia will, upon its accession to the EU in 2013, have to establish a Schengen border regime with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Particularly promi-

ment in this context is the issue of passing through Neum territory: the way in which traffic towards Dubrovnik territory will be resolved is much more important than the value of cargo and number of passengers taking this route. The final Croatian decision on the way in which the south of Croatia will be connected with the rest of the country (whether Pelješac Bridge, a special regime for the passage through Neum or the construction of motorway through the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina) will in its own way largely determine relations between the two countries. Apart from the Neum corridor, there is the outstanding issue of the port of Ploče, i.e. the way in which the wish of Bosnia and Herzegovina to exert some control over the management of this key port for BiH can be reconciled with the fact that the port itself is on the territory and under the ownership of Croatia. Also problematic is the status of hydropower plants built in areas bordering with Croatia (Hydropower Plant Trebišnjica and Hydropower Plant Orlovac, receiving water from Bosnia and Herzegovina), or Serbia (hydropower plants Bajina Bašta and Zvornik on the Drina river), for which Bosnia and Herzegovina is seeking compensation.<sup>16</sup>

Finally, 16 years after the war, one of the biggest problems that both Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are facing is the issue of refugee return, above all return of Croats to Republika Srpska, as well as to some areas in the Federation with a majority Bosniac population, and the return of Croatian Serbs that presently live in the territory of Republika Srpska. Presently the dynamics of refugee return is considerably decelerated – it has slowed down on the one hand due to the fact that majority of refugees have built their new lives in their new environments, and on the other due to the fact that certain parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina still do not meet the minimum conditions for refugee return. At the same time, the economic crisis is making job seeking more difficult in both Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Another contributory factor

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<http://www.liderpress.hr/Default.aspx?sid=71055>, December 28th 2011.



is the fact that a large number of crimes committed during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina have not yet been punished, which additionally hampers the rebuilding of trust.

According to official UNHCR data, during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina as many as 1.2 million persons were granted refugee status, of which more than one million of BiH citizens sought refuge abroad, and at least 500 thousand stayed there to date with no intention to return to Bosnia and Herzegovina. A certain number of them are in Croatia. In addition, in Bosnia and Herzegovina there are presently 113 thousand internally displaced persons that cannot return to their pre-war places of residence since their homes have been destroyed.<sup>17</sup> It is disturbing that even after the war a large number of young people continue to emigrate because they cannot see their future in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In this context we must not forget the fact that the number of BiH Croats declined by approximately 40% as compared to the pre-war statistics (in 1991 – around 800,000 and in 2009 around 500,000). Apart from the high death toll during the war, exceptionally large numbers of BiH Croats are displaced or refugees, with the emigration trend continuing in recent years.

At the end of this overview, it is important to note that Croatia has, during its EU accession process, in a way made a commitment to help its neighbouring countries in their democratization process and their path towards Euro-Atlantic Integrations. Croatian leaders in this respect regularly express their readiness to help their colleagues from Bosnia and Herzegovina on this path, above all in order for Bosnia and Herzegovina to achieve NATO and EU membership as soon as possible.

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17 <http://www.bitno.ba/vijesti/bosna-i-hercegovina/bih-treba-500-milijuna-aura-za-povratak-izbjeglica>, December 28th 2011.

## 2.1.2. Economic Relations between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Of all the countries of the former Yugoslavia, Croatia has most intensive economic relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina. As early as 2003, the World Bank analysis suggested that Croatia's trade with countries of the South East Europe region was too low, whereas its trade with Bosnia and Herzegovina was at the same time too high (Mileta, 2007, 107; in Skoko, 2007, 44).

Geographical proximity of the two countries, relative complementarity of their economies, absence of language barriers, mutual links and similar mentality of their populations have enabled Croatian companies' deep involvement in economic developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We should also not disregard the fact that a significant number of Croats live in Bosnia and Herzegovina, representing an important market for Croatian goods and services (especially the areas of Herzegovina, Central Bosnia and Posavina).

In borderland areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, particularly in Western Herzegovina and Northern Bosnia, there exist the strongest ties between the population and economy of the two countries, so that there is the highest rate of daily and periodic migration. This most often involves shopping trips, but people also go to work in the other country. Moreover, as a result of the economic crisis, Bosnia and Herzegovina is, due to its extremely competitive prices, slowly turning into a shopping mecca for Croatian citizens.

Judging by the total economic exchange, Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with Italy and Germany, has for years been one of the three main trading partners of the Republic of Croatia. According to the data of the Croatian Bureau of Statistics, in 2010 Bosnia and Herzegovina was,

second only to Italy, Croatia's second most important export market, to which goods and services worth 1.033 billion Euros were exported.<sup>18</sup> Especially prominent is the export of food products, where Bosnia and Herzegovina is Croatia's most important export market. In its trade exchange with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia produces a large surplus. In fact, according to the data of the BiH Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations,<sup>19</sup> coverage of imports from Croatia by BiH exports to Croatia was in 2010 as low as 52%. According to the data of the same Ministry, in 2010 imports from Croatia accounted for 15.12% of BiH total imports, whereas BiH exports to Croatia accounted for 15.09% of total BiH exports. In 2010 Croatia was, after Germany, BiH's second most important export market, and was at the same time by far the largest exporter to BiH.<sup>20</sup>

Bosnia and Herzegovina is not only a neighbouring country with special political relations with Croatia, but at the same time represents a market that is in many ways compatible with and even similar to the Croatian market, as well as an interesting investment destination for Croatian investors. According to the data of the Croatian National Bank<sup>21</sup>, until June 2011 Croatia invested 530.3 million Euros in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which resulted in Bosnia and Herzegovina being ranked second among countries receiving the largest share of investment from Croatian companies. As compared to these numbers, investment of BiH companies in Croatia is negligible, its most outstanding examples including the construction of a toilet paper factory in Sveta Helena by the Violeta Company from Grude, and the investment of Mujo Selimović,

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18 <http://hgd.mvpei.hr/hr/gospodarstvo/>, December 20th 2011.

19 *Analysis of Foreign Trade Exchange of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2010*, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of BiH, Sarajevo 2011, p. 47

20 [http://hgd.mvpei.hr/gospodarski\\_prikaz/bosna\\_i\\_hercegovina/2/#podatak](http://hgd.mvpei.hr/gospodarski_prikaz/bosna_i_hercegovina/2/#podatak), December 27th 2011.

21 <http://www.hnb.hr/statistika/strana-ulaganja/h-izravna-ulaganja-u-inozemstvo-po-zemljama-ulaganja.xls>, December 27th 2011.

the owner of MIMS Group in Slatina's Marinada and business news portal Business.hr.

Croatian investors in Bosnia and Herzegovina include its largest companies, such as INA, Agrokor, Kraš, Zvečevo, Nexe Group, Zagrebačka banka, the wood-processing industry Finvest from Čabar, Croatia osiguranje and Agram Concern.

On the other hand, BiH Government plans of large investment in reconstruction and development of railway and road infrastructure (corridor Vc) offer great possibilities for business cooperation with the Croatian construction sector, but the dynamics of the implementation of such plans will certainly depend on the recovery of Bosnia and Herzegovina from effects of the economic crisis.

The economic crisis, which affected both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, temporarily impeded the traditional hiring of workers from Bosnia and Herzegovina to work on a temporary and casual basis in Croatia, especially in the construction and shipbuilding sectors,<sup>22</sup> but it is expected to increase as the supply of skilled workers in technical professions in Croatia dwindles.

An interesting development is the increasingly expanding cooperation in the area of tourism, whereby visitors from Bosnia and Herzegovina travel to Croatia's Dalmatian coast during summer, while Croatian visitors go to Bosnia and Herzegovina on pilgrimages to Međugorje and more and more often stay in its winter resorts in Jahorina, Kupres and Blidinje.

Apart from the economic crisis which has affected both countries, the biggest threat to further development of excellent economic relations

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22 [http://www.glas-slavonije.hr/rubrika.asp?rub=1&ID\\_VIJESTI=78861](http://www.glas-slavonije.hr/rubrika.asp?rub=1&ID_VIJESTI=78861), November 30th 2011.

between the two countries is Croatia's upcoming full EU membership. In fact, once Croatia becomes a full member of the EU, it will automatically cease to be a member of the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA), which means that customs duties will be introduced for the export of Croatian products to CEFTA countries and vice versa. This poses a serious problem for BiH exports to Croatia, as well as for Croatian exports to BiH. However, this might encourage Croatia's purchase or opening of factories in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which could give new impetus to mutual cooperation. This primarily applies to large exporters such as Podravka, which would obviously outsource part of its production to Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>23</sup> However, exporters of agricultural and food products from Bosnia and Herzegovina might be faced with a struggle for survival since Croatia is their most important export market. The problem is manifold. In addition to the introduction of a customs regime between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as Croatia leaves CEFTA and becomes a member of the EU, there is also the fact that it will be only possible to export agricultural and food products from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Croatia via a limited number of border crossings (presently only two). Moreover, unlimited export of food products to Croatia will no longer be allowed and will be subject to quotas. Also, the export of food products will only be allowed if they meet the strict EU safety standards, which is not the case with a significant number of food products from Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>24</sup>

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23 [http://www.agrolink.ba/Novosti/default.aspx?id=3983&template\\_id=75&pageIndex=1](http://www.agrolink.ba/Novosti/default.aspx?id=3983&template_id=75&pageIndex=1), December 27th 2011.

24 <http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/mobile/hr/features/setimes/features/2011/12/07/feature-04>, Decemeber 27th 2011.

## 2.2. Relations between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

### 2.2.1. Political Relations between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Overall relations between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina could be considered normalized, after a decade of tensions. Bosnia and Herzegovina shares approximately one third of its land border with Serbia (almost the entire eastern border of Bosnia and Herzegovina, or 312 kilometres).<sup>25</sup> Additional ties between the two countries result from the fact that Serbs are one of the three constituent peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina and form a majority in one of the two BiH entities (Republika Srpska). Besides, there is in Serbia (in the Sandžak region) a large, compact and autochthonous Bosniac minority.<sup>26</sup> Finally, another important political link between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia is the fact that, along with Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia is a signatory to the Dayton Agreement discussed above.

Bilateral relations between the Republic of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina have in the course of the past fifteen years gone through many ups and downs and have almost always been determined by the consequences of the military conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and by the fact that the Dayton Agreement stipulated the creation of Republika Srpska within Bosnia and Herzegovina as a separate entity with a majority Serb population (whose territory was during the war ethnically cleansed to a considerable extent). Although the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina ended a long time ago, relations between BiH and Serbia are haunted

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25 [http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zemljopis\\_Bosne\\_i\\_Hercegovine](http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zemljopis_Bosne_i_Hercegovine), December 29th 2011.

26 <http://www.bitno.ba/vijesti/svijet/bosnjaci-sandzaka-zatrazili-autonomiju>, December 29th 2011.

by the legacy of their past. There is no doubt that the conflict between Serbs and Bosniacs left deep scars and consequences for the future among peoples inhabiting the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Back in 1993, Bosnia and Herzegovina instituted proceedings against Serbia before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) concerning violations of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide related to events in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In February 2007 the judgement was delivered stating that Serbia was not responsible for genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. that crimes committed by Bosnian Serbs could not be imputed to Serbia since it was not proved that Serbia had control over them. The Court also concluded that genocide was limited to the area of Srebrenica, contrary to the claims of agents of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who requested that the existence of genocide be established on a wider territory and claimed that Serbia was responsible for failing to prevent the events and punish the perpetrators.<sup>27</sup> This judgement left a bitter taste for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, Bosniac and Croat public generally condemn Serbia's relation to war criminals (who have been hiding for years on the territory of Serbia) and responsibility for crimes that had been committed.

The former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia established diplomatic relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina as late as December 15th 2000, almost five years after the end of war and signing of the Dayton Agreement. However, relations between the two countries are 11 years later still affected by numerous outstanding issues, ranging from border disputes and the as yet unresolved issue of division of the property of their former common state, to the position of refugees and support for war crime trials.

The border between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina has not yet been delineated in spite of the fact that the inter-state border commis-

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27 <http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/genocid>, December 23rd 2011.

sion has existed for years. Problematic areas involve above all sections of the border in the immediate vicinity of hydropower plant Bajina Bašta and hydropower plant Zvornik, as well as several borderland settlements in Podrinje. Given that Bosnia and Herzegovina claims its co-ownership of the stated facilities (accumulation lakes of hydropower plants are partly on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina), in 2009 it sought compensation from Serbia for "its share of electricity" generated and sold by the two hydropower plants.<sup>28</sup>

Further problems relate to the passage of the international railway line Belgrade-Bar through Bosnia and Herzegovina (Štrpci station), as well as the status of BiH enclave Međurečje, situated deep within the territory of Serbia.<sup>29</sup> While Bosnia and Herzegovina insists that the interstate border be determined by confirming the inter-republican border that existed at the moment of its international recognition in 1992, the Serbian side emphasizes the need to reach a compromise over disputed border sections.

The prosecution of war crimes prosecution is a special problem due to the absence of agreement on the exchange of evidence in war crime cases, as well as so-called parallel law suits in both countries, such as the case of crime in Dobrovoljačka Street in Sarajevo from the beginning of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for which parallel proceedings are ongoing in both Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The problem of lack of cooperation between judicial bodies of the two countries grew especially prominent and complicated in 2010, when Serbia's accusations from the early 1990s led to the arrest of a member of Bosnia and Herzegovina wartime presidency, Ejup Ganić, in London,

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28 <http://www.liderpress.hr/Default.aspx?sid=71055>, December 28th 2011.

29 [http://www.b92.net/info/dokumenti/index.php?nav\\_id=567737](http://www.b92.net/info/dokumenti/index.php?nav_id=567737), December 28th 2011.



and the arrest of wartime commander of the BiH Army, Jovan Divjak, in Vienna. It should be noted here that the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its Criminal Code still do not provide for the possibility of extradition of BiH citizens to other countries.

According to data from the study "*Relations between the Republic of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina: Definition of a New Policy*" published in November 2011 by the Research Forum of the European Movement in Serbia (supported by the German Marshall Fund), there are currently around 25,000 refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina (mostly from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina) living in the Republic of Serbia. Their return depends inter alia on the successful resolution of claims for the return of approximately 2000 apartments to citizens that had been employees of the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) until April 1992. The problem of property return occupies an important place in bilateral relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, and is mostly related to resolving the status of pre-war assets of BiH companies in Serbia and Serbian companies in Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>30</sup> With a view to facilitating a speedy solution to this problem, Bosnia and Herzegovina sent the Government of Serbia a draft Agreement between the two countries on the regulation of property relations, and a meeting of the special committee on succession was held in Sarajevo in mid September 2011, where the conclusion was reached that it was necessary to accelerate the process.

According to the above mentioned study of the Research Forum of the European Movement in Serbia<sup>31</sup>, a stronger involvement of Serbia

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30 [http://www.b92.net/info/dokumenti/index.php?nav\\_id=567737](http://www.b92.net/info/dokumenti/index.php?nav_id=567737), December 29th 2011.

31 *Relations between the Republic of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina: Definition of a New Policy*, study, Research Forum of the European Movement in Serbia, Belgrade, November 2011.

and equalizing of its (currently disproportional) relations with Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, are keys to the stabilization of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is with this end in view that the official visit of Serbian President Boris Tadić to Sarajevo took place in July 2011, which due to its symbolism (the first official visit of the Serbian President to Bosnia and Herzegovina), as well as to statements of support for the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, certainly represents one of the most important events in 2011 concerning relations between the two countries. After years of building special relations with Republika Srpska, including open support for its politics, which coincided with stagnation in relations between Belgrade and Sarajevo, Serbia has through Tadić's visit finally shown that it could do more with a view to developing relations between the two countries instead of focusing on its relations with only one of the entities (Tadić, who was born in Sarajevo, had visited Banja Luka a number of times as the President of Serbia, but had not visited Sarajevo before July 2011).<sup>32</sup>

The visit of the Serbian President to Sarajevo certainly marks a turning point with the country, shifting away from its previous policy of more or less open support to developing relations with Republika Srpska.<sup>33</sup> As a reminder, it should be noted that in July 2010 Tadić visited Srebrenica (as a tragic site of Serbian genocide against Bosniacs), and his visit was preceded by the adoption of the Declaration Condemning the Crime in Srebrenica by the National Assembly of Serbia in March 2010. The stated document condemned the crimes committed in Srebrenica and

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32 <http://www.vjesnik.hr/Article.aspx?ID=0BA6AACC-C38A-4E2D-B664-D555F457A69B>, December 28th 2011.

33 <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,15217370,00.html>, December 28th 2011.

its surroundings in late July 1995, and called for the reconciliation of the peoples and countries of the region.<sup>34</sup>

Some analysts believe that a shift in the policy of the Government in Belgrade towards Sarajevo and its slight distancing from the politics of Milorad Dodik in Republika Srpska is caused by the increasing pressure of western, especially European, countries on Serbia, which aspires to get candidate status for EU membership. According to Daniel Serwer, American analyst and an expert on the situation in the region, Republika Srpska's declaration of independence would not be in the interest of Serbia since, if Boris Tadić were to support such a project, he would have to give up on EU accession aspirations, and if he were to oppose it, he would lose the next elections. Therefore, while continuing its apparent support for an undivided Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia is actually focused on supporting Republika Srpska and Milorad Dodik in his demands for maximum autonomy.<sup>35</sup>

It is in this light that we should view the Serbian initiative to conclude with the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina an agreement similar to the agreement on special parallel relations between the Republic of Serbia and Republika Srpska.<sup>36</sup> In fact, in 2007 Serbia ratified the Agreement on Special Parallel Relations with Republika Srpska, which is formally not contrary to the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but, according to general opinion of Bosniac political leaders, calls into question the sustainability of Bosnia and Herzegovina.<sup>37</sup>

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34 [http://www.b92.net/info/dokumenti/index.php?nav\\_id=567737](http://www.b92.net/info/dokumenti/index.php?nav_id=567737), Decemehr 28th 2011.

35 <http://www.vjesnik.hr/Article.aspx?ID=0BA6AACC-C3A-4E2D-B664-D555F457A69B>, December 28th 2011.

36 [http://www.b92.net/info/dokumenti/index.php?nav\\_id=567737](http://www.b92.net/info/dokumenti/index.php?nav_id=567737), December 28th 2011.

37 <http://www.dnevniavaz.ba/izdvojene-kolumne/72154-paralelni-ne-sporazumi.html>, December 29th 2011.

Although Bosniac and Serbian political leaders hold quite opposing views on the future political and territorial structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is a fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia (with the exception of BiH aspirations to NATO membership) have identical foreign policy perspectives and goals – which above all include EU membership, strengthened regional cooperation and security in the region, improved relations with neighbouring countries and with the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China. At the same time, both countries have very good bilateral relations with the Republic of Turkey, which was the key factor in the improvement of relations between the Republic of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina and renewal of dialogue between the two countries.<sup>38</sup>

One of the areas in which Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina could certainly intensify their cooperation in the time to come is their EU accession process. Although Serbia is still waiting to get the candidate status, whereas Bosnia and Herzegovina has not yet met the requirements to apply for membership, this process is inevitable for both countries and they will therefore have to draw on the experience of Slovenia and Croatia, which will as of 2013 be the only two EU member states from the area of former Yugoslavia. This form of regional cooperation would certainly contribute to stabilization of the region as a whole.

The aforementioned study *“Relations between the Republic of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina: Definition of a New Policy”*, of the Research Forum of the European Movement in Serbia suggests that Serbia and Croatia (as guarantors of the Dayton Agreement) should coordinate their positions on policy towards Bosnia and Herzegovina as a pledge of regional stability. It is in this context that reference is made to the fact

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38 [http://www.b92.net/info/dokumenti/index.php?nav\\_id=567737](http://www.b92.net/info/dokumenti/index.php?nav_id=567737), December 28th 2011.

that the presidents of Croatia and Serbia, Ivo Josipović and Boris Tadić, in their joint statement given on May 28th 2010 at the *Brussels 2010* Forum, underlined the importance of respecting the territorial integrity and unity of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this respect, the importance of the support of the governments in Belgrade and Zagreb for BiH authorities' efforts aiming to accelerate the country's EU accession process was emphasized.

### 2.2.2. Economic Relations between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Serbia is, along with Croatia, one of the most important trading partners of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2010, imports from Serbia accounted for 10.50% of BiH total imports. On the other hand, BiH exports to Serbia amounted to 12.61%. Coverage of imports by exports in trade with Serbia was 62.59%. Therefore, it is clear that BiH exports are very concentrated and mostly dependent on the markets of Croatia and Serbia.<sup>39</sup>

However, it is interesting to note that Croatia's exports to Bosnia and Herzegovina are still to the greatest extent focused on the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, whereas Serbia's exports are focused on Republika Srpska (Mileta, 2007, 129). The concentration of economic relations with Republika Srpska is a result of years of close cooperation, as well as The existence of the Agreement on Special Parallel Relations, which had some influence on the strengthening of economic ties. Due to the concentration of cooperation mainly in the entity with a Serb majority, and to oscillating political relations with the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, economic cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina

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39 *Analysis of Foreign Trade Exchange of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2010*, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of BiH, Sarajevo 2011, p. 4

and Serbia somewhat lags behind the cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. However, it may be expected that the stabilization of political relations that started in 2010 will contribute to the strengthening and increase of economic cooperation, in spite of the fact that the economic crisis maintains a strong grip over the region as a whole.

Economic relations between the two countries were significantly improved by the strengthening of bilateral relations through the mediation of Turkey in spring 2010, which resulted in signing of the so-called Istanbul Declaration, whereby countries expressed their readiness to secure peace, stability and progress in the region, thus making room for strengthening economic cooperation.<sup>40</sup>

According to the data of the Indirect Taxation Authority of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia was in 2010, after Germany and Croatia, the third largest export market for BiH products (13% of total BiH exports) and after Croatia the second largest import market (12% of total BiH imports). According to the data of the BiH Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, mineral oils and fuels (43.32% of total exports), iron and steel (9.8% of total exports), and wood and wood products (6.91% of total exports) accounted for a major share of BiH exports to Serbia in 2010. According to the data of the Agency for Statistics of BiH, principal items that Bosnia and Herzegovina imported from Serbia in the same period included alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, iron and steel, plastic mass and crops.<sup>41</sup>

Serbia's investment in Bosnia and Herzegovina was also mostly directed to Republika Srpska. According to the data of the Serbian

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40 <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,5505568,00.html>, December 29th 2011.

41 [http://www.mvteo.gov.ba/izvjestaji\\_publikacije/izvjestaji/ANALIZA%20.pdf](http://www.mvteo.gov.ba/izvjestaji_publikacije/izvjestaji/ANALIZA%20.pdf), December 29th 2011.

Chamber of Commerce<sup>42</sup>, investment of Serbian companies in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the period 1994-2010 exceeded 820 million Euros, which accounts for as much as 22.7% of total Serbia's foreign investment.

According to the data of the BiH Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Serbia's largest investment in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the Telekom Serbia's takeover of the Republika Srpska telecom operator, worth as much as 646 million Euros.<sup>43</sup> Other large investors from Serbia investing in Bosnia and Herzegovina include leading Serbian companies such as Delta Maxi retail chain, Hemofarm pharmaceutical company, Knjaz Miloš mineral water producer, Swisslion Takovo confectionery company and Komercijalna banka.<sup>44</sup> Any serious reciprocal investment of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Serbia is negligible.

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42 <http://217.24.23.93/MSaradnja.aspx?id=820&p=1&pp=0&>, December 29th 2011.

43 <http://www.mobilnisvet.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=8531&sid=c2691de5da01b1ed6636f11ab134a56e>, December 29th 2011.

44 <http://217.24.23.93/MSaradnja.aspx?id=820&p=1&pp=0&>, December 29th 2011.

### **3. THE IMAGE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA IN CROATIA AND SERBIA**

In order to find out how citizens of Croatia and Serbia perceive Bosnia and Herzegovina, we conducted a field survey in both countries using a sample of 800 respondents in Croatia and 812 respondents in Serbia – a total of 1,612 respondents. The survey was conducted in November 2011.<sup>45</sup> The goals of the survey were: to explore personal relations, attitudes and perceptions of the citizens of Croatia and Serbia regarding Bosnia and Herzegovina and its citizens, and assess the relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina with Croatia and Serbia. In order to achieve the stated goals, we divided the study into several segments: links with Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. frequency of visiting the country and personal experience of the country, as well as personal and family ties to Bosnia and Herzegovina; associations coming to mind at the mention of Bosnia and Herzegovina; perceptions of people, nature, culture, lifestyle and products; attractiveness of certain cities as tourist destinations; similarities and differences between perceptions of Bosnians and Herzegovinians; perceptions of political structure and functioning of Bosnia and Herzegovina; perceptions of political and economic relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina with Croatia and Serbia respectively; perceptions of relations of ethnic motherlands with their

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45 The survey was conducted by Millenium promocija Agency (with offices in Zagreb, Mostar and Belgrade) in collaboration with the IPSOS PULS Agency.



fellow nationals in Bosnia and Herzegovina; perceptions of relations between the three peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and perceptions of the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

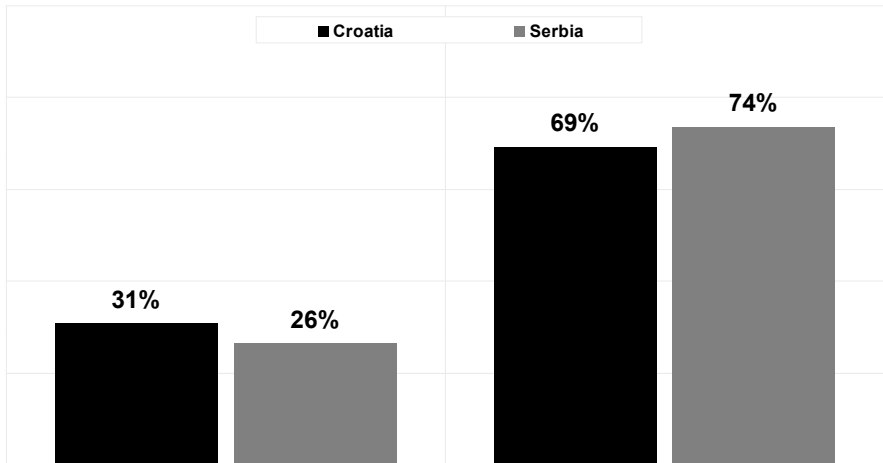
### **3.1. Results of the Study on the Image of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Croatia and Serbia**

#### **3.1.1. Visiting Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ties to Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Assuming that first-hand experience and international contacts largely influence the formation of opinions on a country and people, we tried to establish the physical connections of respondents with Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. how many of them have stayed in this country after the war. The survey showed that one fourth of Serbians (26%) and a third of Croatians (31%) have visited Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war. These numbers are extremely small given the proximity of the countries and other forms of ties that we will discuss below..

**Graph No. 1.**

**Have you visited Bosnia and Herzegovina after the last war?**



Based on the analysis of demographic characteristics of Croatian respondents, we drew the conclusion that it was pensioners, i.e. citizens over the age of 60, who travel to Bosnia and Herzegovina least frequently in the past 15 years (only 21%), which is understandable given their lower mobility. They are followed by young people under the age of 30 (23%). The most frequent travelers to Bosnia and Herzegovina are citizens between the ages of 45 and 60 (43%) and those between the ages of 31 and 44 (35%). As regards their education level, respondents with university degrees are in the lead (42%) along with those holding secondary school diplomas (32%). With respect to regions of Croatia, most Croatian citizens that visit Bosnia and Herzegovina come from Slavonia (42%), Istria and the north Croatian Coast (42%) and Dalmatia (36%), while the smallest number come from Northern Croatia (16%).

The situation is somewhat similar with Serbian respondents. Those respondents who most frequently travel to Bosnia and Herzegovina are

the age group of 31-44 (33%), followed by those in the middle-age group of 45-60 (28%) and young people under the age of 30 (27%). As in the case in Croatia, those that travel least frequently respondents over the age of 60 (19%). Also, with respect to their education level, the largest number of respondents visiting Bosnia and Herzegovina hold university degrees (as many as 40%). As for the regions, respondents from Belgrade and its surroundings have the strongest links with Bosnia and Herzegovina (39% of them visited Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war). They are followed by respondents from Western Serbia (35%) and Vojvodina (29%). The smallest number of respondents that visited Bosnia and Herzegovina come from Eastern and South-Eastern Serbia (8% from each).

**Table 1.**  
**Visiting Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war –**  
**respondents from Serbia – demographic overview**

Have you stayed in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the last war?  
Demographic breakdown

			Yes	No
<i>Sample</i>		N=812	26%	74%
<i>Sex</i>	<i>Male</i>		31%	69%
	<i>Female</i>		22%	78%
<i>Age</i>	<i>Under 30</i>		27%	73%
	<i>Between 30 and 44</i>		33%	67%
	<i>Between 45 and 60</i>		28%	72%
	<i>Over 60</i>		19%	81%
<i>Education</i>	<i>Primary school</i>		20%	80%
	<i>Secondary school</i>		26%	74%
	<i>Community college/ University</i>		40%	60%
<i>Type of settlement</i>	<i>City</i>		31%	69%
	<i>Village</i>		20%	80%
<i>Region</i>	<i>Vojvodina</i>		29%	71%
	<i>Belgrade</i>		39%	61%
	<i>West</i>		35%	65%
	<i>Central Serbia</i>		24%	76%
	<i>East</i>		8%	92%
	<i>South-East</i>		8%	92%

**Table 2.**  
**Visiting Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war –**  
**respondents from Croatia – demographic overview**

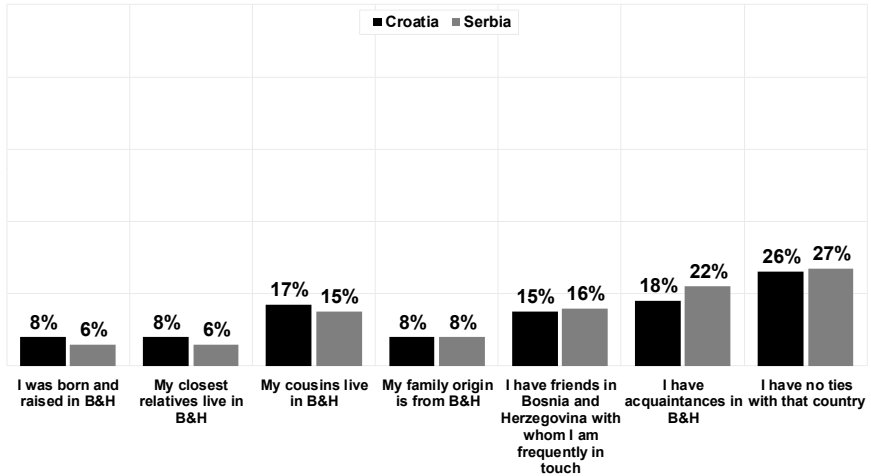
Have you stayed in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the last war?  
Demographic breakdown

			Yes	No
<i>Sample</i>		N=800	31%	69%
<i>Sex</i>	<i>Male</i>		32%	68%
	<i>Female</i>		30%	70%
<i>Age</i>	<i>Under 30</i>		23%	77%
	<i>Between 30 and 44</i>		35%	65%
	<i>Between 45 and 60</i>		43%	57%
	<i>Over 60</i>		21%	79%
<i>Education</i>	<i>Primary school</i>		24%	76%
	<i>Secondary school</i>		32%	68%
	<i>Community college/ University</i>		42%	58%
<i>Type of settlement</i>	<i>City</i>		35%	65%
	<i>Village</i>		23%	77%
<i>Region</i>	<i>Zagreb and its surroundings</i>		24%	76%
	<i>Northern Croatia</i>		16%	84%
	<i>Slavonia</i>		42%	58%
	<i>Lika and Banovina</i>		30%	70%
	<i>Istria, Rijeka, Croatian Coast and Gorski Kotar</i>		42%	58%
	<i>Dalmatia</i>		36%	64%

Since respondents who have visited, whether regularly or temporarily, Bosnia and Herzegovina include a large number of citizens of Croatia and Serbia who are of BiH origin or are in some other way linked with the country (through relatives or friends), we tried to find out the number of such respondents. The survey showed that both countries are strongly linked with Bosnia and Herzegovina through intertwined family ties. A total of 41% of all respondents in Croatia and 35% of respondents in Serbia are of BiH origin or have relatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is no significant difference between respondents from Croatia and those from Serbia with respect to their personal or family ties with Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, it seems that respondents from Croatia are somewhat more frequently linked to Bosnia and Herzegovina by their origin or family ties, and respondents from Serbia by acquaintance and friendship. 15% of Croatian and 16% of Serbian citizens have friends in Bosnia and Herzegovina with whom they maintain regular contact, while 18% of respondents from Croatia and 22% of respondents from Serbia have acquaintances in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Only 26% of Croatian and 27% of Serbian respondents do not have any ties to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Graph No. 2.**

**Which of the options listed below describe your relationship to Bosnia and Herzegovina?**



With respect to demographic structure, the largest number of Croatian respondents born in Bosnia and Herzegovina or of BiH origin live in Slavonia, Dalmatia, Istria, on the Croatian Coast, and in Zagreb. As for Serbia, the largest number of respondents who are of BiH origin live in Vojvodina, Western Serbia and Belgrade.

Those with the weakest ties to Bosnia and Herzegovina are found among the inhabitants of Northern Croatia, Lika and Banovina in Croatia, and among the inhabitants of South-East and East Serbia, as well as Central Serbia.

**Table 3-a**

**Ties with Bosnia and Herzegovina – respondents from Croatia –  
demographic overview (excluding percentages of responses – I do not know  
or do not want to answer)**

Which of the following describes your relationship to Bosnia and Herzegovina?

Demographic breakdown

		<i>I was born and grew up in BiH</i>	<i>My immediate family lives in BiH</i>	<i>My extended family or relatives live in BiH</i>
<i>Sample N=800</i>		8%	8%	17%
<i>Sex</i>	<i>Male</i>	5%	7%	15%
	<i>Female</i>	10%	8%	19%
<i>Age</i>	<i>Under 30</i>	5%	8%	17%
	<i>Between 30 and 44</i>	3%	9%	14%
	<i>Between 45 and 60</i>	14%	5%	23%
	<i>Over 60</i>	10%	8%	15%
<i>Education</i>	<i>Primary school</i>	12%	10%	25%
	<i>Secondary school</i>	5%	6%	12%
	<i>Community college/ University</i>	7%	8%	14%
<i>Type of settlement</i>	<i>City</i>	9%	9%	19%
	<i>Village</i>	7%	6%	14%
<i>Region</i>	<i>Zagreb and its surroundings</i>	7%	5%	12%
	<i>Northern Croatia</i>	1%	6%	4%
	<i>Slavonia</i>	16%	13%	37%
	<i>Lika and Banovina</i>	1%	1%	11%
	<i>Istria, Rijeka, Croatian Coast and Gorski Kotar</i>	5%	11%	17%
	<i>Dalmatia</i>	15%	10%	22%



**Table 3-b**

**Ties with Bosnia and Herzegovina – respondents from Croatia –  
demographic overview (excluding percentages of responses – I do not know  
or do not want to answer)**

Which of the following describes your relationship to Bosnia and Herzegovina?

Demographic breakdown

		<i>I have distant origins in BiH</i>	<i>I have friends in BiH with whom I maintain regular contact</i>	<i>I have acquaintances in BiH</i>	<i>I do not have any ties to BiH</i>
<i>Sample N=800</i>		8%	15%	18%	26%
<i>Sex</i>	<i>Male</i>	6%	12%	16%	61%
	<i>Female</i>	11%	18%	21%	49%
<i>Age</i>	<i>Under 30</i>	7%	16%	27%	44%
	<i>Between 30 and 44</i>	13%	12%	17%	60%
	<i>Between 45 and 60</i>	8%	18%	17%	54%
	<i>Over 60</i>	7%	15%	15%	57%
<i>Education</i>	<i>Primary school</i>	11%	19%	14%	55%
	<i>Secondary school</i>	7%	11%	21%	57%
	<i>Community college/ University</i>	9%	21%	23%	44%
<i>Type of settlement</i>	<i>City</i>	9%	13%	21%	50%
	<i>Village</i>	7%	18%	15%	61%
<i>Region</i>	<i>Zagreb and its surroundings</i>	10%	11%	22%	57%
	<i>Northern Croatia</i>	2%	6%	5%	80%
	<i>Slavonia</i>	21%	23%	31%	34%
	<i>Lika and Banovina</i>	4%	6%	12%	65%
	<i>Istria, Rijeka, Croatian Coast and Gorski Kotar</i>	5%	14%	16%	48%
	<i>Dalmatia</i>	6%	26%	21%	42%

**Table 4-a**

**Ties with Bosnia and Herzegovina – respondents from Serbia –  
demographic overview (excluding percentages of responses – I do not know  
or do not want to answer)**

Which of the following describes your relationship to Bosnia and Herzegovina?  
Demographic breakdown

		<i>I was born and grew up in BiH</i>	<i>My immediate family lives in BiH</i>	<i>My extended family or relatives live in BiH</i>
<i>Sample N=812</i>		6%	6%	15%
<i>Sex</i>	<i>Male</i>	6%	5%	13%
	<i>Female</i>	7%	7%	18%
<i>Age</i>	<i>Under 30</i>	2%	3%	14%
	<i>Between 30 and 44</i>	4%	4%	11%
	<i>Between 45 and 60</i>	8%	7%	19%
	<i>Over 60</i>	10%	9%	17%
<i>Education</i>	<i>Primary school</i>	10%	11%	16%
	<i>Secondary school</i>	4%	3%	14%
	<i>Community college/ University</i>	7%	7%	18%
<i>Type of settlement</i>	<i>City</i>	8%	8%	16%
	<i>Village</i>	5%	4%	14%
<i>Region</i>	<i>Vojvodina</i>	14%	9%	31%
	<i>Belgrade</i>	6%	4%	15%
	<i>Western Serbia</i>	6%	19%	6%
	<i>Central Serbia</i>	0%	2%	6%
	<i>Eastern Serbia</i>	5%	5%	15%
	<i>South-East</i>			3%

**Table 4-a**

**Ties with Bosnia and Herzegovina – respondents from Serbia –  
demographic overview (excluding percentages of responses – I do not know  
or do not want to answer)**

Which of the following describes your relationship to Bosnia and Herzegovina?  
Demographic breakdown

		<i>I have distant origins in BiH</i>	<i>I have friends in BiH with whom I maintain regular contact</i>	<i>I have acquaintances in BiH</i>	<i>I do not have any ties to BiH</i>
<i>Sample N=812</i>		8%	16%	22%	27%
<i>Sex</i>	<i>Male</i>	5%	17%	22%	55%
	<i>Female</i>	10%	15%	22%	56%
<i>Age</i>	<i>Under 30</i>	9%	18%	23%	51%
	<i>Between 30 and 44</i>	5%	14%	24%	55%
	<i>Between 45 and 60</i>	10%	19%	23%	53%
	<i>Over 60</i>	8%	13%	17%	62%
<i>Education</i>	<i>Primary school</i>	8%	15%	18%	64%
	<i>Secondary school</i>	6%	16%	22%	53%
	<i>Community college/ University</i>	12%	18%	27%	48%
<i>Type of settlement</i>	<i>City</i>	10%	18%	24%	48%
	<i>Village</i>	5%	13%	19%	66%
<i>Region</i>	<i>Vojvodina</i>	14%	22%	32%	44%
	<i>Belgrade</i>	6%	22%	25%	44%
	<i>Western Serbia</i>	6%	22%	10%	52%
	<i>Central Serbia</i>	9%	12%	21%	59%
	<i>Eastern Serbia</i>	6%	6%	10%	75%
	<i>South-East</i>		1%	14%	82%

### 3.1.2. Associations with Bosnia and Herzegovina

In order to explore how citizens of the two countries perceive Bosnia and Herzegovina, we applied the method of associations, i.e. we studied what ideas first come to the mind of respondents at the mention of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We compiled the list of associations offered as choices by organizing a focus group beforehand,<sup>46</sup> whereby we tried to explore and define the most frequent associations of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

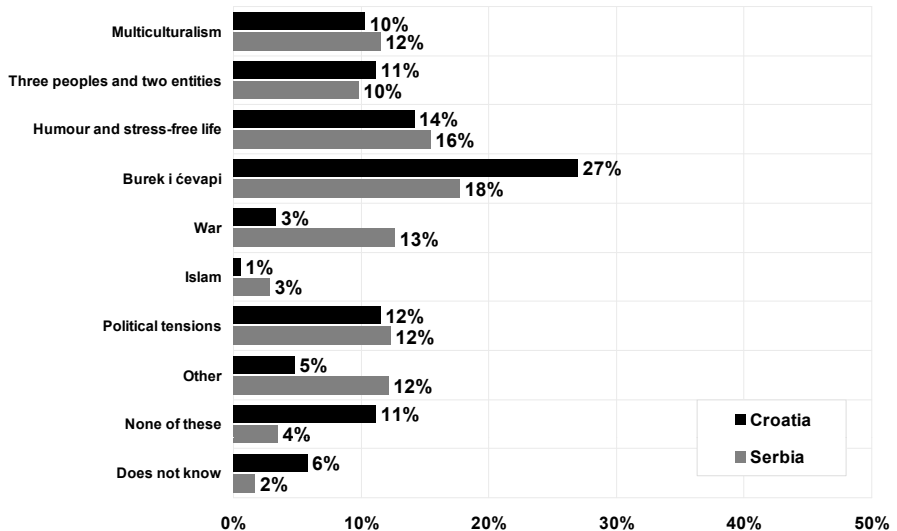
The leading association for both respondents from Croatia and those from Serbia is with “burek and ćevapi” as symbols of characteristic Bosnian cuisine. However, this association is much more prominent with respondents from Croatia (27%) than it is the case with those from Serbia (18%). “War” is a very strong association for respondents from Serbia (13%) unlike those from Croatia (3%). Therefore we could draw the conclusion that respondents from Croatia look at BiH much more benevolently and even perceive it as being more carefree as opposed to those from Serbia, who still view it considerably through the prism of the recent war. It is also possible that its perception in Croatia is much more dependent on the influence of mass media. The second most frequent response is “humor and stress-free life” – 16% in Serbia and 13% in Croatia. This is followed by “political tensions” (12% in both Serbia and Croatia), multiculturalism (12% in Serbia and 10% in Croatia), “two entities and three peoples” (11% in Croatia and 10% in Serbia). The least frequent association is the one with “Islam” (3% in Serbia and 1% in Croatia).

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46 The focus group method is a form of qualitative research that involves a group discussion about a given topic. The main aim of the focus group is to encourage an in-depth discussion with a view to exploring values or attitudes of respondents about a problem or a topic, i.e. understanding and explaining the meanings, beliefs and culture that influence the feelings, attitudes and behaviour of individuals.

**Graph No. 3.**

**Which of the following evokes the strongest associations with Bosnia and Herzegovina for you?**



With respect to demographic statistics, it is interesting to note that highly educated respondents from Croatia more frequently perceive Bosnia and Herzegovina through the following associations: multiculturalism, two entities and three peoples. In the case of respondents with secondary education, much more frequent are associations with burek and ćevapi, humor and a stress-free life. It is interesting that the idea of multiculturalism is less frequently mentioned by respondents from cities than those from rural areas, whereas associations with cuisine are equally present in both rural areas and cities. As far as the regions are concerned, the association with multiculturalism is most prominent among respondents from the Croatian Coast, Rijeka and Istria, and Zagreb (which at the same time host sizeable Bosniac communities). Also prominent in these areas is the association with humor and a stress-free life. Burek

and ćevapi are quite prominent associations in all the regions, but to a somewhat lesser extent on the northern Croatian Coast and Istria. The association with political tensions is most prominent in Dalmatia.

As regards respondents from Serbia, once again highly educated respondents more frequently mention the association with multiculturalism. It is interesting that respondents in rural areas much more frequently emphasize multiculturalism and “two entities and three peoples” than is the case in cities. As far as the regions are concerned, it is interesting to note that respondents from Western Serbia least frequently made the association between Bosnia and Herzegovina and burek and ćevapi, while it is most prominent in Belgrade. The association with war is strongest in Western Serbia and in the south-east of the country. The association with political tensions is most often found in the east of the country, whereas the association with Islam is most frequent in Central Serbia as well as in the south-east.

**Table 5.**  
**Associations with Bosnia and Herzegovina – respondents from Serbia – demographic overview**

Which of the following evokes the strongest associations with Bosnia and Herzegovina for you? Demographic breakdown

	Multi-cultural-ism	Three peoples and two entities	Humour and stress-free life	Burek and ćevapi	War	Islam	Political tensions	Other	None of these
Sample N=812	11%	10%	16%	18%	13%	3%	12%	12%	3%
Sex									
Male	10%	11%	13%	21%	11%	3%	13%	14%	3%
Female	13%	9%	18%	15%	14%	3%	12%	11%	4%
Age									
Under 30	8%	8%	13%	26%	22%	5%	10%	4%	4%
Between 30 and 44	13%	14%	16%	20%	10%	6%	13%	4%	2%
Between 45 and 60	13%	6%	19%	16%	17%	1%	15%	10%	1%
Over 60	11%	11%	13%	12%	5%	1%	11%	29%	8%
Education									
Primary school	8%	4%	16%	14%	17%	2%	12%	17%	7%
Secondary school	11%	12%	15%	20%	12%	3%	13%	11%	2%
Community college/ University	20%	13%	17%	17%	8%	4%	11%	7%	3%
Type of settlement									
City	14%	12%	18%	19%	11%	4%	9%	12%	3%
Village	9%	6%	13%	16%	16%	2%	17%	13%	5%
Region									
Vojvodina	14%	13%	20%	19%	10%	0%	12%	13%	0%
Belgrade	10%	10%	15%	28%	11%	4%	6%	12%	4%
Western Serbia	8%	6%	25%	7%	17%	1%	16%	8%	8%
Central Serbia	15%	11%	12%	17%	14%	7%	8%	15%	2%
Eastern Serbia	10%	3%	10%	13%	6%	1%	26%	18%	1%
South-East	9%	11%	8%	12%	20%	5%	18%	7%	9%

**Table 6.**  
**Associations with Bosnia and Herzegovina – respondents from Croatia – demographic overview**

Which of the following evokes the strongest associations with Bosnia and Herzegovina for you? Demographic breakdown

	Multi-culturalism	Three peoples and two entities	Humour and stress-free life	Burek and ćevapi	War	Islam	Political tensions	Other	None of these
Sample N=800	10%	11%	14%	27%	3%	1%	12%	5%	11%
Sex	Male	10%	10%	27%	3%	1%	12%	6%	11%
	Female	10%	9%	18%	27%	3%	11%	4%	12%
Age	Under 30	12%	7%	22%	39%	1%	4%	6%	6%
	Between 30 and 44	10%	9%	12%	39%	5%	6%	2%	13%
	Between 45 and 60	13%	13%	11%	23%	4%	1%	18%	9%
	Over 60	7%	14%	13%	10%	1%	1%	16%	15%
Education	Primary school	1%	9%	8%	23%	2%	16%	6%	20%
	Secondary school	15%	11%	19%	31%	3%	8%	5%	7%
	Community college/ University	19%	18%	14%	21%	7%	1%	14%	3%
Type of settlement	City	13%	13%	15%	28%	4%	12%	3%	8%
	Village	6%	8%	13%	26%	2%	1%	10%	16%
	Zagreb and its surroundings	11%	14%	15%	27%	4%	2%	15%	7%
Region	Northern Croatia	2%	9%	6%	36%	0%	2%	2%	21%
	Slavonia	8%	15%	13%	28%	7%	1%	5%	8%
	Lika and Banovina	8%	17%	8%	23%	2%	1%	11%	16%
	Istria, Rijeka, Croatian Coast and Gorski Kotar	29%	3%	30%	19%	7%	1%	4%	2%
Dalmatia	8%	8%	14%	24%	1%	1%	26%	3%	13%



### 3.1.4. Perceptions of Individual Determinants of Bosnia and Herzegovina

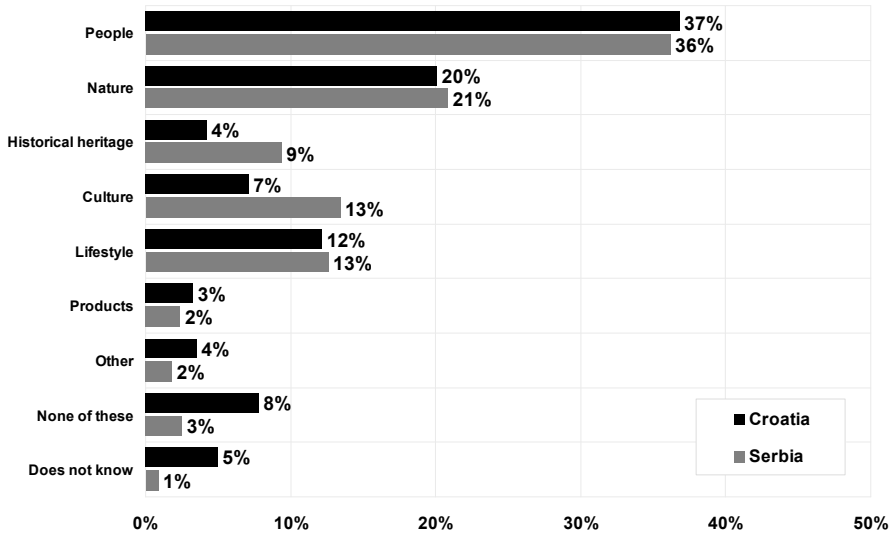
Following the aforementioned hexagon of competitive identity proposed by Simon Anholt (people, culture, policy, tourism, products, investments), we used several questions in an attempt to analyze the appeal of these facts of Bosnia and Herzegovina as perceived by BiH neighbors. In one of the questions we modified these concepts, translating them into determinants that are close and comparable in relation to respondents: *people, nature, historical heritage, culture, lifestyle and products* and we suggest these to respondents as choices in order for them to select what attracts them most.

In the three leading categories – people, nature and lifestyle - respondents from Croatia and Serbia have almost identical opinions. Citizens of both neighboring countries are most attracted to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina (37% in Croatia and 36% in Serbia). They are followed by nature (21% in Serbia and 20% in Croatia) and lifestyle (13% in Serbia and 12% in Croatia). With respect to culture and historical heritage, there is a difference in opinion between Croatia and Serbia. Specifically, respondents in Serbia were much more inclined to rank these two categories first than those in Croatia. Thus culture was selected by 13% of respondents in Serbia and only 7% in Croatia, and historical heritage by 9% in Serbia and only 4% in Croatia. We could draw two conclusions from these data that should be explored separately – respondents from Croatia are less familiar with BiH culture and history or, when compared to their own cultural and historical heritage, those of Bosnia and Herzegovina seem less rich to Croatian respondents.

BiH products are indistinguishable in the perceptions of respondents from both Croatia and Serbia. Citizens of Croatia also responded that they found none of the offered choices attractive (8%).

**Graph No. 4.**

**Which of the following do you find most attractive in Bosnia and Herzegovina?**



The analysis of demographic data shows that, with respect to rating people as the most attractive determinant in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are no large differences in either Croatia or Serbia related to sex, age, education level, type of settlement and regions. It is only in Serbia that respondents from the south-east of the country were less likely to select people as the most attractive category. Nature was in Croatia less frequently selected by respondents under the age of 30 and inhabitants of Lika and Banovina. It is interesting to note that historical heritage was more often emphasized by young people under the age of 30 and respondents holding community college diplomas or university degrees. Culture was the most frequent choice of respondents from the Croatian Coast and Istria, Zagreb and its surroundings, as well as Lika and Banovina. It is also interesting that products are mentioned to

a somewhat higher extent by respondents from the economically most developed region of Croatia – Northern Croatia.

In Serbia, Bosnian and Herzegovinian nature is similarly perceived by respondents, irrespective of age and type of settlement, but is rated as most attractive to a lesser extent in Western Serbia. At the same time, it is regarded as the most attractive by inhabitants of Vojvodina and Belgrade. Culture is perceived most positively in the south-east of the country and by respondents under the age of 30, and least positively by respondents between the ages of 31 and 44, and those from Belgrade. Lifestyle is less attractive to respondents over the age of 60 and those in the east of the country. At the same time, BiH products are somewhat more attractive to inhabitants of Eastern Serbia as compared to the rest of the country.

**Table 7.**  
**Attractiveness of individual determinants of Bosnia and Herzegovina – respondents from Croatia –**  
**demographic overview**  
**(percentages of responses for the options ‘I do not know’ or ‘Other’ are excluded for clarity of presentation)**

Which of the following do you find most attractive in Bosnia and Herzegovina? Demographic breakdown

	People	Nature	Historical heritage	Culture	Lifestyle	Products
Sample N=800	37%	20%	4%	7%	12%	3%
Sex	Male	17%	4%	8%	12%	6%
	Female	39%	23%	5%	6%	1%
Age	Under 30	44%	5%	10%	6%	7%
	Between 30 and 44	37%	27%	1%	7%	5%
	Between 45 and 60	36%	24%	7%	6%	1%
	Over 60	32%	21%	0%	9%	1%
Education	Primary school	31%	20%	3%	5%	2%
	Secondary school	38%	20%	3%	10%	5%
	Community college/ University	47%	21%	10%	4%	1%
Type of settlement	City	40%	21%	6%	7%	4%
	Village	32%	18%	1%	8%	2%
	Zagreb and its surroundings	36%	19%	7%	10%	0%
	Northern Croatia	28%	15%	2%	7%	7%
Region	Slavonia	46%	24%	6%	1%	5%
	Lika and Banovina	46%	6%	3%	10%	4%
	Istria, Rijeka, Croatian Coast and Gorski Kotar	44%	16%	2%	12%	1%
	Dalmatia	30%	32%	3%	5%	10%

**Table 8.**  
**Attractiveness of individual determinants of Bosnia and Herzegovina – respondents from Serbia –**  
**demographic overview**  
**(percentages of responses for the options 'I do not know' or 'Other' are excluded for clarity of presentation)**

Which of the following do you find most attractive in Bosnia and Herzegovina? Demographic breakdown

	People	Nature	Historical heritage	Culture	Lifestyle	Products
Sample N=812	36%	21%	9%	13%	13%	2%
Sex						
Male	41%	19%	9%	14%	10%	1%
Female	32%	23%	10%	13%	15%	4%
Age						
Under 30	33%	21%	5%	19%	15%	3%
Between 30 and 44	30%	21%	14%	8%	18%	5%
Between 45 and 60	42%	20%	9%	16%	11%	1%
Over 60	38%	22%	9%	13%	8%	0%
Education						
Primary school	39%	16%	11%	18%	10%	2%
Secondary school	35%	23%	8%	12%	14%	3%
Community college/ University	36%	24%	10%	10%	14%	2%
Type of settlement						
City	35%	22%	13%	12%	12%	2%
Village	38%	20%	5%	15%	13%	3%
Region						
Vojvodina	36%	29%	6%	10%	15%	0%
Belgrade	36%	22%	13%	9%	12%	2%
Western Serbia	50%	11%	3%	13%	12%	1%
Central Serbia	35%	18%	11%	17%	10%	7%
Eastern Serbia	40%	18%	16%	11%	7%	9%
South-East	24%	16%	10%	25%	16%	1%

### 3.1.4. Perceptions of BiH Destinations

In view of the fact that a significant potential of Bosnia and Herzegovina lies in its tourism opportunities, we wanted to explore the image of some of its cities as tourist destinations. Thus respondents were offered a list of various BiH destinations, and asked which destinations they would like to visit soon. The list included important economic and political centres, tourist destinations and those having largest number of visitors, destinations with ethnic significance for individual peoples, as well as destinations with potential for tourism development.

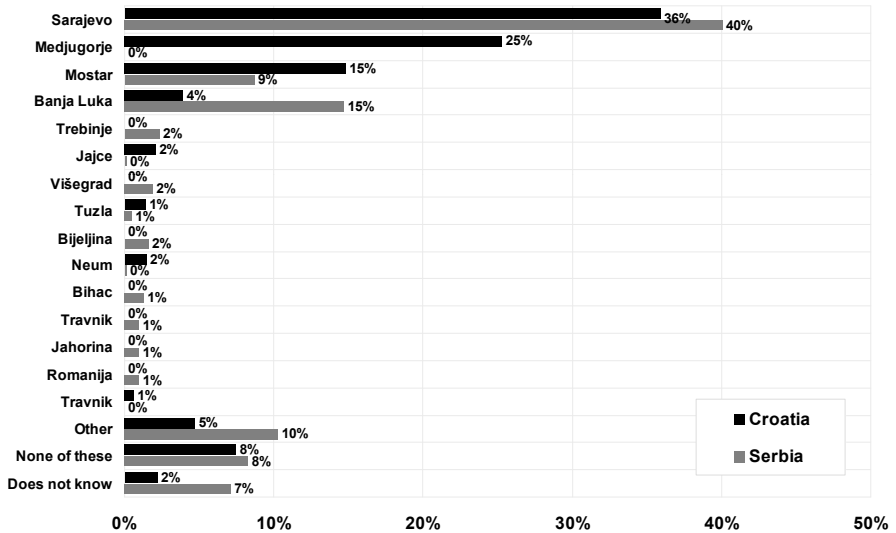
Sarajevo is the top potential destination for both neighboring nations. As might be expected, Međugorje and Mostar are extremely attractive to Croatians, as is Banja Luka to Serbians. 40% of respondents from Serbia and 36% of respondents from Croatia would like to visit Sarajevo. 25% of respondents from Croatia and almost none from Serbia would like to visit Međugorje. 15% of Serbians and 4% of Croatians would like to visit Banja Luka, while 15% of Croatians and even 9% of Serbians would like to visit Mostar. Other cities and destinations such as Trebinje, Jajce, Višegrad, Tuzla, Bijeljina, Neum, Bihać, Travnik, Jahorina and Romanija are not attractive to either Croatians and Serbians. Among the latter, Serbians still see minimum potential in Trebinje, Višegrad and Bijeljina (2% for each location), and Croatians in Neum and Jajce (2% for each each). Therefore, an outstanding tourism potential and popularity in the region is only found in Sarajevo, and to an extent in Mostar, followed by Banja Luka. Međugorje acts as a strong magnet for visitors from Croatia. Other cities or other tourist destinations are perceived as rather indistinguishable in their potentials and offerings and are in dire need of branding.

In Croatia, Sarajevo is most attractive to young people under the age of 30 (51%) and highly educated respondents (61%). It is equally

attractive to respondents coming from different regions. In Serbia, it is most attractive to respondents in the middle-age group (age 31 to 60), equally attractive to respondents holding secondary school diplomas and university degrees, and roughly equally attractive in all regions. Mostar is a destination that respondents from Northern Croatia (23%) are significantly inclined to visit. In other categories there is no significant difference in perceptions of Mostar, the exceptions being that highly educated respondents are less inclined to visit it, and that it is least recognizable in Istria and the Croatian Coast. In contrast, among Serbian respondents that would like to visit Mostar those that are highly educated make up the largest group, and there is higher inclination found among respondents from rural areas. As for Banja Luka, its fans more often come from cities than from rural areas, and there are more of them with primary education. Also, Banja Luka is a destination attracting twice as many men as women from Serbia. The largest number of them come from Vojvodina and western parts of Serbia, followed by those from Belgrade. Among respondents from Croatia that would like to travel to Međugorje, there are more women than men, and more respondents from Zagreb, Slavonia, Lika and Banovina. Slightly less inclined to visit it are highly educated respondents as compared to those with secondary or primary education.

**Graph No. 5.**

**Which destinations in Bosnia and Herzegovina would you like to visit soon?**



### 3.1.5. Image of Bosnians and Herzegovinians

Since it would be predictable to find more positive perceptions of BiH Serbs among Serbs from Serbia and of BiH Croats among Croats from Croatia, the study focused on perceptions of Bosnians and Herzegovinians irrespective of their nationality. Thus we offered the following traits: traditional, fun, honest, industrious, resourceful, sincere, modest, loyal and advanced, asking respondents to determine for each of these terms whether or not it generally describes a typical Bosnian or Herzegovinian. Thus we obtained some interesting results.

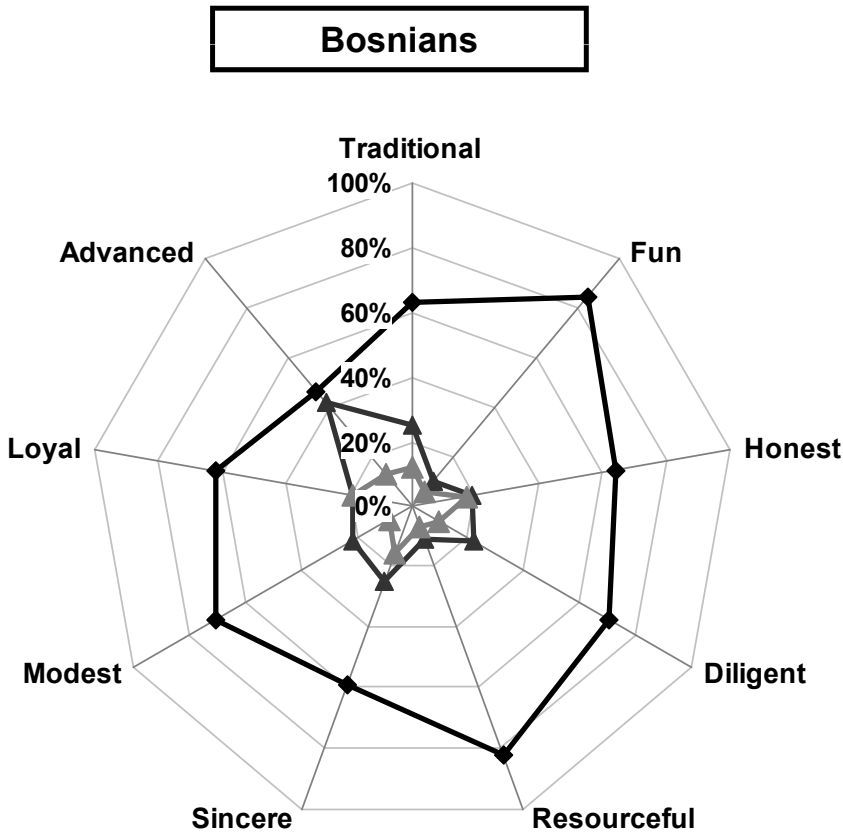
In Croatia, Bosnians are somewhat more positively perceived than Herzegovinians, whereas in Serbia both Bosnians and Herzegovinians have a fairly equal image. Croatian respondents more frequently consider



Bosnians to be fun, honest and modest, and less frequently find them advanced and traditional. They more often consider Herzegovinians to be traditional, advanced and resourceful, and less often find them modest, fun and honest.

**Graph No.6.**

**Respondents from Croatia – To what extent does each trait describe or does not describe a typical Bosnian?**

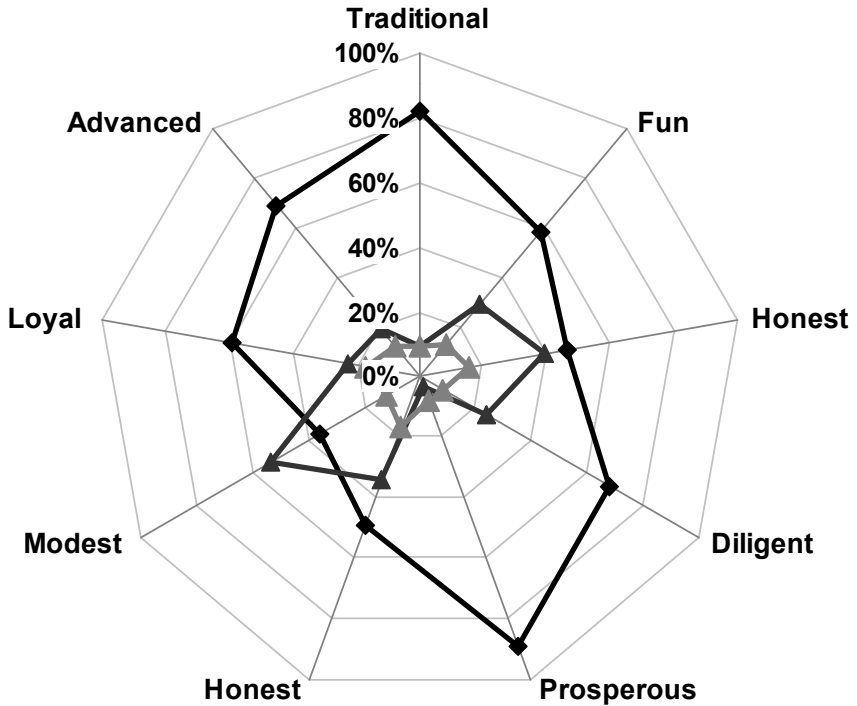


Graph No. 7.

Respondents from Croatia – To what extent does each trait describe or does not describe a typical Herzegovinian?



**Herzegovinians**



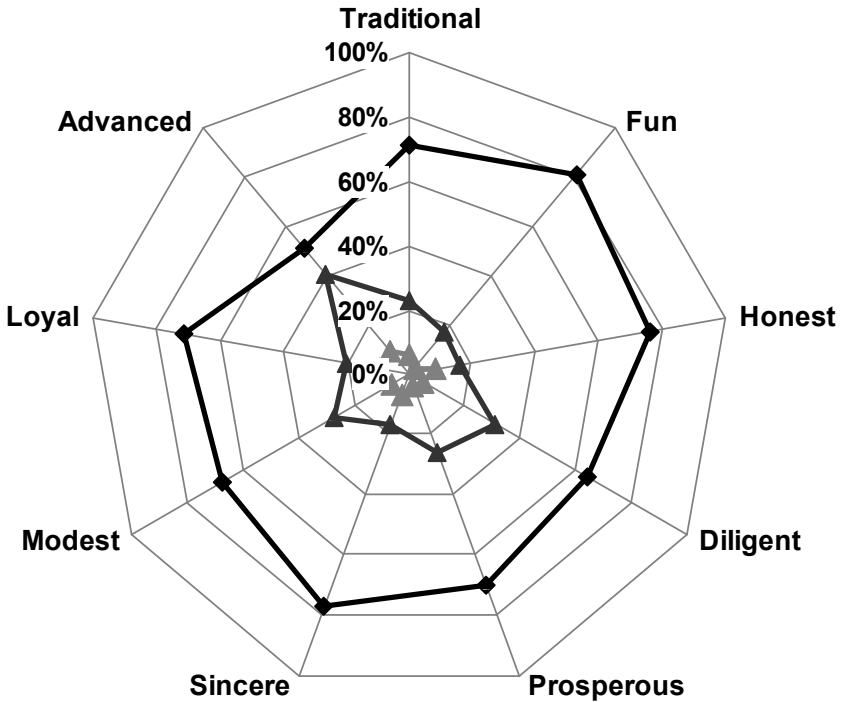
Traits similar to those attributed to Bosnians by Croatian respondents are attributed to them by respondents from Serbia. They even find Bosnians somewhat more sincere and loyal than they are considered to be by Croats from Croatia. As regards Herzegovinians, it seems that they have a somewhat better image in Serbia than is the case in Croatia. Serbian respondents, unlike those from Croatia, attribute to them the quality of modesty. Also, Serbians consider Herzegovinians to be honest, sincere and loyal to a greater extent than Croatian respondents do. When Herzegovinians and Bosnians are compared, there is less of a difference between them in Serbia than there is in Croatia. In fact, in many respects there is no difference at all. Admittedly, Serbians do find Herzegovinians to be more diligent, advanced and traditional than Bosnians, and they find Bosnians more fun, sincere and modest than Herzegovinians. There are no major deviations with respect to demographic indicators.

Graph No. 8.

Respondents from Serbia – To what extent does each trait describe or does not describe a typical Bosnian?



**Bosnians**

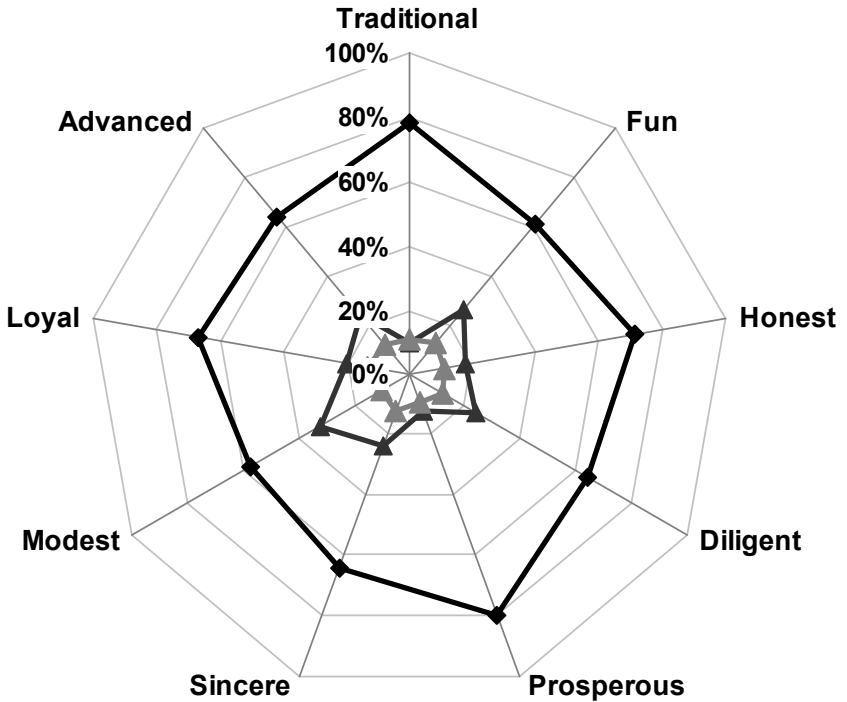


Graph No. 9.

Respondents from Serbia – To what extent does each trait describe or does not describe a typical Herzegovinian?

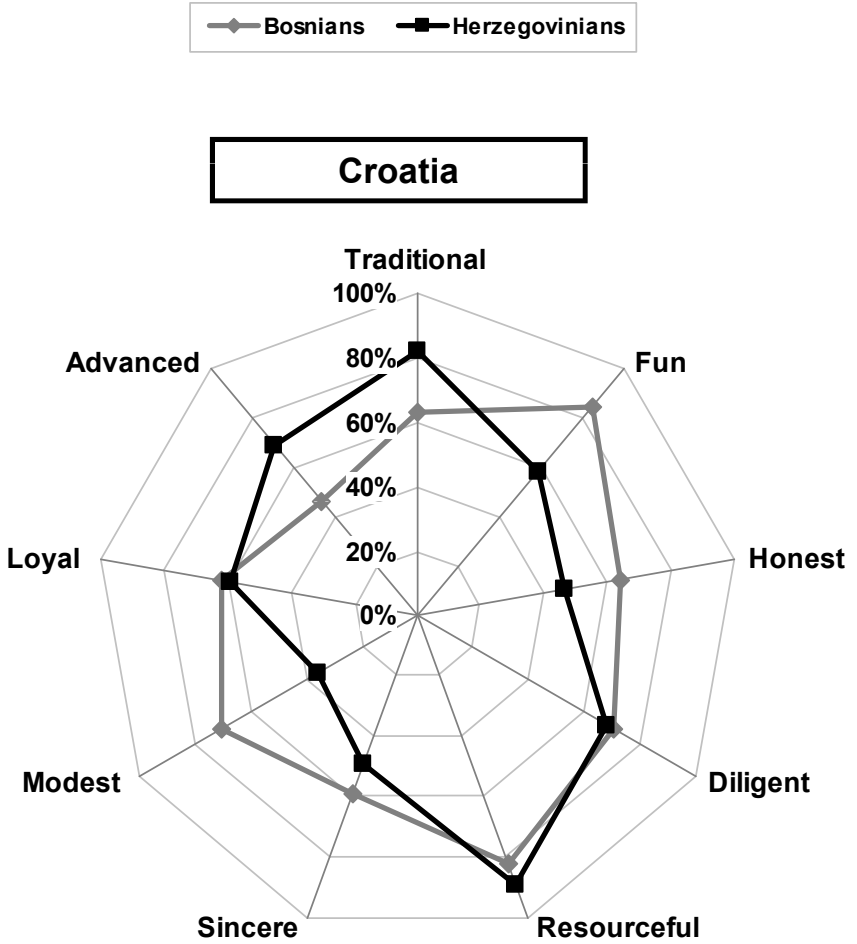


**Herzegovinians**



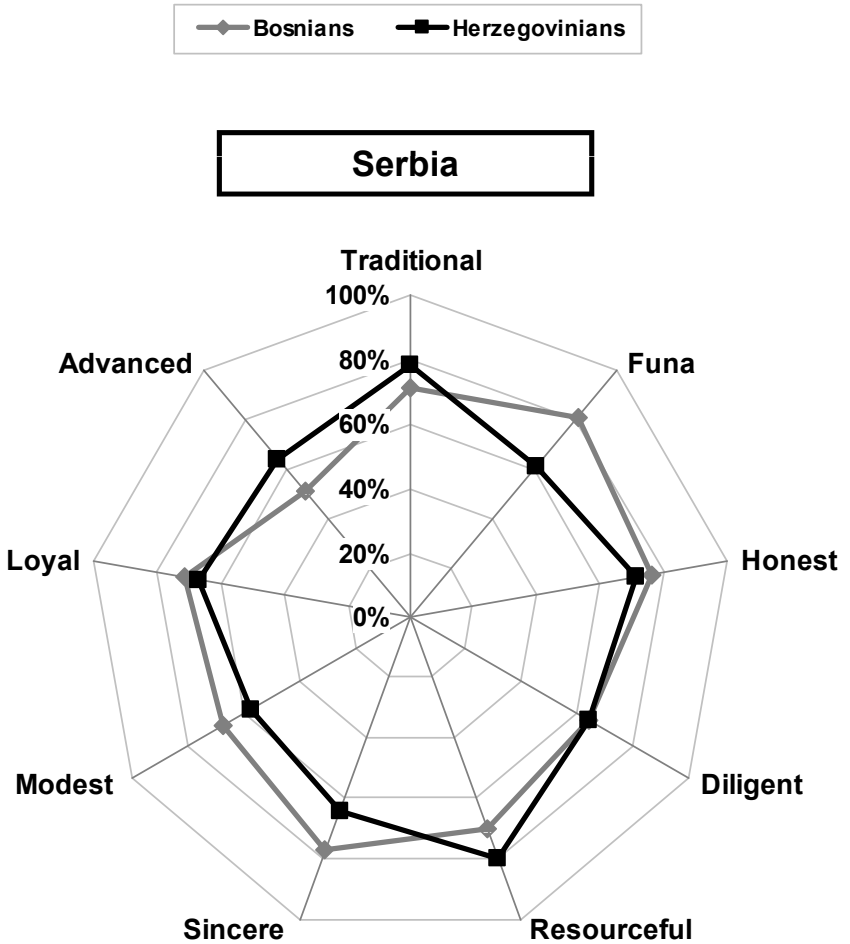
**Graph No. 10.**

**Respondents from Croatia – comparative analysis of Bosnians / Herzegovinians**



Graph No. 11.

Respondents from Serbia – comparative analysis of Bosnians/Herzegovinians



**Table 9.**  
**Image of a typical Bosnian – respondents from Serbia – demographic characteristics**

To what extent do individual traits generally describe a typical Bosnian? Demographic breakdown

	Traditional	Fun	Honest	Industrious	Resourceful	Sincere	Modest	Loyal	Advanced
Sample N=812	71%	81%	76%	64%	70%	77%	67%	71%	51%
Sex	Male	81%	77%	61%	69%	77%	68%	77%	47%
	Female	71%	80%	74%	66%	71%	65%	65%	55%
Age	Under 30	69%	83%	74%	64%	59%	57%	74%	47%
	Between 30 and 44	70%	77%	73%	54%	73%	60%	65%	56%
	Between 45 and 60	78%	82%	83%	62%	72%	72%	73%	51%
	Over 60	67%	82%	71%	75%	73%	75%	72%	50%
Education	Primary school	69%	78%	76%	68%	73%	65%	65%	63%
	Secondary school	73%	83%	76%	62%	69%	70%	74%	49%
	Community college/ University	69%	77%	74%	61%	69%	60%	72%	37%
Type of settlement	City	74%	83%	75%	65%	69%	71%	73%	46%
	Village	68%	78%	76%	62%	72%	61%	67%	59%
	Vojvodina	73%	83%	83%	72%	74%	62%	72%	55%
Region	Belgrade	73%	80%	74%	62%	66%	69%	75%	43%
	West	68%	84%	76%	56%	72%	63%	67%	55%
	Central	73%	87%	77%	64%	75%	77%	73%	55%
	East	59%	67%	59%	61%	69%	69%	63%	60%
	South East	74%	76%	73%	58%	61%	62%	68%	43%



**Table 10.**  
**Image of a typical Bosnian – respondents from Croatia – demographic characteristics**

To what extent do individual traits generally describe a typical Bosnian? Demographic breakdown

	Traditional	Fun	Honest	Industrious	Resourceful	Sincere	Modest	Loyal	Advanced
Sample N=800	63%	84%	64%	70%	82%	59%	70%	62%	46%
Sex	Male	84%	67%	70%	76%	65%	76%	64%	42%
	Female	72%	83%	61%	70%	87%	52%	65%	49%
Age	Under 30	65%	94%	76%	67%	86%	71%	75%	45%
	Between 30 and 44	63%	81%	59%	62%	81%	60%	66%	43%
	Between 45 and 60	73%	81%	65%	77%	85%	52%	76%	45%
	Over 60	52%	80%	60%	73%	77%	55%	71%	48%
Education	Primary school	47%	74%	60%	74%	79%	51%	73%	54%
	Secondary school	72%	89%	66%	69%	84%	61%	71%	66%
	Community college/ University	73%	91%	69%	62%	81%	69%	64%	69%
Type of settlement	City	67%	84%	65%	72%	83%	59%	71%	62%
	Village	56%	83%	63%	66%	80%	57%	70%	63%
Region	Zagreb and its surroundings	59%	82%	68%	70%	81%	54%	63%	59%
	Northern Croatia	56%	79%	64%	57%	75%	59%	73%	62%
	Slavonia	70%	89%	73%	78%	87%	73%	74%	67%
	Lika and Banovina	56%	75%	59%	61%	72%	67%	73%	63%
	Istria, Rijeka, Croatian Coast and Gorski Kotar	77%	96%	65%	84%	93%	63%	83%	75%
Dalmatia	62%	81%	53%	69%	83%	45%	64%	54%	
									35%

**Table 11.**  
**Image of a typical Herzegovinian – respondents from Serbia – demographic characteristics**

To what extent do individual traits generally describe a typical Herzegovinian? Demographic breakdown

	Traditional	Fun	Honest	Industrious	Resourceful	Sincere	Modest	Loyal	Advanced
Sample N=812	78%	61%	71%	64%	80%	64%	57%	67%	64%
Sex	Male	60%	72%	61%	80%	67%	57%	72%	61%
	Female	77%	61%	70%	67%	79%	58%	64%	67%
Age	Under 30	79%	55%	72%	60%	77%	51%	67%	52%
	Between 30 and 44	80%	61%	59%	60%	79%	48%	64%	64%
	Between 45 and 60	79%	61%	74%	64%	79%	60%	67%	68%
	Over 60	75%	64%	79%	70%	84%	68%	72%	70%
Education	Primary school	72%	64%	66%	65%	82%	62%	66%	72%
	Secondary school	80%	61%	75%	65%	78%	57%	68%	63%
	Community college/ University	84%	55%	70%	58%	81%	50%	68%	53%
Type of settlement	City	79%	61%	75%	64%	80%	56%	71%	62%
	Village	77%	60%	65%	64%	80%	59%	63%	67%
	Vojvodina	76%	56%	60%	55%	79%	42%	64%	71%
Region	Belgrade	83%	61%	77%	64%	84%	64%	76%	60%
	Western Serbia	83%	63%	83%	62%	80%	63%	69%	67%
	Central Serbia	71%	64%	73%	69%	79%	65%	69%	60%
	Eastern Serbia	77%	61%	70%	67%	75%	63%	51%	62%
	South East	81%	64%	74%	75%	80%	59%	70%	62%

**Table 12.**  
**Image of a typical Herzegovinian – respondents from Croatia – demographic characteristics**

To what extent do individual traits generally describe a typical Herzegovinian? Demographic breakdown

	Traditional	Fun	Honest	Industrial	Resourceful	Sincere	Modest	Loyal	Advanced	
Sample N=800	82%	58%	46%	68%	89%	49%	36%	59%	69%	
Sex	Male	81%	59%	46%	64%	87%	51%	40%	60%	67%
	Female	83%	56%	47%	71%	91%	47%	32%	59%	71%
Age	Under 30	81%	67%	42%	59%	95%	60%	40%	55%	75%
	Between 30 and 44	83%	50%	41%	62%	86%	43%	26%	62%	58%
	Between 45 and 60	84%	53%	44%	74%	95%	43%	35%	63%	76%
	Over 60	79%	62%	56%	73%	82%	51%	44%	57%	69%
	Primary school	73%	64%	55%	69%	80%	54%	46%	58%	75%
Education	Secondary school	87%	53%	41%	67%	94%	45%	31%	59%	70%
	Community college/ University	85%	58%	44%	69%	94%	49%	29%	65%	51%
	City	82%	50%	41%	66%	90%	41%	30%	59%	67%
Type of settlement	Village	82%	69%	54%	70%	88%	62%	45%	61%	73%
	Zagreb and its surroundings	90%	54%	41%	70%	94%	49%	24%	58%	71%
Region	Northern Croatia	70%	54%	51%	64%	73%	57%	49%	51%	67%
	Slavonia	75%	61%	51%	57%	92%	48%	39%	64%	78%
	Lika and Banovina	85%	77%	56%	74%	92%	63%	42%	66%	66%
	Istria, Rijeka, Croatian Coast and Gorski Kotar	89%	51%	45%	74%	95%	40%	34%	67%	62%
	Dalmatia	82%	58%	41%	70%	90%	42%	34%	58%	67%

### 3.1.6. Testing of Claims Made in the Media about the Past, Present and Future of Bosnia and Herzegovina

In order to explore the perceptions of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a country and perceptions of its peoples, and at the same time test the most frequent claims about the past, present and future of the country appearing in the media, we offered respondents 11 different (positive, negative and neutral) claims and asked them to indicate to what extent they agree or disagree.

The claims that received the highest degree of agreement among respondents from Croatia are:

1. Bosnia and Herzegovina was a victim of the war imposed by Slobodan Milošević and his war collaborators in BiH. (Total of 86% agree: 63% fully agree; 23% mostly agree; only 9% of respondents disagree with this claim).
2. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a land of natural diversity and rich cultural and historical heritage. (Total of 85% agree: 54% fully agree; 31% mostly agree; only 9% of respondents disagree with this claim).
3. BiH Croats, Bosniacs and Serbs represent three separate worlds, cultures and civilizations. (Total of 71% agree: 41% fully agree; 30% mostly agree; 24% of respondents disagree with this claim).
4. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country bringing together the East and West, Christianity and Islam. (Total of 74% agree: 29% fully agree; 45% mostly agree; 21% of respondents disagree with this claim).
5. Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina are the smallest people and as a result the most threatened one. (Total of 61% agree: 43% fully agree; 18% mostly agree; 25% of respondents disagree with this claim).
6. Franjo Tuđman and Slobodan Milošević tried to divide Bosnia and Herzegovina, but did not succeed in their attempt. (Total of 58%

agree: 38% fully agree; 20% mostly agree; 25% of respondents disagree with this claim).

7. Bosnia and Herzegovina as it is now is doomed to failure because there is no political will for reforms and mutual coexistence. (Total of 58% agree: 36% fully agree; 22% mostly agree; 29% respondents disagree with this claim).

The claims that a significant number of respondents in Croatia disagree with are:

1. It is only a matter of time before Republika Srpska secedes from Bosnia and Herzegovina. (Total of 39% disagree: 21% fully disagree; 18% mostly disagree; however, the same number of respondents – 39% agree with this claim).
2. There is no major difference between Bosnians, whether they are Croats, Bosniacs or Serbs in origin. (Total of 37% of respondents disagree: 18% fully disagree; 19% mostly disagree; however, as many as 53% of respondents agree with this claim).
3. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country that is becoming increasingly Islamized. (Total of 36% of respondents disagree: 15% fully disagree; 21% mostly disagree; however, as many as 48% of respondents agree with this claim).
4. Croats and Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina share more common interests with each other than they do with their fellow nationals from Croatia and Serbia. (Total of 31% of respondents disagree: 13% fully disagree; 18% mostly disagree; however, as many as 48% of respondents agree with this claim.)

The claims that received the highest degree of agreement among respondents from Serbia are:

1. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a land of natural diversity and a rich cultural and historical heritage. (Total of 93% agree: 54% fully agree; 39% mostly agree; only 6% of respondents disagree with this claim).

2. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country bringing together the East and West, Christianity and Islam. (Total of 74% agree: 27% fully agree; 47% mostly agree; 24% of respondents disagree with this claim).
3. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country that is becoming increasingly Islamized. (Total of 62% of respondents agree: 30% fully agree; 32% mostly agree; 26% of respondents disagree with this claim).
4. BiH Croats, Bosniacs and Serbs represent three separate worlds, cultures and civilizations. (Total of 64% agree: 25% fully agree; 39% mostly agree; 31% of respondents disagree with this claim).
5. Croats and Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina share more common interests with each other than they do with their fellow nationals from Croatia and Serbia. (Total of 58% of respondents agree: 18% fully agree; 40% mostly agree; 29% of respondents disagree with this claim).
6. There is no major difference between Bosnians, whether they are Croats, Bosniacs or Serbs in origin. (Total of 60% of respondents agree: 26% fully agree; 19% mostly agree; 34% of respondents disagree with this claim).
7. Bosnia and Herzegovina as it is now is doomed to failure because there is no political will for reforms and mutual coexistence. (Total of 55% agree: 25% fully agree; 30% mostly agree; 37% of respondents disagree with this claim).

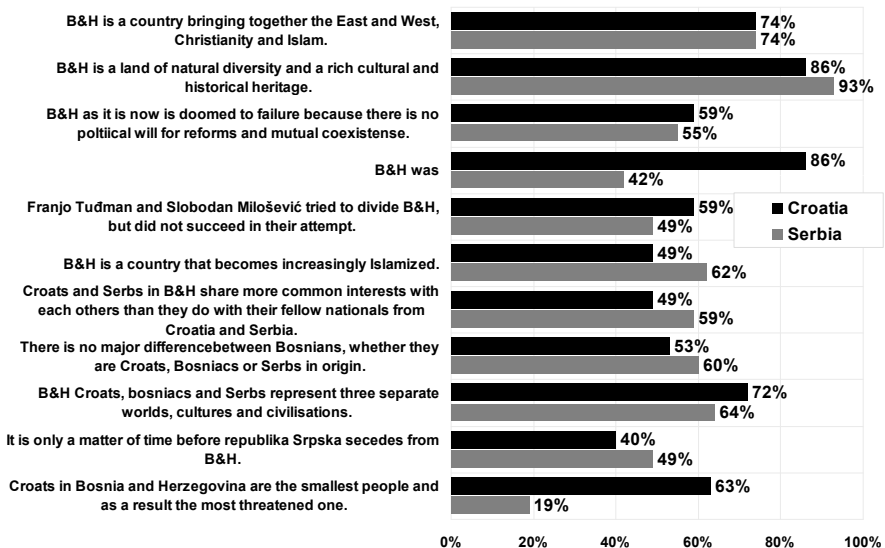
The claims with which respondents in Serbia disagree more often than not are:

1. Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina are the smallest people and as a result the most threatened one. (Total of 68% disagree: 37% fully disagree; 31% mostly disagree; 19% of respondents agree with this claim).
2. Bosnia and Herzegovina was a victim of the war imposed by Slobodan Milošević and his war collaborators in BiH. (Total of 47% disagree: 31% fully disagree; 16% mostly disagree; however, as many as 42% of respondents agree with this claim).

The claims that a significant number of respondents in Serbia disagree with are:

1. It is only a matter of time before Republika Srpska secedes from Bosnia and Herzegovina. (Total of 35% of respondents disagree: 16% fully disagree; 19% mostly disagree; however, as many as 50% agree with this claim).
2. Franjo Tuđman and Slobodan Milošević tried to divide Bosnia and Herzegovina, but did not succeed in their attempt. (Total of 33% disagree: 17% fully disagree; 16% mostly disagree; 49% of respondents agree with this claim).

**Graph No. 12.**  
**Degree of agreement with individual claims**



Therefore, if we summarize and compare the views of Croatian and Serbian citizens, we could say that both countries perceive the natural diversity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its rich cultural and historical heritage to the fullest extent (93% in Serbia and 86% in Croatia). Also, both countries consider BiH to be a land of diversity, bringing together the East and West, Christianity and Islam (74% of respondents in both countries). This appears to be a good potential for the future in terms of tourism development as well as the creation of and identity and image of Bosnia and Herzegovina abroad. The most prominent differences between the views of Croatian and Serbian citizens are related to their interpretation of the recent war and the position of BiH Croats: as many as 86% of Croatians believe that Bosnia and Herzegovina was a victim of the war imposed by Slobodan Milošević and his collaborators in BiH, and as many as 63% of Croatian respondents believe that Croats as the smallest people in Bosnia and Herzegovina are at the same time most threatened. However, even in these respects a significant number of Serbians believe that Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina are threatened (19%) and that Bosnia and Herzegovina was a victim of the war imposed by Slobodan Milošević (the view of as many as 42% of respondents in Serbia).

What should be rather alarming for political elites in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the fact that more than 50% of citizens in both Croatia and Serbia believe that Bosnia and Herzegovina as it is now is doomed to failure because there is no political will for reforms and mutual co-existence. Also symptomatic is the belief that BiH Croats, Bosniacs and Serbs represent three separate worlds, cultures and civilizations (72% in Croatia and 64% in Serbia), which is not surprising given that divisiveness and nationalist bickering are evident in daily media reports from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is interesting to note that respondents in Serbia are more confident that Bosnia and Herzegovina is becoming increasingly Islamized



than those from Croatia (this is the view of 62% Serbians versus 49% Croatians). It is also interesting that Croatians are more inclined to believe the conspiracy theory about the division of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Tuđman and Milošević than is the case with Serbians (59% in Croatia, 49% in Serbia), which could be linked to frequent exploitation of this thesis in daily political statements of Tuđman's opponents in Croatia in the course of the past decade.

In addition, it is interesting to note that respondents in Serbia are more optimistic about relations between the three peoples and their mutual cooperation. For example, as many as 59% of Serbians believe that Croats and Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina share more common interests with each other than they do with their fellow nationals from Croatia and Serbia, whereas in Croatia only 49% of respondents hold this view. Serbians are also somewhat more confident that there is no major difference between Bosnians irrespective of their nationality (60% in Serbia and 53% in Croatia). As for the belief that Republika Srpska will secede, this is shared by more Serbians (49%) than Croatians (40%).

### 3.1.7. Perceptions of Political and Economic Relations

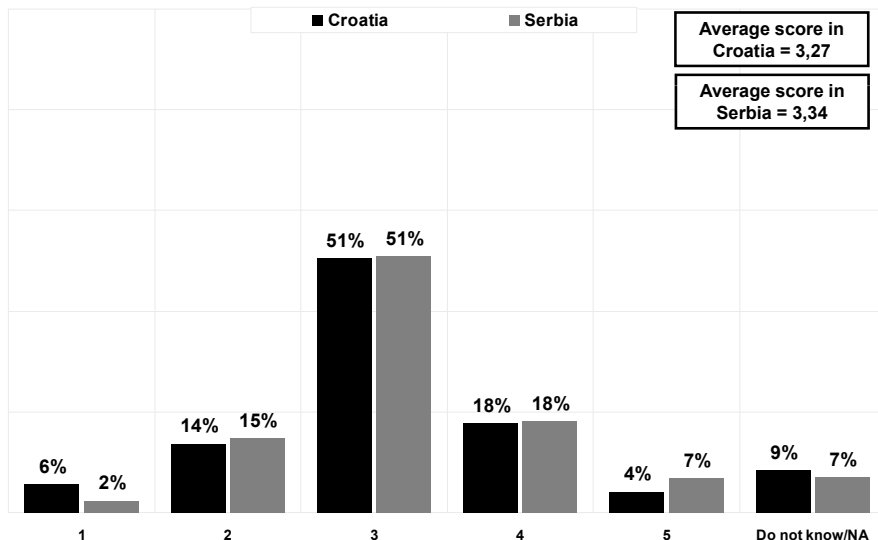
We asked respondents to give their assessment of the current political and economic relations between their countries and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Citizens of both Croatia and Serbia gave rather similar assessments of these relations (the average score was 3), although they were somewhat more optimistic in Serbia, with economic relations with both countries getting higher scores.

In Croatia, the average score of political relations between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina was 3.27, while the average score of economic relations was 3.37.

In Serbia, the average score of political relations between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina was 3.34, while the average score of economic relations was 3.40. There were no major demographic differences in the assessments.

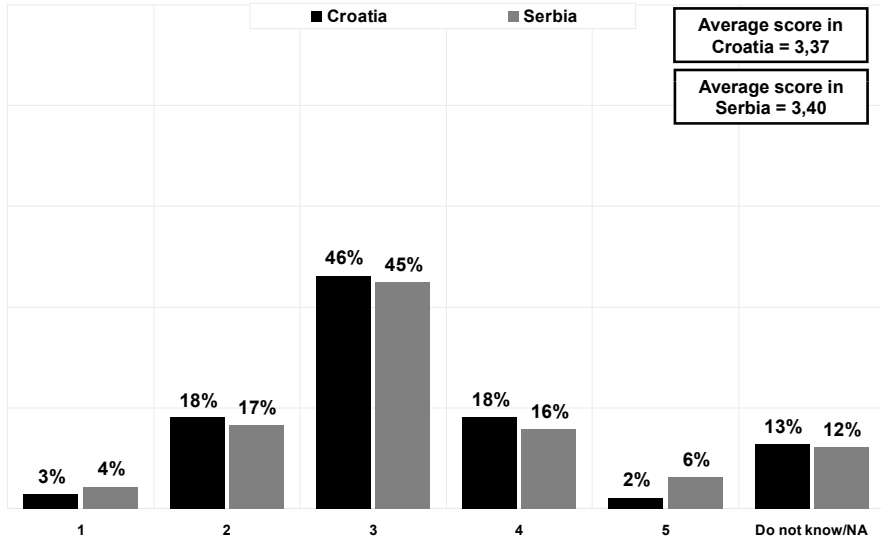
**Graph No. 13.**

**Assessment of the current political relations between respondents' homeland and Bosnia and Herzegovina**



**Graph No. 14.**

**Assessment of the current economic relations between respondents' homelands and Bosnia and Herzegovina**



### 3.1.8. Perceptions of Policies of Croatia and Serbia towards Croats and Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina

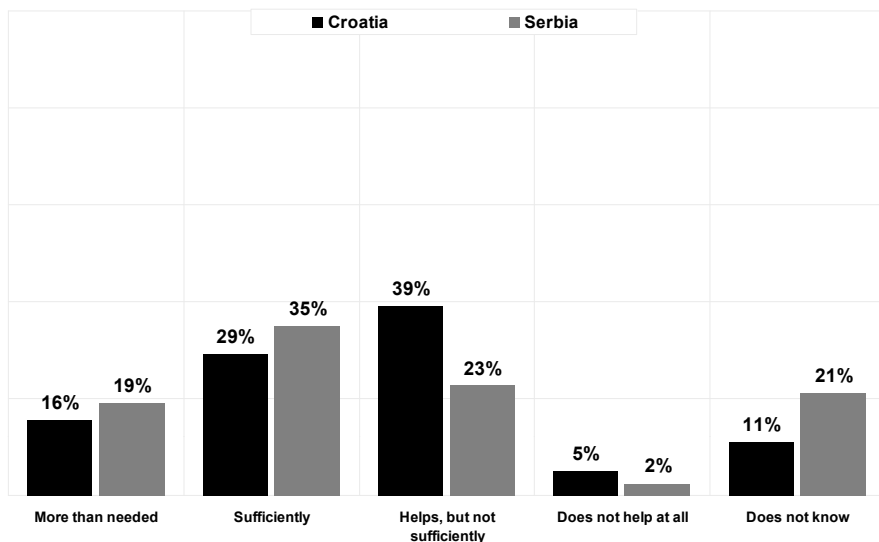
We also tried to explore the views of citizens of Croatia and Serbia about policies of their own countries towards their fellow nationals. The question read – *To what extent, in your view, do Croatia and Serbia respectively take account of their national interests and help Croats and Serbs respectively in Bosnia and Herzegovina?* In order to analyze perceptions of the both Croats and Serbs people regarding these relations, we also asked respondents in Croatia about relations of Serbia with Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and respondents in Serbia about relations of Croatia with BiH Croats.

A relative majority of Croats in Croatia (approximately 40%) believe that the Republic of Croatia does not sufficiently help Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, whereas a relative majority of Serbians (35%) believe that Croatia provides sufficient help to BiH Croats.

As regards the relations of Serbia with Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as many as 52% of citizens of Serbia believe that the Republic of Serbia does not sufficiently help Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Croatian citizens most frequently do not have an opinion in this respect (35%).

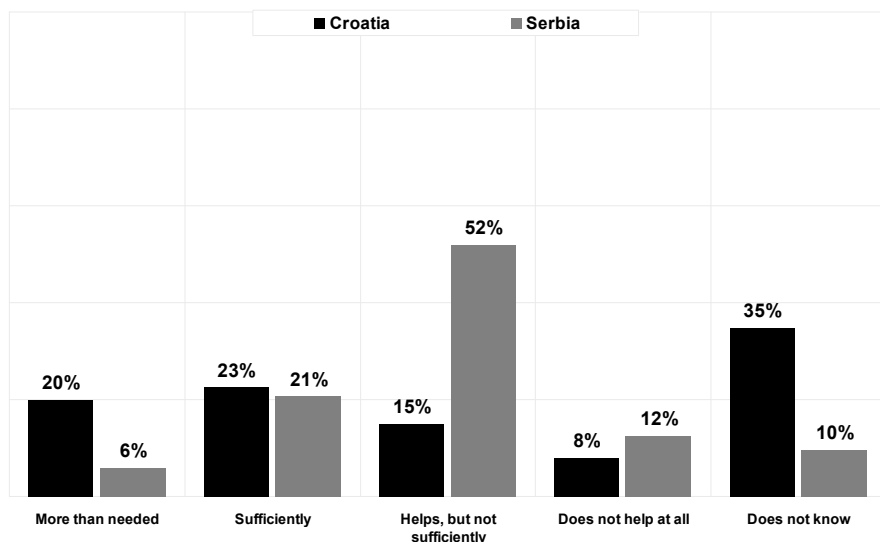
**Graph No. 15.**

**To what extent does Croatia take account of its national interest and helps Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina?**



**Graph No. 16.**

**To what extent does Serbia takes account of its national interest and helps Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina?**



The belief that Croatia does not sufficiently help Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina is shared to a considerable extent by all demographic groups, but mostly by highly educated respondents (49%) and inhabitants of Lika, Banovina, Zagreb and Slavonia. The belief that Croatia is sufficiently helping Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina is considerably present among inhabitants of Istria and Croatian Coast, as well as Northern Croatia. The view that Croatia is not sufficiently helping its fellow nationals in Bosnia and Herzegovina is prevalent among respondents in Serbia most frequently found among inhabitants of Eastern Serbia and Belgrade.

The belief that Serbia does not sufficiently help Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina is most prominent among inhabitants of Belgrade, the central part of the country and Vojvodina. The view that Serbia is providing

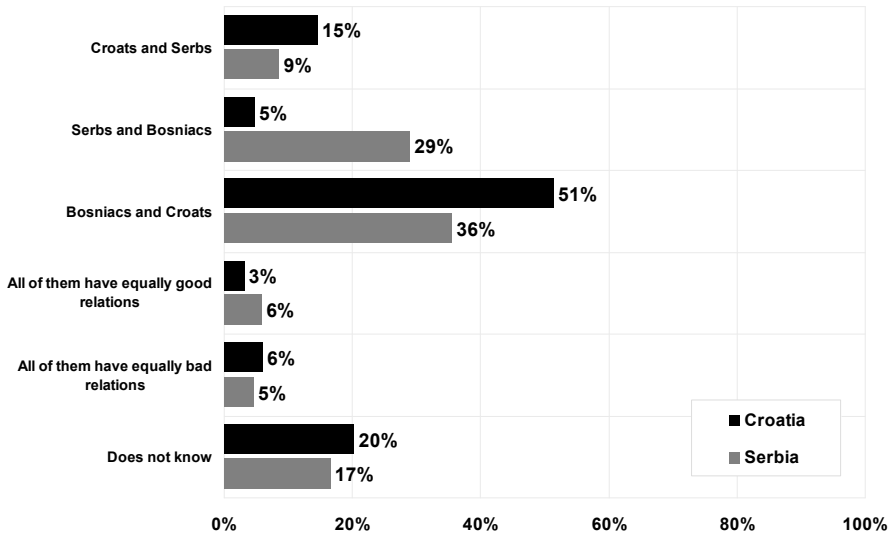
sufficient help is more frequently held by highly educated respondents, whereas inhabitants of Eastern Serbia believe that Serbia's help is more than enough.

### 3.1.9. Perceptions of Mutual Relations among the Three Peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina

While trying to explore perceptions of mutual relations among the three peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we found a considerable difference of opinion among respondents in Croatia and Serbia. Nevertheless, the relations deemed to be best are those between Bosniacs and Croats, with as many as half of the respondents responding thus (51%). The same opinion is held by 36% of Serbians. Relations between Serbs and Bosniacs are positively perceived by as many as 29% of respondents in Serbia and only 5% of respondents in Croatia. It is interesting to note that relations between Croats and Serbs are viewed much more optimistically in Croatia than they are in Serbia. They are deemed to be best by 15% of respondents in Croatia and 9% in Serbia. The belief that relations among all three groups are equally good is shared by 3% of Croatians and 6% of Serbians, whereas the belief that relations among all groups are equally poor is shared by 6% of Croatians and 5% of Serbians. As many as 20% of Croatians and 17% of Serbians stated that they could not give an assessment of relations among the three peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Graph No. 17.**

**Which two peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina have the best relations in your view?**



With respect to demographic indicators in Croatia, relations between Croats and Serbs are perceived more positively in Slavonia and Dalmatia, as well as by highly educated respondents. Relations between Bosniacs and Croats are perceived as best in Istria, Croatian Coast and Northern Croatia, as well as by respondents with secondary education.

As regards demographic indicators in Serbia, it is interesting to note that relations between Croats and Serbs are more positively perceived by highly educated respondents (the same as in Croatia). Relations between Bosniacs and Croats are more frequently considered to be best in Western and South-Eastern Serbia, and again by highly educated respondents. Relations between Serbs and Bosniacs in Bosnia and Herzegovina are least frequently perceived as best by inhabitants

of the western part of Serbia, and most frequently by respondents in the east of the country.

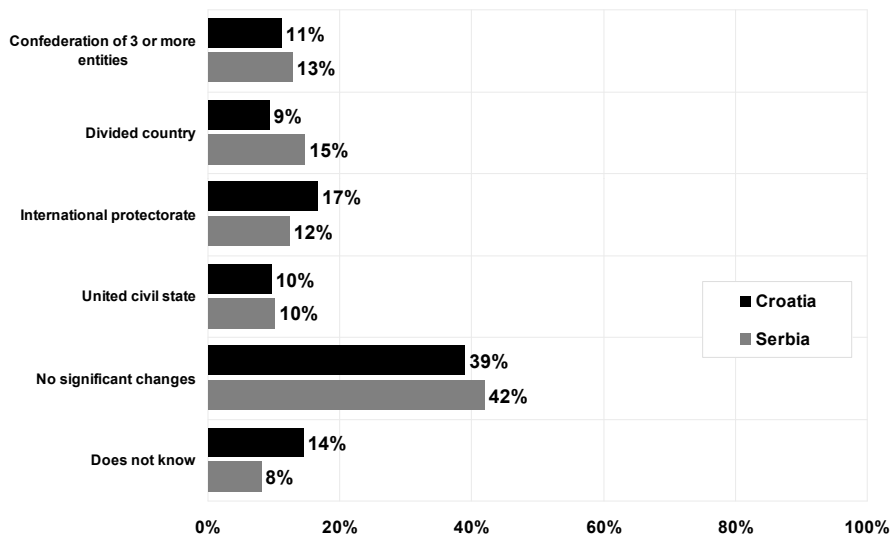
### 3.1.10. Perceptions of the Future of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Finally we explored how the citizens of Croatia and Serbia see the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the next 10 years. Over half of citizens in both Croatia and Serbia are pessimistic about the country's future. The deeply held belief that no significant changes will take place is shared by 42% of Serbians and 39% of Croatians. Another group believes that Bosnia and Herzegovina will remain an international protectorate. This belief is more frequently held by Croatians (17%) than by Serbians (12%). Serbians are more likely to believe that Bosnia and Herzegovina will become/remain a "divided country" (15% Serbians and 9% Croatians). A roughly equivalent number of Croatians (11%) and Serbians (13%) believe that Bosnia and Herzegovina will become a confederation of three or more entities. The same applies to the belief that Bosnia and Herzegovina will become a united civil state (10% of respondents in both Croatia and Serbia).



**Graph No. 18.**

**How do you see the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the next 10 years?**



Among respondents in Croatia, the belief that Bosnia and Herzegovina will become a confederation of three or more entities is more frequently found among older respondents, those with university degrees, and inhabitants of Zagreb, Lika and Banovina. In Serbia, this belief is more prevalent in Belgrade and Central Serbia.

The belief that Bosnia and Herzegovina will become/remain a “divided country” is more common among respondents in Croatia with only primary education and inhabitants of Northern Croatia. In Serbia, this scenario is more commonly found in responses of younger people, those living in cities, and inhabitants of Western Serbia.

In Croatia, the belief that Bosnia and Herzegovina will remain an international protectorate is more prominent among respondents over

the age of 45 and inhabitants of Istria, Croatian Coast, Slavonia and Zagreb. In Serbia this belief is more commonly shared by respondents with higher education and inhabitants of the western part of the country.

The belief that Bosnia and Herzegovina will become a united civil state is more prevalent among respondents in Croatia living in cities than those from rural areas, whereas in Serbia it is most prevalent among inhabitants of Central Serbia. The belief that no significant changes will take place is equally prevalent in all demographic categories.

These beliefs are extremely pessimistic, but they are not surprising if we take into account the messages that are sent out of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which speak little of a common vision for the future and political will for substantial changes.

**Table 13.**  
**Perceptions of the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina – respondents from Croatia. – demographic overview**

How do you see the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the next 10 years? - Demographic breakdown

	As a confederation of three or more entities	As a divided country	As an international protectorate	As a united civil state	Without significant changes	Do not know	
<b>Sample N=800</b>							
<b>Sex</b>	Male	10%	9%	17%	10%	39%	14%
	Female	12%	10%	13%	8%	44%	12%
<b>Age</b>	Under 30	3%	8%	9%	3%	64%	13%
	Between 30 and 44	7%	13%	12%	10%	47%	11%
	Between 45 and 60	15%	14%	22%	16%	27%	5%
	Over 60	17%	2%	21%	8%	24%	27%
<b>Education</b>	Primary school	13%	12%	14%	9%	24%	29%
	Secondary school	8%	9%	18%	11%	48%	6%
	Community college/ University	18%	5%	19%	8%	45%	6%
<b>Type of settlement</b>	City	11%	12%	18%	7%	41%	10%
	Village	11%	4%	14%	13%	35%	22%
<b>Region</b>	Zagreb and its surroundings	14%	8%	19%	12%	42%	4%
	Northern Croatia	8%	19%	4%	8%	38%	24%
	Slavonia	9%	6%	20%	5%	39%	21%
	Lika and Baranovina	15%	1%	15%	14%	36%	20%
<b>Region</b>	Istria, Rijeka, Croatian Coast and Gorski Kotar	7%	15%	26%	11%	31%	10%
	Dalmatia	13%	5%	17%	9%	42%	13%

**Table 14.**  
**Perceptions of the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina – respondents from Serbia – demographic overview**

How do you see the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the next 10 years? - Demographic breakdown

	As a confederation of three or more entities	As a divided country	As an international protectorate	As a united civil state	Without significant changes	Do not know	
Sample N=812	13%	15%	12%	10%	42%	8%	
Sex	Male	16%	17%	8%	40%	3%	
	Female	10%	14%	8%	12%	13%	
Age	Under 30	10%	20%	13%	5%	2%	
	Between 30 and 44	10%	19%	9%	8%	2%	
	Between 45 and 60	13%	11%	14%	14%	40%	7%
	Over 60	16%	12%	14%	12%	27%	20%
Education	Primary school	11%	12%	7%	12%	18%	
	Secondary school	13%	17%	15%	9%	3%	
	Community college/ University	14%	13%	15%	10%	41%	7%
Type of settlement	City	16%	10%	12%	9%	8%	
	Village	9%	21%	13%	12%	38%	9%
	Vojvodina	10%	16%	9%	9%	47%	10%
	Belgrade	18%	15%	14%	7%	43%	4%
Region	Western Serbia	10%	22%	19%	10%	11%	
	Central Serbia	16%	13%	12%	20%	37%	2%
	Eastern Serbia	8%	7%	8%	9%	49%	18%
	South East	11%	15%	15%	7%	44%	9%

### 3.2. Summary of Survey Findings

- As regards a vast majority of issues, it was found that there were no major differences between the attitudes of Croatian and Serbian citizens towards Bosnia and Herzegovina and its citizens. As might be expected, exceptions to this rule were almost always issues related to the recent past and relations between peoples. The fact is that perception of Bosnia and Herzegovina is adversely affected to a considerable extent by the recent war (more so in Serbia than in Croatia)
- Roughly equal numbers of citizens from Croatia and Serbia visited Bosnia and Herzegovina after the war (31% as compared to 26%). This is a relatively small number given the proximity of the countries and other forms of ties between them. However, Bosnia and Herzegovina is obviously not generating sufficient motivation and attraction to increase the number of visits. This will have to change because it is visits and first-hand experience that contribute most to breaking down of prejudice and reducing of ethnic distance.
- There are similar percentages with respect to the personal or family ties of respondents to Bosnia and Herzegovina. In fact, a significant number of citizens of Croatia and Serbia are firmly tied to Bosnia and Herzegovina through their family or origin. Between 35% and 40% of citizens in both countries are either of BiH origin or have relatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina, whereas only about one fourth of their citizens have no ties to the country. This represents a powerful potential for the strengthening of mutual relations, as well as for creating of promoters of Bosnia and Herzegovina in its neighborhood. Also, it is obvious that dissatisfaction with position, living standards and status of their relatives and friends in Bosnia and Herzegovina strongly influences overall public opinion in Croatia and Serbia respectively. A more positive message from Bosnia and

Herzegovina could also influence the change in perception in a relatively short time.

- The stereotype of “burek and ćevapi” is the most frequent association with Bosnia and Herzegovina. This stereotype association is especially prominent among Croatians (27%). It is followed by “humor and stress-free life” (14% and 16% respectively). Approximately 13% of respondents from Serbia reported that their first association was war, whereas this is the case with only 3% of citizens of Croatia. The underlying assumption is that Croatians more often form their perceptions of Bosnia and Herzegovina based on mass media, whereas Serbians more often do so based on personal experience and influence of the recent war. In any case, a great potential for improving of the image of Bosnia and Herzegovina lies in the fact that the BiH lifestyle, along with the virtues and qualities of the people and its cuisine act as a powerful magnet for respondents in the region. This pertains to positive or neutral traits that are to a higher or lesser extent attributed to all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina irrespective of their nationality.
- When analysing what factors in Bosnia and Herzegovina are most attractive to its neighbours, we found very widespread agreement that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina are its greatest and most attractive asset. This is the response of just below 40% of citizens of Croatia and Serbia. This fact offers us great possibilities in building up a new image of Bosnia and Herzegovina, although it is to some extent already exploited in products of popular culture such as films and the like. The next most attractive determinant is nature, on which there was approximately 20% agreement. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a beautiful country with a rich natural diversity. It is good that our neighbours are aware of this. However, in a global context this fact remains mostly unknown. Another attractive asset

is lifestyle (12%/13%). Serbians are somewhat more likely to point out the culture (13% as compared to 7%) and cultural heritage (9% as compared to 4%).

- Although Bosnia and Herzegovina has significant tourism potential, it appears to be insufficiently exploited, i.e. focused on only a few destinations. Sarajevo is a potential top destination for almost 40% of respondents from both neighboring nations. As might be expected, Međugorje is extremely attractive to Croatians (25%), as is Banja Luka to Serbians (15%). Mostar is also attractive to 15% of citizens of the Republic of Croatia and 9% of citizens of the Republic of Serbia. Other cities do not have identifiable tourism potential and must work hard on their branding.
- There is a difference between perceptions of Bosnians and Herzegovinians. In Croatia, Bosnians are somewhat more positively perceived than Herzegovinians. They are more frequently considered to be fun, honest, sincere and modest. On the other hand, Herzegovinians are perceived as more advanced and resourceful. In Serbia there are similar differences as well, so that Herzegovinians are also less frequently considered to be fun, modest and sincere. However, these differences in perceptions are less prevalent in Serbia, which means that the perception of Herzegovinians and Bosnians as people of “different characters and qualities” is not so strong.
- It is interesting to note that the natural, cultural and historical advantages of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a land of diversity at a junction of civilizations and cultures is a widely-held perception. In fact, the majority of citizens of neighbouring countries agree that Bosnia and Herzegovina brings together the East and West, Christianity and Islam (74% in both countries), and that it is rich in cultural and historical heritage (86% in Croatia and 93% in Serbia). This perception

is important to building of the image of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a multiethnic country.

- However, over half of respondents in both countries believe that Bosnia and Herzegovina is doomed to failure (59% in Croatia and 55% in Serbia), and even more respondents believe that the three peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina represent “three separate worlds” (72% as compared to 64%). It is obvious that political divides and ethnic conflicts have left a strong imprint on perceptions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and this image can hardly change without concrete progress being made in the country.
- Still, around 50% of respondents from the Republic of Croatia and 60% from the Republic of Serbia believe that Croats and Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina have more in common with each other than with their fellow nationals from Croatia and Serbia, and almost as many believe that there is no major difference between Croats, Serbs and Bosniacs from Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Serbians generally believe that Bosnia and Herzegovina is becoming Islamized more than Croatians (49% as compared to 62%), and 49% of Serbians and 40% of Croatians believe that Republika Srpska will secede sooner or later. Two thirds of citizens of Croatia believe that Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina are most threatened. It is interesting to note that 20% of citizens of Serbia share this belief. As can be expected, there are major differences in interpretations of the war. Thus 86% of citizens of Croatia believe that Bosnia and Herzegovina was a victim of Milošević’s war, whereas only 42% in Serbia share the same belief, which is not negligible but shows that different perceptions of the war and its consequences are still present. There is less of a difference in interpretations of the meeting between Milošević and Tuđman, so that almost 60% of respondents in the Republic of



Croatia believe that the two presidents intended to divide Bosnia and Herzegovina, a belief shared by almost 49% of respondents in the Republic of Serbia. However, it is interesting that Croatians are more inclined to believe this conspiracy theory than Serbians.

- Assessments of economic and political relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina are very similar in the two countries and they range between the score of 3 and 3.5. Respondents are obviously aware that much more could be done in terms of strengthening mutual relations.
- In assessments of Croatian policy towards Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina made by Croatian and Serbian respondents, there are differences, naturally, but they are smaller than might be expected. Thus almost half (45%) of citizens of Croatia believe that Croatia's help is sufficient or more than enough, which is the view of 54% of citizens of Serbia. On the other hand, as many as 39% of citizens of Croatia believe that Croatia is not helping sufficiently, a view shared by a significant 23% of respondents in the Republic of Serbia.
- In assessments of help received by Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina (from the Republic of Serbia), there are more serious differences between respondents in Croatia and Serbia. Thus as many as 52% of respondents from Serbia believe that help to Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina is too scant, and additional 12% believe it to be non-existent. These beliefs are shared by only 15% and 8% respectively of respondents in the Republic of Croatia. However, the majority of citizens of Croatia (35%) do not have an opinion in this respect.
- Relations between Bosniacs and Croats that are most frequently perceived as best (51% of respondents in Croatia and 36% in Serbia).

As many as 29% of respondents in Serbia consider relations between Serbs and Bosniacs to be best, whereas in Croatia the figure is only 5%. On the other hand, only 15% of respondents in the Republic of Croatia and 9% in the Republic of Serbia consider relations between Serbs and Croats to be best. Only 5-6% of respondents believe that relations among all peoples are equally poor.

- Over half of citizens in Croatia and Serbia are pessimistic about the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina – either with no changes (around 40%) or as a protectorate (12-17%). Only 11-13% see it as a confederation of three or more entities, and only 10% as a united civil state. These attitudes are not surprising given the messages that citizens of Croatia and Serbia regularly receive through mass media, which speak of the absence of any consensus, unity or vision among the political and ethnic elites in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Therefore, the first step towards changing of this perception must be made by the responsible authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## **4. AWAKENING OF THE IDENTITY OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AS THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS IMPROVING ITS IMAGE**

Undoubtedly, throughout the world Bosnia and Herzegovina is most associated with the war. Bearing witness to this is the fact that “the war in Bosnia” has nearly become a film stereotype. This will continue to be so – as country image theoreticians put it – until such time as Bosnia and Herzegovina manages to tell a more attractive story about itself or shift the focus from the war to the qualities and advantages of the country through an important international event, as it once had done with the Winter Olympic Games in Sarajevo. On the other hand, Bosnia and Herzegovina does sporadically and occasionally capture the attention of the world through various stories, such as visits of foreign movie and musical stars, the organization of attractive events such as Sarajevo Film Festival, mass tourism in Sarajevo, Mostar and Međugorje, its specific cuisine or films which have achieved remarkable global success. However, this is not enough. On the one hand, these are only sporadic attempts to influence the image of the country, without a strategy and coordination, and consequently with no major effect. On the other hand, all these efforts are very quickly dwarfed by news of ethnic conflicts and bickering, dysfunctional government, terrorist attacks, war crimes, economic stagnation and backwardness, religious

fanatics and the like. Unfortunately, foreign analysts of news coming from Bosnia and Herzegovina could come up with only one word as a common denominator for the image created thereby – “problems”. Indeed, war and problems are the two nouns that have in the past years most frequently been associated with Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is no doubt that they discourage or hinder attempts of friends of Bosnia and Herzegovina abroad to tell a different story about this country. And it is actually many of those who happen to have visited Bosnia and Herzegovina that became its best promoters. Such people have usually been astounded by its beauty, diversity, as well as its cultural heritage.

An international tourism expert, who recently toured the length and breadth of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was astonished by the beauty of its forests and mountains, canyons and waterfalls, historic cities and deserted fields, almost ideal for movie spectacles. *“Why is it that nobody in the world knows how beautiful this country is?”* he wondered in astonishment. Answers that come to mind are based on common sense. First of all, we are unaware of the beauty of our surroundings and always feel that things are better somewhere else. Perhaps we are too focused on negative things to be able to see the good and positive ones. We are expecting solutions to come from the political level, which has already showed that it has not yet risen to the challenge of our times. Then it is no wonder that we often ask ourselves, how is it possible that the country which in our view is known for war, genocide, its protectorate status, divisions and poverty could be perceived as “beautiful?” Had we been more aware of our own advantages, we would have protected the land we inhabit more jealously from pollution and devastation and would proudly show it to everyone. To top it all, competition is fierce. Each country emphasizes its own strengths and competes for the attention of the global public and tourists, and if we do not do anything in order for the world to see us in a different light, how can we possibly expect to have a better image and higher income from tourism? Finally,

tourists and guests from abroad who could spread the word about the beauty of the land, expect more attractions, such as first-class hotels, restaurants with traditional cuisine, well organized museums, attractive tours, good signposts and friendly hosts. It is not only the state and owners of hotels and restaurants etc. that benefit from tourism. All those who are creative can benefit from it. Money itself is not critical. Guests from abroad are often times most interested in things that are locally produced, authentic and homely.

This year millions of foreign tourists will spend their summer holiday in the Mediterranean. Some of them will cross the BiH border and traditionally visit Mostar and Međugorje. Many others will travel directly to Sarajevo. Why shouldn't we make an effort to get them interested in other parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well? Will this country at some point become one of the best holiday destinations in the world, as Croatia, Argentina and New Zealand have been in the past few years? Frankly speaking, it depends solely on its inhabitants and its politicians! God or Allah already blessed its peoples with everything they need for it. However, we have obviously not yet become aware of it and are still waiting for others to "enlighten" us.

Tourism development is an important sector. But let us not forget foreign investments, the marketing of Bosnian and Herzegovinian products to foreign markets, the influence in international associations and the like. This all depends on the image of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is not exactly brilliant. And when we think about country image and the possibilities for its change and improvement, we must ask ourselves what is the identity of the country, since it is identity that we use as a foundation for building the image in the long term and telling the story about ourselves. What do we want to be known for and how do we want to be perceived? What is it that we can offer and proudly show to others?

What is it that could symbolize a modern identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and come to the minds of foreigners at the mention of its name, apart from war? What is it that makes it special, i.e. that its peoples are trying to communicate to the world as their symbols, advantages or qualities, as their common national identity? The answer to this question certainly cannot be given in a simple or symbolic way. The reason for this is that we obviously still do not have a clearly defined identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina through which others could perceive its citizens. Also, there is obviously no national “consensus” about this issue among the peoples living here. However, this is not surprising given that Bosnia and Herzegovina has only existed as an independent state for two decades and that its citizens are still recovering from the bloody conflicts. But this does not mean that people abroad, whether they are potential tourists, investors or decision makers, do not have an opinion about or perception of this country. They form it, if not otherwise, based on the information they get from the media, from friends, and even on misinformation. As a matter of fact, there is a rule on the necessity of branding that reads thus: if you fail to tell the story about yourself, somebody else will tell it, against your interest. The identity is there, it just needs to be found and presented to the world.

We could search for the roots of our national identity above all in our awareness about who we are and our existence, about what we consider to be ours, local, genuine and authentic. It is what we show to others, the first-class and original; the things that make us recognizable to others. It is that special something which others do not have. We can draw elements of our identity from our own history, myths and legends. However, we must be careful not to fall in a trap of creating our identity solely according to our own wishes and the purposes of daily politics. In fact, in parallel to our own awakening with respect to our roots and values, where at times there is a slight tendency to overdo it, we must also develop our “export” identity, i.e. what we can choose from the

totality of our national heritage as good, original, recognizable and attractive, and offer and sell it to a world which is increasingly looking for the authentic and different. On the other hand, our identity, as attractive as we may find it, must not be “cemented”, fixed or limited. We need to preserve its full wealth and diversity and constantly develop and enrich these. However, we should also, using communication, promotion and other means, present to the world the “symbolism” of all this, something that simply can be “consumed” in a world overloaded with information, as well as offerings of all varieties. Thus we must bear in mind that the essence of branding of modern countries is their singularity and originality. A country that wants to capture global attention should not imitate others, but offer what nobody else can offer, what is found there alone and is different. Naturally, it should, while doing so, appeal to emotions rather than get lost in fragments of history and dry facts. At the same time, Bosnia and Herzegovina must not be a copy of any other country – Turkey, Croatia or Serbia, since it has sufficient potentials of its own to shine in the collective memory of the world as unique and inimitable.

Therefore, let us try to search for things that could build the foundation of the identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina:

- The peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina have for centuries fostered those same values that Europe is today so proud of, i.e. unity in diversity and tolerance. Bosnia and Herzegovina therefore must not and cannot forget this wealth as a segment of its identity because it makes it remarkable and recognizable among dozens of other countries that can be considered as competitors in the global political, economic, tourism and cultural market. The war has somewhat threatened this wealth of identity, but Bosnia and Herzegovina has all the preconditions and a responsibility to continue building its identity along these lines, because its history and “paths of the Lord” forced the three peoples to live and build their future together in this

small country. This identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina was described by Ivo Andrić in his works, and has been presented to the world by many travel writers, while the war itself has, in the eyes of the global public, additionally crystallized the necessity of mutual coexistence of different cultures, civilizations, religions and peoples. What in the 1990s was perceived as an obstacle by individual political leaders must now once again act as a magnet, since it is the only way for Bosnia and Herzegovina to succeed and to clearly position itself in the world. Foreign tourists have for years visited Sarajevo and Mostar in order to experience a "bit" of the Orient in the heart of Europe. For centuries they have admired the churches, mosques and synagogues rising next to each other and calling people to prayer and acting charitably. Unfortunately, there are people who fall into the trap of believing that one national identity excludes the other, whether it is Bosniac, Croatian or Serbian... The real truth is that the identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina is only recognizable if all of its identities live their singularities to the fullest extent and complement instead of exclude each other. The identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a mosaic of diversity, a thread linking others and differences.

As the survey showed, people are the most precious in the eyes of their neighbours. That is why we could consider their values and lifestyle, which is as a rule widely associated with humor, hospitality and a stress-free life, as an outstanding potential for the identity of the country.

- The second important determinant of BiH identity is the way in which tradition intertwines with modern ways of life, which can seldom be found in Europe. Only a few kilometres away from each other you will find people and a way of life that has not changed for centuries, while at the same time you will feel the pulse of modern life connecting this country with the developed world, whether it is through



fashion, music, film, dance or architecture. As regards their tradition and customs, whether we take Bosniacs, Croats or Serbs, few places in Europe can take pride in preserving as much authenticity, and taking as much care in passing these traditions down jealously from one generation to the other. This rich heritage imbues their ceremonies and celebrations, cuisine and products. Varied traditions and folk customs in this country live rather than being kept in old museums and books.

This is a special quality that Bosnia and Herzegovina must foster and develop. Linked to this is the famous hospitality and kindness of the people of the country, which is almost identical irrespective of their nationality and religion. Coffee, brandy, lots of fun and laughter and stories are what simply captivate guests from western countries. Old crafts tell yet another story, which represents a strong potential for so-called export identity. There is no doubt that the traditional cuisine is also an indispensable part of the modern identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. For example, burek and pies, dating back to the Ottoman era, represent a national dish, whereas to stay in Bosnia without eating ćevapi is considered to be a sin by modern tourists. Failing to taste Herzegovinian wines, lamb or ham is also a mistake that should not be allowed to happen. Today when the entire modern world is searching for the original, Bosnia and Herzegovina, linking tradition with modernity, can certainly be the place to find it.

- A strong determinant of the identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina that is related to tradition is its strong religiosity, permeating all spheres of life regardless of what specific religion and faith we are talking about. For centuries, Christianity and Islam have thrived in this country alongside each other and interacted as two major religions, that is three faiths – Muslim, Orthodox and Catholic. Although the modern global policy is trying to create a huge gap of misunderstanding between the two major religions, this place is one of the few in the

world where these religions and faiths cooperate with each other and complement each other, because their believers, having grown up between a church and a mosque and having all their lives wished each other happy Christmas and Eid Mubarak, cannot and do not know how to do any different. That there is no alternative to mutual respect and appreciation, as difficult as it might be for some people to accept, was unfortunately proved by the recent war. Such a wealth and intertwining of religions is truly a special quality of Bosnia and Herzegovina and it should be preserved and developed in order to prevent the domination of any side from disturbing this harmony. Sarajevo is rightfully called the Jerusalem of Europe and Bosnia and Herzegovina is with respect to its religions a jewel of Europe, which needs to be recognized and preserved.

It is faith in Bosnia and Herzegovina that creates a special link between tradition and modern life. One can see in the Marian Shrine in Međugorje in Herzegovina, the region that has for centuries been faithful to the Catholic Church and has now become one of the largest Catholic centers of pilgrimage in the modern world after six children reported the apparition of the Virgin Mary there. This is the place where millions of believers and unbelievers have for 30 years found comfort, peace, strength and spiritual health.

Bearing witness to the strength of tradition in its own way is Ajvatovica, the oldest Bosniac sanctuary in Bosnia and Herzegovina, situated close to the town of Prusac, known as a spiritual and religious centers of Ottoman Bosnia. Ajvatovica is famous for the legend which tells how Allah showered His mercy upon thirsty inhabitants of Prusac by giving them water after dervish Ajvaz-dedo prayed the morning prayer on the site for forty days. Ever since, it has become a pilgrimage site visited by thousands of Muslim believers from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the world.

Especially valuable are religious temples, which have for centuries been known for their cultural and artistic treasures. For example, Tvrdoš Orthodox monastery was built in 15th century, but its foundations belong to an early Christian church from 4th century and it is still possible to see fresco paintings from that period. The Franciscan Catholic monastery in Humac near Ljubuški preserves the oldest museum in Bosnia and Herzegovina with rich mementos of the Roman period. The beauty of mosques in Sarajevo, Mostar and other towns, some of which date back to 15th century, causes envy throughout the Muslim world. Gazi Husref-Bey's mosque in Sarajevo from 1530 is the largest mosque in the country and at the same time the most significant architectural achievement of the Ottoman era.

We could add to these testimonies dozens of other stories about faith and hope, relying on the supernatural powers of the Creator (whatever He is called in different religions) and His bestowed mercies, which live among people and are passed down to future generations. Bearing witness to how intertwined religions are in the everyday life are many religious institutions that are supporting general well-being of the society and the progress of Bosnia and Herzegovina by promoting culture, education, science and much more.

- The fourth important determinant of the identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the beauty and diversity of its nature. There are but few places in the world where one can find such ecologically preserved richness of flora and fauna. This country and its peoples enjoy mountain expanses of indescribable beauty, wild rivers and rapids, vast fields and forests and even their own part of the Adriatic Sea. Foreign guests are usually caught by surprise when visiting Bosnia and Herzegovina for the first time and witnessing this richness. The country's geographical position is simply unique – this relatively small country spans from the far south of the Adriatic Sea to the

fertile plains in the north below the Sava river, which mostly forms a natural border with Croatia. It is here that in only one day you can enjoy both the Mediterranean and mountain atmosphere. The Central Dinaric Alps, stretching through this country, represent a paradise for nature lovers. This southern extension of the Alps is one of the least explored in Europe. This expanse of untouched nature and wildlife offers immense potential for tourism development. This is the site of the only remaining primeval forest in Europe. It is here that the largest European karst field and one of the last wetlands in Europe are situated. All parts of the country are almost equally rich in immense quantities of clean drinking water, which will represent an invaluable wealth in future. The rivers of Bosnia and Herzegovina tell yet another story, offering great possibilities, given their symbolic importance for the people, as well as opportunities for tourism development. The Una, Vrbas, Tara, Neretva... each river is a brand in itself. Bosnian and Herzegovinian lakes, both natural and artificial, are also excellent destinations for tourism development. Unfortunately, the majority of these outstanding natural potentials remain unused, but they still strongly determine the identity of the country.

- The fifth important determinant of the identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina is its rich cultural heritage, which once again pervades and links different epochs, cultures and civilizations, as much as certain peoples might try to present Bosnian history as their exclusive right. It is in Bosnia and Herzegovina that Western and Eastern influences coming from Latin, i.e. Roman and later Frankish culture, and on the other hand from Greek, or Byzantine, have met for centuries. The Turkish occupation and a century of rule of the Turkish Empire have additionally influenced the cultural, political and religious image of the country. We must also not forget that the Medieval Bosnian Kingdom was at one time among the largest and the most influential kingdoms in the Balkans. Most medieval fortresses in Bosnia and Herzegovina

were built upon original structures from Illyrian and Roman times dating back to the first century AD, which were later, after the fall of the Kingdom of Bosnia in 15th century, rebuilt by Ottomans. In fact, each important historical edifice bears imprints of different cultures and influences. For example, the town of Počitelj, built in stone, a jewel on the Neretva river, was a strategic fortified town that guarded the Neretva river delta from Roman times and was later enlarged by Croatian rulers. Today it preserves some of the most striking examples of brilliance and beauty of the Ottoman culture. Jajce is also a living monument to different periods of the turbulent and colorful history of Bosnia. Among its many roles, it was the last stronghold of the medieval Bosnian Kingdom before it fell under Turkish rule. The location of Kraljeva Sutjeska was another seat of Bosnian kings, and the fortified walls of the Bobovac fortress served as a defence against the Ottoman invasion. Today it is the site of the monument to the last Queen of Bosnia, Katarina, who fled after the Turkish conquest, first to Dubrovnik and then to Rome. The whole city is now a cultural heritage monument. The old town in Sarajevo was a strong commercial centre as far back as the 15th century. Its authenticity is preserved and is characterized by both Ottoman and Viennese architecture. Mostar is the farthest pearl of the Orient in the west, offering thousands of tourists the spirit of old times and traditional crafts. In fact, the Old Bridge in Mostar from 1566 and the Bridge on the Drina river in Višegrad, whose construction was described by the Nobel Prize winner Ivo Andrić, are the two most beautiful bridges preserved from the Ottoman period in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The natural and cultural heritage are in this country inseparable. Numerous towns, fortresses and shrines were built in pristine natural settings and still bear witness to the wisdom of their constructors.

If we were to look for a true symbol of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian historical heritage, this could rightfully be the mystic stećaks or bilig

stones, tombstones carved out in the period between 11th and 15th century. The custom of raising such tombstones is unique in the world and bears witness to the creative spirit of the people of this country in the Middle Ages.

As regards the recent history of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the so-called national liberation movement during the Second World War under the leadership of partisan commander Josip Broz Tito represents yet another indispensable part of the modern identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In fact, it is on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina that decisive battles for liberation were fought, which were later recounted to generations of youth in the former Yugoslavia, and were known around the world due to cult partisan movies. Destinations such as Neretva, Sutjeska, Kozara and Drvar had at one time been attractive tourist sites, and they still hold enormous potential for future. Likewise, let us not forget that in Jajce, in the Second Session of AVNOJ, socialist Yugoslavia was born.

If we take into account all the aforementioned features which should represent a specific foundation of the modern identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, one might still wonder – can a country that is presently divided between two entities and three peoples and exists as a form of protectorate have a clear and recognizable identity? As impossible as it might sound, experience and practice from around the world prove it is possible. Actually, life itself will force us to support and promote such a “common” identity, which by no means excludes the clear and recognizable identities of Croats, Serbs and Bosniacs. Quite the contrary, the common identity is only enhanced by the strengthening of the identities of the three peoples, as paradoxical as it might sound. In fact, it is only in this way that Bosnia and Herzegovina can be promoted as a country embracing differences, bringing together religions and peoples, tradition and modern life. It is the only way to preserve its wealth in diversity for

the future. Ultimately, only identities that are lived and breathed survive. Those artificially created are short-lived. Therefore, while creating the modern identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is by all means necessary to take into account what is already there, and extract from it the very best, that which is common to and connects us all.

One might wonder – why have a recognizable identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina if all three peoples are seeking to strengthen their own particularities? It is because individual peoples can only “sell” their identities to the demanding modern world if they package them as a part of the common umbrella brand of Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. if they become a part of the common “network”. It is only in this way that they can give prominence to their own regional or ethnic particularities. Therefore it is important to emphasize once again that we should by no means “imitate” the identities of ethnic motherlands of individual peoples or countries they look up to as their models, since our national features embrace so much wealth that it is quite sufficient and deserves to be presented to others.

On the other hand, the identity does not necessarily depend on the political structure of the country. All it takes to form an identity is to be a part of the community inhabiting a certain area. Tourists do not care for artificially created borders anyway, and will during their visits try to see as much diversity in a small area as possible. Likewise, as much as the internal structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina might change in future, the geographical and historical regions that had survived for centuries will continue to exist. By strengthening their identity, we will be strengthening the identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina. And strengthening of the common brand of Bosnia and Herzegovina will, in turn, bring benefits to all that live here.

Let us not forget that the identity is a prerequisite for creating of image. There is no image without a clear identity and a strategy for communicating this identity.

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## A Note about the Author of the Study

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He published a series of research studies related to these issues. Especially prominent among them are the publications *“The Country as a Brand”* (Matica hrvatska, Zagreb, 2009) and *“Croatia and its Neighbours – How is Croatia Perceived in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Slovenia and Serbia”* (AGM, Zagreb, 2010). He is also the author of the study *“What Croats, Bosniacs and Serbs Think of Each Other and What They Think of Bosnia and Herzegovina”*, which was published in 2010 in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Božo Skoko is one of the leading regional experts on public relations. He is a partner and a strategic adviser of Millenium promocija, the leading Croatian public relations agency. He is a guest professor at the University of Mostar and University of Dubrovnik. He has also been a welcome guest at many conferences in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and abroad.

As a former journalist, he worked from 1996 to 2001 as an editor with Croatian Television, and thereafter was a correspondent for the Federation Television in Sarajevo. He was born in 1976 in Ljubuški (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

