



YOUTH STUDY BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA 2018/2019



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1	Foreword	3
2	Introduction	5
3	Methodology	7
4	Youth in BiH –General Remarks	11
5	Leisure and Lifestyle	15
6	Trust and Values	21
7	Family and Friends	25
8	Mobility	33
9	Education	41
10	(Un)Employment	45
11	Politics	51
12	Demographic indicators of youth in BiH	57
	Bibliography	62
	About the Authors	64
	Footnotes	65
	Table of Figures	66
	Table of Tables	66

1

FOREWORD

For more than 20 years the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) has been actively supporting partners throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina in their efforts to consolidate and strengthen peace and democracy. As a German political foundation named after Friedrich Ebert, who was the first German president that was elected democratically, we hold fast to his belief that democracy needs democrats. In this spirit FES has always put particular emphasis on its work with and for young people, both in Germany and in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as in its other, more than 100 offices worldwide.

For a second time after 2014, the FES commissioned a thorough, empirical survey about youth in Southeast Europe. Ten country and one comparative report aim to provide politicians and experts with a comprehensive understanding about the situation, needs, attitudes and values of the young generation. The present study on youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina forms an integral part of this joint effort.

Furthermore, since the surveys in all the countries are based on the same methodology and questionnaire, it also enables us to provide a separate and comprehensive regional comparative perspective. We hope that these inputs will contribute to the policy development process aimed to improve the societal, economic and political development of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the wider region.

It will also serve as an important point of orientation for the future design of our own work with youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as in the wider region.

Sarajevo, January 2019

Nermin Kujovic and Marius Müller-Hennig

2

INTRODUCTION

Youth Study 2018 is an empirical study on young people in Bosnia-Herzegovina (further to BiH), which provides analytical insight into perceptions, attitudes and values of youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding some key issues in BiH's changing society and is a continuation of research from 2015, when the first *Youth Study for BiH 2015*¹ was produced. The first Youth Study has been presented and promoted in Sarajevo, Berlin, Brussels and in many other academic conferences and has provoked significant interest amongst the scholarly and general public (results have been presented at the Adriatic Forum and some other significant policy-related events, for example).

Based on the results of the Youth Study 2014, a smaller research team (Lejla Turčilo, Amer Osmić) developed a project for the development of political and media literacy among youth (since these two aspects have proven to be the most undeveloped ones among young people), conducted focus groups in eight cities in Bosnia- Herzegovina, and produced a report on focus groups as well as the publication *Youth, Politics and Media: Manual for Development of Political and Media Literacy of Youth* published in 2017². This is how the project of Youth Study 2014 continued to produce results down to the present.

The Youth Study 2018 is a continuation of efforts to gain insight into trends and tendencies among young people in Bosnia-Herzegovina and thus generate important data and analysis which can be used both in academia and policy planning and development. Using empirical data gathered by field research, the Study examines and interprets attitudes and views of youth regarding the following issues:

- Leisure and lifestyle
- Values, religion and trust
- Family and friends
- Mobility
- Education
- Employment
- Politics

Having discussed findings and results of the field research and after placing these in the wider context of life and society in Bosnia-Herzegovina, this study offers some concrete recommendations on how to alter opinions of youth in BiH society as well as on directions in which to develop youth and social policies in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

3

METHODOLOGY

A quantitative research method (survey) was used to examine attitudes, perceptions, awareness, expectations and approaches towards changing realities of people 14 – 29 years of age. The

data-collection method used in this research was computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI). Table 1 contains basic information on the research process.

TABLE 1: **Basic information about the research process**

Time period to conduct the research	26 February 2018. – 11 March 2018.
Data collection method	Computer-assisted personal interviewing – CAPI
Instrument	The research instrument used in this research was developed by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
Research sample	People aged 14 to 29 belonging to the general population of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
The size of the sample	Total sample size is 1,000 respondents.
Representativeness	A random stratified sample representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, entities, ethnic majority areas and municipalities. Participants were members of randomly selected households who had recently had their birthday.

In order to identify a representative, random probability sample of 1,000 young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina aged 14–29, Prism Research (the implementing field research agency) used the following sample frame – the list of urban and rural settlements in each municipality and geographic region with the number of young inhabitants registered in the last census conducted in 2013. For this survey, a multi-stage random stratified probability sample was designed. The sample was stratified by entities, after that by ethnic majority areas and then by geographic regions. For the purpose of sample stratification, Prism Research used 18 geographic regions. There were 12 geographic regions in the Federation of BiH, 5 in Croat majority regions and municipalities (Posavina, Zenica-Doboj and Central Bosnia Canton – municipalities where Croats are majority, Neretva-Herzegovina Canton – municipalities where Croats are majority, Western Herzegovina Canton and Canton 10) and 7 in Bosniak-majority regions and municipalities (Una-Sana Canton, Tuzla Canton, Zen-

ica-Doboj Canton, Gorazde Canton, Central Bosnia Canton – municipalities where Bosniaks are a majority, Neretva-Herzegovina Canton – municipalities where Bosniaks are majority, Sarajevo Canton). There were 5 geographic regions in Republika Srpska (Banjaluka – Northwest, Doboj – North, Bijeljina – Northeast, Pale – East and Trebinje – Southeast). Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina was treated as a separate – the 18th-region.

Within each geographic region, the sample was further stratified by the size of the municipalities. In that regard, three categories of municipalities' sizes were defined on the basis of the total number of inhabitants: small – up to 25,000 inhabitants, medium size – from 25,000 to 45,000 inhabitants, and big cities/municipalities, with over 45,000 thousand inhabitants.

The Primary Sampling Units (PSUs) were selected in the first stage of the survey sampling. In this stage, within each of 17 geographical regions (Brčko District is defined as a single-municipality region), a minimum of 1 municipality in each category was

randomly selected using the simple random sampling procedure with PASW Statistics Sampling Module software. In addition to this, regional centres (in total, 18 regional centres) were selected by default for each geographic region. Out of 141 municipalities (plus Brčko District), we selected 61 municipalities for the sample using this method. The city of Mostar was divided into 6 different units according to ethnic majority.

The SPSS Statistics software package was used for statistical data analysis. Statistical analysis used for data processing is descriptive and inferential, i.e. univariate (response distribution). Socio-demographic characteristics such as: gender, age cohort, type of community (village, city), socio-professional status, level of education of respondents and their fathers were used as a basis for identification of deviations, or lack of connection between certain types of evidence. All the results are presented on consecutively numbered graphs or charts. The graphs and charts show the results as percentages.

4

YOUTH IN BIH – GENERAL REMARKS

The opinions of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a topic we have been assessing on a continuous basis since 2014. At that time, we conducted an empirical research using an analytical approach tuned to the actual opinions of young people in this country, starting with insights into their socio-economic status, but also their educational and cultural needs, unemployment and employment opportunities, value systems, attitudes towards democracy and political activity, European integrations, migration, family and social networks as well as the way they use their free time and life in general.

The above-mentioned research included over 1,000 people aged 15 to 27 from the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Of these, 45 percent were young people from rural and 55 percent from urban areas. The aim was to find the most objective indicators at the level of the society as a whole. We wanted to find out what young people think about their own status in society, and not, as is customary, leave it up to others to discuss youth from the perspective of their own insight and perceptions. The results of this research were published in 2015 in a separate book printed in both Bosnian and English and entitled *Youth Study in Bosnia and Herzegovina by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and the Faculty of Political Science in Sarajevo*.

THE SITUATION FOR YOUTH IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA FURTHER DETERIORATED

Unfortunately, indicators reflecting negative attitudes on the part of young people in society, which we derived not only through the mentioned research, but rather from other relevant databases, have not improved. In many segments, the situation is even worse today. Not only are 60 percent of young people unemployed – one in every five of those persons looking for a job has been searching in vain for more than five years, while half of them have been looking for more than two years. Over 50 percent of primary-school children from poor families do not continue their education, while about 10 percent of them have no health insurance, despite numerous somatic and mental illnesses that burden this society as it passes through an overly difficult post-war transition³. In spite of all this, the percentage of young people who are active in politics, the non-governmental sector or some leisure-time activity, etc., is negligible.

In addition to unemployment, an inadequate educational system, the depressing political situation in the country, feelings of lack of prospects, etc., the mass exit of young people to other countries has continued. Their departure from the country also reduces a key source of potential for this society, possibly having fatal consequences for its future development. An additional problem in all this is related to the fact that the mass exodus of young people from Bosnia and Herzegovina has been something that many experts have been drawing attention to for years, but almost nothing has been done to stem it or at least slow it down. It is true that young and educated people are not leaving only Bosnia and Herzegovina. They are also leaving other countries, even more developed ones, or socially stable

societies⁴. However, there is one very important difference in all this. From Bosnia and Herzegovina, young people are leaving out of need, because they cannot get jobs, get married or meet existential needs, and due to the fact that the ruling elites have for years been responsible for a conflict-plagued political situation and an unsettling atmosphere of insecurity, fear, etc., whereas young people in more developed societies are looking for a situation even better than the ones they already have.

Due to the drastic fall in birth-rates and fertility, and the massive departure of young people from this country, Bosnian society is rapidly aging. We shall present several indicators in support of this statement. The decline in the percentage of the youngest population (0–14 years) among the total number of inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina has become extremely worrying. From the census performed in 1971, when 34.4 percent were registered in the total population, to the 2013 census, the share of young people in the total population of this country fell to only 15.4 percent. This means that in this period their percentage dropped by more than half. On the other hand, the situation surrounding the oldest cohort of the population (over 65 years of age) has reversed, with its percentage almost tripling in the same period. It grew from a negligible 4.7 percent (1971 census) to 14.2 percent (2013 census) in total, as is shown in the official reports of the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition, from 2013 to 2016, there were 23,000 fewer births than deaths, while last year (2017) there were as many as 6,388 fewer, which for a small society such as Bosnia and Herzegovina is of a worrisome magnitude.

Negative population growth also goes hand in hand with a drastic decrease in the number of pupils in elementary schools. The recently issued publication *Bosnia and Herzegovina in Numbers 2017* (Statistics Agency of BiH, 2018) indicates that 287,694 pupils were enrolled in the school year 2016/2017, which is almost half as much as thirty years earlier. According to estimates by the United Nations for Bosnia and Herzegovina, by the middle of this century the number of inhabitants could decrease by about 20 percent compared to 2015 (UN, 2015), while the share of young people (0–14) will decline by another 4 percent in comparison to the indicators from the 2013 census. At the same time, the portion of older persons over 60 may grow dramatically – to even reach 40 percent (UN, 2015).

To sum up, due to the low birth-rate and young people leaving the country, the aging of the population is accelerating, and this will in the future have multiple socio-economic implications, i.e. negatively affecting various aspects of human life, starting from the structure of the family, social security, employment, the economy, etc.. This issue is therefore without a doubt one of the greatest challenges facing modern Bosnian society.

There is nothing more precious to a society than the people who make it up, and especially young and educated people. This means social communities that attend to themselves and their future, endeavouring at all costs to preserve and keep especially young and educated people. It is also well-known that only „societies of

neglect“⁵ do not appreciate their young and educated people, who are then benevolently given up to other societies. Therefore, one should not be surprised to see each and every kind of marginalisation of youth possible here in comparison to developed societies.

CRISIS OF THE LOCAL FAMILY SYSTEM

The second problem faced by the modern Bosnian society which is dramatically influencing young people is related to the crisis of the local family system and is not only the result of the so-called demographic transition through which this society is moving, but is also due to several additional factors discussed in more detail in the previously cited work *The Study on Youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Ziga et al., 2015). We will only mention a few of these here.

It is evident that families around the world, and especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, are affected by instability – as Bauman (2009) put it: exposed to a „looseness of relationships and reversal of obligations“ among their members, suppressing those traditional, firm relations of integration and hierarchy characterising patriarchal communities. In short, the family is increasingly „opening up“ to various social networks and institutions that are becoming involved more and more in socialisation, articulation of the value system, etc. This not only involves formally structured changes within the family, i.e. the atomisation of traditional family communities, a reduction in their average numbers, but also a redefinition of the nature of intra-family relations, both in terms of the parent-child relationship as well as that between spouses, children, etc., and as reflected in the number of divorces of marriages, extramarital relationships and single-parent families. However, local society is not yet ready to take on the roles that have so far been assigned almost exclusively to the family, starting with socialisation, economic and social care, and so forth, thus creating a „vacuum“ and then filling it with the street, peers and the media. When it comes to families in BiH, we are still far away from the transformation of family relationships witnessed in developed societies. In addition, we have been mistaken in thinking that it is possible to undergo a transformation from the traditional to a post-modern, atomised type of family system overnight. The consequences of such misconceptions are evident every step along the way, from an increase in violence in the streets, at school, in the family⁶, in the collapse of the system of values, as well as in the growth of all kinds of social pathologies, etc.

If we want to stop the catastrophic mass exit of young people from this country, and reverse the negative demographic trends that are key to the future of this society, it is necessary to do the following:

First, ensure a desirable environment for people to live in, especially young people, throughout the country, especially in rural areas. These areas should be fostered in all segments of life.

There are many possible comparative advantages offered by life there that need to be activated and leveraged, especially if one takes into account that traditional rural areas have higher birth rates than urban centres. In addition, it is essential to plan development of sub-regional centres so that local inhabitants can adequately meet their needs in education, health, culture, business, etc. It is an absurd fact that the share accounted for by agriculture in the GDP of this country has declined from 14 percent to only 8 percent, and that out of the 31 percent of the population engaged in agriculture, only 4.8 percent sell their products on the market.

Secondly, since stable biological reproduction is in the interests of every society, it would be only logical for Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a common living space of all its peoples, to have a well-designed policy promoting a healthy birth-rate. It is absurd to launch separate population policies in ethnically heterogeneous communities. As such, due to spatial-administrative and other limitations, these policies are unable to produce the desired results, and are moreover invariably discriminatory.

Experience teaches us that an effective pro-natal policy rests on activating all the important factors that can motivate people to have more children, among which we especially want to highlight the following:

- Ensuring the social security of fertile married couples, especially for young people (stimulating their employment, facilitating housing and other issues of existential importance);
- Economic and social protection of pregnant women (guaranteeing workplace during pregnancy and maternity leave, including appropriate financial support / salary). For example, in some Scandinavian countries 80 percent of the wage or a full ten-month salary is guaranteed for one year for all pregnant women;
- Appropriate social care for children, both pre-school and of school age (accessible accommodation in child-care facilities, free education, appropriate health care, etc.);
- Special incentives for having a large number of children through financial assistance to parents, which must be provided continuously over the years when these children are raised and extend to their education, while including tax breaks and other social benefits to support parents;
- Revitalisation of the social role of the family, especially in the educational-socialising segment, to enable the most normal growth of children possible in their capacity as the most vulnerable members of the population.

Every cohesive society appreciates its own human resources, especially its young and educated people, training and educating them and nurturing their reproduction. Only “social communities of neglect”, and we can include Bosnia and Herzegovina among these, consider this to be an unimportant issue, renouncing this most precious resource and abandoning it to others.

We believe that such continuous research on the opinions of young people in society is of crucial importance and that through comparative analyses of the current situation compared to the previous period it can provide a reliable bearing regarding what and how to overcome certain undesirable situations in society and how to carry on and encourage things that are good.

5

LEISURE AND LIFESTYLE

LEISURE AND LIFESTYLE OF BIH YOUTH – HEDONISTIC AND MEDIA ORIENTED

Leisure time affects the quality of life of young persons. „Free time is one of the determinants of development, it does not work entirely independently and is therefore expressed in two ways: a space in which the interaction of inhabitants is made possible and as a space for self-development and self-realisation“ (Bašić et al., 1993, p. 132).

Leisure time is essential for the functioning of the individual and his/her personal happiness. „Leisure is a time for active vacation, recreation, positive development, socialisation, humanisation and creative personality confirmation“ (Previšić, 2000, p. 406).

Plenković (2000) assigns leisure time four important aspects: freedom (as the foundation of all science, the essence of mankind), creativity (through which mankind knows and then acquires freedom), action (considered a transient form of human life because it contains elements of creativity and work) and work (which is of a mechanical nature).

There are several factors that influence the ways in which youth spend their free time. First of all, there is a wide range of options and choices for young people in their free time. Secondly, exponential growth of communication media and platforms affect the leisure time of youth significantly and they seem to dominate the scene in these options that young people have in their leisure time. Also, the variety of activities that young people participate in during their schooling and/or occupation make them not want to be so active during their leisure time, with some of them seeing this as “time for doing nothing”. Mišigoj-Duraković (2000) points out that contemporary civilization is characterised by a reduction in physical activity and passive individuals, especially when it comes

to leisure time. Many young people consider leisure time to be time to “do nothing”.

Youth Study 2015 showed that young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina spend most of their free time in media-oriented and media-focused activities, and that they do not show any great interest in political events, either local or global. The 2015 youth study has shown that young people spend their leisure time mostly in interaction with information and communication technologies, usually digital or the Internet (83.5 percent of young people said that using these is one of the main ways to spend their free time). Average daily Internet usage among young people back then was 3.8 hours. However, the focus groups formed for the purpose of writing the Manual for Political and Media Literacy have reflected a change here, as a large number of youngsters, when asked how much time they spend online, said they cannot answer this question because they have their smartphones with them constantly and are always connected to the Internet, so they cannot estimate how much time they spend online and how much offline. This was confirmed by this year’s research, with 70.3 percent of the young people surveyed stating that they were connected practically all the time.

29.9 percent of young people surveyed in connection with *Youth Study 2015* said that the Internet was used for the purpose of being active in social networks, mostly Facebook, which was confirmed in this year’s Study, with 85.4 percent of the respondents saying that they use social media often, while only 2.8 percent said they never use social media. The most frequently used social media are Facebook and Instagram, while, interestingly, Snapchat is not that widely used.

In the focus groups, young people stated that social networks were their main source of information on social as well as political events. They rarely seek information from television, and read

newspapers rarely or almost never. This has not changed much since then, with 27.4 percent of young people now saying that they never read newspapers and 33.8 percent that they do so less than once a month, while 37 percent of young people state that they watch TV two hours a day and 3.9 percent do not watch TV at all (in Youth Study 2015, almost one-third of young people said that they watched television less than 2 hours a day, while 33.3 percent said that they watched TV one to two hours a day). In the focus group discussions, we learned that young people do not watch television for information purposes, especially about political events in the country or at the global level, instead mainly watching TV to keep track of music, reality programs and other entertainment content. It is especially worrying that 18.6 percent of young people state that they never read any books and 41 percent say they never travel abroad. So we can say that their perspectives are mainly shaped by social media and online sources of information as well as by family members, as 73.3 percent of youth say they socialise with their family members on a daily basis, while only 2 percent spend free time with their family once a month or less.

Research conducted by Pehlic (2014) with secondary school students has shown that watching TV, listening to music, engaging in sports and going out with friends are the most common activities of youth in their leisure time. Only 16 percent of respondents in his research said that they feel they have quality leisure time. As the main reasons for not having quality leisure time they cited: school, other obligations they have, parents and lack of financial resources (Pehlić, 2014, p. 71). In the 2018 survey for this Study, 26.4 percent of young people stated that they never engage in any sports, while 23.3 percent said they do so only rarely. 45.6 percent say they never do anything creative, such as art, 57.7 percent never go to a youth centre (in all fairness it must be said that there are not many of these, especially in smaller local communities) and 66.1 percent say they never engage in any kind of voluntary activities. It is more than obvious that social engagement does not lay a dominant role in the leisure time of young people in Bosnia-Herzegovina, nor do sports or the arts. This confirms the hypothesis of Mišigoj-Duraković (2000) regarding the reduction of physical activity and passive individuals, especially when it comes to leisure time.

When it comes to lifestyles of youth, it is important to mention that young people develop individual lifestyles as a response to the worldwide phenomena of globalisation, increased uncertainty in the contemporary world and changing ethical and other norms in society. Adjustment to external rules and acceptance of external norms is not viewed to be a necessity. Instead, young people want to choose their own identity and lifestyle.

Tomić Koludrović and Leburic (2001) define lifestyles of youth as “stable aspects of organisation of everyday life in certain life situations.” (p.63). Tomić Koludrović (2008) specifies six lifestyles of young people based on their identity and ways of spending leisure time: 1. Hedonists/intellectual (self-confident, care about visual appearance, care about health, leisure: oriented towards high culture – going to theatre, reading books); 2. Trendy (making

progress in life, having qualities of leaders, making decisions quickly, leisure: sports, computers, fancy restaurants); 3. Superficial/social (many friends, often invited to parties, making friends easily, leisure: coffee shops, discotheques, shopping); 4. Traditional/family-oriented (would rather listen to others than speak themselves, leisure: staying home, listening to folk music, hand-crafts, helping elderly people or children); 5. Socially engaged (always working on behalf of others, belief they can make changes, leisure: communication, helping others, a need to be engaged in various activities); 6. Modern (must be first in everything, fancy and expensive clothes, very careful about diet; leisure: doing nothing, going out).

When it comes to lifestyle of young people in Bosnia-Herzegovina, it seems worth mentioning that in 2014 the Ministry of Education in Canton Sarajevo acting in cooperation with the Association XY issued a syllabus called „Healthy Lifestyles“ targeting pupils at elementary schools, which should help youth to have more quality life and to learn what quality life is.⁷

LIFESTYLE OF YOUTH IN BIH – DATA FROM THE SURVEY

According to this survey, young people in Bosnia-Herzegovina enjoy shopping (33.9 percent of them say they go shopping at least once a week, although half of them have never done any shopping online), and 39 percent of young people believe that wearing branded clothes is important or very important. Healthy eating is important or very important to 84.5 percent of young people, while only 1.2 percent of them says it is not important at all. Of the only 16.7 percent of young people who say that they have more money for personal needs in comparison to other youth in BiH, it is questionable how much they can afford healthy food and branded clothes. Yet 81 percent of respondents say that looking good is important or very important to them (48.5 percent of them say they are satisfied with the way they look and 27.2 percent are very satisfied) (Figure 1).

51 percent of youth say they never drink any alcohol and 96 percent never used any soft drugs. Also, 66.6 percent of youth say they do not smoke cigarettes and never have (Figure 2). On the other hand, 20.3 percent of them smokes cigarettes every day.

When it comes to sexual and reproductive health, the most common age for the first sexual intercourse is 17–18, with 42 percent of young people saying they use birth control methods as a rule. However, 15.5 percent of young people were uncomfortable about discussing this issue.

71.6 percent of respondents rate their health as very good or excellent. In general, one can say that young people are aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles and try to base their lives on these foundations as much as possible.

In this context, it is interesting to see that 66.3 percent of young people say that engaging in sports is important or very important, although 49 percent of youth do sports rarely or

FIGURE 1: Perception of look among youth

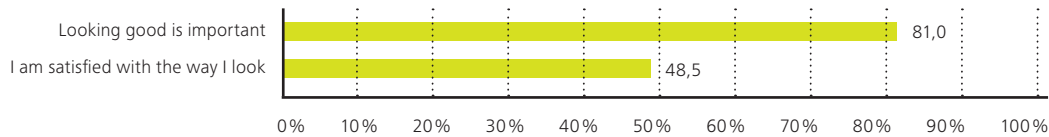
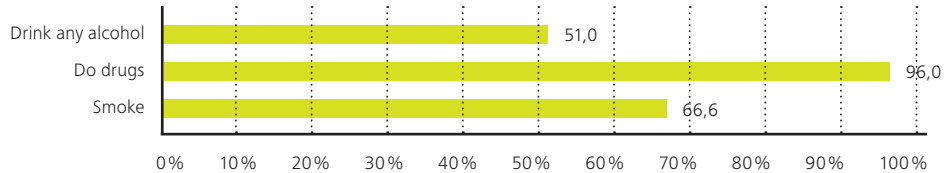
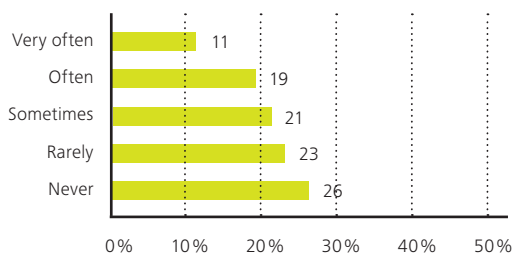


FIGURE 2: Attitude of youth towards unhealthy habits – I never ...



never (figure 3). Since engaging in sports has a significant commercial aspect (it requires specific equipment, membership fees at sports clubs or for using sports facilities), one can say that young people would like to do sports and consider this to be quite important, but cannot afford it. 40.8 percent of them say that they are concerned about poverty in society, allowing one to identify this as an issue that affects their life. Of course, there are some sports activities that do not require significant financial investments by youth, but most of sports clubs are commercial ones. At the same time, the state invests little or none funds to make sports activities more available and more affordable for youth (one good example is opening of sports park Safet Zajko in Sarajevo, but these initiatives are rare).

FIGURE 3: Engagement of youth in sports



If we compare responses from youth with Tomić Koludrović and Leburčić's (2001) types of youth lifestyles, one can say that none of them completely applies to youth in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It appears that they do care about health in that they believe that healthy food and health in general are important. Doing sports is not something they do often, however, nor do they read books, so they do not seem to exhibit the traits of the hedonist/intellectual type as defined by Tomić Koludrović and Leburčić. They are trendy when it comes to using computers and online media, but are also superficial, as significant portions of their leisure time are devoted to shopping, coffee shops, etc. They are also family-oriented since they live with their parents and are not socially engaged and because volunteering or going to youth centres is not the way they opt to spend their leisure time. Since almost half of

them say they spend leisure time doing nothing and 39 percent fancy branded, expensive clothes and 85 percent care about their diet, one can say that they fit mostly into a category of the modern type of youth as defined by Tomić Koludrović and Leburčić.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO SUPPORT MORE QUALITY LEISURE TIME FOR BIH YOUTH?

How can society, i.e. institutions, change such a perspective held by young people so as to improve their lifestyle and create more quality leisure time for them? The institutions that are primarily responsible for issues of culture, sport and leisure are the relevant ministries at the entity levels in BiH. At the state level, the BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs is in charge. "The main challenges facing young people in this field are: lack of legal regulations, lack of strategy or a strategic framework for development and investment in the field of culture and sports, lack of a programme-oriented approach, lack of institutional capacity, poor co-ordination and cooperation between different levels/government institutions in BiH and financial difficulties⁸" (MCABH, 2018).

According to previous research, most young people are dissatisfied with the support offered by local authorities in terms of cultural services and programmes as well as making sports available. More young people are dissatisfied with physical/sports education than satisfied with it. Friends and colleagues followed by television have a greater influence on the decisions of young people to participate in cultural events. Only 7 percent of young people are engaged in sports activities within any organisation or association. The lack of an appropriate strategy on the part of the institutions of government in the fields of sport and culture is an example of young talent being directly neglected. The lack of legal regulations to govern support by government institutions in the field of work with youth, their free time, and culture and sports creates a stereotype of youth not being interested in these activities⁹ (NGOCO, 2011).

This survey has also shown that there is an interest on the part of youth to participate in, for example, sports activities, but that this interest is not pursued in actual practice. Young people do feel that a healthy life is important and that they should seek this, but still they spend a lot of time in passive, computer-oriented activities. Also, when it comes to lifestyle, it appears that they have certain standard models which they look up to, i.e. a person who is healthy, well-dressed, enjoys shopping, is connected and networked all the time and from time to time does nothing (which is to say, is inactive) as a way to rest and recuperate. So young people try to replicate this hedonistic/intellectual lifestyle, but we must say that the intellectual is less popular (reading is not high on their list of priorities), and they are also more oriented toward having fun in leisure time and interested in themselves rather than devoting their time to benefitting others (voluntary engagement is not prioritised, either). So one of the tasks of educational institutions and some youth-engaged NGOs could be to promote and support participation of young people in cultural activities (reading clubs at schools, funding tickets for theatre plays for students, etc.) as well as to promote voluntary commitments more and encourage young people to volunteer more (for humanitarian organisations, the Red Cross, etc.). Also, since using online media is an important part of life for young people, a more active approach towards the development of digital literacy (and media literacy in general) from an early age would be very important, as would the development of a concept of media literacy in formal education, as a stand-alone course or as part of some already existing courses (some aspects of media literacy are included in formal education, but the concept is outdated and uninteresting for students (Tajić, 2013). Sports and cultural activities should be more accessible to young people (in schools or in sports clubs and facilities that would be financed by local authorities, so having money and being able to pay for equipment and facilities would not be a pre-condition for youth to engage in sport). Local authorities should also consider opening youth centres, which would offer a variety of services for young people, from cultural events, training programmes and courses in different fields, sports activities, places for socialising, etc. This would appear to require a huge investment by local governments, but it is possible, especially bearing in mind that such services are already provided to the elderly population (centres for healthy aging have been established in many towns, for example – an excellent service, incidentally), so something like this could and should be provided to youth, especially in smaller towns.

In general, youth policy related to improving the quality of their living (including leisure time) should be more practically oriented, more coordinated at all levels (cantons, entities and the state) so that differences in approaches to youth and differences in opportunities they have in different parts of the country are minimised.

KEY FINDINGS:

- 85.4 percent of young people state that they use social media often, while only 2.8 percent say they never use social media. The most frequently used social media are Facebook and Instagram, while, interestingly, Snapchat is not that widely used.
- It is especially worrying that 18.6 percent of young people say they never read any books and 41 percent state they never travel abroad. So one can say that their perspectives are mainly shaped by social media and online sources of information as well as by family members, since 73.3 percent of young people state that they socialise with their family members on a daily basis, while only 2 percent spend free time with family once a month or less.
- This survey has shown that there is an interest on the part of youth in participating in, for example, sports activities, but this interest is not put into practice. Young people do feel that healthy life is important and that they should live one, but still they spend a lot of time in passive, computer-oriented activities. Also, when it comes to lifestyle, it would appear that they have a certain model which they look up to, namely that of a person who is healthy, well-dressed, enjoys shopping, is connected and networked all the time and from time to time does nothing to rest and recuperate. So, young people try to conform with this standard type of a hedonistic rather than intellectual lifestyle (reading is not high on their priority list), and they are also more oriented toward having fun in leisure time and interested in themselves rather than using leisure time to the benefit of others (voluntary commitments are not prioritised at all).

6

TRUST AND VALUES

Social trust is seen as the glue that binds societies together. With most of us living in environments where we do not personally know our fellow citizens, it is trust that allows us to interact with each other in an open and efficient way. Only through these repeated and regular types of interactions with strangers is it possible to build a social fabric resilient to the challenges of modern development. In this sense, social trust is defined as “the belief that others will not deliberately or knowingly do us harm, if they can avoid it, and will look after our interests, if this is possible” (Delhey & Newton 2005: 311).

Putnam uses the term social capital to describe this type of social cohesion, defining these connections among individuals as “social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (Putnam 2000: 19). He furthermore associates social capital to ‘civic virtue’, or the willingness to work together for a public good. Greater levels of social capital are linked to stronger social cohesion, higher levels of citizens’ participation and more effective democratic practices. A lack of social capital can lead to a withdrawal from public engagement into homogeneous and family networks (UNDP, 2009). Therefore, the role that social interactions and trust plays in a society should not be understated.

Although social capital has been explored in sociological and psychological literature, as well as at mezzo (community) or micro (individual) levels, here I mostly focus on the political science and macro-level (government and society) aspect of the phenomenon. From this perspective, social capital can further be broken down according to the type of connections it is based on. We can distinguish between bonding social capital, bridging social capital, and linking social capital. Bonding social capital is characterised by horizontal relationships and connects people on the basis of similarity (Field 2003). In its ultimate form, it is based on kinship

and familial networks. In the BiH context we can distinguish two relevant types of bonding networks: those based on family relations and those based on shared ethnic identity (UNDP, 2009). The type called bridging social capital is also based on horizontal relationships, but connects people on the basis of diversity and different background (Field, 2003). Here we tend to focus on interactions with acquaintances, friends and relations at the workplace. Finally, linking social capital is based on vertical relationships between people of different wealth, power, and authority. Of these three types, all can have positive and negative outcomes, but bridging social capital tends to favour societal cohesion and democratic engagement. Previously, bonding networks had also been equated with particularised trust, and bridging networks with generalised trust (Šalaj 2009).

We can also distinguish between the types of exclusive and inclusive social capital based on restrictions to inclusion of new members in the social network. Inclusive social capital has few restrictions and new membership is open and even encouraged. This leads to greater levels of diversity in terms of, for example, ethnicity, gender, age or education. On the other hand, exclusive social capital is characteristic of closed networks, where membership is based on attributes such as family membership, wealth, religion, race and so on. This restricts and can even prevent membership of certain individuals or groups (Pickering 2007: 112). While the two classifications are not synonymous, bonding networks tend to be more exclusive and bridging networks more inclusive (UNDP, 2009).

At the same time, prejudice and suspicion towards others as well as societal and political institutions, along with a perceived and real discrimination can erode trust and social capital, leading individuals to isolate themselves from society. Individuals who do not engage in networks, especially the inclusive kind, do not

contribute to societal development and democracy. This is of particular concern for youth as they migrate from a family setting and more frequently encounter differences through everyday interactions. For youth, trust towards others who are different has to be learned and practiced through repeated interactions.¹⁰

Several studies have investigated the issue of trust in Bosnia, but only the previous round of the “Youth Study Bosnia and Herzegovina” (Žiga et al. 2015) had a specific focus on youth, in the article written by Jelena Brkić Šmigoc. All other studies focused on the population in general, among which the UNDP study “The Ties that Bind” (2009) and the study by Berto Šalaj “Socijalno povjerenje u Bosni i Hercegovini” (2009) stand out. In addition, the World Values Survey Wave 4 was carried out in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2001 and included a large number of questions related to values, trust, and religiosity (WVS, 2014).

Previous research concluded that BiH has very low levels of societal trust in comparison to other countries of the region and is at the same time dominated by strong familial ties. As such, “BiH society is more characterized by bonding social capital, characterized by high trust among members of one’s own group and close groups, and low trust towards non-members of these groups” (UNDP 2009: 27). Especially in contact towards minorities, such

as the Roma, there is a large level of prejudice and discrimination (Šalaj 2009). At the same time, any form of bonding network and trust does not extend to all members of one’s ethnic group and is mostly limited to immediate members of one’s family and inner circle (UNDP, 2009). Looking at results of the *World Values Survey (2001) from one generation ago, not much has changed in regard to general levels of trust.*

The results of the 2015 BiH *Youth Study* indicate that youth are characterised by particularised trust, very similar to the general population (Žiga et al., 2015). They have high levels of trust towards groups they know well, such as family and close friends, and average or low trust towards acquaintances and citizens in general (see Table 2). These findings are in line with the levels of participation in voluntary organisations and interest towards politics. Levels of tolerance are generally higher and mostly expressed towards groups with similar background, and much less towards minorities. On a positive note, the study found very low levels of perceived discrimination among youth (based on religion: 8.7 percent, wealth: 7.5 percent, education: 7.5 percent, and ethnicity: 7.1 percent), which may also be a result of a lack in meaningful interaction outside one’s core group. Similar results were found in this survey round.

TABLE 2: **Specific trust among youth**

Trust towards...	2015	2018
Immediate family members	4.7	4.7
Extended family members	3.6	3.9
Friends	3.7	4.1
Neighbours	2.8	3.6
Classmates, course mates, or work colleagues	3.1	3.6
Political leaders	N/A	1.9
People of other religions	2.9	3.3
People with different political convictions	2.8	3.0
People of other nationalities	N/A	3.3

Note: values are averages on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). Not all categories were part of the 2015 survey.

Social capital among youth in BiH is exclusively built on horizontal relations of kinship and family networks. This bonding type of social capital creates a particularised trust that is highly exclusive. Young people place great trust in close family members, and to a lesser extent in relatives and close friends, but are mostly ambiguous towards all other categories such as neighbours, work colleagues, and people of different religion, nationality or political convictions. It is not so much that they distrust them but rather that they feel no need to develop deep bonds with them. In fact, youth only distrust political leaders and to a great extent with over 50 percent having no trust in them at all.

This relation towards social capital is reaffirmed by their views on what is most important in their lives. Traditional items such as being faithful to a partner and friends as well as having children and taking responsibility rank highest. The highly valued item of being independent can also be read in this context of dominant conservative values, where independence is equated with getting married and establishing a family of one's own, rather than in a more postmodern outlook. Items that relate to any form of social or political activity rank very low among young people's interests and only very few are interested in participat-

ing in politics or being engaged in civic activities. In a context like that of BiH, where primary concerns are socio-economic in nature, family is seen as a refuge and family values are cherished for the stability that they provide. Values that are perceived as anti-family, i.e. justification of abortion and homosexuality, are vilified. These results mirror previous findings among youth in BiH and among the population in general. Compared to the first round of surveys in 2015, trust among youth has become ever so slightly more particularised.

It is difficult to uncover the reasons behind weak societal ties in BiH based on a couple of survey questions, but there might be enough evidence to point us in the right direction. In addition to strong family loyalty, a significant proportion of young people think that it is justified to use connections and other types of informal relations to find employment (20.6 percent) or access services (such as healthcare, governments benefits, etc.; 26.8 percent). At the same time, criminalised forms of informality such as cheating on taxes and corruption are not accepted. Informality often works within the family and close family ties are essential when utilising connections (see Table 3). When informality is used, it creates an even stronger bond among those involved.

TABLE 3: **Justification of certain informal types of behaviour among youth**

Justification for...	
Cheating on taxes	2.4
Accepting or giving bribes	2.7
Using connections for employment	3.7
Using connections to access services	4.0
Average	3.2

Note: values are averages on a scale of 1 (never) to 10 (always). Items according to the Tolerance towards informal practices measure (INFORM, not yet published, <http://www.formal-informal.eu/home.html>).

All this together degrades connections and bonds between people who don't share family ties nor engage in informal contracts. Conservative and collective values that prioritise "survival" are reaffirmed over those that prioritise the individual (WVS 2014). This could explain why young people are highly optimistic about their personal future in 10 years, but at the same time are ambivalent or only cautiously optimistic about the future of their country.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Social capital among young people in BiH is built on horizontal relations of kinship and family networks. There is only a diffuse trust towards individuals not belonging to one's immediate family (and to a lesser extent relatives and close friends).
- Non-criminal informal relationships, such as using connections to gain employment to access services, are widespread and are mostly accessed through family ties. This creates a synergy reaffirming conservative and collective values that prioritise the survival of the family over everything else.

7

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

TRANSFORMATION OF THE FAMILY: FROM PATRIARCHAL TO MODERN FAMILY

In turbulent times of transformation processes facing modern family, multiple questions are raised, such as the following: What challenges face the modern family? What aspirations, criteria and values are cultivated in today's families? Can family truly fulfil commitments and expectations that are imposed on it in times of social change?

Great shifts are taking place at present in our very understanding of family and family life; there is no universal definition of family, people are not at all certain what their family represents, expectations are more diverse than ever – mother, father and a child, each on their own imagine what family is or should represent. Modern family is fluid (Baumman, 2009), marked by a transformation that is being accompanied by great tension, independence and freedom.

When talking about modern family, many authors imply the crisis of family. Parsons (1955) already referred to disorganisation and reorganisation of types of family, while Burgess (1957) observed changes characterising family through the degradation of parents' authority, insecurity and decline in the significance of marriage. Eckermann (1987) considers that one of the characteristics of our times is an odd disharmony in relations between the individual and wider community, as well as society, which is described by Durkheim (1951) as an anomie, while Fromm (1955) explained it through the human tendency towards alienation.

Present concerns regarding modern family are not merely a response to changes that families have gone through and endured over the last centuries, but they can also be observed as an effort to pin down or encourage a certain form of family life and values

(Robinson, 1993 as cited in Dallos and Draper, 2010). Given that family and family life are influenced by society and social processes, the surroundings in which family exists affects its efficiency and functionality, with all kinds of social malaise intertwining through family (Pasalic-Kreso, 2004).

When it comes to the Bosnian-Herzegovinian family, which marked traditional features having a clear hierarchical structure and patriarchal domination for decades, social changes after the beginning of the 1990s were marked by war, conditioned changes in the nature, functionality and efficiency of family. So, family suddenly found itself thrust into a situation of "being left to its own devices". As a consequence, transformation processes left the Bosnian-Herzegovinian family in the void surrounding the old, patriarchal family, once the dominant form of family organisation, but which was gradually disappearing (or had already completely disappeared) under the pressure of the democratic family. With respect to the aforementioned, it can be said that the mentioned changes, marked by a turbulent post-socialist transition process, largely reflected on the Bosnian-Herzegovinian family. Despite all that, Bosnian-Herzegovinian family has maintained familism, which the family assumes a position of ascendance over individual interests.

However much transformation processes have had the effect of displacing the traditional family, Dallos and Draper (2010) state that we can be "for or against" traditional family. Nevertheless, the traditional family offers (or has offered) a sort of a reminder of a way of thinking, feeling and making decisions. On the other hand, as Eckermann suggests (1987), the contemporary family cannot yet be considered to be a definitive model and firmly structured form of family organisation, either. In Western and other societies we are today witnessing many forms of family life, however. A question arises as to how people build their own models of family life?

Decisions facing the average young person range from: Should I opt for marriage or to live together with a partner out of wedlock? When will I get married, will I have children, how should I do it, will it be by in vitro, how many children will I have, who will take care of my children, should I get a divorce or continue living in an unhappy marriage...? – At first glance these decisions would appear to be made autonomously, but they depend on and are the results of personal experiences, family traditions and social discourses. This interdependence of an individual and family is explained by Eckermann as a function of the primordial human need for living inside a community. By pointing out the close connection between family and society in which family develops, Alic (2012) emphasises that the position and condition of family correspond to a human at a certain stage in time, as well as to overall social relations during an epoch. On the other hand, values and conditions in one society are in fact a reflection of family conditions and values, as one of its key aspects. Since stability and changes that determine family also influence the nature of society and culture, Erlich (1971) believes that it is precisely the surroundings in which family functions that is the key indicator for successful rearing and raising of children.

Looking into transformation processes, changes facing family can be observed through changes in parenting, marriage, authority, roles and power. Despite the fact that contemporary family has secured its privacy, it has lost its former emotional and social bonds between family members. Perceptions, beliefs, values and norms once depended on the authority of grown-ups and a strict patriarchal hierarchy in which young people matured socially and assumed the roles of adults much earlier. Today, we are witnessing shifts in boundaries, as the age for gaining independence and assuming the role of grown-ups has been postponed to the late twenties or early thirties. These changes are being accompanied by many others, such as ubiquitous divorce, the popularity of cohabitation out of wedlock, and a growing number of single parents, teenage mothers, recombined families, short-term relationships and even shorter marriages, and single-child families. The aforementioned changes suggest dramatic shifts in the nature of living. Alic (2012) therefore contends that the statement “nowadays young people are completely different” actually confirms the transformation and transition of culture we are experiencing.

Great shifts in the position of children and youth within their families raise the following question: What truly describes the life of young people in contemporary families? Young people today are liberated from the authority of parents, they are free-spirited and open to change, but more than ever they expect that it is precisely the family that should meet and fulfil all their expectations. On the other hand, parents want their children to experience emotional fulfilment, and in order to respond to this challenging task facing modern parents, “love, emotions, tenderness, motherhood and closeness are frequently instrumentalized by parents in order to achieve a positive response of children” (Green, 1960 as cited by Milic, 2007:168).

Although in earlier periods the Bosnian-Herzegovinian patriarchal, authoritative family insisted on supervision, restrictions, sanctions and watchful parenting, parents today more than ever and without exception offer unconditional caring, approval and support for everything their children do.

Among the evidence supporting indications of great changes in parenting behaviour in Bosnia and Herzegovina are the results of research conducted by Pasalic-Kreso and Alic (2017), where half of the child participants evaluated their parents as highly emotional and in poor control, which matches the description of permissive parenting (42.7 percent of children evaluated their mothers as highly caring and in poor control). Similar relations are also present in the evaluation of fathers (even 44.7 percent of children evaluate their fathers as highly emotional and in poor control). Recalcati (2014) states that we are witnessing a time of “decline in patriarchy and fading away of God-father, where the firm support of fatherly authority is disappearing” (Recalcati, 2014:47).

Since authoritarian parenting has completely disappeared in modern family, children have become a “life-long project” of parents (Milic, 2007), who are prepared to assume never-ending commitments, responsibilities and costs for their children. Conversely, young people have become more and more closed off, invisible, encapsulated under their family’s wing and not prepared for society. At the same time, even economically, contemporary family seeks to secure optimal, sometimes even maximum material conditions for the upbringing of their children. Milic (2007) says that young people today are not only able to meet the more elaborate and widened array of their basic needs, but that this abundance allows them to start building their own identity at a very early age. But, “this abundance and freedom of choice is only seemingly so” (Milic, 2007:167) because behind the young person lies complete economic and financial dependence on their parents.

The hypothesis that young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina have high consumer expectations is corroborated by the results of research conducted by Ziga et. al (2015) which indicates that young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina spend their free time in entertainment activities, in which process high percentage of youth spend their leisure time using media, with the Internet and virtual social networks. Also, for young people it is very important to have good looks, young people believe that wearing branded clothing is “cool”. In one previous chapter Turcilo says that youth in Bosnia-Herzegovina enjoy shopping (33.9 percent of them say they go shopping at least once a week), and 39 percent of young people believe that wearing branded clothes is important or very important.

Underlying this hedonistic lifestyle and popular youth consumerism is financial dependence of youth and financial (in)ability of parents, whose earnings and standards are less and less able to keep up with the trends that are being developed by the subculture of young people.

Generations of today, liberated from traditional, conservative and restraining norms, have the security that goes with all the rights and opportunities for unhampered development, and many

young people therefore opt to move away from home early on.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is somewhat different from that of developed countries because the formal maturity and autonomy of young people is limited and marked by so-called “prolonged youth”. Most frequently, young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina are economically and financially dependent on their parents because of an increasingly longer period of education, which in certain professions prevents them from assuming an occupational status in society by the time they reach middle age. Apart from this, upon the completion of their education, a growing number of young people cannot find appropriate jobs and are forced to build their lives in their parents’ home, where their independence and freedom remain unrealised. In their positions of dependence and prolonged education, young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina are having many more difficulties with regard to marriage and marriages are being consummated at a much slower rate, with young people experimenting with different practices in terms of living with their partners, while they have different views on marriage and sexual behaviour, contrasting to those held by previous generations.

Based on the aforementioned, it can be concluded that the traditional understanding of family, dominated by autocratic parenting and strict supervision by parents, has disappeared. The life of a young person is no longer unfolding according to the established pattern of childhood-education-moving out-marriage, and is replete with challenges and flexibility. Choosing the right education, career or marriage partner is nowadays considered to be a personal matter rather than a matter concerning family. On the other hand, social changes face young people with great expectations and a burden of responsibility which they are not able to cope with, triggering feelings of insecurity and dependence.

The contradictions characterising younger generations, seemingly marked by a flight from family and family values, in fact confirm that in turbulent time like those of transformation processes, as Roudinesco (2012) states, it is precisely the family that is called upon to help young persons find a secure position in society.

THE LIFE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE BOSNIAN-HERZEGOVINIAN FAMILY

With regard to the aforementioned, this research is looking for an answer to the essential question revolving around the significance of family in the lives of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Based on the empirical indicators relating to the position of family in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The greatest number of young people live in a household with parents (over 80 percent) and siblings (34.8 percent). Young people aged 14 to 22 who are still studying or are unemployed more frequently live with their parents. Young people who live with their partners (17.3 percent) in most cases have already completed their education and it is likely that they have found a job.

One interesting piece of data shows that 11.9 percent of young people in households live with their grandparents. Given the aforementioned, it is evident that, due to the effects of social change, the three-generation family which were predominant in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society several centuries ago now account for a much smaller proportion. Furthermore, at present one can identify the dominant form as the two-generation family, whose household is most frequently made up of parents and children. The greatest percentage of young people (47.5 percent) live in families of three, while 38.5 percent live in families of four members. The said indicators suggest that the contemporary Bosnian-Herzegovinian family is still characterised by features inherent to traditional forms of society (Ziga et al., 2015), although one cannot disregard major social changes affecting changes in family functions and structure (Pasalic-Kreso and Alic, 2017).

The finding that 77.4 percent of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina live in their parents’ home confirms that young people in the countries of southeast Europe, unlike their fellow counterparts in the northern parts of Europe, are more likely to prolong their stay in their parents’ home (Chorosewitz and Wolff, 2010). It was therefore important to gain an insight into the reasons for staying with parents: as much as 59.9 percent of young people see this as the simplest solution, while 35.8 percent state that their financial circumstances do not allow them to live on their own.

Among those who consider staying with parents to be a more practical and simpler solution – this is the most prevalent model among respondents aged 14 to 17 (43.3 percent) – one should nevertheless not disregard the fact that 30.6 percent of young people aged 18 to 22 also share such an attitude. Considering the fact that young people at this age are still undergoing education and not yet ready to live on their own, it is to be expected that they consider staying with parents to be an easier, more secure and better option.

On the other hand, young people over 23 (58.1 percent) who live with parents due to financial circumstances in most cases have already completed their education and are nevertheless still for the most part unemployed because they have not yet entered the labour market. It is interesting to note that every third person in Bosnia and Herzegovina stated that they would live on their own if their financial circumstances allowed such.

It can be concluded that young people in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society are developing a sense of autonomous generational identity, but at the same time the period of financial dependence on, and segregation from, parents is being prolonged. Therefore, young people count on support and assistance from people close to them in their social networks; parents or relatives are meeting the basic needs of the majority of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, who would like to complete their education, find employment, gain full independence and start their own families.

Prolonged periods of education and financial dependence slow down and postpone the entrance of young people into the world of grown-ups, while the inability to gain independence and the lack of privacy also underscore “supervision” of young people’s

free activities. Thus, the data presented in fact demonstrates that young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina actually mature more slowly than they used to.

RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS: FROM THE AUTHORITARIAN PATTERNS TO DEMOCRATIC RELATIONS

By moving the boundaries, young people are constantly exposed to new situations and transformation processes of everyday life. It is evident that social changes have brought changes to the shape and status of as well as relations within families. The quality of relations between young people and their parents is marked by reciprocal distancing and alienation.

When describing the intergenerational gap between young people and their parents, Car (2013) believes that young people today are less likely, in contrast to their parents, to marry, socialise with people of similar social backgrounds, have similar lifestyles and careers like their parents, to stay close to their parents or to raise their children along traditional lines. Earlier research (Bradeley, 1997; Ingelhart, 1997; Wyn, Dwyer, 1999; Miles, 2000; Ule, 2000, as cited in Ilišin and Radin, 2007) pointed out that in contemporary society modernisation processes contribute to a weakening of traditional bonds and modes of transmitting values and patterns of behaviour from generation to generation. However, the results of the research performed indicate that young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina attach importance to values cultivated (or fostered) by their parents.

Thus, young people (55.8 percent) want to raise their children almost the same as their parents did, while 16.1 percent of them want to do it exactly the same, and 19.4 percent wish to do it differently. Accordingly, it can be asserted that, despite the fact that social changes have eroded the importance of the family as a political, social and economic community, young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina are still oriented towards this unit. Thus, significant decisions such as choosing a career path, marriage partner, place of living, or style of parenting – are matters discussed within the family.

Democratic society requires a departure from the authoritarian patterns of traditional roles in the family (in the first place from the authority of the father), with these being replaced by democratic relations marked by a sense of emotional safety, independence, solidarity and personal freedom on the part of young people. It is in this spirit that the greatest proportion of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina (87.6 percent) state they make their decisions on their own. On the other hand, although they live in an era of liberalism and individualism, young people in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society require support in facing contemporary challenges.

Due to their lack of skills, they need to make rational decisions with positive outcomes, young people still expect their parents' support here. In the research conducted, young people (55.3 per-

cent) state that their parents are involved in their important life decisions, with most of such responses being voiced by young respondents who are still in the educational system or living with their parents. Mothers have the greatest impact on important life decisions of young people (70.8 percent).

Confirming the fact that the traditional authority of the father is weakened in Bosnian-Herzegovinian families is data testifying that only 62.4 percent of young people state that their fathers have an impact on their important life decisions. Other studies illustrate the closeness between father and child is lower than the closeness between mother and child. Comparing results with the attitudes of young people in Croatia about important decisions in their life, (Ilišin et al, 2013) mothers have a higher impact (43.4 percent), than fathers (only 27.2 percent). The same attitudes are present among young people in Slovenia (47 percent mothers have an impact, while only 25 percent fathers have impact on important life decisions) (Flere et al, 2014).

Young people who state that they most frequently make decisions on their own without their parents' influence are mostly respondents over 23 (61.8 percent) who in most cases have completed their education. It is interesting that young women prevail in the group of those whose decisions are influenced by other people, primarily partners (69.8 percent), while only 30.2 percent of young men state that their decisions are influenced by their partners. The importance of family as one of the integral parts of young people's identity is evident from the fact that, apart from parents, the opinion of brothers (11.4 percent), sisters (12.8 percent), but also grandfathers (3.1 percent) and grandmothers (4.9 percent) is also important.

MARRIAGE – A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE?

The focus of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the planning of family life is very salient, with 94.6 percent planning a future in marriage union and a small proportion of them plan to cohabit out of wedlock (only 1.3 percent). A small percentage of young people plan their future married but without children (1.4 percent), while 0.4 percent imagines the future unmarried relationship with partner and without children, single without children (2 percent) and only 0.3 percent of young people see themselves in the future as a single parent.

The attitudes of young people in regards to marriage are significantly different in terms of sociodemographic background. Accordingly, young people who are older than 23 more often see themselves in the future as married, unlike young people aged 14 to 22. If we take into consideration that people in this age range are still in the process of education, it is not unusual that due to their professional advancement, they attach more importance to education and career, and not to marriage.

If we compare the attitudes of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina as regards marriage with attitudes of young people

in neighbouring countries (Flere et al., 2014), with 61 percent of young people in Slovenia preferring marriage union, 76 percent in Croatia, 87 percent in Kosovo (in Slovenia 24 percent of young people want to live together outside of wedlock, while in Croatia and Kosovo the figure is 6 percent), it can be surmised that young people in Bosnian-Herzegovinian society are much more in favour of marriage and family than their counterparts in neighbouring countries.

When it comes to the projection of their own future, no significant differences are evident in terms of gender (young women and men both equally see themselves as married in future). It is important to note that young people who have only completed secondary education (42.6 percent) are more likely to see themselves being married someday, in contrast to young people who are highly educated (only 14.3 percent of young people with university degrees plan to get married in the near future).

The fact that family plays an important part in the lives of young people is confirmed by the fact that young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina wish to (or have already) become parents, with 8.2 percent of them who have done so having one child, while 3.4 percent of respondents have two children. Young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina most often plan to have a smaller number of children (59.7 percent would like to have two children, while 22.7 percent wishes to have three children). This situation and the decrease in the number of children is certainly reinforced by the numerous sociodemographic, socioeconomic and cultural changes in the overall status of young people.

Today, in greater numbers than ever, young people are continuing their education, marrying later in life, and deciding to become parents later in order to improve their occupational opportunities, and they want to enter the labour market in greater numbers than ever. Apart from the fact that lengthening the period of education and obstacles to employment mean that they will attain socioeconomic independence later than hoped, they are also bringing about numerous changes in family structure and dynamics, which is why young people are deliberately postponing their marriage and procreation. Thus, the majority of young people are of the opinion that the late twenties (between the ages of 25 and 30) is the best age to have the first child.

The family and offspring are ranked very high on the scale of social values among young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with this being confirmed by the fact that 57.7 percent of respondents consider it important to have a partner to have a happy life, while 69.8 percent of respondents believe that it is also important to have children. Aside from family life, young people believe that to have a happy life it is extremely important to live in a good country (61.0 percent), and to have a lot of friends (37.3 percent). From the aforementioned, one can conclude that young people still attach considerable importance to family values based on the foundations of marriage.

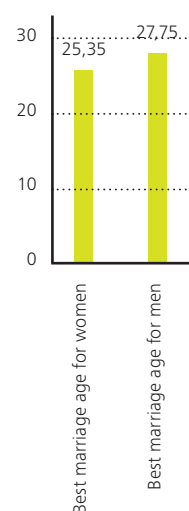
While the importance of marriage in contemporary developed countries is waning, recent generations of young people are tending to get married later. Young people state that the best age for

marriage is in late youth, with the age for women being stated at 25, and for men 25 to 29.5 (on average 27.7).

Young people in neighbouring countries share the same attitude (according to data from the *Slovenian youth study (2013)*, *young people in Slovenia consider the best age for a woman to get married to be 29, while in Croatia this figure is 27, and in Kosovo 26*), whereas for men it is 31 in Slovenia, 30 in Croatia, and 24 in Kosovo.

Reasons for delaying marriage until the late twenties should be sought in the delays in the process of gaining socioeconomic independence. Thus, young people attach importance to completion of education, which facilitates personal security and an improvement in material conditions – key preconditions for marriage.

FIGURE 4: **Attitudes of young people – the best marriage age**



Since the majority of young people plan to enter into marriage union, it was interesting to examine which criteria were important when choosing a marriage partner. From the data generated, it is evident that common interests are extremely important to young people when choosing a marriage partner (52.5 percent), and 48.9 percent value personal and psychological traits in a marriage partner.

More than 60 percent of young people don't find religious beliefs important when choosing a marriage partner and more than 3/4th of young people do not deem national origin important when choosing a marriage partner. Comparing this results with the results from Youth Study BiH (2015) there is no difference in the attitudes of young people. In regard to choosing a spouse, young people from 2015. assigned the highest value to common interests with partner (84.3 percent), personality (81.8 percent) and after that religious affiliation (66.2 percent) and ethnic origin (58 percent).

Ziga et. all (2015: 83) founded: "The above-mentioned indicators point out that, despite recent war conflict in the region, there is still evidence of readiness of many young people to enter into marriage with persons who do not share their

regional, ethnic or religious affiliation, that is, "person's character" and "common interests" are more important when choosing a partner. These findings correspond with present, century-long openness and acceptance of cultural, religious and other forms of diversity" The importance of family support for young people in establishing their own independent lives is evident, as 30 percent of young people consider the approval of their family to be extremely important when choosing their marriage partner.

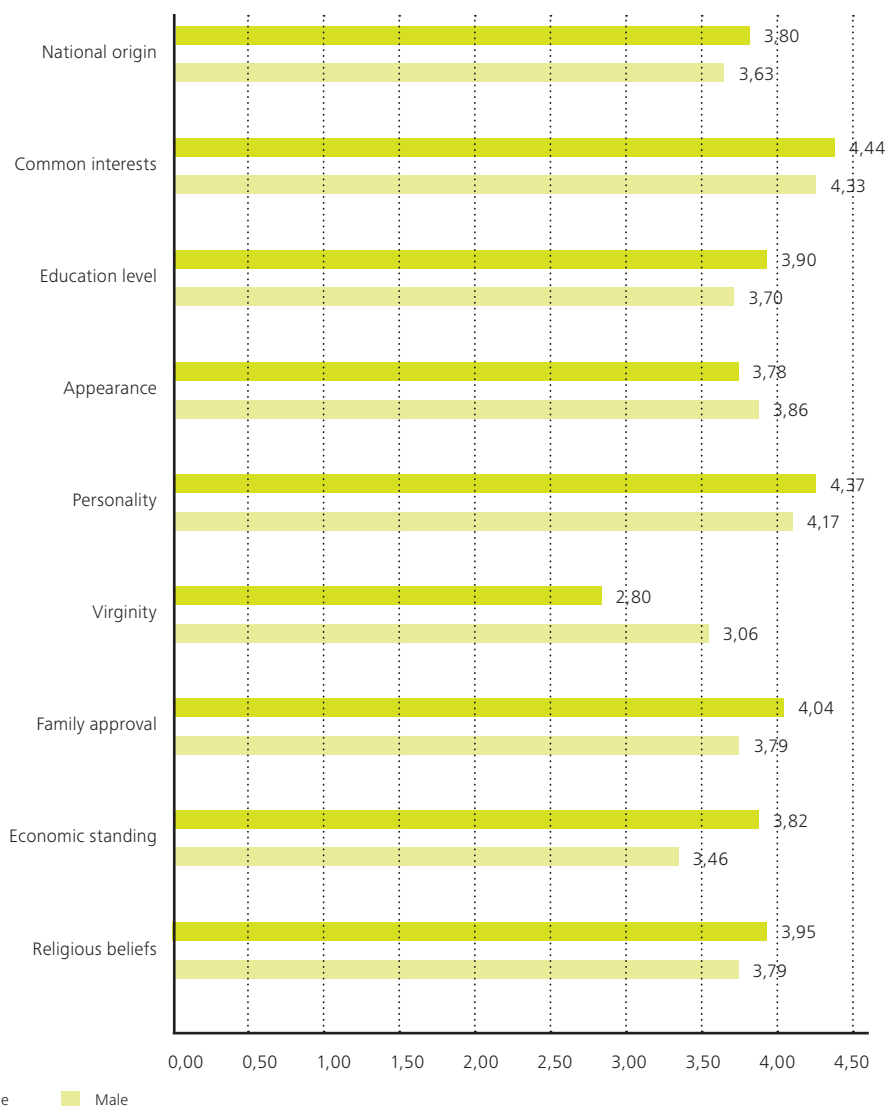
The least important factors in choosing a future spouse are the level of education (19.9 percent), economic standing (18.2 percent) and physical appearance (18.0 percent), while the issue of virginity is ranked lowest on the scale of important factors when choosing a marriage partner (17 percent). It is important to note that the younger age group highly values family approval, virginity, appearance and level of education when choosing a future spouse. In addition to the aforementioned, the older group cites common interests, personality and religious beliefs as important factors. A significant difference in attitudes was to be found in terms of gender, as young women

consider the approval of family extremely important when choosing a marriage partner, while young men attach more value to virginity.

Apart from family, it is immensely important for young people to establish social networks. Given the importance of peer influence, which is particularly high at a younger age, there is no doubt that friends participate in the process of making important decisions. Young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina have developed social networks, and as is shown by the data, most frequently they have friends of different social statuses (84.7 percent), different religion (81.4 percent), different ethnic origin (76.9 percent), and friends who speak different languages (47.6 percent). Also, in the previous chapter Kapidzic says that these friendships actually seem to indicate a potential of the youth to foster both linking and bridging social capital.

Based on the said indicators, it can be concluded that young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina most often live in their parents' home, in which they stay until their late youth. Burdened by financial circumstances, educated and unemployed, they find their greatest support in family surroundings. They are staying in the

FIGURE 5: Scale ranking of factors important to the choice of a marriage partner in terms of gender



educational system longer than ever, but this does not prevent them from picturing a future with their own family.

Also, they consider having a spouse and children to be important to a happy life. Young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina still believe in marriage and attach value to familism and family support. The fact that the Bosnian-Herzegovinian family is at a crossroads between the traditional and modern family is best illustrated by young people who, despite their desire for autonomy and individualism, value family support as they pursue their own lives, while most important decisions are still made inside the family.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, due to prolongation of their education, lack or only have inadequate employment opportunities, and they face pressure generated by uncertainties and a delay in their attaining independence until their late twenties.
- Every third person in Bosnia and Herzegovina wants to live on their own, but their financial circumstances do not allow them to do so.
- Young people in the Bosnian-Herzegovinian society are still oriented towards family, and important matters such as choosing a career, spouse, place of living, and parenting style are decisions which are on the surface made autonomously, but nonetheless still take place in the family.
- The focus of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina in their planning of family life is very pronounced, as the greatest proportion of young people are planning to have a family in wedlock.
- Young people estimate that the best age for marriage is late youth, with this age being 25 for women and 25 to 29.5 for men. They want to become parents and most frequently plan to have a smaller number of children. The majority of young people share the view that the best age to have the first child is from 25 to 30.
- Young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina attach value to friendship links in which the vast majority of cases reach beyond religious, ethnic and social groups of origin.

8

MOBILITY

CAUSES AND IMPACTS OF MIGRATION

People migrate for various reasons, whether it be banishment or wars, or economic reasons that cause people to migrate, their motivation is mainly associated with the preservation of physical and psychological integrity and better living conditions. During the last few years alone, Bosnia and Herzegovina is facing a new dimension of migrations causing huge changes in the social, economic and demographic spheres. Although contemporary economic migrations are often characterised as voluntary, the inability to meet basic existential needs and enjoy dignified living conditions raises many questions, including how voluntary the decision to leave the country really is.

The question facing nearly every young person is this: Is it better to go out into the great unknown or stay and fill in long application forms to try to get a job? A climate has been created in which it would appear that only “losers” stay, while the brave and agile are the ones who leave. Young people are naturally impatient and want everything “right here and now”, and ultimately no one has time to wait, especially in such uncertain environments. Nevertheless, in choosing between the lesser of two evils – leaving or staying – more and more young people are opting to leave the country. Life abroad is hardly easy, but in spite of all the hardships and challenges facing young people as they adapt to new environments, in personal as well as in the occupational sense, young people remain determined to realise their plans.

Demographic shifts are due to negative natural growth rates as well as the departure of increasing numbers of young people – a development that is beginning to verge on an exodus. Experts are worried about the impact of imbalances and depopulation, and are warning of a possible decline in population by one-fourth in the next three decades (Al Jazeera Balkans, 2017). If emigration continues at this pace, this society will certainly become a society characterised by an elderly, unemployed and dependent population. At the same time, immigration is playing an increasingly great

role in the changing social and demographic face of society, which has yet to be adequately explored. Bosnia and Herzegovina is not an appealing destination for immigrants due to its labour market and unfavourable environment for entrepreneurship. As a result, other motives are driving immigration here. Although migration flows are clearly pointing in different directions, the subject of this analysis is internal and cross-border migration of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Young people represent the most important resource of any society, and they make up one-fourth of the total BiH population, but their mass exodus is having far-reaching implications. Recent studies on young people show that a majority of them want to leave the country. Thus, FES Youth study cites data indicating that 49.2 percent of young people want to leave the country (Ziga et al., 2015), while a somewhat earlier study by the Institute for Youth Development KULT (2013) warns that as much as 60 percent of young people want to leave Bosnia and Herzegovina. The motives of young people surveyed in the study to leave range from education to the acquisition of new knowledge and experience, which is also related to greater opportunities and the search for jobs. The reasons for departure are usually associated with macro-economic factors such as unemployment, which is extremely high in the 15–24 age cohort, and, according to data from the Agency for Statistics (2017), is nearing 54.3 percent. Among the main reasons for the departure of young people they cite is corruption, unemployment, poor living standards and lack of prospects (KULT, 2013). It would appear that young people are aware of the situation characterising their society, with one high school student from the Brcko District summing up views regarding the state of young people like this: it “depends on who your parents are, where they work and which party they belong to” (Jerkovic, Ibrahimovic, 2018).

Unemployed youth are exposed to multiple risks in the form of social exclusion, poverty, stigmatisation, and even long-term social isolation, especially due to the fact that “every long-term cessation in use of acquired knowledge and skills leads to a loss of these and therefore a decrease in employability” (Žiga et al.,

2015:70). The consequence of unemployment in the chosen occupation has long-term effects on micro-macro levels and constitutes a serious drain in terms of human and social capital. Taking into consideration the duration of studies for doctors, engineers, dentists, pilots as well as sociologists, school counsellors or any other experts, in addition to the financial losses that are associated with an inability to find employment and loss of these skills when people emigrate, this equation also involves a serious loss in human resources. According to some estimates, it costs around half a million euros (1 million BAM) to educate one doctor, with 350 doctors having left the country in one year alone (Bljesak, 2017). It is not particularly difficult to calculate the financial loss, not even considering the consequences for the overall system of healthcare and the quality of services. Medical schools and medical studies have become one of the most attractive institutions in higher learning not only in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but in the region as well, partly because of the attractive labour market in Germany that is looking for medical professionals, and at the same time offering favourable working conditions. The exodus of young people has long-term effects on the demographic structure of society. Bosnia and Herzegovina is already turning into an aging society, and one can only conjecture how it will look demographically several decades in the future. Eurostat data (2012) indicates that old-age dependency will become a global problem in the next three decades and there are no alternatives to these kinds of services. The absence of relatives and young people who could be there to assist our elderly might become a serious problem, and the need for these services therefore warrants emphasis.

Consequently, the loss of human capital, especially of young educated people, results in a decrease in the national pool of skills at the global level (Milio, 2012), where knowledge and technologies constitute the most powerful capital. The phenomenon of migration, whether it be observed from an economic (cost-benefit) or sociological perspective, is related to a search for benefits in almost all migrations, inevitably affecting a majority of society. On the other hand, some researchers note that an "increase in levels of human capital does not necessarily result in a country's development" (Clemens, 2009, as cited by Milio, 2012). On the one hand, an oversupply in the labour market undoubtedly dictates such processes, as is equally the case with corruption and nepotism on the other. We are seeing how a non-selective overproduction of highly educated human resources does not contribute to the development of human capital; on the contrary, it creates an army of unemployed people who the labour market cannot absorb.

For a long time now, bad experiences have been piling up in this society due to a host of negative factors plaguing it, leaving the country alone to come up with a "logical solution" to the problems of unemployment, poverty, political instability and general social insecurity. This climate has become almost infectious, as all that matters now is to leave the country. Even very young people consider leaving to be the only option if they are to have any future prospects. More than ever, parents are investing in their children by learning other languages, thereby aggrandising their

knowledge, but also creating greater opportunities for them later in life. The majority of migrants are younger people seeking social security and a better quality of life as well as new and different experiences. Unfortunately, it is not rare that whole families emigrate. According to the findings of the previous research conducted with young people from 15 to 30 years 20 percent confirm that they and their families are preparing for departure (KULT, according to the Bh-index, 2018)

Over the past few years, the European Union has initiated a number of programmes aiming to encourage young people to volunteer and acquire new knowledge to adapt themselves more to new demands of the market. The opening of the EU border to Bosnia and Herzegovina and a visa-free regime, put into force in 2010, has enabled free movement of people. A large number of BiH citizens have seized this opportunity to connect socially and strengthen primary and secondary social networks. At the same time, a significant number of people in the population of working age have seen this as an immense opportunity to find occasional employment and as the only source of social security for entire families.

The most recent data provided by the World Economic Forum in 2017 place Bosnia and Herzegovina in 103th place among 137 countries in the world on the Global Competitiveness Index. The primary parameter, economic underdevelopment, is the key factor explaining this low ranking. The ranking is considerably worse when it comes to the ability to keep a country's own talent and workforce, as Bosnia and Herzegovina is nearly last, coming in at 135th (Schwab, 2017). The desired goal of "brain gain" still seems more or less out of reach.

An increasing effort is being made to replace the "brain drain" as the dominant term and concept with the notion of "circulating brains", which has finally been recognised and offers an important strategy for government authorities. The aim of such a strategy is to use emigration potential, especially the educated diaspora, which presents a significant amount of social capital, not only in the countries of emigres' residence, but also for the development of their country of origin.

The Policy on Cooperation with Diaspora recognises the importance of this potential, with a special area of this policy citing the need for "mobilisation of human potential, knowledge and skills of the diaspora" (Ministry of Human Rights, 2017). This document seeks to introduce a positive perspective in the whole process – a perspective which is completely logical and unavoidable. It emphasises that "the diaspora presents a huge human, economic and social potential for the development of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Human potential implies education, expertise, and qualifications of the diaspora, while economic resources include the transfer of remittances from the diaspora, money-saving, direct investments and trade." (Ministry of Human Rights, 2017:10). However, there is a good deal of scepticism in the diaspora about the chances for it to make a contribution to improving the development of the country and the exchange of knowledge, and this is due to doubts as to the existence of a positive climate and sufficient

openness to facilitate the exchange of knowledge (Oruc, Alic & Barnes, 2011). Unfortunately, those members of the diaspora who have returned to transfer their acquired knowledge and experience in the public sector have had negative experiences and are faced with disapproval and poor prospects for professional advancement (Bozic, 2015). This kind of social capital is invaluable in creating a professional network, fostering transfer of knowledge and promoting science.

If we take into consideration the fact that for the time being the majority of young people are not interested in returning permanently, the “circulating brains” strategy would appear the best way to “use” this highly educated diaspora. The data show that 20,000 highly educated, mostly young people have left Bosnia and Herzegovina over the last decade (2004–2014) (KULT, 2013), which suggests that the diaspora offers a huge amount of social capital. Taking into account a certain homesickness and desire to make a contribution from the diaspora in their homeland, and a certain interest in their professional knowledge and experience, it

would appear that a more positive outcome and mutual benefits are virtually certain.

The Bosnian diaspora is of extreme importance materially speaking as well, with remittances constituting a significant source of social security for many families. After the war, the remittance rate as a portion of total GDP was around 15–20 percent with a declining trend. It can be concluded that family solidarity and strong social networks helped preserve social stability, whereby the role of the state was to a great extent substituted (Jakobsen and Strabac, 2015).

MOTIVATION, PLANS AND PREFERENCES FOR MIGRATIONS

An examination of academic and journalistic articles produces some important findings regarding the issue of migration and exodus of young people. By the same token, these are supple-

FIGURE 6: **How strong is your desire to move to another country for more than six months (emigrate)?**

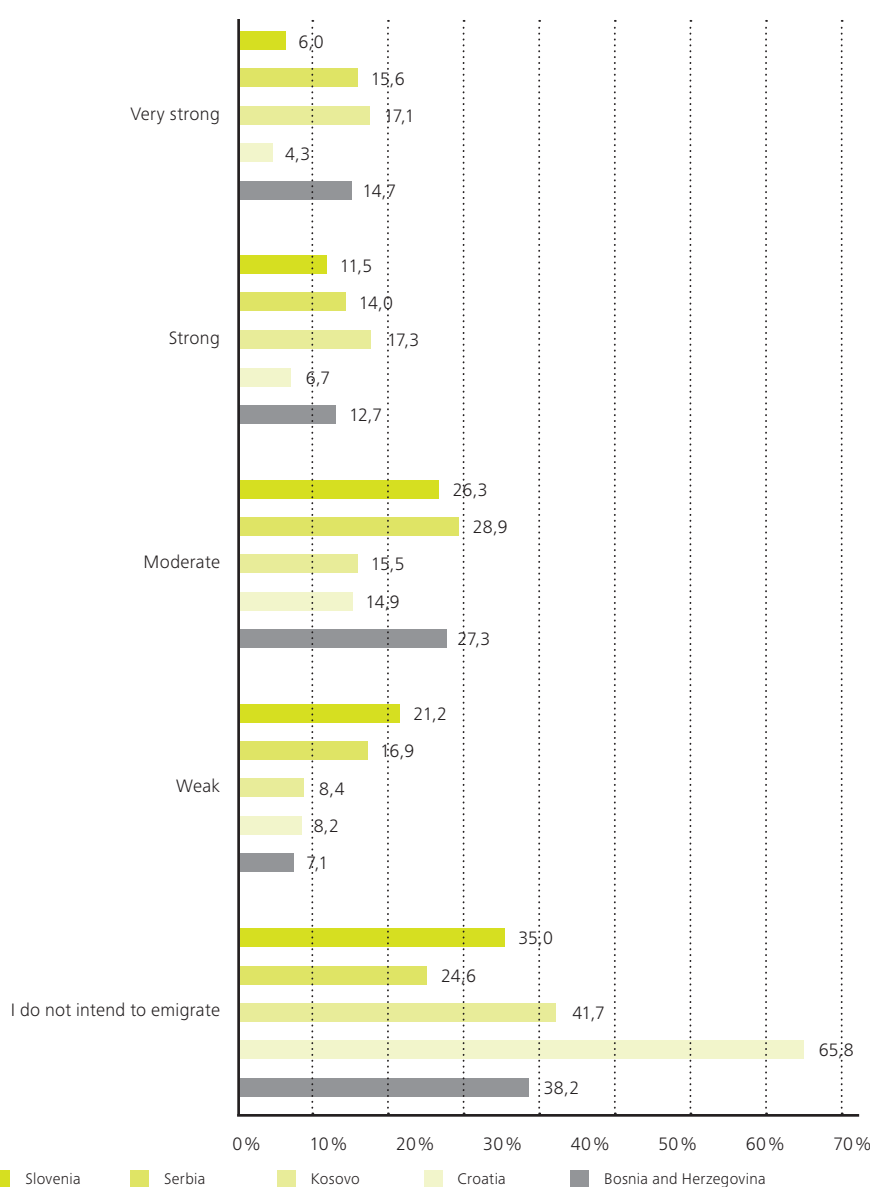


FIGURE 7: How long do you plan to stay abroad

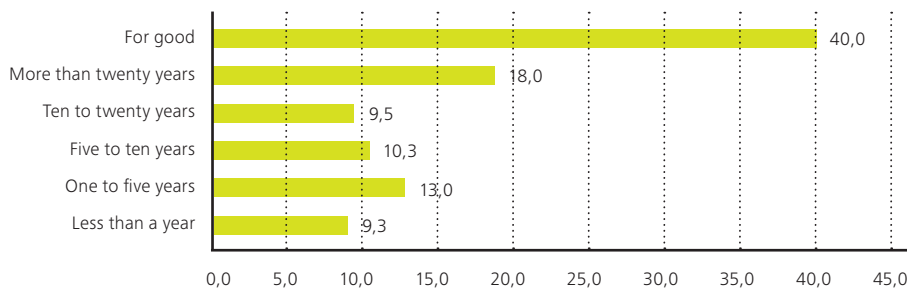
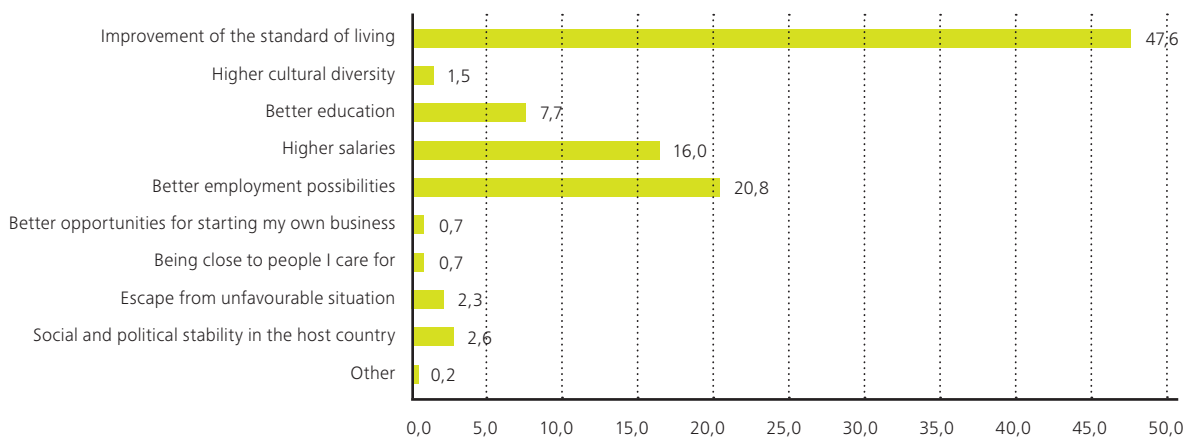


FIGURE 8: Reasons for leaving the country



mented considerably here by empirical results from research on young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina aged 14–29 in the attempt to obtain the most precise findings possible regarding their plans, reasons for leaving the country, their preferences, activities in the preparation for departure, and motivation for integration in their host country.

Growing unemployment, particularly evident in this social strata, as well as social insecurity, poverty, political and economic instability, heightened social inequality and the overall crisis of moral and social values directly condition the fact that the majority of young people desire to leave for some other country.

The question „how strong is your desire to move to another country for more than six months (emigrate)?” met with the following responses: 38.2 percent of young people do not intend to emigrate, 7.1 percent have a weak desire, 27.3 percent have a moderate desire, 12.7 percent have a strong desire and 14.7 percent have a very strong desire to move to another country. These results indicate that the majority of young people to a lesser or a greater degree (61.8 percent) want to move to another country. According to the results of this study, and in comparison to the previous Study on Young People (Ziga et al., 2015), a 12.6 percent increase in the number of young people who desire to leave the country can be observed.

In comparison to young people from the region, young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina express a stronger desire to leave in comparison to young people in Slovenia and Croatia, and a sig-

nificantly weaker desire than young people in Kosovo and Serbia. It is evident that young people from less economically developed countries are more interested in leaving the country.

Certainly, the fact that 40 percent of young people desire to leave the country for good is of concern, with another portion planning to stay abroad for more than twenty years (18 percent), followed by those who would stay for a certain number of years. A desire to return is expressed by a majority of young people, however, who plan to spend the most productive years of their lives somewhere else, which has broader social consequences. The intensity of the desire to return greatly depends on living and working conditions as well as the favourability of conditions for having a family, having children, but also economic and political circumstances in the country of origin.

The reasons for leaving the country have not changed since the previous Study on Young People from 2015 (Ziga et al., 2015). This time as well, the principal reasons for leaving listed by young people include an improvement in the standard of living (47.6 percent), better employment possibilities (20.8 percent), higher salaries (16.8 percent) and better education (7.7 percent). Unemployed young people express an even stronger desire to leave the country and see this as an opportunity to improve the standard of living and greater opportunities for employment. Among those persons who are currently employed, their incentives for leaving include an improvement in their standard of living and higher salaries. It is cause for concern that young people who are

currently employed also have a desire to leave the country, most frequently due to poor labour market conditions and low salaries which do not even cover basic costs of living – the death knell for any plans to have a family. Those who are already employed are certainly at an advantage, as they have a certain amount of professional experience, making them „qualified“ while facilitating the mobility of young people in the labour market. On the other hand, a young unemployed person without any professional experience can hardly hope to enter any labour market, which significantly affects their self-confidence.

Beyond an improvement in their standard of living and finding employment, one could conjecture that other factors such as political stability and an unfavourable social situation are completely irrelevant for a young, oftentimes apolitical young person, with this hypothesis also being confirmed by the previous study. A young person is pragmatic and interested in more tangible factors leading to an improvement in their standard of living.

In terms of internal migration from rural to urban areas, the results of this study show that the majority of young people (64.5 percent) do not have any pronounced desire to change their place of residence. A tendency towards migration is evident among young people who live in villages, with this prevalence dropping in proportion to the size of the place of residence, and is at its lowest in the cities. The reasons underlying internal migration are no different from those cited in the case of cross-border migration, namely an improvement in living standards (40.6 percent) and easier employment (32.4 percent), while one of the reasons for the smaller proportion of young people is a change of environment for educational reasons (8.5 percent). According to the results of the 2013 Population Census, 61.1 percent of the population in Bosnia and Herzegovina has come to their place of residence from somewhere else in the country (72 percent) or from abroad (28 percent) (Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2017). The trend towards moving out of rural areas, evident among the younger population, will no doubt continue, and one can very rightly refer to a rural exodus which will continue into the future. Young and educated people have no prospects not only in their villages, but in smaller towns as well, which is why internal migration is oriented towards larger urban areas. As a result, young people can be expected to continue to concentrate in larger urban centres in Bosnia and Herzegovina offering education and providing significantly greater opportunities for employment and development of occupational skills.

UNDERTAKEN ACTIVITIES, SOCIAL NETWORK SUPPORT AND DESIRE FOR INTEGRATION IN PREFERRED COUNTRY

The gap between a desire to leave the country and taking actual steps towards this goal can be insurmountable for many. When it comes to the actual steps taken in the realisation of their plans for leaving, only a small percentage of young people actually have taken such steps, i.e. contacting an embassy (3.8 percent) or potential employers (7.8 percent), while 3.0 percent have contacted potential universities or schools. The majority still have not done anything to carry through with their plans to leave the country (62.7 percent). For a larger percentage, moving abroad is just another unaccomplished aspiration.

Mobility requires the acquisition of new skills and knowledge, and one of the most important among them is knowing the language, which enables entry into the labour market and later social integration in the country of arrival. Research indicates that when it comes to the knowledge of language of the preferred country, approx. half of young people (49.5 percent) have basic speaking skills, 14.6 percent are proficient, and 7.8 percent have excellent skills, while 28.2 percent do not speak the language at all. In this case, we are talking about the German language, given the fact that Germany, Austria and Switzerland are German-speaking areas, so knowledge of this language would appear necessary. A significant number of young people have learned German during their education and therefore have a certain level of knowledge. The motivation of young people to move to another country is compatible with the motivation to learn a foreign language. Majority of them (88.8 percent) are highly motivated to invest additional efforts in learning foreign language. At the same time, German-language classes are currently very popular in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and free courses are even offered for certain occupations of special interest to the host country. The „migration industry“ (Mesic, 2002) is doing everything it can to attract an educated, flexible and valuable work force and is devising different strategies to tap into the target population.

Social mentality, the existing diaspora and the dynamics of the labour market significantly affect selection of the host country. As in previous years, most young people desire to go to Germany (47.6 percent), then Austria (12.5 percent), Switzerland

FIGURE 9: What steps have you taken to leave the country?

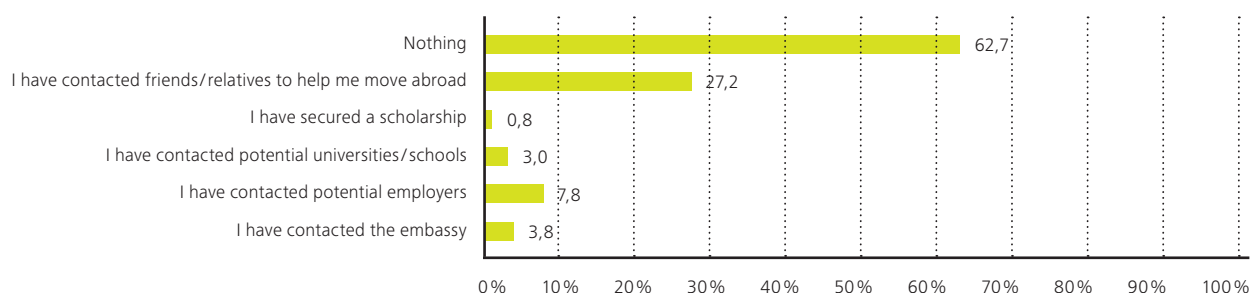
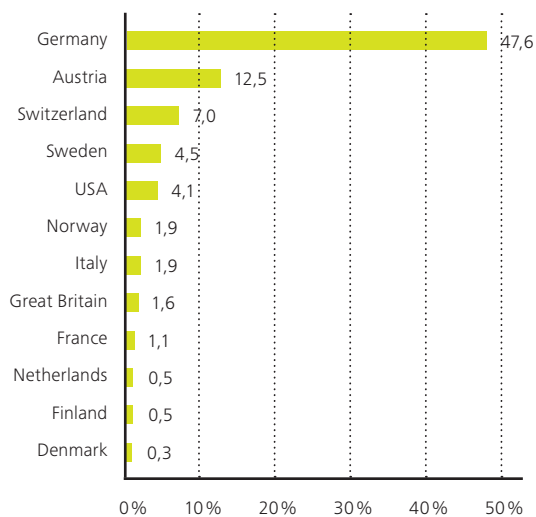


FIGURE 10: Preferred countries of emigration



(7.0 percent), Sweden (4.5 percent), and the USA (4.1 percent), while a smaller percentage desire to go to some other country, e.g. Norway, France, Italy or Great Britain. Germany is equally attractive for the citizens of the neighbouring region. In all probability, young Bosnian-Herzegovinians do not intend to go overseas countries, which is not the case with young people from the rest of the region. For example, young people from Croatia, Macedonia, or Slovenia to a significant extent desire to go to the USA or Canada. Historically speaking, Bosnia and Herzegovina as a target country for migrants has been predominantly oriented towards Germany for several reasons dating back to the period of industrialisation in the wake of the Second World War. The existing diaspora greatly facilitates emigration, as it is a direct source of information, and a significant source of support during the adjustment period as well as in the search for housing, employment, while most importantly it provides emotional and psychological support in the period of adaptation and adjustment to the new social surroundings, new value system, customs and habits. Apart from already „trodden“ paths of previous migrants, geographical proximity of these countries is an additional factor together with increasingly cheaper flights offered by companies that facilitate the decision-making process in connection with migration, especially when the rest of the family is already in the country of origin.

The support found in existing social networks, primarily among relatives and family, offer a significant level of security and reliability both by providing information and actual material support as well as in psychological and emotional terms. A significant proportion of young people (42.5 percent) have received an offer to leave from a person they know, whereby only half of respondents (27.2 percent) have taken advantage of this contact for the purpose of leaving the country. The Internet and the development of social media have significantly enabled the establishment of social networks abroad. Experience suggests that a growing number of young people are finding partners abroad, often through social media, later leading to marriage – a sure path when it comes

to obtaining citizenship. At the same time, the development of social networks opens up other possibilities which ‚outrank‘ family as a primary network, giving a young person more space for personal autonomy. Nevertheless, ‚chain migrations‘, as Mesic dubs them (2002), offer already existing migrant structures that serve as a significant source of information and logistics for a future migrant, significantly facilitating the process of finding accommodation, employment, but also providing valuable emotional support during the critical period of adjustment.

Young people who are motivated to leave their country believe that they would be useful and loyal citizens in the host country because they would do their job properly (89.7 percent), share their knowledge and skills (82.5 percent) and contribute to cultural and scientific progress (75.7 percent), even by accepting job positions that are not sought by the local population (70.8 percent). As it were, every unemployed person would appear destined for „less desirable jobs“ and jobs unrelated to one’s profession; and indeed, a majority actually have jobs they have not been trained for. A person who decides to seek an employment is often ready to do any job at all as long as it comes with a decent salary. According to the results of research conducted in Croatia, 69 percent of respondents alone would rather accept a job with a better salary even if it is outside their occupation (Express, 2017). At the same time, migrants’ readiness to accept low-status job positions is also considered a „moral obligation“. The Youth Study in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2015 came to the conclusion that a significant proportion of young people (35.7 percent) are overqualified (Ziga et al., 2015). Existential reasons condition the choice of career path, which is to the greatest extent also affected by the existing labour market. It is certainly encouraging that data from the last FES research findings (2018) shows that young people tend to believe that the economic situation will move in a positive direction.

KEY FINDINGS:

- The intensity of economic migrations and the issue of depopulation in countries of the region show no signs of abating. The bulk of research on young people all point towards a growing number of young people seeking better living conditions and to find a job are ready to try their luck somewhere else.
- The reasons behind the desire of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina to move to another country are associated with actual indicators of development in societies, such as growing unemployment and, especially evident in this social category, social insecurity, poverty, heightened social inequality, political and economic instability and the crisis of moral and social values.
- Negative experiences have been accumulating for some time, which is why leaving the country seems to be the only solution for a great number of young people. The dominant public discourse on migration creates an impression that this is not mere-

ly a “desirable” course of action, but also a “necessary” one.

- The results of this study, in comparison to the previous one, point to a growing number of young people who have a desire to emigrate. Among the reasons behind this intensive desire to leave are improvement in the standard of living and the issue of unemployment.
- It is a matter of concern that one piece of data indicates that a great number of young people desire to leave the country for good and/or to spend their most productive years working abroad.
- “The mathematics of migration” indicate that “push factors” dominate over “pull factors”.
- Apart from factors relating to the surroundings, young people are an extremely “high-risk” group with regard to migration due to their age and adventurous spirit, higher level of education, knowledge of foreign languages and modern-day technologies.
- When other “risk factors” are added to the environmental factors, such as the already existing diaspora and “well-trodden” paths established by war-time migrants and post-war economic migrants, a decision to emigrate becomes much easier.

9

EDUCATION

GENERAL REMARKS ON EDUCATION SYSTEM IN BIH

The educational system in Bosnia and Herzegovina is laid down in the national constitution. It is set out in the BiH Constitution, the constitutions of the entities, cantons, and the Statutes of Brčko District of BiH, which govern legal competencies in the field of education. The Republic of Srpska has a centralised government and one ministry of education. The Federation of BiH has a decentralised government and consists of ten cantons, with each canton having its own ministry of education. There is also a Federal Ministry of Education, but this Ministry only plays a coordinative role. The Brčko District of BiH has a government with various departments. One of these departments is the Department of Education. Thus, in sum total 12 ministries (10 cantonal, one in RS and one department in Brčko District) are in charge of education in BiH. There are also two other ministries that play a coordinating role: the Ministry of Education in the BiH Federation and the Ministry of Civil Affairs at the state level.

Pre-school education and childcare is to be provided for children from six months of age until they start primary education. It comprises three levels: nursery school (for children from six months to three years of age), preschool (for children from three years to six years of age) and the preschool preparatory programme. Primary education is compulsory and is for nine years. Secondary education is available in the form of general secondary education schools, vocational secondary education schools and art schools. General secondary education takes four years and vocational secondary education three or four years. Higher education in BiH is organised in three cycles. The first cycle leads to the academic title of Bachelor after a minimum of three and a maximum of four years of full-time study. The second cycle leads to the academic title of Master and lasts one or two years. The third cycle leads to a doctoral degree.

In addition to employment and economics, education and training are the most important elements in determining the eco-

nomical and social position of young people and the most important elements of youth policies.

The key challenges in this field for Bosnia-Herzegovina, as laid down by the Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH¹¹ are:

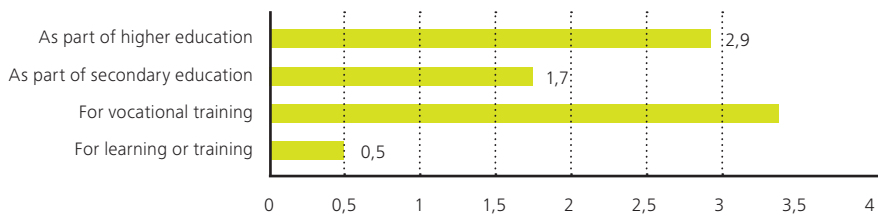
- A disconnect between the educational system and the labour and employment sector, or the labour market.
- The educational system is based on theory without a practical component.
- An extremely high unemployment rate and sub-par productivity of the labour force.
- Incompatibility of education with the needs of the labour market.
- Delays in reforms in the educational system.
- No policies on human resource development.

Almost every second young person in BiH who has left the formal educational system stays at the level of three-year secondary education or lower. This means that BiH is significantly below the EU average when it comes to the proportion of people who have completed four years of high school or higher education. Every fourth person in BiH leaves the educational process too early, which is far above the average compared to most European countries. Financial problems are the main reason for termination of education, with only 7 percent of pupils and students receiving a scholarship for education, which in most cases amounts to 100 Bosnian mark (BAM=KM), or does not exceed 200 KM¹².

LEVEL OF SATISFACTION OF YOUTH WITH THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Interestingly enough, with all these difficulties and obstacles when it comes to the educational system in BiH, 32.8 percent of young people in this survey state they are very satisfied with the education they receive in Bosnia-Herzegovina, while 49.1 percent

FIGURE 11: Travel for education among youth



say they are satisfied, and 50.5 percent are satisfied with quality of education. At the same time, 97.1 percent of respondents have never been abroad for educational purposes at the university level, 99.5 percent have never undergone any kind of training, so it is obvious that they do not have anything to compare the BiH system with (Figure 11 shows travel abroad for education purposes among youth in BiH). Only 7.7 percent of youth would move abroad to obtain a better education, which also suggests that these young people find the BiH system satisfactory. In everyday discussions, one can often hear adults in BiH, mainly parents, saying that they would move abroad for the purpose of providing better education for their children. There are no exact data, or survey, which would show us how strong is a desire among parents in BiH to move abroad for the purpose of better education of their children, but from the media stories about people who leave and their argumentation, it seems that they are more critical attitude towards education than youth in BiH.

Responses that young people provide about specific segments of education in BiH also indicate that they actually do not know the proper meaning of the term “quality education”. How can we explain the fact that 75.6 percent of young people say that education is not well adapted to market needs and 72.1 percent think that there are cases where marks are “bought”, i.e. the system is corrupt, and at the same time they say that they are satisfied with quality of education? It would appear that by “quality” they mean that it is easy to pass exams and get degrees rather than obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for successful life and work (58.5 percent are sure that they will obtain the level of education they aspire to, and another 35.5 percent state that they only study one to two hours a day, so it is obvious that they consider the educational process to be something that is easy to go through even with a limited effort). Although 44.1 percent of young people find education hard and stressful, they still say that it is satisfactory in terms of quality. This actually shows that young people are not used to questioning the system and process of education and look upon it as something that is taken for granted.

LACK OF PRACTICAL TRAININGS – MAIN DOWNSIDE OF THE EDUCATION

One of the downsides of education in BiH that is most widely discussed is the lack of a practical component in education, with outdated theories being taught instead of practical training, internships, etc. This is confirmed by statements by young people in this survey, with 46.5 percent stating that they have never had a practical position or internship. 58 percent of them think that with this level of education it would be difficult to find a job, and 14.9 percent think it would be very difficult. This shows that young people are not confident that education provides them with enough skills and competences to adequately participate in a labour market. However, it is interesting to note that 68.9 percent of them would prefer a job in the public sector, which corroborates with all other data gathered to date, which indicate that the public sector is the most desirable place to work. This is mainly due to the fact that these jobs are perceived as well-paid and secure in terms of staying in a position for a long time (preferably until retirement) in comparison to the private sector, which is insecure. This attitude among young people to the effect that education is just an entry ticket to a well-paid job in the public sector which does not require a lot of skills or practice is something that society should be concerned about.

In general, young people in this survey have merely confirmed findings by the Ministry of Civil Affairs regarding education in Bosnia-Herzegovina and this should serve as a call for action in the field of education. First of all, it is important to make the educational system more synchronised at different levels. Now we have a case in which, for example, in one canton higher education is based on a three plus two model, while in others four plus one is used, which makes mobility within the country sometimes more difficult than mobility with foreign universities. Furthermore it is important that education sector is better connected to the labour market, but not in a way so that government authorities do not support the humanities, arts etc. (which is the case at the moment), but rather in a way so as to introduce more practical training and skill development in formal education. Also, lifelong learning should be developed more so that young people can improve some of their skills and competences if they failed to do so in the formal educational system. Support for student exchanges and better promotion of this among youth should also be executed

more effectively by educational authorities in the future since the number of young people who have never travelled abroad for educational purposes is quite high. Quality assurance and quality control should be developed more intensively at all levels of formal education and students should be encouraged to think deeply and critically about the educational programmes on offer and not only view education as the path to secure a job in the public sector, but as something that improves their lives. In this context, promotion of knowledge as a value in society needs to be made a top priority on the societal agenda.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Almost every second young person in BiH who has left the formal educational system does not go beyond the level of three-year secondary education or lower. This means that BiH is significantly below the EU average when it comes to the proportion of people who have completed four-year high school or higher education.
- 97.1 percent of young people have never been abroad for educational purposes (at the university level), while 99.5 percent have never been abroad for any kind of training and 69.1 percent do not intend to do so in the future.
- One of the downsides of education in BiH that is discussed the most is the lack of any practical component in education, while outdated theories are taught instead of offering practical training, internships, etc. This is confirmed by statements made by young people in this survey, according to which 46.5 percent of them have never had a practical position or internship.
- 58 percent of the respondents think that with an education they have now it would be difficult to find job, while 14.9 percent believe that it would be very difficult.

10

(UN)EMPLOYMENT

Youth is defined as the stage of life oriented towards and dominated by learning. Furthermore, it is also a stage of enhanced personal development. During this period one year of life between the ages of 15–30 has a more significant impact on future life in general than one year in the case of mature (adult) people. It is well known that what has been learned in youth permanently affects values, attitudes and patterns of behaviour (Ilišin, Mendeš and Potočnik, 2003). The number of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina is steadily decreasing, compared to the 1991 census it is 360,925 lower (according to the 2013 census in Bosnia and Herzegovina there are 730,850 young people aged 15 to 30 living here) than in 1991, when according to the census there were 1,091,775 young persons aged between 15 and 30. There is no dilemma that it is more difficult for any country to compensate for losses like these, bearing in mind that young people, especially those who are finishing their formal educational phase and are looking for their first job, constitute an extremely important part of the population, as they contribute vital new knowledge, ideas and energy without which an economy or society as a whole could not move forward (Hadžimahmutović and Martić, 2013).

In modern and post-modern societies, unlike those in the past, work is the central value and avenue to integration into society (Back, 2001, Klemenčić Rozman and Dekleva, according to Koller-Trbović, 2008). Unfortunately, this method of integrating

young people into social life in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not applicable, as only 15 percent of young people say that they have permanent employment, while approximately 23 percent of young people have part-time work. Of the 64 percent of young people who are unemployed, only 22 percent say that they are actively seeking employment.

According to Ule (2000, cited by Koller-Trbović, 2008) today's society is based on labour and employment values, the unemployed, in particular young people, are cast aside and constitute a marginalised and stigmatised part of the population (Koller-Trbović, 2008). Also by the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States (CIA), Bosnia and Herzegovina occupies first place in terms of the percentage of unemployed young people aged 14–24, with the percentile of unemployed youth being as high as 62.3 percent (CIA, 2017). The reasons for the unrealistically high percentage of unemployed young people are, of course, multiple, but primarily to be found in the desolate and underdeveloped economic system (disintegration of the wider economic system from the war and the transition process), which offers very limited opportunities for the employment of young people, most of whom are employed in two "branches" of the service industry, catering and commerce.

Modern societies differ from traditional ones primarily regarding what role they attribute to (paid) work or employment (Žiga et al, 2015). Recent sociological and economic studies emphasise

FIGURE 12: **Employment and unemployment among economically active young people (14–29)**

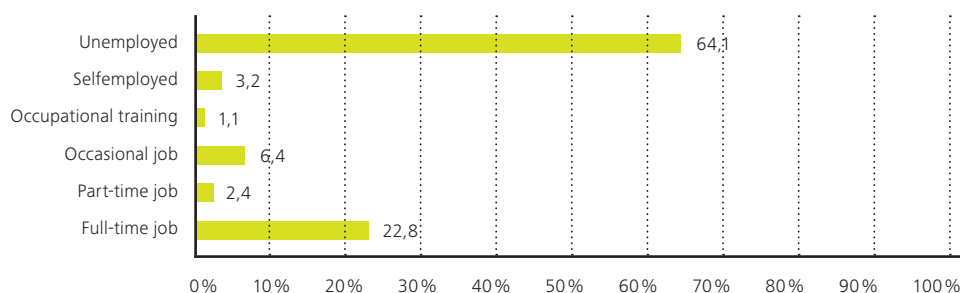
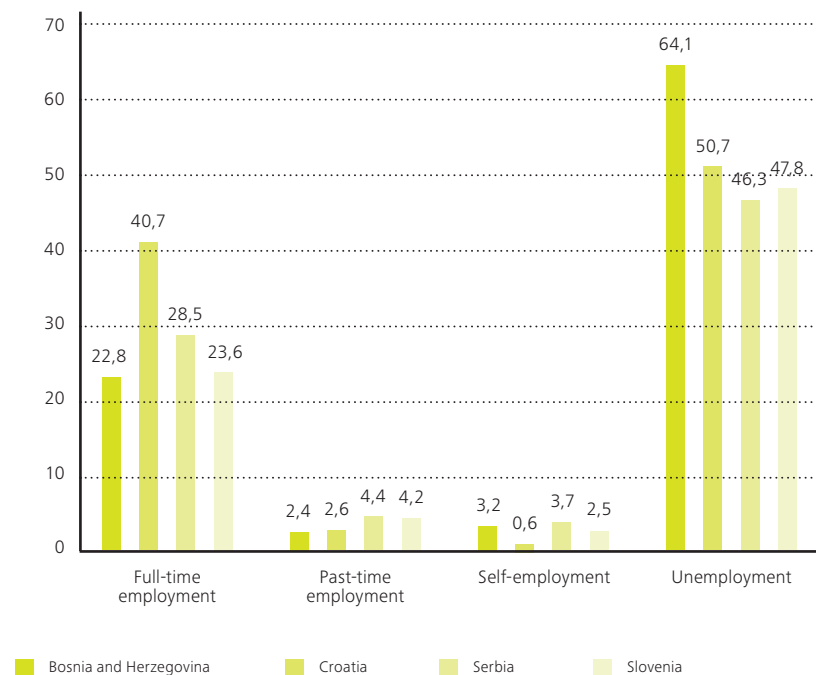


FIGURE 13: **Predominant activities of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia, 2018**



that employment is not only the most important feature of the individual's social position, but equally important in facilitating (economic) independence and autonomy (Žiga et al, 2015). Data generated on the horrendously high rate of youth unemployment in Bosnia and Herzegovina are furthermore alarming in comparison with other countries in the region, as we see that the extremely high percentage of unemployed young people poses one of the most pressing problems faced by southeast Europe and the associated economic migration and insecurity of young people when it comes to a future in their homeland.

Social interaction, economic security, the structure of individual time and self-esteem of the individual are all aspects of human life related to work or employment, and dissatisfaction with these aspects according to many studies (see Jahoda, Lazarsfeld and Zeisel, 1933; Jahoda, 1982; Fryer and Payne, 1986; Hanisch, 1999; Water, 2000) has a devastating social and psychological impact (Jahoda, 1982). These studies, but also many others, have undoubtedly shown that unemployment has serious psychological consequences – reduced life satisfaction, feelings of helplessness, loss of identity and self-confidence and impaired mental and physical health (Šverko, 2002). Additionally, scientists and analysts in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Martić, Mujanović and others) regard the unemployment problem as one of the most important challenges facing Bosnian and Herzegovinian society. With regard to aspects of unemployed persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we can conclude that women and young people aged 18 to 22 with completed tertiary level of education are more likely to be unemployed.

Economic indicators do not suggest any improvement in employability of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, either, as economic policy has been badly managed or neglected entirely since the signing of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, or structural reforms have been postponed indefinitely, without which it is almost impossible to generate significant employment possibilities. The breakdown of socialism and the transition to the capitalist system of economic development have had extremely negative consequences for a society such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, as liberalisation and privatisation have been carried out without any clear strategy or careful preparation, leading to problems in financial, political and social institutions (Radman, 2002). These indicators are also confirmed by the attitudes of young people regarding the perceived and real desire for employment in a particular sector, which are almost void of any desire for employment in the private sector, with 78.3 percent of respondents stating that they work in the private sector, while 68.9 percent have a desire to work in the public sector. These percentages clearly indicate that young people have much more confidence in the public sector when it comes to their desired employment sector than in the private sector as a result of decent work conditions.

Unfortunately, the educational system, which is not of a dual nature and during the formal educational process does not offer young people the opportunity to acquire knowledge, competences and skills that are in line with the needs and competitive requirements of the 21st century, also reduces the chances of quicker employment, leading one to infer that many young people accept jobs for which they are not trained and do not have ade-

FIGURE 14: Youth unemployment rates based on self-assessments by young people, broken down by major sociodemographic groups

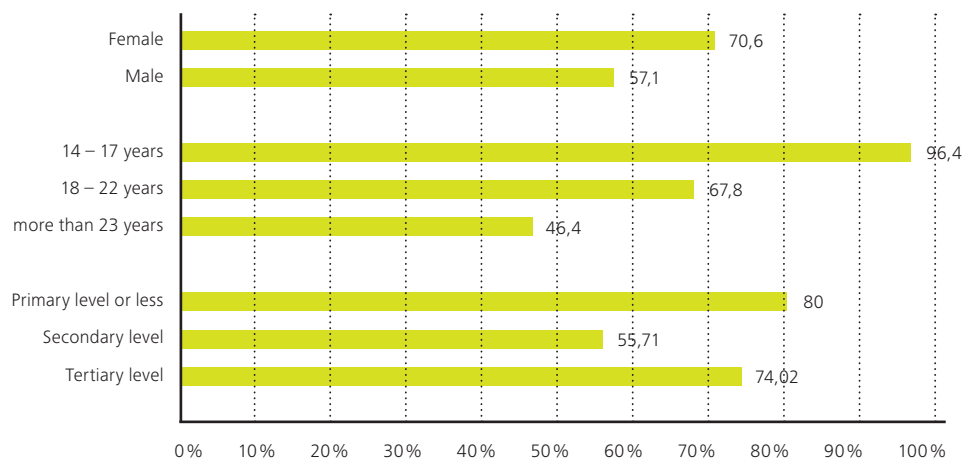


FIGURE 15: Work at a job within your occupation (one that you have been trained/educated for)

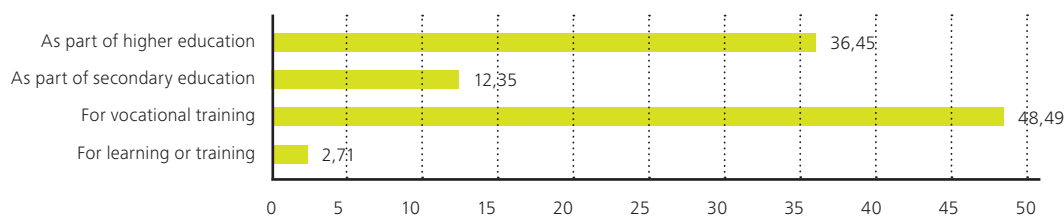
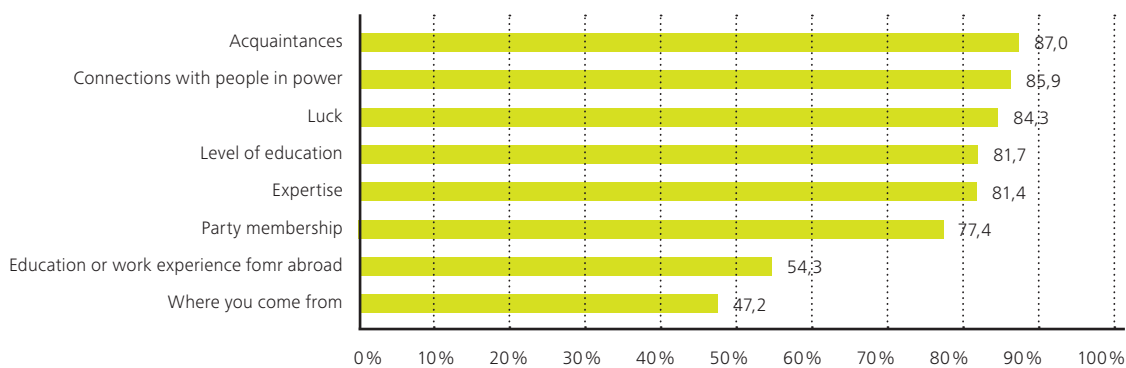


FIGURE 16: Importance of factors when it comes to finding a job in Bosnia and Herzegovina



quate educational training. Thus, in almost 50 percent of cases, young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina perform jobs for which they are not trained or for which they lack skills and competences, while almost every third young person considers that the job they have lies below their level of qualification.

An interesting but worrying finding is that an extremely small number of young people are employed and finance their own tertiary education, which can be explained by the fact that in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the countries of the region „it is normal for parents to support children as long as they are studying“ (Matić, 2016). According to the data obtained, a rather small percentage of young people decide to engage in voluntary work, with only 13 percent stating that in the last 12 months they have

taken part in at least one activity that could be characterised as voluntary work. Young people most often performed voluntary activities in schools or universities and youth organisations. There is almost no voluntary engagement by young people in trade unions and relief services (firefighters, etc.). These indicators in comparison with the data obtained in 2014 indicate that the attitude of young people towards voluntary work has not changed, and that young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not make any significant use of the opportunities available to them to improve their skills, competences and knowledge through phases of non-formal education and thus become more competitive in the labour market. It is interesting that young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not perceive expertise, skills or competences as

key factors for employment, with their viewpoint being that it is more important to have friends and acquaintances and connections with people in certain positions or simply luck, which dovetails with the view that for young persons there is no real motivation to volunteer alongside their formal educational training, as the education received formally or informally in the view of young people does not carry as much weight as connections with acquaintances, relatives and others who are in a certain positions of power and can hire a person in the desired sector.

When it comes to the perception of young people regarding key factors in the choice of employment today, we notice that young people attach more importance to material aspects than they attribute to the social sphere. Thus, it is not so important for young people to know who and what the work environment will be like in relation to the amount of earnings and job security. These indicators further reinforce the views of many researchers (Lavić, Žiga, Kukić) that Bosnian and Herzegovinian society is affected by the problem of precariousness or uncertainty with regard to every segment of social events, especially in terms of employability and the search for jobs.

These negative trends in the labour market in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the transition period since 1996 have to this day constituted a growing social problem that mostly affects the young population, whose unemployment rate is 3 to 4 times higher than total unemployment. When it comes to the employment of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, three important factors would appear important to an understanding of this social deviation, which includes an extremely low employment rate of approximately 40 percent of young people who are in employment, marked economic inactivity amongst young people, who in 50 percent of cases do not have a job or are looking for one, and the problem of long-term unemployment, which affects every second young person in Bosnia and Herzegovina after completion of the secondary or tertiary level of education, with this group of persons seeking employment but not able to find it during the first 12 months. All these factors have an enormous influence on youth thinking about their future in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which in many cases leads to the reason why a large number, especially those with a university education, decide to find a job outside the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This causes another problem, namely that skilled experts emigrate to developed countries and with their knowledge and work "contribute to the development, production and living standard" of their new country of residence. Young people are also forced to gain their first work experience by working in the "black market" (moonlighting, working on a cash basis, unregistered), which is also one of the most serious problems facing the economic system of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The perception of young people is that the Employment Office in its capacity as a government institution will not be able to help them find employment, but rather as an institution that provides free health insurance (Mujanovic, 2013). Furthermore, there is a clear discrepancy here compared to the few jobs to be found in sectors where there is an ample supply of workers in the labour market, namely the health sector, IT sector, craft services, electrical engineering and telecommunications as well as mining and construction. But most often young people decide to undergo training for occupations such as accounting, finance, administration and banking. Given all this, it is clear that more attention should be paid to general and targeted education in shaping the labour market, and economic policy steered by promoting and further stimulating young people who want to obtain educational training in areas where labour is needed. Of course, a clearer, faster and more productive reform of economic policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina is necessary, primarily aimed at young people who have not yet taken steps to leave the country. The impression one has is that it is necessary for young people to take things into their own hands to access the labour market, primarily when it comes to starting up their own business, i.e. a switchover to a proactive youth employment policy is required (e.g. a grace period in paying contributions and taxes when starting up a business, an adjustment of minimum wage policy, tax incentives to employ young people, a reduction in registration costs for companies), which should involve a removal of barriers to the employment of young people, but also significantly more intensive cooperation of the real sector of the economy with the educational system. Čavalić contends that it is necessary to start with reforms that reduce content that is not market-oriented, and to highlight those reforms that prepare young people to achieve a better performance in the labour market („entrepreneurship“ as a compulsory subject) (Čavalić, 2014).

KEY FINDINGS:

- Unemployed persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina tend to be women and young people aged 18 to 22 who have completed the tertiary level of education.
- The liberalisation and privatisation proces in Bosnia and Herzegovina were carried out without a clear strategy and detailed preparation, which led to problems in financial, political and social institutions. These indicators are also confirmed by the attitudes of young people regarding the perceived and real desire for employment in a sector, neglecting employment in the private sector and expressing a desire to work in the public sector.
- Young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina do not perceive expertise, skills or competences as key factors in employment, with the prevailing view being that it is more important to have friends and acquaintances and connections with people in certain positions or simply luck.

11

POLITICS

Most countries of southeast Europe in general, and Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular, cannot be considered to be consolidated democracies. 28 years after the first general elections and 23 years after the end of conflict, the country is still in a precarious state in which the achievement of democracy should not be taken for granted. Much hope is placed in today's youth and their role as catalysts for a democratic future of the country. While they have no recollection of the authoritarian past of BiH, they are at the same time disillusioned by the current stagnation of political development. This chapter addresses the question of whether youth can be considered a vibrant force that wishes to strengthen democracy in BiH and at the same time help it advance towards membership in the European Union.

Democracy can never be taken for granted, as it is not a stable and unchanging category of social and political life. Rather, it is re-created by each generation through their social repertoires of action and political discourse. Active participation, institutional trust and values of inclusiveness, the hallmarks of liberal democracy, are rather novel in BiH and the region. They have not yet had time to become ingrained in societal structures. This experience of democratic consolidation can be observed at multiple levels: (1) constitutional consolidation, (2) representative consolidation, (3) consolidation of behaviour of political actors, (4) consolidation of civil culture and civil society (Merkel 2007: 416–417). In BiH all four levels show significant deficiencies in consolidation, according to the Bertelsmann Transformation Index, as well as an overall stagnation in democratic development over the past eight years (Bertelsmann Transformation Index, 2018). The respondents to this survey have lived all their lives in a transitional democratic society. Born between 1989 and 2004, they have no distinct memories or experiences of the autocratic regime of socialist Yugoslavia which shaped the political attitudes of their parents' generation. They also have no or only very vague recollections of the 1992–1995 war and ethnic violence in BiH but have grown up in a context shaped by the outcomes of the conflict. Their only political experience is of a perpetually incomplete consolidation of democracy.

This contextual setting can spur an increased interest in politics and especially levels of political participation that can serve as a good indicator of democratic awareness and a means of strengthening the democratic system. Among political scientists there is agreement that without substantial political participation by citizens it is not possible to speak of a democratic regime (Dahl 1989; Tilly 2007; O'Donnell 2010; Przeworski 2010; Munck 2011; Merkel 2004). Participation is especially important for young people, as it allows them to develop an awareness of democratic values and a general repertoire of political action. Forms of political participation may change with generations, while their scope mostly remains the same (Norris, 2004). Today, youth are more likely to participate in subject-oriented activities, such as protests and petitions, with the aim of shaping public policies rather than more traditional democratic participation through elections and political parties. In order to obtain a complete picture, it is thus necessary to examine multiple forms of political participation, including informal and non-institutionalised types of political action and online participation. Engagement that is more personalised and informal is more likely to attract young people. Institutional trust is another variable important to democratic development, as discussed in Chapter B. It helps lower transaction costs within a society and makes reciprocal relations more feasible (Fukuyama, 1995). Low levels of trust in state institutions can make governance more difficult by undermining public authority. Additionally, this can discourage youth from innovating and adapting such institutions to address their needs, further eroding the effectiveness of governance.

The study also touches on the relevant and timely issue of political orientation in light of extensive globalisation and rising illiberal politics, specifically focusing on economic and cultural explanatory factors. These factors have been identified as potential explanations for authoritarian trends and practices of illiberal politics by ruling elites, both of which have impacted politics in southeast Europe (Inglehart & Norris, 2017). Whereas the factors that explained a retreat of competitive authoritarianism in the past

such as the increasing political influence of the European Union are waning, and new challenges to democracy are becoming more commonplace (Levitsky & Way, 2010), this trend is not limited to the region or to youth in particular, but is part of a broader self-reflection of liberal democratic development (Levitsky & Ziblatt 2018; Mounk 2018)

Paradoxically, it is because young people in BiH are very well integrated into global communication networks that they are exposed to political systems that are economically more efficient or organisationally more adept than their imperfect democracy at home. Being better informed about political developments in the country, the region, and the world does not necessarily make them more active democratic citizens and can instead lead to a withdrawal from a stagnant institutional setting they do not trust. Or it can lead to more radical anti-democratic politics.

Previous research on politics, democracy and youth in BiH is extensive and only a small portion thereof will be addressed in this text. These studies include "Voices of youth" (Đipa & Fazlić, 2012), "Towards a Youth Policy in FBiH" (Halimić, Koštrebić & Neimarlija, 2013; in continuation "Youth in the FBiH"), "Apstinenti u BiH" (Puhalo & Perišić, 2013), and the previous round of the "Youth Study Bosnia and Herzegovina" (Žiga et al., 2015), with the article written by Damir Kapidžić.

In previous research, young people did not express great interest in any type of political events and very little political engagement apart from voting, and even here youth participation was significantly below average for BiH. According to the 2015 BiH *Youth Study*, young people generally did not participate in protests or other subject-oriented action, whether formally or informally (Žiga et al., 2015). There was little understanding of political orientation on a left vs. right or conservative vs. liberal spectrum with 41.8 percent answering, "don't know" and another 36,5 percent answering neither left nor right. Also, young people mostly considered themselves complacently uninformed on political issues (there were no questions looking into authoritarian values or underlying cultural and economic factors). The 2015 BiH *Youth Study* found high levels of distrust towards political institutions that also serve as an explanation for general resignation of youth when it comes to BiH politics. "Ultimately, it is to be expected that the very limited political engagement of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as low level of trust in political institutions, results in evident dissatisfaction with democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina" (Žiga et al. 2015: 168).

Most of the earlier studies conclude that the combination of democratic transition, isolated political elites and lagging economic development result in a distinctive pattern of political behaviour characterised by abstinence from politics as a form of protest and revolt against a political system that does not seem to care about their future.

While the previous BiH *Youth Study* included a whole section on the integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the European Union, this round focuses more on opinions and values as underlying drivers for certain forms of political behaviour. While similar

questions were asked in both rounds, the responses and scales differed, thus making direct comparison difficult.

Youth are not interested in politics. This has not changed since the last survey round when 50 percent of young people showed little or no interest in politics. Nor have there been any major political events that would justify increased interest. There is only slightly more interest in politics at the local and national level than for international politics, as the former impact everyday life and the latter are far removed from everyday concerns. Since there is little interest, it is understandable that young people do not talk about politics with family or friends. When seeking information on political events, youth mostly turn to the Internet and to some degree to television. In recent years, there has been a shift from TV towards online media as the main source of information, with this trend accelerating, which is in line with other media consumption trends among youth. This survey marks a tipping point where the Internet has overtaken television as the main source of political information. At the same time, social networks are not a source of information about political events in particular, although it is unclear whether respondents recognised politically preferential posts (by friends or groups) as sources of information. Although they are likely to be better informed about the world in general, youth tend to shun information about politics. They simply have too much information to consume and digest and choose to disregard more tedious political news. From what information they do get, young people perceive that their interests are not well represented and that they do not have enough political rights (they view themselves as badly represented as disabled people and the poor). Even children and ethnic minorities are perceived to have more rights than them. This is a bit perplexing, as children cannot exercise their political will and rely on decisions made by others, and ethnic minorities face systemic discrimination when running for certain offices. Youth, on the other hand, have the ability to engage in politics and press for change. But they consciously choose not to, except for the act of voting.

A majority of young people voted in the last national elections (held four years ago) and 78 percent plan to vote in the upcoming elections in October 2018. The same percentage believe that it is the duty of every citizen in a democracy to vote. These figures are in contrast to popular belief and media discourse that youth generally abstain from voting, although there is no reliable exit-poll data to back up either claim. Youth have a clear sense of their role in legitimising representative democratic rule, even if they do not have much trust in the institutions they vote for (more on this point shortly) or detailed knowledge on the political process of governing. Voting decisions are nevertheless no less informed than those of the general population. Apart from voting, there is little actual political engagement. Informal and non-institutionalised, subject-oriented actions such as protests and petitions, both in person and online, do not have any allure at all. In fact, online activism is ranked especially low with only 4.7 percent participation rate. Formal or semi-formal types of engagement such as work for political parties or through a political function have no allure, either.

It is the mere fact of consciously having to engage with political decisions, complex institutional processes and personal responsibility that makes youth disinterested. This does not mean that protests do not happen in BiH. They do, especially around issues of personal and socio-economic security, and they impact political decision-making. It is just that large parts of youth do not perceive them as relevant and prefer voting as the sole type of democratic participation. This limited engagement corresponds to the allegiance model of the ideal democratic citizen (Almond and Verba 1963). It might also be a reason for relatively constant voting patterns in BiH elections, with the same parties ending up in government despite broad disenchantment with politics in general. The allegiance model of the democratic citizen emphasises an elite mandating forms of political participation and does not expect citizens to take on active roles in democracy between elections. Youth strongly supports democracy and would most likely defend their right to vote, but do not want to engage in daily politics when not absolutely necessary. At the same time, this limited form of democratic participation can lead to increased mistrust in political institutions.

This is exactly what we are witnessing in BiH. Trust in political institutions, including the BiH Presidency, the national Parliament, government and political parties is extremely low. The latter are the least trusted of all. Citizens in general and youth in particular do not engage with these institutions, nor does the BiH political system provide them with adequate opportunities to do so. BiH is a consociation democracy where power-sharing between groups is institutionalised within the political system. Political parties consider themselves the sole representatives of their ethnic group interests in formal institutions and subject-oriented interests have a hard time making it into policy. Such a system favours informal decision-making between party leaders behind closed doors rather than open and inclusive deliberation, thus limiting avenues for citizens (and youth) to take direct action. It is also possible to observe this at the subnational level through different levels of trust towards institutions of Republika Srpska and the Federation of BiH. On average, the President, Prime Minister, Parliament, and government of Republika Srpska are more trusted than the same institutions in the Federation of BiH (an average of 2.24 compared to 1.69 out of 5), which are the least trusted political institutions in the country. This could be, among others, because the Federation operates through a second tier of back-room power-sharing as opposed to more public and confrontational politics in Republika Srpska. Trust in local government, civil society, the judiciary and BiH media are only slightly better, while all of these are less trusted than, for example, banks and big companies. This is because restrictive ethnic politics play a role in their functioning as opposed to market forces. The only local institutions that enjoy any trust from BiH youth are the police, the church and volunteer movements – institutions that provide direct tangible services to citizens. Similar views can be observed in the previous survey round. Generally speaking, international actors are deemed more trustworthy than local institutions, with the

European Union being the most trusted of all political actors (although still a quarter of young people distrust the EU). This mismatch is exemplified through the significant difference in perceived status of values in BiH and the EU (Table 4). Young people still see the EU as a role model in many aspects, especially employment and economic welfare – two issues of particular concern in BiH. The prevalent lack of trust towards BiH political institutions and politicians also explains why very few young people are willing to take on a political function. This is again somewhat perplexing, as youth have clear and ambitious ideas about what government should provide (and currently does not).

TABLE 4: **Perceived status of values in BiH in comparison to the EU (averages)**

	Bosnia and Herzegovina	European Union
Democracy	2,7	3,7
The rule of law	2,4	3,7
Human rights	2,4	3,8
Economic welfare of citizens	2,0	4,0
Employment	1,7	4,1
Equality	2,5	3,7
Security	2,7	3,7
Individual Freedom	2,8	3,8
Aggregate value	2,4	3,8

Note: values are averages on a scale of 1 (very bad) to 5 (very good)

Youth expect the government to be more active in fostering economic growth, fighting corruption, securing social justice and human rights, and reducing unemployment especially among young people. They expect a lot from their government in other policy areas as well, but these stand out. Their position against economic liberalism is evident. While they are not able to place themselves on a left-wing/right-wing scale according to their political beliefs (over two-thirds of respondents did not answer this question), they have a clear affinity towards a stronger role of the state in the economy. Disillusioned with the problematic transition of the country to a market economy, and aware that globalisation increasingly impacts economic opportunities in countries that are left behind, youth expect the state to step in. Over 89 percent of young people agree or totally agree that there is a responsibility on the part of government to ensure that everyone is provided for. While the majority do not see competition as harmful, and almost 82 percent believe that in the long run hard work will pay off, the value of equality is in high regard with 82 percent agreeing that incomes of the poor and the rich should be made more equal. All this points towards the social market economy being the preferred model in addition to conservative social values (see chapter B). While economic preferences may appear to benefit social democratic parties, traditional values clearly

favour social conservative parties. In combination with manifest authoritarian traits this can even lead to support for nativism, protectionism, and illiberal democracy among young people.

In general, there has been no change in satisfaction with democracy in BiH compared to 2015, with the majority (and average) of young people being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Youth still think that democracy is a good form of government and over 90 percent support the right to vote, although, unsettlingly, as in the previous survey round, over a third would prefer authoritarian rule under certain circumstances. Values such as individual freedom, rule of law and democratic opposition are not understood or rank very low among their priorities (although human rights in general are valued). Youth clearly lack knowledge of what some of these categories and civic responsibilities mean and how different aspects of democratic rule complement each other. In addition to disdain for everyday BiH politics, this is most likely the result of inadequate or poorly executed civic education in schools. The survey confirms this, as over 50 percent of respondents say they do not know much about politics. Nor are young people nationalist, at least not in terms of BiH state nationalism (an average of 2.6 on a 1-to-5 scale). This can either be due to recognition of the multi-ethnic character of the country or, more likely, due to the omission of competing ethnic nationalism from the survey. On the bright side, a large majority of young people believe that conflicts in society cannot be solved by violence, a clear sign that they distance themselves from the politics of the past that have not brought them any fortune.

Populism remains an issue, as support for a strong party and leader representing the common folk in general is high. On a scale of authoritarianism (a modified four-item F-scale based on Lane, 1955 was included in the survey), young people in BiH score very high, an aggregate average of 76.4 on a 0-to-100 scale (Table 5). Especially on items that motivate political action, such as that an insult to one's honour should not be forgotten, youth exhibit worrisome authoritarian traits. Their preference for a strong leader should not be read as disdain for democracy in general, but rather for the ineffective institutional setup and corrupt governing practices of BiH elites, including patronage and nepotism. There is a clear allure of other successful governance models around the globe that link strong leadership and conservative family values, especially as they do not require persistent democratic engagement in between elections. As voting is still seen as essential, the illiberal democratic model (such as in Hungary or Poland) has a particular allure. Youth expect a lot from government, are willing to do only little themselves, and are waiting for a strong leader to solve their problems for them.

TABLE 5: **Scale of authoritarianism among BiH youth**

We should have a leader who rules Bosnia and Herzegovina with a strong hand for the public good	79,2
What young people need most of all is strict discipline by their parents	67,7
An insult to one's honour should never be forgotten	82,4
Most people who don't get ahead just don't have enough willpower	76,1
F-scale aggregate	76,4

Note: values are averages on a 0–100 scale

Youth have limited, but cautiously optimistic, expectations for the economic and political future of BiH. 85 percent support the country joining the EU, and EU integration is still seen as an opportunity for a better future. In this sense, there has been no backlash against economic globalisation directed towards Brussels. For the time being, young people are withdrawing from politics, as they are disillusioned with the political system and consociation party politics of BiH. They are waiting for a saviour.

KEY FINDINGS:

- The 2018 BiH Youth Study provides strong evidence that there is fertile ground among young people for populist parties and illiberal democracy to develop in the near future in BiH. While youth think that democracy is a good form of government and over 90 percent support the right to vote, over a third would prefer authoritarian rule under certain circumstances. Young people score very high on a scale of authoritarianism, with an aggregate average of 76.4 out of 100. Populism remains an issue with significant support for a strong party and leader representing the common folk in general. This should not be read as disdain for democracy, but rather for the ineffective institutional setup and corrupt governing practices of BiH elites.
- A majority of young people voted and believe that it is the duty of every citizen in a democracy to vote. Youth have a clear sense of their role in legitimising representative democratic rule. Apart from voting, there is little actual political engagement such as protests and petitions or work for political parties. This limited engagement corresponds to the allegiance model of the ideal democratic citizen, which emphasises elite mandating forms of political participation and does not expect citizens to take on active roles in democracy between elections.
- Trust in political institutions, including the BiH Presidency, the national Parliament, government and political parties is extremely low. The political system of the country favours informal decision-making between party leaders behind closed doors rather than open and inclusive deliberation, thus limiting avenues for citizens to take direct action. Only local institutions that provide direct tangible services to citizens enjoy any trust from BiH youth, such as police, the church and voluntary movements. The European Union is the most trusted of all political actors, especially with regard to employment and economic welfare – two issues of particular concern in BiH. Support for EU integration is very high at 85 percent.

12

DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS OF YOUTH IN BIH

Young people as a social group designate a population aged 15 to 30 (Štefančić, 2010), although some state the age of 15 to 25 as their period of youth, while for some it goes up to 30, and for others even until the age of 35, in accordance with the guidelines for an extension of youth in contemporary society (Gršić, 2017). Youth is most often described as a transition period between childhood and adulthood. Statistically, the lower limit of youth usually starts at the age of 15, while the upper limit varies, ending most often at 24, and sometimes at 29 or 34 years of age.

This trend is recognised as “extended youth” because it is characterised by increasingly long institutional education, difficult and inadequate employment, slowing socio-economic independence, delay in the establishment of one’s own family and poor inclusion of young people in social decision-making (Ule, 1988; see Hadžimahmutović and Martić, 2013). According to the population census conducted in 2013, 773,850 young people aged 15 to 30 live in Bosnia and Herzegovina, i.e. 21.91 percent of the population is made up of young people.

TABLE 6: **Number of youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina according to political structure**

	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Republika Srpska	Brčko District
Male	396.949	261.024	127.144	9.781
Female	376.901	248.352	120.112	8.437
Total	773.850	509.376	247.256	17.218

When we analyse the above figures, we note that every fifth person living in Bosnia and Herzegovina is in the category of young people. In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 22.95 percent of the total population are young people, while in the Republika Srpska this percentage is somewhat smaller, with 20.12 percent of the total population being made up of young

people. Respondents who participated in research dealing with the demographic situation of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina are on average 22 years old, whereas in the survey conducted in 2014 for the year before, where the average age was 21. Of the 1,000 young people surveyed, the sexual and age structure looks like this.

TABLE 7: Sexual and Age structure of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Sex	
Female	51,3
Male	48,7
Age (M:22,04)	
14 – 17 years	20,9
18 – 22 years	34,7
more than 23 years	44,4

According to the ethnic structure of the surveyed population, 49.7 percent of respondents stated that they identify as being Bosniaks, 13.9 percent as Croats and 32.8 percent as Serbs, the remainder were 0.8 percent, while 2.8 percent of respondents declined to answer this question. When it comes to religious identification, 48.9 percent of the respondents stated that they were Muslims, 34.9 percent of the population identified with being Orthodox and 13.6 percent considered themselves members of the Roman Catholic religion.

Looking at the type of community, the respondents live more often in cities (57.2 percent) than in rural areas (42.8 percent) compared to 2014, when the difference in percentage was 9.6 percent. It has now increased to 14.4 percent, i.e. an increase of 4.8 percent of young people living in the city, which corresponds to the trend towards accelerated urbanisation and deagrarianisation of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian society. In terms of the size of the community, the young people surveyed live predominantly in communities with up to 2,000 inhabitants (46.2 percent), while 7.0 percent of the respondents live in cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants, as is shown in more detail in the following table.

TABLE 8: Size of settlements in which young people live (percent)

Settlement size	
Under 2,000	46,4
2,000 – 5,000	9,1
5,000 – 10,000	8,5
10,000 – 20,000	11,1
20,000 – 50,000	8,0
50,000 – 100,000	9,9
100,000 – 500,000	7,0

When it comes to the highest level of education of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is apparent that young people are increasingly choosing not to enter the tertiary level of education, i.e. every tenth secondary school student decides to enrol in a university, although education is “a process of raising (young people); it is a systematic training, education and training of young people as a preparation for a life in business; it is a culture or development of ability, and character formation.” (Koković, 2009) One gets the impression that young people do not have much confidence that they will be more competitive in the labour market after completing university education. Thus, according to the 2013 census, of 722,311 young people aged 15–29, only 95,048 or 13.15 percent have a university degree, while 58.33 percent have completed secondary education. It is also worrying that 1.8 percent (13,257) of young people stated that they did not have any, or had not completed, primary education. Additionally, the young people surveyed in the research conducted confirm these trends, which can be seen in the following table.

FIGURE 17: Level of education of young people in relation to parents

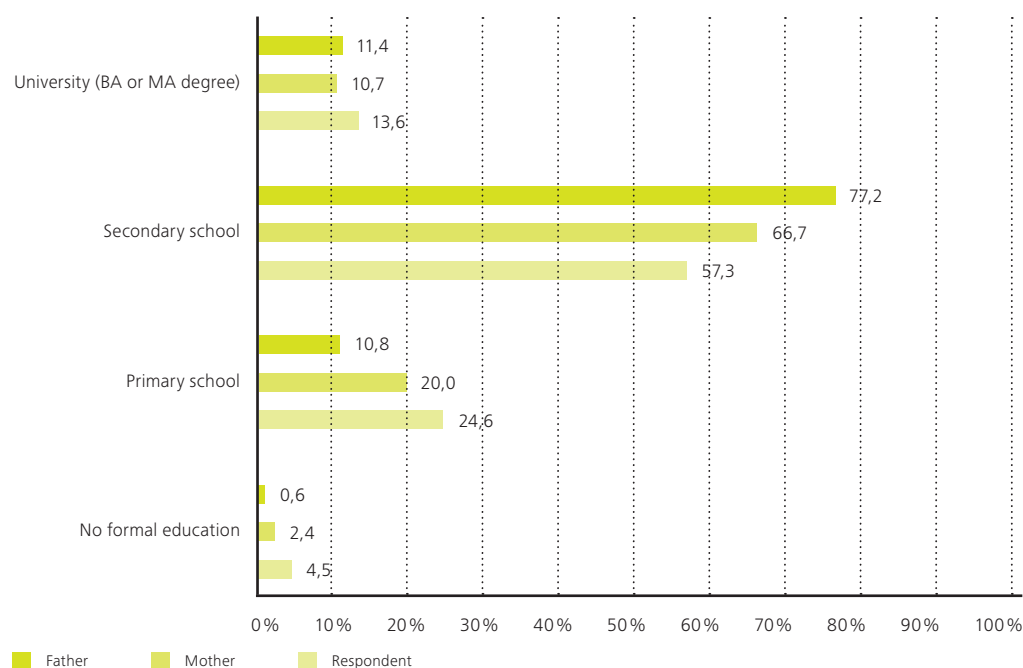
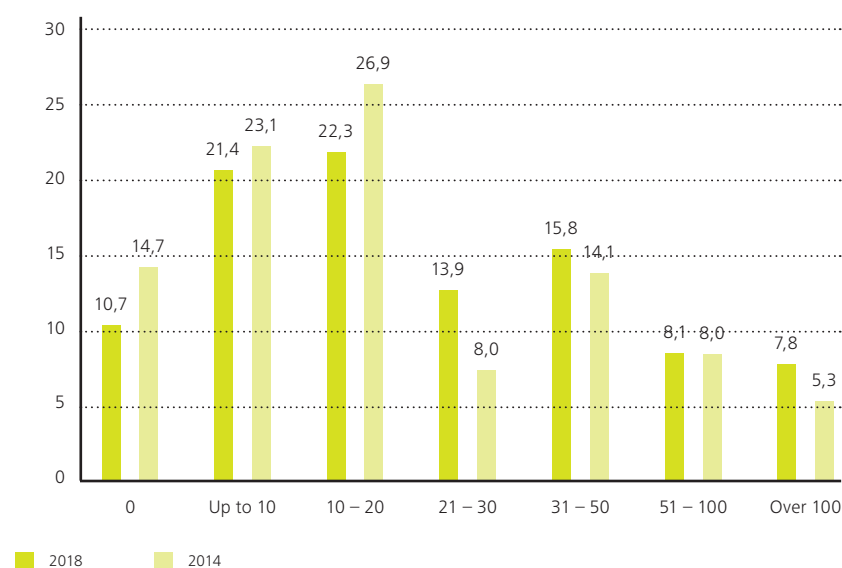


FIGURE 18: Number of books that the household has compared to 2014



As far as the educational status of young people in relation to their parents is concerned, we notice that young people have a higher level of formal education, which of course results in an economic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina where, due to the impossibility of employment after secondary school, young people decide to enter the tertiary level of education and to be more competitive in the labour market. Unfortunately, the choice of studies or the domination of social science and humanities degrees in the desired study segments of young people has led to an oversaturation of the labour market with these profiles, and it is increasingly difficult to find employment for students of social and human sciences, whose number in the unemployment registration services is increasing continuously from year to year, as is their growing dissatisfaction with the social situation and uncertainty over the future and survival in their own country.

Looking at the data obtained from the survey, the average number of household members is 3.57, that is, young people most often live in households with three or four members. An important determinant of the social position of young people is their way of living, which greatly affects the quality of life. In 83.9 percent of cases, young people or their parents in Bosnia and Herzegovina live in their own home or apartment, and in more than 90 percent of cases, each household member has his own mobile device, which is understandable due to the speed of development and the dissemination of new technologies. Additionally, amongst the surveyed population there is an insignificant number of households that do not have a working Internet connection in their home (2.3 percent do not have an Internet connection in their home). The connection between these and other elements with the economic status and equipment of the household in which young people live does not reflect the perception of young people with regard to the standard of living, as 40.1 percent of young people believe that there is enough money for basic foodstuffs, clothing and

footwear, while on the other hand they also have at least one car in 85 percent of cases. Only 10.6 percent of young people think that they have a good standard of living and can afford everything they need. As data on young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina tend to be published more often and there is a tendency towards very unhealthy living habits, it is not surprising that 38.5 percent of young people say that there is not a single bicycle in the household in which they live, while on the other hand they report that in over 85 percent of cases the household owns at least one car. One of the indicators that could measure the educational and social status of the family, i.e. the respondent's *objective cultural capital*, is knowledge of the number of books that the household has in which the respondent lives (Žiga, et al, 2015), where compared to 2014 we do not notice any significant changes.

When examining the data presented, reading habits in Bosnia and Herzegovina have not changed significantly. Young people read very little and they are much more interested in the Internet and television. We can also conclude that love of books has been displaced transgenerational "from the family, to the school, to the environment that should refer to the book as a true spiritual value" (Živković, 2012), which according to the data and the attitudes of young people is not the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

According to data obtained in the *Youth Study* of 2014, the profile of a young person living in Bosnia and Herzegovina offers an average picture of a young person at the age of 21 living in a community/village with no more than 2,000 inhabitants. If they are not a student in high school or at university, then they are most often unemployed, living in a household with about four members (3.82), in an apartment/house and have their own room and Internet connection. On average, young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina have a computer, a car and a smartphone in the household they live in or personally, while most do not own a tablet and a slightly lower percentage have a laptop. Households

in which young people live have on average between 11 and 20 books (Žiga et. al, 2015).

Compared to 2014, the profile of a young person in 2018 has not changed significantly, with an average age of 22 and living in a community/village with no more than 2,000 inhabitants. If they are not students in the secondary or tertiary phase of education, then they are most often unemployed and are not actively seeking employment. On average they live in a household with 3.57 members and have their own room and Internet connection. Households in which young people live according to type of equipment and quality of life have all the necessary elements that imply an average standard of living (washing machine, dishwasher, computer, car). What is interesting is the fact that the leisure time of young people is mostly spent in cafes, and that they do not visit cultural events or travel much. This can be associated with very low or no income for young people, where a young person does not have the ability to contribute to the domestic budget, while all of their activities depend on the help of their parents. As a result of all of the above, there is almost no process of independence among young people, especially the unemployed, and the average ages in which they get married and start a family are increasing due to a perceived uncertainty surrounding the future.

KEY FINDINGS:

- The profile of a young person in 2018 in Bosnia and Herzegovina is of someone at an average age of 22, living in a community/village with no more than 2,000 inhabitants. If they are not students in the secondary or tertiary phase of education, then they are most often unemployed and are not actively seeking employment.
- On average, they live in a household with 3.57 members and have their own room and Internet connection. Households in which young people live in terms of the type of equipment and quality of life have all the necessary elements that imply an average standard of living (washing machine, dishwasher, computer, car).
- The leisure time of young people is mostly spent in cafes, while they do not visit cultural events or travel much. This can be associated with very low or no income for young people, a situation in which a young person does not have the ability to contribute to the home budget.
- There is almost no process promoting independence among young people, especially the unemployed, and the average age of marriage and starting up a family are increasing due to a perceived uncertainty surrounding the future.

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After discussing results of the empirical research performed for the purpose of this Study, we may say that, unfortunately, the negative indicators regarding the status of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina which became evident in the survey in 2014 have not improved in this year's survey. In some segments today, the situation is even worse.

About 60 percent of young people are unemployed, and one in every five of them looking for a job has been waiting for more than five years, and even half of them for more than two years.

In addition to unemployment and an inadequate educational system, due to the depressing political situation in the country, the feeling that there are no prospects, etc., the mass exodus of young people to other countries has continued, reducing the fertility potential of this society, which can be fatal to its future development. With the alarming decline in birth-rates and fertility, and the massive departure of young people from this country, local society is rapidly aging.

The situation has not improved when it comes to the quality of life of young people in this country, which is reflected, in addition to the unemployment mentioned above, in the way they use their free time, their dissatisfaction with the educational system, lack of trust, frustration characterising society in general, etc. Nevertheless, the percentage of young people who are active in politics, the non-governmental sector, and some leisure activities, etc., is still negligible, thereby contributing to their own unsustainable situation in society. Indeed, their disinterest not only in public engagement, but also a lack of elementary knowledge about politics, the importance of public opinion, etc., is something we should be worried about.

In order to stop the mass exodus of young people from this country, and the negative demographic trends that are very important to the future of this society, it is necessary to provide a desirable environment for the lives of people, especially young people, throughout the country.

Thus, we feel free to propose several policy recommendations for an improvement in the position of youth in BiH society. These include the following:

- Establish and fund youth centres that focus on interaction among youth and creative thinking. Programmes at these centres have to be designed and implemented by young people themselves. This will create an opportunity for vertical relationships and bridging social capital to encourage development.
- Place an emphasis on skill-based learning in curricular reforms. In addition, offer free-of-charge, extra-curricular, skills-based education. This will allow youth to focus their abilities and skills on the job market and make them more independent in their search for employment. Indirectly this policy will also benefit social capital. However, value of knowledge, including humanities, arts and critical thinking is also crucial in the development not only of curricula, but also societal values.
- Assign much greater emphasis to civic education in schools, especially to the quality of education. Much more practical exercises, role-plays, field trips and discussions need to be included in the curriculum.
- Consideration of the fact that young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina view family as the primary social unit of vital importance and one of the most important resources for a happy life; in fragmented and turbulent times of post-modern processes, it is important to empower the Bosnian and Herzegovinian family to become a cross-generational transmitter of values;
- More often than ever, young people are demonstrating their desire to permanently leave in order to solve the problem of unemployment and improve their living standards. Therefore, it is necessary to bring about a positive social environment with employment opportunities as well as a good quality of life that would suit the needs of young people.
- Apart from creating a labour market which can accept competitive young people, it is necessary to create a stimulating environment where young people can realise their full potentials. Simultaneously, the labour market needs to be humanised and human dignity has to be regained so that young people can recognise the value of labour that makes a decent living possible.
- In order to change the dominant discourse encouraging awareness of the "necessity" for departure of young people, it is necessary to promote positive social change and shift the mind-set away from "must leave" to "must stay".
- It is necessary to integrate labour market needs into educational policies (dual education system), especially at the high school level.
- It is necessary for public employment offices to have a better connection with the labour market.
- It is necessary to affirm the existing diaspora; apart from economic investments in the homeland, it can help support social progress through transfer of knowledge and know-how.
- Political institutions and actors, especially at the local level, need to make a much stronger effort to increase interest and engagement on the part of youth. This is especially true of municipalities (and possibly cantons in FBiH), where youth engagement can actually make a difference in the short term. Leaders at these levels of government need to work across party lines to bring youth into the discussion on shaping their communities.

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FOOTNOTES

[1] More in: Žiga, J., Turčilo, L., Osmić, A., Bašić, S., Džananović Miraščija, N., Kapidžić D. & Brkić Šmigoc, J. (2015): Youth study Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sarajevo: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

[2] More in: Turčilo, L., Osmić, A., Žiga, J. (2017). Mladi, Politika i Mediji: Priručnik za razvoj političke i medijske pismenosti mladih (Youth, Politics and Media: Manual for Development of Political and Media Literacy of Youth). Sarajevo. FES

[3] Read more at: www.mladi.gov.ba/indeks.php?option=content&task=view&id=46.hr

[4] The countries that are a democratic, economically, and politically stable.

[5] States that are non-democratic, politically and economically unstable

[6] More in: Šahonović M. Jević A, (2017). Vršnjačko i rodno-zasnovano nasilje u osnovnim školama u BiH. Sarajevo.

[7] Its primary aim was to promote a healthy lifestyle among youth. The main topics addressed by the syllabus included: Healthy nutrition – the basis for physical and spiritual development of children; physical activities – development of humanity and skills, knowledge and competences; healthy lifestyles as a tool in the fight against the use and abuse of psychoactive substances; preservation of reproductive health and gender issues – developing positive attitudes and values; development of life skills – the path to non-violent communication; and inclusion – respect of diversity (<http://www.asocijacija.org/zdravi-zivotni-stilovi-kako-znati-sta-je-cool--a-sta-nije>). We still do not have any research or data that would show what kind of influence this syllabus has had so far, however.

[8] More in: http://www.mladi.gov.ba/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=46&lang=hr

[9] More in: <http://novijece.ba/index.php/informacije/razno/748-poloaj-mladih-u-bih>

[10] This study does not look at exposure to differences in childhood which, arguably, strongly influence attitudes during early adulthood.

[11] More in: http://www.mladi.gov.ba/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=46&lang=hr

[12] Data from the website: http://www.mladi.gov.ba/pdf/Analiza_mladi_-_za_web.pdf

TABLE OF FIGURES

17	FIGURE 1: Perception of look among youth
17	FIGURE 2: Attitude of youth towards unhealthy habits – I never ...
17	FIGURE 3: Engagement of youth in sports
29	FIGURE 4: Attitudes of young people – the best marriage age
30	FIGURE 5: Scale ranking of factors important to the choice of a marriage partner in terms of gender
35	FIGURE 6: How strong is your desire to move to another country for more than six months (emigrate)?
36	FIGURE 7: How long do you plan to stay abroad
36	FIGURE 8: Reasons for leaving the country
37	FIGURE 9: What steps have you taken to leave the country?
38	FIGURE 10: Preferred countries of emigration
42	FIGURE 11: Travel for education among youth
45	FIGURE 12: Employment and unemployment among economically active young people (14 – 29)
46	FIGURE 13: Predominant activities of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2018), Croatia (2018), Serbia (2018) and Slovenia (2018)
47	FIGURE 14: Youth unemployment rates based on self-assessments by young people, broken down by major sociodemographic groups
47	FIGURE 15: Work at a job within your occupation (one that you have been trained/educated for)
47	FIGURE 16: Importance of factors when it comes to finding a job in Bosnia and Herzegovina
58	FIGURE 17: Level of education of young people in relation to parents
59	FIGURE 18: Number of books that the household has compared to 2014

TABLE OF TABLES

7	TABLE 1: Basic information about the research process
22	TABLE 2: Specific trust among youth
23	TABLE 3: Justification of certain informal types of behaviour among youth
53	TABLE 4: Perceived status of values in BiH in comparison to the EU (averages)
54	TABLE 5: Scale of authoritarianism among BiH youth
57	TABLE 6: Number of youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina according to political structure
58	TABLE 7: Sexual and Age structure of young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina
58	TABLE 8: Size of settlements in which young people live (percent)

