

Pursuing Peace: The Return of Bosnian War Refugees from “Paradise Lands” to “Home”

Özge Algül



“Sunce tuđeg neba neće vas grijat ko što ovo grije”

*“The sun of someone else’s sky will not warm you
like this one”*

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Lands” to “Home”**

Master’s Thesis

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Cover Picture: Ruins of buildings destroyed during the Bosnian war near the centre of Sarajevo
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Cover Quote: Verse from a poem, written by the famous Bosnian poet Aleksa Šantić

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The research project that led to this master's thesis was an exciting opportunity in my academic and personal life. Going to Bosnia for a research was also an occasion to conduct research about my own identity, discovering another side of myself.

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I dedicate this thesis to my father, Erol Algül, who encouraged me to do the master's degree in development studies. Even though he left in the middle, his thoughts and guidance were with me until the end, giving me courage to finish the mission that I started.

“And now they even think about doing the same post-conflict reconstruction in Syria! If you want to destroy the country, yes, do it like in Bosnia! We are still in war, but without weapons. It’s worse than right after the war.”

Zene za Zene (“Women for Women”), NGO in Sarajevo, May 2019

ABSTRACT

Drawing on in-depth interviews in Sarajevo (2019) with former Bosnian war refugees and the institutions taking part in post-conflict reconciliation, this research aims to examine the Bosnian returnees' return, their re-establishment process and (non)migration aspirations.

The point of departure of this research is the current Syrian refugees and their uncertain future. Considering that the war is on the verge of coming to an end and their repatriation will be a subject of debate in the near future, this paper wishes to establish lessons from previous policies, regulations and experiences by looking at the long-term consequences of the Bosnian refugees' return.

The research finds that, psycho-historical trauma of the forced displacement is the biggest motivation behind their decision to return. However, many of them could not return to their "home" and fell into the category of internally displaced, due to the country's entrenched ethnic division into two entities. Regarding the re-migration aspirations, the study discovers that migration causes the loss of *capitals* (Bourdieu,1986). This, alongside returnees' high capability level, prompted them to stay in Bosnia rather than leave.

Overall, this paper argues that repatriation, despite its literal meaning, doesn't always mean going back "home". The formation of new capitals throughout the asylum experience, as well as the support of (inter)national institutions, may create challenges rather than opportunities in the course of re-establishment.

Key words: Aspiration, Bosnia, Capability, Capital, Migration, Refugees, Return

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BiH/BIH: Bosnia and Herzegovina

DPA: Dayton Peace Agreement

FBIH: Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

IOM: International Organisation for Migration

MHRR: Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina

OSCE: Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

RS: Republika Srpska

UN: United Nations

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGIES

1-Refugee: At the UN level, a distinction is made between refugees and asylum seekers. The former is the ones whose asylum application is accepted by the host country because of “a well-founded fear of persecution” due to their race, religion, nationality, politics, or social group membership. The latter; asylum-seekers, are those seek asylum under the intention of being accepted on said basis. However, in this paper the term of refugee will be used in general frames, regardless if the status of refugee is obtained in the host country. It refers to all Bosnians who fled to another country for the purpose of seeking asylum. “Migrant” term is also used in the same meaning, referring to all the Bosnians who left from the country.

2-Bosnia: Refers to the country of Bosnia and Herzegovina

3-Bosnian: Citizen of Bosnia and Herzegovina excluding the ethnicity

4-Bosniak: Refers to ethnicity; Bosniak person is a Bosnian Muslim

5-Croat: Refers to ethnicity; Croat person is Bosnian Catholic

6-Serb: Refers to ethnicity; Serb person is Bosnian Orthodox

7-Returnee: A refugee who returned from abroad to the home country

8-Stayee: Person who did not go away and stayed in the home country during the war

9-Federation: Bosniak-Croat Entity in Bosnia-Herzegovina

10-Repuplika Srpska: Bosnian Serb Entity in Bosnia-Herzegovina

11-Minority return/returnees: Returnees who are of a different ethnic group to those who are in the majority in the region; e.g. Bosniak returnee in the Republika Srpska

1) INTRODUCTION

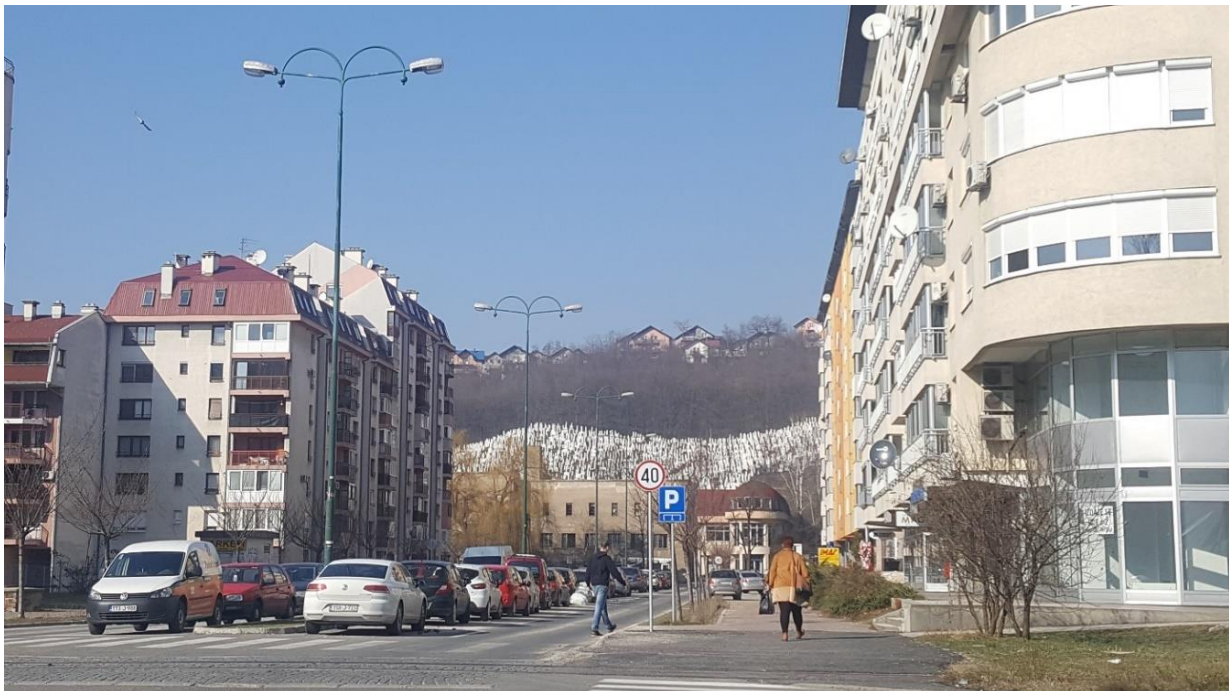
“It is not about the lack of money; we keep the ruins to always remember the war. To not to forget the siege of Sarajevo, to not to forget Srebrenica; if you forget, it might happen again!”¹

The cover picture is taken in February 2019, during the field research, close to the centre of Sarajevo. Although the Bosnian war ended almost 25 years ago, its ruins² are preserved, for several purposes. The cover picture is one of the strongest examples of this, due to its size and central location. Its message is strong and clear: the war continues, but this time without weapons.

Sarajevo, witnessing the longest siege in the world modern history (BBC World Service, 2016) persists in carrying the scars of the war, in order to remember the past. These scars remind Sarajevans every second of the ethnic conflict, the lost lives, and the missing people.

The conflict took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina between 1992-1995 and displaced around 2.5 million people, which was more than half of Bosnia’s pre-war population (4.3 million). This was the largest displacement in Europe since the Second World War (Flemming, 2012); roughly half sought asylum abroad while the other half were internally displaced (Barslund et al., 2017; del Pilar Valledor Alvarez, 2015; Hallergard, 1998; Lippman, 2015). After the end of the war, Sarajevo received many internal and international displaced people, transforming into the return hub of the displaced Bosnian Muslims (Statistic Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013).

Figure 1: Street in Sarajevo. Graveyards on the hill (white colour) is a constant reminder of the war.



Source: Özge Algül, 2019

¹ Citizen of Sarajevo comments on the ruins left from the war (March 2019).

² Ruins are preserved in many towns in Bosnia. This is not specifically related to Sarajevo.

Re-starting life in a devastated town and living together with the war memories for 25 years was the point of departure of this research project. Without a doubt, these wounds and many other non-material ones influenced Bosnian refugees' capability to re-establish after return. The title of this thesis draws attention to this heavy process; the core theme of this study. Nonetheless, the terms used in the title require explanation to avoid potential confusions. Firstly, the word of "peace" refers to internal and psychological peace rather than physical peace. Most of the Bosnian refugees spoke of "peace" while explaining their return. "Paradise Lands" is another term utilized by the participants to describe the developed nature of their former host countries. "Home" is written in quotation marks purposely to provoke reflections on its meaning and significance, which will be discussed throughout this paper.

Figure 2: Memorial for killed children during the siege of Sarajevo in 1992-1995, in the center of Sarajevo. It represents more than 1300 Bosniak, Croat, Serb, Roma, Jewish children.



Source: Özge Algül, 2019

Bosnian refugees' return has been elaborated by many scholars so far, however this research differentiates from others due to its location, date, diverse sample and connection to the current refugee crisis. The following section underlines the relevance and urgency of this research.

Firstly, there is limited research examining the contrast between the Bosnian returnees' post-arrival needs and the offers of inter(national) and non-governmental institutions. What the return and post-return meant for policy makers was different than what it meant to the refugees. It is calculated that Bosnia has received more per capita aid than any European country under the Marshall Plan (Pasic, 2011). However, neither foreign largesse nor the various reconstruction and development strategies could manage to bring progress to the country. Considering half of its population still lives abroad (Krasteva et al., 2018, p. 26) and it has the highest youth unemployment (International Labour Organisation, 2018) and emigration rate (Telegraf.rs, 2017) in Europe, Bosnia deserves to be re-examined, to challenge the effectivity and sustainability of the repatriation and re-establishment.

Secondly, through the literature review it is remarked that there is relatively less studies on Bosnian refugees' re-establishment experiences comparing to their asylum or repatriation processes. The latter is more of an issue of host countries whereas the former remains as an issue of home country. Academia tends to produce knowledge according to the needs of the host countries, as these countries are more developed, thus refugees' post-return experiences receive little attention. Their process of return and the immediate post-arrival experiences have been researched, but there is not enough information on the long-term consequences of this. The relationship between the image of return and the reality of return is rather unknown in Bosnian case, which displays of the necessity for further investigation. It is crucial to follow up the re-establishment period because it provides a better understanding of the so-called current high emigration pattern in Bosnia, which ultimately concerns more developed states. Insufficient examination of the post-return results in insufficient understanding of the flow of Bosnian people. Many returnees went or are going back to their former host countries after the repatriation; demonstrating that the return is in fact not the end of migration cycle. Hence, researching post- return experiences of Bosnian refugees are vital to provide up-to-date explanations and recommendations for current human mobilities.

Thirdly, there is a research shortfall regarding the recent voluntary returnees, so called *late returnees*³. It is important to examine their return from "paradise lands" because currently many Bosnians are leaving the country for these lands. This provokes questions as to the sense and the reason of migration. Contrary to what ne-classical theories would suggest, return migration may not only be driven by economically rational behaviour, but also determined by non-economic factors.

Regarding the urgency of this research, its timing is meaningful due to its connection with the current refugee crisis. Regarding the Syrian war is on the verge of coming to an end, repatriation of the Syrian refugees' will soon be a subject of debate. The number of Syrian refugees worldwide is around 6.7 million (UNHCR, 2018) and their return to home will cause many challenges for the refugees, for the Syrian state, as well as for the host countries. Studying former Bosnian refugees' re-establishment could provide lessons as it demonstrates the long-term consequences of the past return policies and regulations. In this way, Syrian refugees' post-return difficulties could be predicted, necessary precautions could be taken, and more sustainable repatriation plans could be prepared before the actual return.

Nevertheless, one should keep in mind that every return has its own character. King's (2000) "return migration" model gives space to these characteristics, going beyond the classical dichotomies. Each return varies not only because home and/or host countries are different, but also as migrants are very different from one another. Even if they come from the same origin and go to the same host country, asylum and post-return experiences may vary profoundly. Each migrant has a different personal, cultural and socio-economic background, and these backgrounds have great influence over a migrants' life experiences. Bourdieu's "capital" framework (1986) is the academic translation of this background. Shortly, we can state that every individual has certain "capitals" or in other words, "resources". These resources are the combination of cultural (level of education or personal characteristics), economic (savings and properties) and social (social networks) means. Given that each migrant has different types and amount of resources, they form different levels of capabilities, which

³ Late returnees refer the refugees who did not return right after the war. They did not lose their residence in the host country even after the end of the conflict. Thus, they could stay longer comparing to the ones who were immediately repatriated. Late returnees hold double citizenship and constitute a big part of the voluntary returns.

directly influence the re-migration aspirations. In this sense, de Haas' "capability-aspiration" model (2010b) is a suitable tool because it allows to see the connection between the individuals' capabilities and (non)migration aspirations. Therefore, asylum and post-return experiences as well as re-migration intentions could not be examined as homogenous cases. Notwithstanding, this heterogeneity does not prevent one building hypothesis; on the contrary, it provides richness and can make the argument more accurate. Varieties as well as similarities among these experiences help to develop potential scenarios for future repatriation cases.

Thus, the main research question of this paper is:

How did the asylum and return experience influence Bosnian war refugees' re-establishment and their re-migration aspirations?

The following sub-questions break down the main research question into three chronological aspects:

- 1- What were the reasons of Bosnian refugees' return decisions?
- 2- What were the main challenges and opportunities of the re-establishment process and how do they link to the returnees' capitals?
- 3- What are the re-migration aspirations among the returnees?

With the aim of answering the mentioned questions, the paper is divided into six chapters. The first chapter contains the introduction to the topic, its relevance, research aim and questions. Chapter 2 demonstrates the theories which frame the research and chapter 3 provides historical context highlighting Bosnian refugee flow and the repatriation. The fourth chapter goes over the methodology and the research designs of this project, including the limits of research. The results of this study are presented in the chapter 5. The latter investigates the three sub questions of the research in chronological order. The first part illustrates the Bosnian refugees' lives in asylum and its impacts on their return. The second part examines their re-establishment to Bosnia and the third part investigates their present re-migration aspirations. Throughout this chapter, the findings are discussed in a broader frame by adding new elements to the existing theories. Chapter 6 concludes this study and give policy recommendations for future return cases.

2) THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, multiple definitions, models and theories framing the research will be included. This research concerns the former migrants who returned to their home country; therefore it starts with defining *return migration*.

Return migration could be defined when people return to their country/place of origin after staying a considerable time period in another country/place (King, 2000, p. 8). However, in this paper instead of *return migration*, the term *repatriation* is used, which means return to one's country of origin in safety and dignity (UNHCR, 2004): Definition wise, the distinction between these terms has never been clear and they could be used interchangeably. Nevertheless, in the literature *repatriation* is generally used to refer the return of refugees, whereas the *return migration* is used as an umbrella term, referring the return of all sorts of migrants. King (2000, p.8) differentiates these two terms and states that *repatriation* is an involuntary act whereas *return migration* is not. However, it could also be voluntary, without any force, as my sample demonstrates. Even if it was not, it is still not a valid definition because repatriation goes beyond this dichotomy. It is questionable, under what conditions a return decision could be named as a voluntary or an involuntary act. This ambiguity will be established throughout this paper.

Another dimension which makes the *repatriation* very discussable among the scholars, is its symbolic connotation. From the host country's perspective, the repatriation is a political act more than it's practical meaning (Koser, 2000, p. 58), because it represents the power of the state within the borders of its sovereignty. Therefore, it's efficiency, success or results might not be as important as the act itself. Refugees, in general, are seen as disrupting the natural order and their repatriation means restoration of this order (Black, 2002, pp. 125–126). From the home country's perspective, repatriation also represents the power of state given that the latter cannot exist without its population, and the return of the citizens is the precondition for the state's continuation and power.

For migrants, the repatriation term becomes more sophisticated as it carries many metaphorical meanings. It literally means return to home, but the concept of "home" is not straightforward. It is closely connected to the notions of memory and identity as much as the country and place (Black, 2002, p. 126). Coles, the author of a major UNHCR study on voluntary repatriation, emphasises the same issue regarding the concept of "home". With the following statements; he defines the two principals of home and community in the country of origin and their connections:

"The human need to belong is more than one for protection or for the means of individual development: it is also a need to be among one's own. Although this latter need varies in strength according to individual circumstances and to such factors as age (it seems to become stronger as a person grows older), it is normally a strong human need, the satisfaction of which is conducive to individual and social well-being and the denial of which is conducive to suffering and to social disorder.

Belonging also relates not only to a community of people but, normally, also to a land (the 'motherland' or the 'fatherland' or the land of one's ancestors). Man is not an ethereal spirit living outside space or time but a terrestrial creature with roots in a land and its history. A 'people' is formed by physical propinquity, a native soil and a shared history that has formed common beliefs and values (i.e. its culture or civilization) and conferred on it an identity. The link between a people and a land is a profound one" (UNHCR 1985:185-186).

The quote above illustrates that home is not only a physical place, its association to certain community and people is essential to name one's place as "home". In this sense, Bosnian repatriation represents various issues regarding the connection between the communities and the place of origin, which was broken down as result of the ethnic conflict. However, even if the connection was kept, still return "home" would not be always applicable. Migration changes the migrant; s/he is not the same person as before the exile. According to de Haas (2010c), awareness of opportunities and ways of living in the period of migration has a dramatic impact on identity formation and the attitudes in the countries of origin. Community and the places might have remained the same, but the person faced transformation and s/he might identify "home" different than previously. During this paper, Bosnian refugees' return "home" will be discussed through the above-mentioned lenses, and it will be examined how this ambiguous process influenced their re-establishment process and re-emigration intentions.

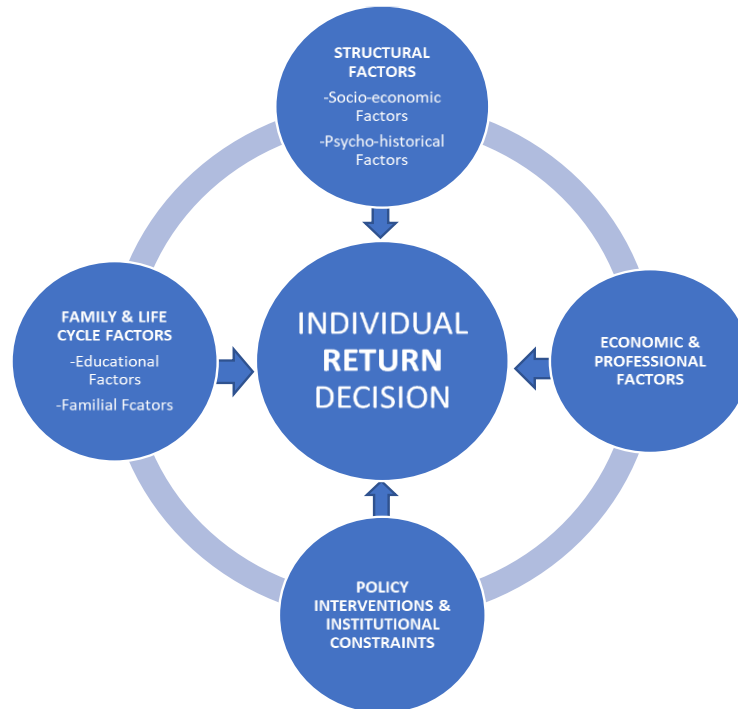
Another key concept leading this written work is *re-establishment*. It is defined as return and resettlement of the refugees in the country of origin (European Commission, 2018, p.4). In the literature, the term *re-integration* is used more often than *re-establishment* to analyse the post-return period of the refugees. However, in this paper the term of *re-establishment* is preferred. *Re-integration* is not the case as the conflict had transformed the country, whereby everything had changed. Returnees took part in dynamic and continuous process rather than returning to the pre-war situation (Cassarino, 2004; Faist, 2008; Hammond, 1999). Thus, it was not only the returnee who had the responsibility to adapt or integrate, but rather the whole community had to adapt to these shifts. The migrant is not the only variable, everything is variable and thus the *re-integration* does not fit well to this study. Therefore, *re-establishment* term is more accurate to define this process. *Re-establishment* is a very long-term process where structural, individual and social factors are significant. Structural factors comprise of the country of origin's policies, regulations and post-conflict structure as well as the support of the host countries and other institutions. Individual factors include the returnees' personal backgrounds, skills as well as their asylum history and experiences. Social factors refer to social networks at the host country and home country, the approach of the local community towards returnees and the number of people returning simultaneously play major role.

In addition to these key-concepts multiple theories and models will guide us while answering the research questions. Firstly, Russell King's return migration model (2000) and its modified format is introduced because it assists us in answering the first sub question; return reasons of the Bosnian refugees. Secondly, Bourdieu's capital framework (1986) is explained in more detail to respond the second sub-question; relation between the refugees' capitals and re-establishment experiences. However, Bourdieu's capital model is also an overall framework of this thesis, and thus it will guide us throughout the paper. Thirdly, de Haas' capability-aspiration model (2010b) is presented, a useful tool to examine the third sub-question; returnees' re-migration aspirations.

1-King's Return Migration Model

Reasons of return are fundamental to understand returnees' lives and re-migration aspirations. In this regard, Russell King's (2000, p. 14) "causes and effects of return migration" model (refer to annexe 1a) inspired many scholars and this written work. Nevertheless, given that it is prepared for all kinds of return migration, it is not detailed enough to respond all the needs of this research. Thus, I modified his model in the frame of "war refugees", which would enable us to deepen our understanding of the return of Bosnian migrants.

Figure 3: Influencing factors of Bosnian refugees' return



Source: Inspired by Yendew et al., 2013, p.274 (refer to annexe 1b for the original model)

The figure above illustrates the Influencing factors of Bosnian refugees' return. It goes beyond the push-pull or voluntary-involuntary dichotomies and tries to explain the return from a broader perspective. They are grouped in four different themes: structural factors, family-life cycle factors, policy interventions and economic-professional factors.

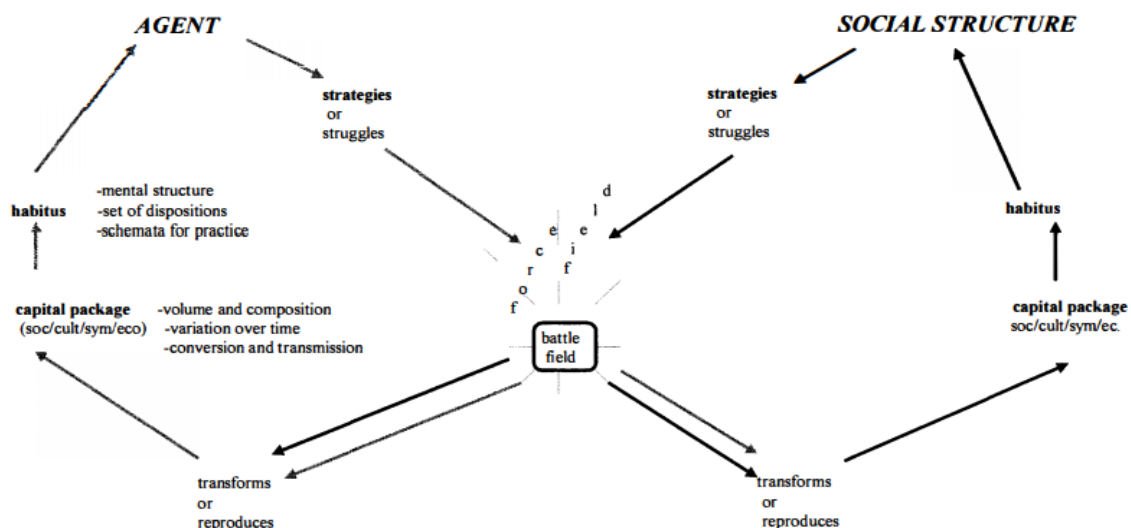
Structural factors are organised under two different aspects: socio-economic and psycho-historical factors. The first contains the social status of refugees in the country of asylum and the second involves the psychological well-being of the refugees, both caused by external factors. In fact, "psycho-historical factors" is one of the main contributions of this research because it has not been included so far in the previous return migration models. The war and forced displacement have caused deep wounds on the refugees' minds and lives, thus the impact on the return decision is tremendous. Family-life cycle factors also contain two subgroups: educational and familial factors in the country of asylum. Policy interventions and institutional constraints is the third dimension and it displays how the refugees' desires and capabilities are shaped by the host countries' asylum policies, consequently driving them to return. The last one is economic-professional factors, consisting of economic status and professional lives of the refugees in their host countries. The first section of the *Results* chapter is organised according to these four factors, which are strongly interlinked.

2-Bourdieu's "Capital" Framework

According to Bourdieu, *capital* is accumulated labour which generates different forms of benefits. These different forms could be material (physical, economic) and immaterial (cultural, social, symbolic) resources inside of the society. Obtaining these resources gives an individual access to power and eventually financial wealth (Bourdieu, 1986). In other words, Bourdieu states that power is both the possession of capital and inseparably, the ability to influence it's value. This demonstrates that capital is the combination of the structural factors and agency. Below, we will see clearer explanation of this framework and its connection to this research.

Bourdieu explains human behaviours through these capitals. According to him, individuals act in the context of a structured framework which they internalised. Hence, capitals are not independent, their values determined according to the social and spatial context. This is where we associate the term of "habitus". The latter refers to a certain framework in which different forms of capitals are valued and given meaning (Bourdieu, 1986). For instance, social expectations and value systems form the habitus and it determines the individual's practice in the field. Moreover, habitus is the outcome of previous practices where strategies have been set up. This is what Bourdieu's 'Theory of Practice' explains: Location determines the habitus and consequently the act of the individual. Interactions in this location thus influence the habitus, provoking new forms of capitals. Thereby, we see the strong connection with the aim of this paper. Given that Bosnian migrants have been to multiple locations, home and host country/s, these spatial areas surely have impacted the migrants' behaviours and attitudes. In order to explain Bosnian refugees' actions in the host and home countries, it is necessary to analyse the outcomes of the "battle fields" in these locations, as is demonstrated in the figure below. The battles transform the existing capitals into other forms of capitals or reproduce new capitals from zero. These capitals shape the habitus and consequently persons' behaviours.

Figure 4: Model of a general frame for Pierre Bourdieu's "Theory of Practice"



Source: (Atkin, 1993, p.13)

Bourdieu's framework is not deterministic. The role of agency is also very active compared to structural factors, as it is displayed in the model. Strictly speaking, persons' behaviours are the product of the illustrated battlefield where structural factors clash with the agency. This approach helps in understanding why refugees who have very similar backgrounds, in means of age group, sex, place of origin, host country, socio-economic status, have very different post-return experiences and aspirations.

Furthermore, exchanges between the different forms of capital have significant value in Bourdieu's capital framework and likewise in this research. Convertibility of the capitals is important to understand the challenges and opportunities that refugees face upon return. For instance, one migrant learns his/her host country's official language very well. When s/he returns to the home country, s/he can have better and more job opportunities in the local labour market considering not many people have the same skills that s/he has. In Bourdieu's capital framework, this means the exchange between capitals; the migrant converts the imported cultural capital into the economic capital, which provides her/his access to power. Capability to convert one capital to other forms of capital, despite the structural constraints, is the core aspect of this model and proves the presence of agency in this framework. As Giddens (1984) states, agency and structure are interactive and reciprocal. Persons' behaviours are neither an outcome of a free will, "agency"; nor an outcome of determined system, "structure". It is rather a result of these two concepts which interplay constantly. Practises produce structures and structures produce practises (Bourdieu, 1986).

Throughout this paper, I apply Bourdieu's framework because it is a useful tool to understand Bosnian refugees' behaviours and thus answer all the research questions. The capitals are framed into three major capitals: social, cultural and economic. The first one includes social relations, networks and contacts of the individuals. The second capital contains personal background of the individual and her/his skills and qualifications. The third one is the economic capital, which represents person's income and other forms of financial resources (Bourdieu, 1986). Imported, acquired, lost capitals and thus access to power summarise the main schema while analysing Bosnian refugees' return, re-establishment process and migration patterns. Hence, Bourdieu's capitals are mentioned throughout the whole paper, yet especially in the second part of the *Results* chapter which is organised according to these three different forms of capitals.

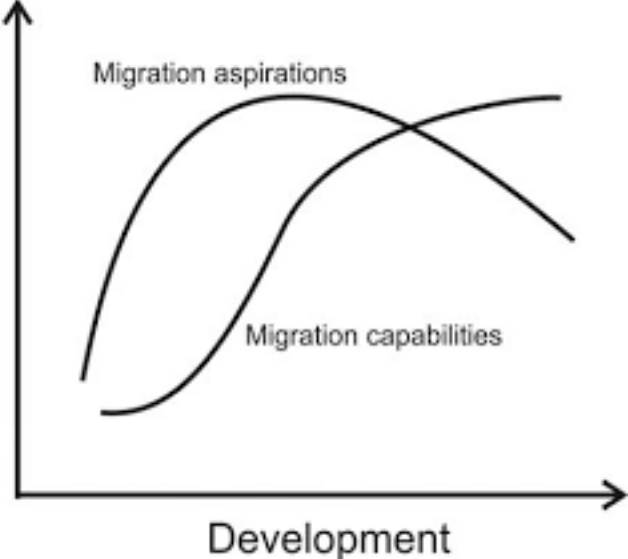
3-de Haas' "Aspiration-Capability" Framework

According to Sen (1999), migration depends on "*people's capabilities and aspirations to migrate within a given set of opportunity structures*" (de Haas, 2014, p. 4). Sen's capability approach considers means and resources within the society, but he also admits that people differ in ability to convert these resources into valuable results. Ability of conversion goes through the agency which is the degree that individual can transfer the means in opportunities (Sen, 1999). Hence, capabilities shape people's aspirations (de Haas, 2010b; Schewel, 2019) and consequently migration decision-making. The aspiration to migrate is simply the "*conviction that migration is preferable to non-migration*" (Carling & Schewel, 2018, p. 946).

The aspiration-capability framework will be used to answer the third sub-question and to better conceptualize returnees' decision to stay or go away. According to this model, while migration "capability" and "aspiration" rise together with development; the migration "aspiration" starts to diminish beyond a certain level of development⁴, which is indicated in the graph below (Castles et. al, 2014; de Haas, 2010a).

This model is a beneficial instrument because, demonstrates two variables (capability and aspiration) which correspond well with the findings of this research. The relationship between these variables will be discussed throughout the paper and question the extent to which the increase in capabilities influence the re-migration plans. However, we should keep in mind that this research sample is formed by the former migrants whereas de Haas' sample is not. Thus, the possible different results would not disprove de Haas' model.

Figure 5: Evolution of migration aspirations and capabilities



Source: de Haas, 2010a, p.17

Finally, even though the three mentioned frameworks are displayed to assist in answering the three sub-questions, they correlate with one another. Bourdieu's framework caters for the other models; the three main capitals of Bourdieu are inserted into the first (King) and the third (de Haas) models. For instance, migrants' personal background, educational life, mental and physical conditions are forming the cultural capital, which influences the decision to return. Regarding the de Haas' model, capitals provide capabilities and they influence the migration aspirations.

⁴ Term of *development* does not only refer to economic assets, it should also be seen as what people can be and can do, according to their own perception of what desirable is (Sen, 1999).

3) HISTORICAL CONTEXT

3.1) Bosnian Conflict and Dayton Peace Agreement

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a very small country in the Western Balkans surrounded by Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro which were forming one state, Yugoslavia; with Macedonia, Kosovo and Slovenia until 1991. After the separation of Croatia and Slovenia from Yugoslavia in 1991, Bosnia and Herzegovina declared its independence in 1992. Nevertheless, in contrary to the other republics (Croatia and Slovenia), the dissolution of Bosnia and Herzegovina was very arduous due to its mixed ethnic demography. There were three political parties representing the three predominant ethnicities in Bosnia: Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks), Bosnian Catholics (Croats) and Bosnian Orthodoxes (Serbs). Bosnian Serbs rejected the independence referendum vote of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in April 1992 they began a systematic invasion of Bosnian territory, supported by the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) which was under the control of Serbia (Dahlman & Tuathail, 2005, p. 647). The aim was to establish a purified Serbian territory, geographically segregated from other ethnicities, and subsequently to form great Serbia⁵. Through ethnic cleansing and forced displacement (Bosnian-Muslim and Bosnian-Croat towns and villages were surrounded, and the inhabitants murdered or deported), the Bosnian-Serb army occupied the vast territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1993 war also broke out between Catholics (Croats) and Muslims (Bosniaks), who were in fact allies against the Bosnian Serbs for the first year of the war. The large-scale ethnic cleansing by Croat forces forced the Muslim inhabitants to leave their homes and pushed them to find a refuge whether in predominantly Bosniak towns or abroad. In other words, yesterday's neighbours became today's enemies; inhabitants of different ethnic groups who had previously lived peacefully together became one another's murderers.

In the east of the country, today's *Republika Srpska*, in the area which was under the protection of the United Nations, large scale massacre, so called "Srebrenica Genocide", took place in July 1995. This ethnic cleansing forced the international community to take actions against the Serb forces. The NATO bombardments obliged Serbian leader Milosevic to cease fire and commence negotiations. Consequently, the peace agreement⁶ was reached in Dayton (USA) in November 1995, ending the four years of war.

Figure 6: Srebrenica memorial centre. Within a week in July 1995 more than 8,000 men and boys were killed in and around the town of Srebrenica, by Serbian forces.



(Source: Özge Algül, 2019)

⁵ Great Serbia: Ideology to create a Serb state which includes all regions of traditional significance to the Serbs. This means also the parts outside of Serbia where there Serb population. This ideology has been present for many centuries and was the main idea behind the Serbian army's occupation Bosnia and Herzegovina's lands (Batt, 2005, p. 13).

⁶ Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA), was officially signed in Paris on 14 December 1995 and ended the conflict by establishing the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) consisting of two entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and the Republika Srpska (RS) (Prettitore, 2006, p. 181).

Figure 7: Street in Sarajevo. Wall writing reminds citizens the genocide.



Source: Özge Algül, 2019

The end of conflict made many structural changes in BiH. The Dayton Agreement determined the current constitution and the government structure (refer to annexe 2 for the further information about the governmental system and its impacts on the country). BiH became a decentralised state composed by two entities: Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS). There is also the District of Brčko, an autonomous region which does not belong to any of these entities due to its ethnically mixed population. However, the two entities have a clear ethnic structure. In the Federation (FBiH) most of the population belongs to Bosniaks and Croats. 91.39 % of Bosnian Croats and 88.23% of Bosniaks of the country live in the Federation. In the Republika Srpska (RS), majority belongs to Bosnian Serbs; 92.11% of all Bosnian Serbs live in the RS (Toe, 2016).

Regarding the humanitarian consequences of the conflict, about 250.000 people were killed and about 17.000 were reported missing according to the data provided by the ministry (Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, 2005, p. 45). People had to leave the areas that they have been living for generations due to violence and ethnic cleansing. The conflict displaced more than half of the country's population; whereby approximately half of them sought asylum abroad (Barslund et al., 2017; del Pilar Valledor Alvarez, 2015; Hallergard, 1998; Lippman, 2015). The following section will highlight this process; 13 different countries⁷ (interviewed returnees' host countries) asylum and repatriation policies will be examined to have an institutional overview about the Bosnian refugees' lives in asylum.

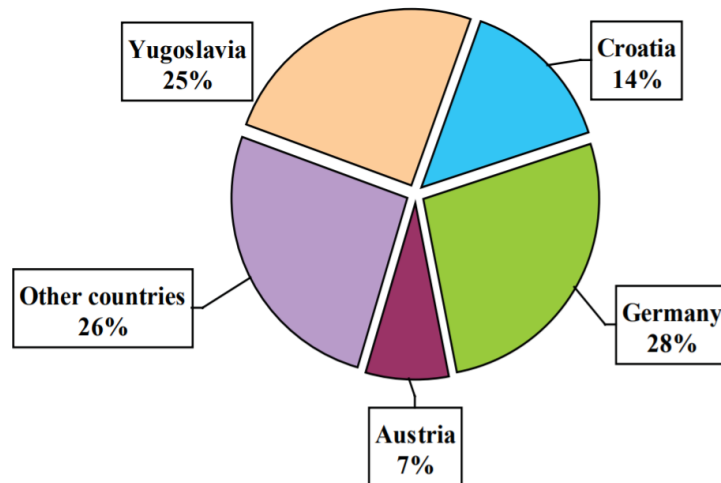
⁷ Sample of this research has been to 13 different host countries; namely: Germany, Spain, Switzerland, Denmark, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Turkey, Montenegro, Malaysia, the USA; the UK; Australia. Detailed information is going to be given in the *Methodology* chapter.

3.2) Host Countries' Asylum Policies and Repatriation

Between 1992-1995, the European Union hosted approximately 584,000 refugees from Bosnia (Black, 2001, p. 181). Germany hosted around 350,000, more than half of all the Bosnians arrived in the European continent, similar to the recent refugee crisis. Alongside Germany; Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden were the major EU states receiving the large absolute and relative influx of refugees between 1992 and 1995 (Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, 2005, p. 48).

Besides the EU, Ex-Yugoslavia countries received also a large inflow, as it is demonstrated in the figure 8. Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and Croatia hosted almost 40% of the total number of BIH refugees. It should be kept in mind that not all the Bosnian refugees were Bosniaks; Croats and the Serbs have also suffered from the war and had to flee. For instance, many Croats fled to Croatia and many Serbs fled to Yugoslavia (Montenegro and Serbia).

Figure 8: Major host countries of Bosnian Refugees



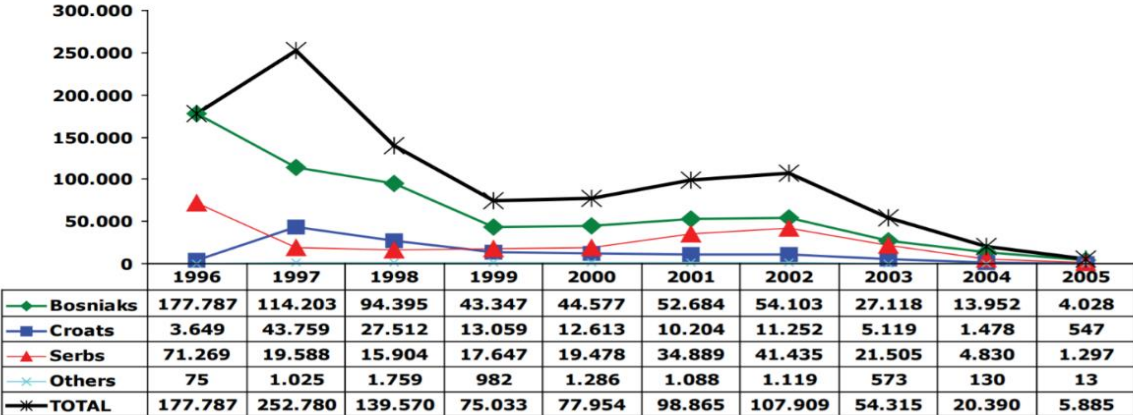
Source: Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, 2005, p.46

As almost half of the participants' host country was Germany, its protection policy requires closer inspection. Bosnian refugees were always under the "temporary protection" and except the special circumstances, it was never converted to permanent status. Bosnians had very limited access to German labour markets and very few integration measures were set up to support them while their stay. The state of Germany did not want to host them long time, thus applied only short-term measures. Once the war was over, Germany repatriated most of the Bosnian refugees (Barslund et al., 2017). Bernd Mesovic's comment, deputy director of the German human rights organization "Pro Asyl" summarizes the issue: "The ink was barely dry on the 1995 Dayton Peace Accord when they were told, 'so you were under protection, now there is peace, get on back home as soon as possible.'" (Martinovic, 2016).

Late 1996, once the Dayton Agreement came into force, UNHCR announced that Bosnia meets the pre-conditions to end the protection for the Bosnian refugees and the repatriation could begin (Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, 2005, p. 22; Walsh et al., 1999, p. 110). The first years after the peace agreement saw the largest return flight, as it is demonstrated below in the figure 9. This was mainly due to some host countries intensive repatriation programmes and the refugees' desires to go back home. The figure below, also demonstrates the amount of returns among the different ethnic groups. The most returns are seen among the Bosniak refugees, which is rational given that their proportion of asylum was relatively higher than the other groups. In 2002, we see another upward

trend which is due to accelerated and effective implementation of the property law⁸, according to the ministry. Moreover, invested funds into reconstruction of the housing units provided a sense of security and thereby increased the number of returnees (Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, 2005, p. 208).

Figure 9: Return to BiH – per national structure and years



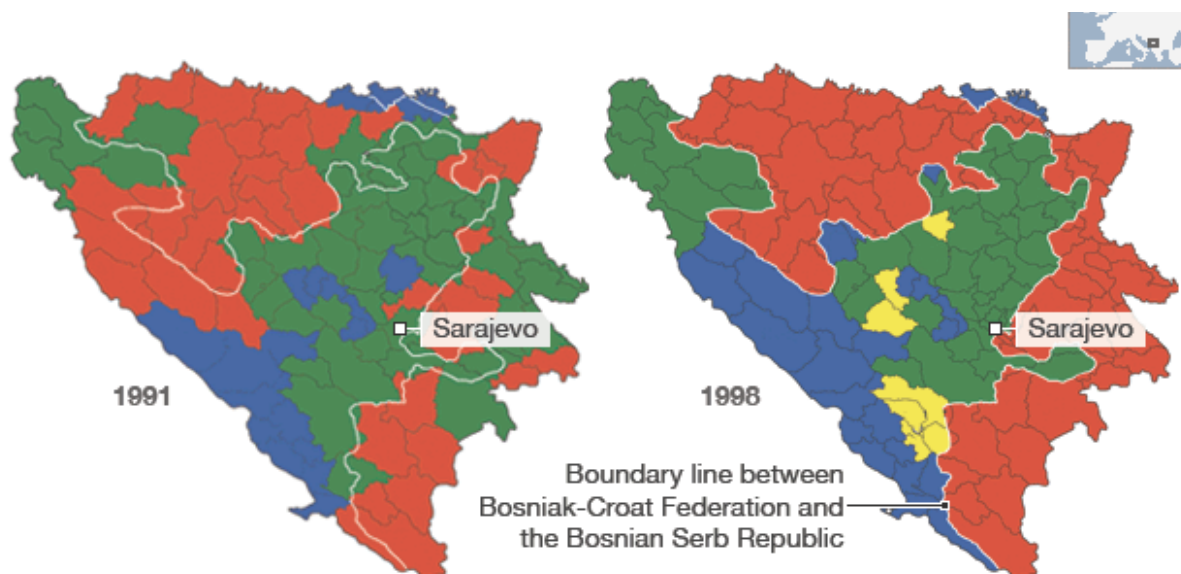
Source: Ministry for Human Rights ad Refugees, 2005, p.210

Nevertheless, there are counter arguments concerning the explanation of the ministry. It is misleading to declare that right of repossession or compensation of the properties would trigger the return. This disregards the other forms of properties such as business establishments or usurped lands (Inmaculada, 2015). Lack of employment opportunities is a larger problem than the reconstruction of the houses. The Annex 7 of the peace agreement, as a guideline for the return of the displaced people, was not including these important dimensions (United Nations, 1995).

Regarding the returns from the host countries, only the states which signed bilateral return agreements have reached high numbers of returns, whereas the other countries, which did not have a strict repatriation policy, had a very limited number of returnees (Markowitz & Stefansson, 2004). For instance, Germany and Switzerland signed the return agreements and many Bosnians were sent back to Bosnia. Nevertheless, many of them, before being sent back to home, applied asylum to third country, mainly to the major immigration countries, such as the USA, Canada or Australia. Same tendency is seen in the regional countries; almost one third of the Bosnian refugees in Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, after the bilateral return agreements, fled to a third country as a refugee (Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, 2005, pp. 341–352). The reason was because they were unable to return to their place of origin, given that their ethnic group had become a minority in these places. For instance, Bosnian Muslims whose hometowns remained in the territory of Republika Srpska could not return, because they would form the minority ethnic group.

⁸ Article 21 on the law on *Displaced Persons and Refugees-returnees in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, based on the Annex 7 of the peace agreement. It gives certain rights to the displaced people such as refunding their properties (if they do not exist anymore) or repairing and reconstructing houses in order to create conditions for safe and dignified return (Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, 2005, p. 225). During the field research, I asked participants if they benefited from the supports mentioned in the agreements, however their answer was negative. I questioned this mismatch during the interviews with the institutions and they reported that they were only able to reach the most vulnerable returnees. This is because very large amount of housing units (60%) were destroyed (Black, 2001, p. 178) and it was impossible to provide support for each household.

Figure 10: Ethnic distribution of Bosnia-Herzegovina, before and after the war

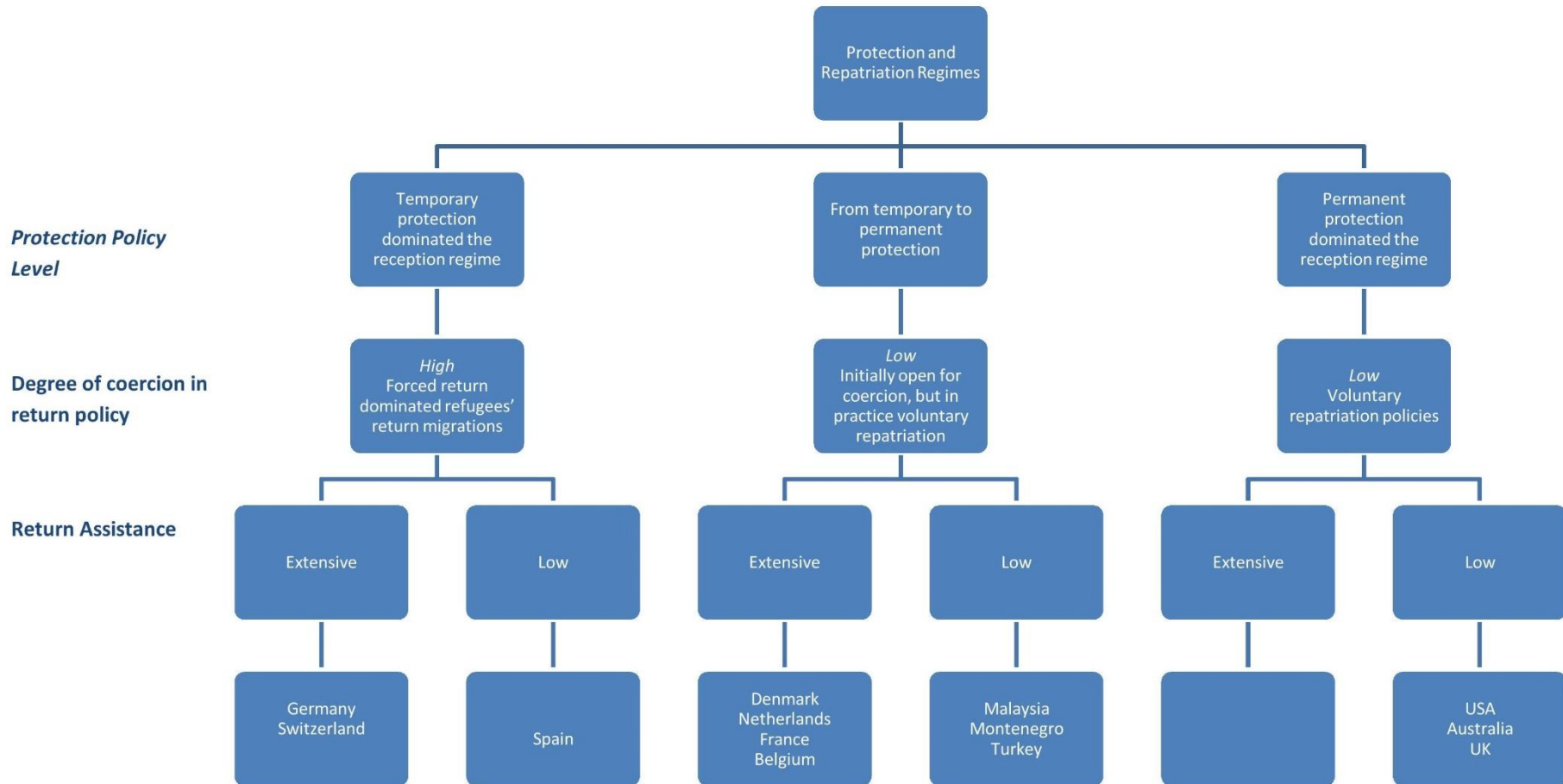


Source: UNHCR, n.d.

The map above illustrates the mentioned ethnic demographic change. Left of the white boundary line is the Federation and the right of the line is the Republika Srpska. Green areas represent the towns where Bosniaks hold the majority, blue areas for the Croats and red ones illustrate the places where the Serbs have the majority. As it can be seen on the map, in 1991, just before the war, many towns in the eastern part of country, today's Republika Srpska, had Bosniak majority. However, in 1998 after the end of the war, Serbs formed the majority due to the ethnic cleansing and displacement of the Bosniak population. Even though the multiple housing and employment initiatives were prepared to encourage the return of Bosniak population to these areas, very few returns were reported due to the post-war political and criminal situations (Kostic, 2013, p. 2). People were expected to return where their loved ones were killed by their former neighbours, and the war criminals subsequently held the political power. Therefore, minority return was not feasible because pre-conditions for the safety and human dignity were missing. Lack of these dimensions led people to find new homes in the entity where they were forming the majority: Bosniak and Croats to the Federation and the Serbs to the Republika Srpska. Thus, their displacement remained, only the status has changed: from refugee to IDP (Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, 2005, p. 343).

However, not every host country applied strict repatriation policies and many Bosnians preferred to stay in their host country instead of going to their former place of residence where they would form the minority. The table below demonstrates research participants' host countries and it provides comparative overview of these countries' asylum and repatriation regimes. Categorisation of the host countries into different asylum regime groups is made by the author basing on primary and secondary resources.

Figure 11: Refugee reception and repatriation regimes in the participants' host countries



Source: Adjusted from Valenta and Strabac, 2013, p.12

As shown in the table, three major dimensions identify various asylum and repatriation regimes: Protection Policy Level, Degree of Coercion in Return Policy, and Return Assistance or in other words *Pay-to-go* schemes. The first two dimensions are closely interrelated: the degree of coercion in return policy is a logical consequence of the protection regime of the host country. Nevertheless, the return assistance does not follow the same logic. The amount of return assistance did not have a significant impact on repatriation whereas the amount of coercion influences directly the large scale of refugee return. For instance, less than 10% of Bosnian refugees from the Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands have returned although these countries offered the most generous return assistances (Valenta & Strabac, 2013, p. 14).

13 different host countries of the sample are grouped according to their asylum and repatriation regimes (refer to annexe 3; table gives detailed overview about institutional and legal frameworks in the host countries). As it could be seen, Germany, Switzerland and Spain had the strictest asylum and repatriation regimes and Bosnian refugees had to leave these countries once the war was over. The second group contains the countries which transferred Bosnian refugees' temporary status into permanent residency after the war ended. Without coercion of return, some countries offered *pay-to-go* schemes such as France, Belgium, Netherlands and Denmark, whereas some did not offer any financial return assistance such as Turkey, Malaysia or Montenegro. Third group concerns the major immigration countries, Australia, the USA and the UK. Bosnian refugees had full protection regimes and they had easier access to the labour market comparing to the other countries. They did not face to any coercion and most of them obtained the host country's citizenship after a short period of time.

4) METHODOLOGY

4.1) Research Design and Methods

This research is based on a field work, conducted between the start of February and the middle of May 2019 in Sarajevo. Qualitative research method is applied because it allowed participants to speak about their migration and re-establishment journey as they experienced it; without the constraints of a rigid investigative approach. The experience of being a refugee is a singular, unique one; each person experiences it and speaks to that experience differently. Furthermore, given that aim of the research is to draw lessons from the past experiences, specific investigation was required to observe the asylum and the return in a timeline frame. Without applying qualitative research method, it would not have been possible to understand consequences of migration experience on the returnees' current lives.

As a fieldwork approach, *participatory action research* method (Bailey et al., 2010, pp. 50–52) is applied to document the voices of the Bosnian. In addition, other stakeholders are consulted, such as the institutions which were involved in the re-establishment process to develop a holistic view regarding Bosnian repatriation.

Following research methods are used:

- a) In-depth interviews:** These were conducted with the returned former Bosnian refugees (26), coming from various host countries, within the age category of 25-45. Interviews were highly interactive; reflection and brainstorming were done together with the participants while trying to understand the impact of their migration experiences on their post-return experiences. Hence, interviews took the shape of a conversation and consequently lasted a long time, almost three hours. Interviews with the international, non-governmental and national institutions (10) were relatively shorter.
- b) Focus group discussions:** They were held both with the returnees as well as with the stayees to examine the tension between these groups. Conversations with these two groups allowed to see how the migration background influences differently people's life visions and aspirations.
- c) Participant observation:** Having family members who used to be refugees in various countries enabled me to conduct deeper analysis by using participant observation method. I was involved in their daily activities and conversations, enabling me to better understand the interethnic tensions within the society.

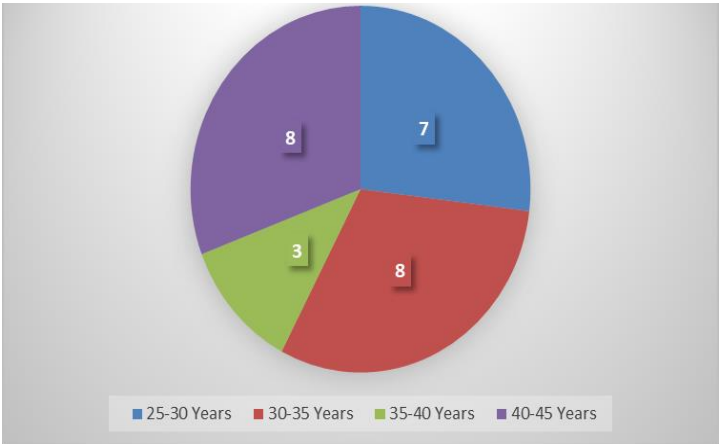
> *Location and sample selection:*

As a research location I chose Sarajevo due to personal and contextual reasons: Firstly, it is the town where I did multiple visits before the research and I had already collected first-hand information about post-war Sarajevo. Furthermore, I have family members living in Sarajevo and I thought that it would facilitate my access to the Bosnian returnees. Context specific reason is that return movements from abroad are primarily concentrated into urban areas (Hallergard, 1998) and Sarajevo was the major town where many returnees gathered. This is because many Bosniak refugees' pre-war home

became the part of the Republika Srpska entity and they moved to Sarajevo to live in a town where they would form the majority.

Figure 12: Number of participants by age group

In total, 26 returnees⁹ took part in this research and were included into final analysis (refer to annexe 4, table of the interviewed population). This target group was chosen among the returnees who are between 25-45 years old. The chart on the right demonstrates the number of participants by their age group. Two reasons are behind this choice. Firstly, I wanted to ensure that they spent their childhood or adolescence in the country of asylum. Secondly, people between 25-45 form the active workforce in Bosnia and I wanted to explore the extent the capitals that they brought from abroad interacted with the local context and be transformed into economic capitals.



These 26 returnees have been to 14 different host countries but only 13 of them are included in the analysis¹⁰. Participants were selected who had come from various host countries. This is to collect broader and comparative overview on different asylum and repatriation regimes, and their impacts on the returnees’ post-return lives.

Figure 13: Number of participants by country of asylum (some stayed in multiple host countries)



⁹Names of individuals which will be cited in this paper have been changed to respect the confidentiality and anonymity of participants.

¹⁰ Macedonia is excluded due to participant’s very short staying period.

Almost all the interviews were held in cafes, tape-recorded and before each interview, participants' consents were requested via written consent forms. Interviews were held only by the author in multiple languages; English, French, Turkish (languages learnt on asylum) and Bosnian, except one interview where an interpreter was used. Conducting interviews in person, without having interruptions and possible misinterpretation, was a big advantage in the data collecting process.

In addition, 10 relevant stakeholders were interviewed to gain professional insight into the Bosnian return. Through the interviews with the returnees, I noticed that there was large gap between what the organisations offered and what the returnees needed in the post-return period. I wanted to question this difference by interviewing with the institutions which took part in re-establishment process. I had positive answers from almost all the organisations that I contacted, and I took extensive notes during the interviews. They provided a broad institutional approach regarding repatriation, which was very essential to comprehend the subject from all perspectives.

Interviewed institutions are:

- >Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency / TIKA
- >German Society for International Cooperation / GIZ
- >Zene za Zene (in affiliation with Women for Women International)
- >Peace Conflict Research Center (Organisation for peace building and post-conflict reconciliation)
- >Dutch Embassy Development Cooperation Unit
- >Hilfswerk International (Austrian relief and reconstruction organisation)
- >Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe / OSCE
- >Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina / MHRR
- >Nasa Perspektiva (Organisation for engaging diaspora into development of Bosnia)
- >Women's International League for Peace and Freedom / WILPF

>Sampling Strategies:

I used multiple tools to reach the ex-refugees:

1- Facebook groups: Bosnian people are very active on social media, particularly on Facebook. They are members of many groups, and I found almost one third of the participants through the announcements that I posted on these groups. The ones that I used most frequently are called (in local language) "Brain Drain", "I am going to the world", "I am going to Germany" and they are founded to exchange information and opportunities abroad. For instance, "I am going to Germany" group, which has around 130.000 members, I found many Bosnians who have been to Germany as refugees. Once I conducted interviews with them, they referred me to their returnee friends and with the snowball effect, I managed to reach many other returnees.

2- University of Sarajevo: By joining the school trips, I had chance to meet Bosnian students and other students from former Yugoslav countries. I explained my research topic and students were very helpful in helping me find contacts.

3- Relatives: Given that some family members of my mother live in Sarajevo, I conducted first focus group discussions with them. However, the snowball effect did not function among the family members; it was not possible to access their acquaintances. This will be explained in detail in the *Positionality* section.

4.2) Operationalisation of the Concepts

The interview questions (refer to annexe 5 for the interview guide and consent form) are ordered according to the sub-questions. In the first part, I asked about asylum experiences, in the second, about their post-return lives and in the final, about future potential migration aspirations. This was in chronological order to see the cause-consequence relationship between the sub-questions.

Firstly, I asked participants about their pre-war life, asylum journey and their life in the host country. It was important to analyse the different standard of living in the home and host country, in order to understand their return decisions. I also asked questions about their background and the capitals they possessed before the war, to see what has changed during the period of asylum. Furthermore, I posed detailed questions concerning their economic and social integration alongside their sense of belonging at the phase of asylum. This was also to comprehend their return motivation. By observing their lives in the host countries, I discovered what migration meant for them.

Concerning their re-establishment to Bosnia, the interview questions tried to capture what sort of capitals they imported and converted into the local context. While asking their post-arrival experiences in various domains (school, career, social network, etc), I collected evidences of their (non)successful re-establishment. These evidences provided ground for the third part which questioned returnees' re-migrations aspirations.

Regarding their re-migration aspirations, I first asked more broadly their plans and expectations for the future, to avoid imposing ideas of re-migration. Later, I asked if they have intention to leave again, and if so for what reason. Their life security, comfort and plans for their family members were key indicators to analyse their aspirations to either stay in Bosnia or re-emigrate to another country.

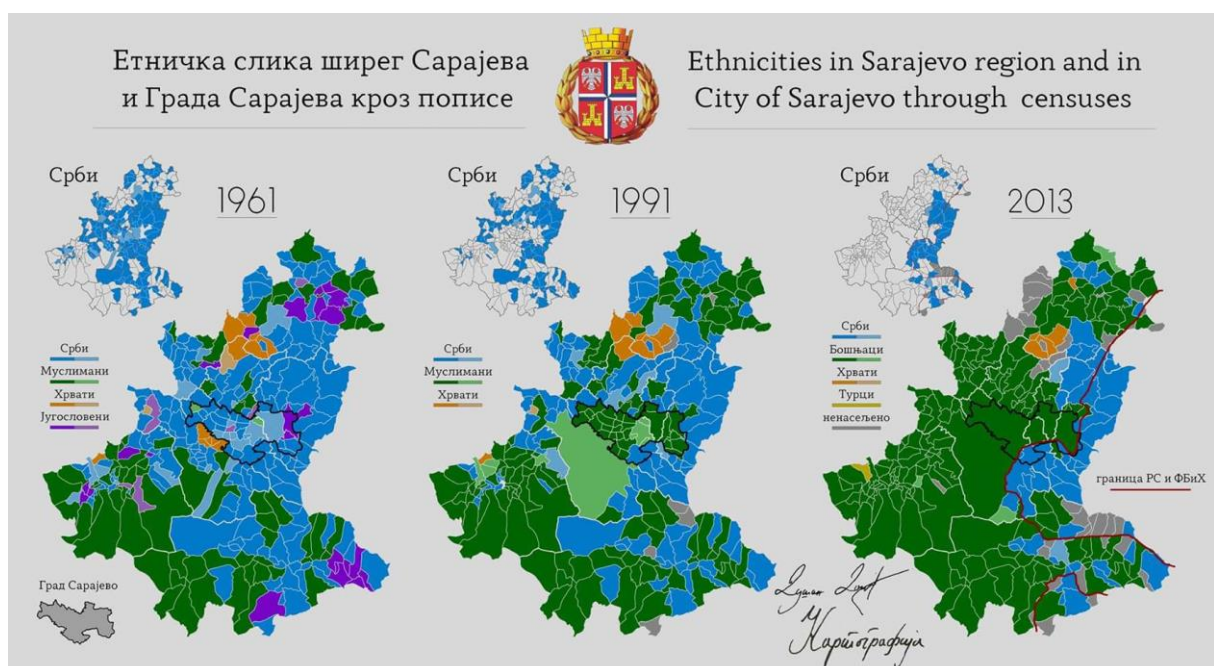
4.3) Limitations and Challenges

It must be noted that the sample of the research is not representative of the entire returnee population. There are three main reasons for this. The first reason is that all the respondents (except one) in the research are Bosnian Muslims. It is rational since most people who fled the country were Bosnian Muslims. However, Bosnian-Croats and Bosnian-Serbs were also displaced. During the field research, I tried to reach out to Serb or Croat returnees to hear alternative perspectives, but this was not feasible. There were multiple reasons behind this problem of access: Firstly, as I mentioned before,

Sarajevo is a Bosniak dominated town and it was difficult to reach returnees from other ethnicities. The map below demonstrates the ethno-demographic change in Sarajevo throughout the years. In the 1960's the majority were Serbs (blue colour) in the town and over the following years the Bosniaks (green colour) became the majority. According to the latest censuses, more than 80% of the citizens in Sarajevo are Bosniaks (Statistic Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013).

Secondly, my first interviewees were Bosniaks and since I reached the other participants through snowball sampling, the friends that they had referred me were also Bosniaks. Moreover, snowball effect meant most participants were returnees coming from similar social classes, which was the reason why I mainly interviewed high-skilled returnees (refer to annexe 4, for detailed information about participants' level of education and professional occupations).

Figure 14: Ethnicities in the Sarajevo region and the city of Sarajevo in 1961, 1991 and 2013



Source: Kartografija, 2018

The final limitation regarding sampling is that I was able to reach only one group of returnees. Many returnees left again in the post war period and I reached only the ones who wanted to or had to stay in Bosnia. This is because those who had intention to leave, had already left. Given that I did my research in Bosnia, I was able to reach only the ones who decided to stay. Therefore the results need to be interpreted with caution.

The research faced to certain obstacles during the interviews with the institutions. It was difficult to obtain information concerning their post-return operations in Sarajevo, because many of them had limited activities there. The focus of organisations concentrated in the most devastated areas, alongside where the minority returns occurred. This focus is because these zones needed special care. For the same reason, the participants of this research do not represent the most vulnerable returnees, considering they had the option to come to Sarajevo, rather than returning to their place of origin. Moving to the capital city requires certain assets. Returnees who could not possess these assets had to return to their original location, despite the hardships they would face by being a minority.

>Positionality

Having common culture between participants and researcher is beneficial in providing access to field, posing relevant questions and achieving sensitive comprehension (Merriam et al., 2000). Without a doubt, having a Bosniak mother lent me these advantages. I had previously been to Sarajevo multiple times and had learnt about issues relating to Bosnia from family members. This provided a motivation behind the choice of the research subject. My entrance to the field was easier thanks to acquaintances living in Sarajevo. Spending extensive time with them also allowed me to gain deep insight into ethnic disputes among the society. Moreover, having a similar cultural background enabled me to have a better interpretation and understanding of the participants responses.

However, being a 'half insider' was not always a useful position during the data collection. Even though, I had a very fast access, family members did not want to share the details of their lives with somebody that they already knew. Conversations remained more general than personal and due to gossiping, which was prevalent, they did not want to refer me to their acquaintances. Furthermore, arriving in the field as a half insider, meant that I had more connections with the subject. I persevered to be neutral and objective, yet this background may have influenced the direction of certain questions.

5) RESULTS & DISCUSSION

This chapter is going to present the research findings and their discussion. The chapter is divided into three sub-chapters in order to answer the three sub-questions respectively. Thus, the first section addresses the Bosnian former refugees' lives in asylum and the connection to their return; under four sub-sections referring to the adjusted King's (2000) model. The second section examines their re-establishment to Bosnia, applying Bourdieu's (1986) three major capitals. The third, analyses the re-migration aspirations, in relation with de Haas' (2010b) "capability-aspiration" model.

5.1) Life in Asylum and Its Impact on the Decision to Return

Before focusing on the Bosnian refugees' lives in the host countries, attention is placed on their choice of country. Their country of asylum is strongly related to their social networks there. As multiple scholars affirm, the migrant community abroad raise the possibility of subsequent migration flows to the same place (de Haas, 2010c; Haug, 2008). Almost all participants of the research reported that they chose that specific country because they had family members there, who could arrange the papers to facilitate their arrival. Only few respondents left without knowing anybody in the country of destination.

5.1.1) Structural Factors

5.1.1.1) Socio-economic Factors

Being in asylum created unstable lives for Bosnian refugees. Changes in legal and economic status urged them to change their places of residence multiple times. They moved from camp to a flat, from one town to another... By that, Bosnian children had to change school frequently, forcing them to rebuild new friendships in each place. Some participants were reporting that they changed place of residence and therefore schools more than ten times. Once they felt settled and had been accepted, they had to leave and restart in another place. This hindered the development of strong friendships at their schools and neighbourhoods, causing problems in a sense of belonging. "*We did not belong to anywhere*" was the general motto of the interviewees while expressing their sentiments about that period. In fact, although issue of the sense of belonging is analysed under the *Socio-economic factors*, it is the consequence of multiple factors. It is strongly connected to the institutional and political regime of the host country, because accessibility to job market, social aid or permanent protection determined Bosnian refugees' living conditions and thus their integration capabilities. Therefore, these four factors are interconnected and should be described as such, while analysing the sources of Bosnian refugees' return.

Regarding the integration process, almost all the participants described that when they moved to bigger, more cosmopolitan towns they started to feel more accepted in the host society. London, Zurich, Sydney, Hamburg, Rotterdam, Los Angeles or Washington DC were some of the major towns that they mentioned. Merjem (34, economist), returnee from the USA: "*When I moved to California, it was the first time that I felt like I am at home. They were very open minded, there was a cultural*

diversity. But still, I had only one American friend and the rest was again kind of immigrants, but I still felt like I belonged there."

Nevertheless, total acceptance was never achieved, and it was one of the main reasons triggering the participants' return. They noted that their parents as well as themselves always felt like a second-class citizen in the country of asylum. Even though they were part of the society, they constantly felt as if they were treated different than the locals regardless of their duration of stay or the host country. Although the participants' parents, different than the mainstream refugee profile, were holding university degrees when they sought asylum, their imported skills did not bring them better standards of living in the host countries. They worked in simple jobs such as cleaning, construction or driving throughout their life in asylum. Even after obtaining citizenship in the host country, their socio-economic status had barely changed. This finding proves that capitals were immobile. Their incapability to work in a satisfying job as well as the lack of respect and acceptance forced Bosnian refugees to look for alternatives to improve their quality of life. Returning home was seen as the only option because they believed that it is the only place where they could receive respect and acceptance. In other words, eagerness to prove oneself, to re-gain self-confidence and the feeling of deserving more drove them to move back to their country of origin.

In some cases, lack of acceptance caused more problems and forced migrants to even lose the capitals that they brought from the country of origin. Asja (27, writer-journalist) is the most striking example of this fact, demonstrating the trauma of being a refugee. She came to Australia at the age of 6 and until the late university years, she only desired to become a real Australian. She built her strategies upon that; refused to speak Bosnian with her parents and chose bachelor subjects simply to study with white Australian students. Nevertheless, these strategies did not heighten her level of acceptance and she subsequently lost her mother tongue. Due to her parents' financial and refugee background, she struggled in multiple manners. *"All the jobs that I had in Australia, I always felt subservient, even though my political opinion is against that... I was not feeling comfortable to talk with powerful people; it is a class thing but also a migrant thing. Let's say the combination of the financial class and the ethnical class. I would feel a bit better if I talk with an Asian powerful guy rather than white Australian guy or I would feel more comfortable to talk with a poor white Australian rather than a rich migrant guy"*, told Asja, when she was talking about her life in Australia. The lack of financial and social capitals blocked her capability of achieving her desires in Australia and for the sake of gaining capabilities and acceptance, she returned to Bosnia. *"I still think that with the skills that I have now, it would be easier to be better off in Australia rather than in Bosnia but the barriers that you have there, make you not "fit in"! Also, the thing that you are coming from a non-developed country and because you do not "fit in", makes you to think about this country, which you are supposed be from. This is the country that I could be involved and help"*.

The idea of serving one's country of origin reflects power dynamics. For instance, in Bosnia, she feels more powerful than in Australia because she had access to a high-skilled job market thanks to her language skills, which is the capital that she brought from the country of asylum. In Australia, even though she had a master's degree, it was difficult for her to find a high-skilled job. However, in Bosnia she accomplished what she desired, and this achievement provided her great self-satisfaction, which she has been searching for. Asja's quotes represent many other participants' feelings and therefore, we can claim that lack of professional respect and social acceptance in the host countries obliged Bosnian refugees to take the return decision.

5.1.1.2) Psycho-historical Factors

Considering half of the sample is formed by the late returnees, it is essential to gauge an insight into the reasons behind their return. War caused displacement created two dimensions in the participants' minds: The first is the curiosity and desire to live in Bosnia. Bosnia always felt like a dream and beautiful land in their memory, owing to the stories from their parents or the images that they remember from their childhood. Being ripped away made them curious about their homeland, and they wanted to see how it would feel like to live in that culture. They wanted to recover themselves from the wounds of displacement. Their return home "*ultimate end to our voyage, the healing of all our rifts*" as Warner defines (1994, p. 169).

The second dimension is the readiness to use their agency. Being obliged to leave home and their dependency on external factors as a refugee, incited them to return to see their options and capabilities. They want to make use of their agency already by deciding to return and live in Bosnia. Merjem's (34, economist) feelings demonstrate this very clearly: "*I came here just to have my option because there I was always forced to be there and I wanted to see how it is here, I wanted to see that I can make an option. Now I feel in peace.*" The enthusiasm to use their agency, and being capable of choosing where to live, were the triggering factors of their return. Vedad (32, IT manager) also returned from the USA, explained his reason also with "peace":

"My grandfather used always to say: It is not easy living on someone else's land. I believe that we humans are like animals. We always go back to die where we were born, we always do. When I was living in California, physically I was there but mentally I was somewhere else. And that somewhere else I knew that it is somewhere in Bosnia. When I first visited Bosnia in July 2004, it was so hot and I remember that I went to our old house which was demolished, I sat next to it and it was the first time that I felt in peace. I never felt in peace before. I always felt displaced. I watched the butterflies in our village... I realized that, we, people who are displaced unwillingly, once in their life they will realise that they belong to the place where they were born. Me coming back here is my peace..." Contrasting to their internal peace, he and many other participants do not believe that Bosnia will reach real peace soon. Due to the state's and society's ethnic segregation, they do not have hope anymore for a better Bosnia. However, they still want to live in this country because they feel at home and at peace, which they had never felt before.

All in all, we can conclude that structural factors played an essential role in the return decision among the participants who sought asylum with their core family members. They reported that the dissatisfaction in the host country and nostalgia for the home country triggered their return.

5.1.2) Family and Life Cycle Factors

5.1.2.1) Educational Life

Almost all the participants arrived at their country of asylum at school age. Education played a critical role in their asylum life cycle and future decisions. The education system differs in each country and as such the impact differs between refugees.

The impact of the German schooling system on the Bosnian refugees' lifecycle is tremendous even though Germany granted limited period of asylum protection. The interviewees who fled to Germany complained extensively about the discriminatory attitudes at schools. Many of them were

registered to lower degree schools, regardless of their capacities and language skills. They were forced to go to *realschule*,¹¹ and in fact, it was the main reason for one participant's return decision. Anisa (40, journalist) went back to Bosnia when the war was still going on. *"At the end, I did the 8th grade everywhere. Before the war, I had started 8th grade in Bosnia, then when I was in Hungary,¹² I did the 8th grade again and also in Germany (laughing). When I started high school in Germany, I decided to go back. Because there wasn't any opportunity to go to a good school there, I wanted to have a good education and therefore I came back."*

Furthermore, the age of arrival and schooling at the country of asylum makes a big difference in terms of integration and therefore, the decision to return. Many participants between the 40-45 age group arrived in host countries after finishing high schools in Bosnia. One participant who returned from the USA reported the importance of going to high school in the host country in terms of integration. His same-aged friends, who came a couple of years before he came, had the chance to go to high school and built friendships faster. He arrived when he was 19 and it took him ten years to feel like an American.

Nevertheless, attending school in the host country does not guarantee integration. All the interviewees who attended school in the host countries reported that they mostly socialised with other migrant children. This was mainly due to them residing in the suburbs of towns where only immigrants were living. In these kinds of segregated areas, they could solely build friendship with other immigrants, which aggravated issues of integration and acceptance. Consequently, this contributed to their return to the home country.

5.1.2.2) Familial Reasons

Most of the interviewees went to the country of asylum by leaving one part of the core family members behind. They were mainly the fathers, who fought in the war or who were taken into the concentration camps. Once the war was over, fathers would often call the other members of the family back to Bosnia, saying that they fought for the country and they want to live in their own place. In some cases, familial reasons were combined with homesickness. One interviewee returned from Spain stating the situation with the following sentences: *"My parents decided to go back to Bosnia. Their parents were alive at that moment. They believed that we didn't have any other country than Bosnia. In my opinion staying in Spain would be better for us."*

When it comes to the participants who left both parents back home, their situation was more challenging. Amina (34, lawyer and PhD candidate in German language and literature) stated that during the period of asylum, for five years, she always wanted to go back to gather with her family. She was fine in Germany, but her suitcase was always ready to be able to go back home immediately. Another refugee who resided also in Germany told that she was having a great time with her host family in Bavaria (Germany). However, she was under the pressure that if she does not return home, her family would think that she does not care about them. Missing those who were left behind was the main reason for the return of the many participants.

¹¹ Type of a secondary school in Germany which has practical, job-oriented curriculum.

¹² Hungary is also excluded from the analysis because participant spent a very short time there. Hungary was used as a transfer point rather than an asylum destination

5.1.3) Policy Interventions & Institutional Constraints

This section analyses the impact of various host countries' asylum policies on the Bosnian refugees' return. Focus will be given to Germany, Spain, Denmark, Turkey and Switzerland, considering participants' return is the result of these states' restrictive asylum regimes.

Bosnian refugee flow and the large number of asylum claims had created great burden among European governments. Temporary protection was the common solution that most of the European states agreed on. It gives states the right to repatriate refugees when the conflict is over and it also allows states not to develop integration and settlement measure, unlike the refugee status (Hathaway, 1997). When the war ended, the reason for temporary protection was not valid anymore. Some countries transferred the temporary protection into permanent status, whereas some did not, and Bosnian migrants lost their right to stay in these host countries. For them there were only two options: return to Bosnia or re-migrate to a third country. The participants whose hometowns became the part of the Republika Srpska or Brcko district, they reported that it was not possible for them to go back "home" because it was not their home anymore. They then either returned to Bosnia but moved to another town, thus became an IDP, or they sought asylum in a third country, to postpone their return. One interviewee's migration path demonstrates this issue. She has fled to Spain with her family, and later her father wanted to join them with family reunification. However, Spain allowed the father to stay only for 6 months. Since the family did not have a "home" back in Bosnia, they moved to Switzerland to seek asylum. They were able to stay there only a couple of years before being sent back to Bosnia. Another returnee from Spain also went back to Bosnia because of the host country's limiting policies. Her mother's doctor diploma was not recognized by the state and she had to work as a cleaning lady throughout the whole asylum period. Once the war was over, they decided to return because in Spain their capabilities were restricted. If the mother's doctor diploma was recognized, the participant stated that they would have stayed in Spain.

Concerning Denmark, the participants stated that they had to move to a third country because of the non-integrative asylum measures. Access to the job market remained very limited and they had to look for other opportunities in order to increase their life conditions. However, in the third country even though they overcame legal restrictions by obtaining the citizenship, lacking access to a satisfying labour market drove them to take the return decision to Bosnia.

Edid, (44, economist) had to change many countries due to the restrictive asylum policies. He firstly moved to Turkey as an asylum seeker. Although people coming from Bosnia had right to apply for a refugee status in Turkey¹³, Edid and his family couldn't have access to their rights and were forced to survive in a very low standard of living. Difficult working conditions and being exploitation for labour urged them to look for alternatives. Therefore, he moved to Germany with his family. Nevertheless, they could not stay there long either because their temporary protection came to an end once the war was over. For him and his family, repatriation was not an option because their hometown became the part of Brcko District. Hence, before being sent back from Germany, they applied for asylum to Australia.

Nonetheless, not every migrant was capable to move to another country. Ilma (25, project manager in an Austrian NGO) went back to Bosnia with her family before being forcibly repatriated:

¹³ Detailed information about Turkish asylum policy in regard to Bosnians could be seen in annexe 3.

“My parents were not happy about this fact. But it was clear from the beginning on that we cannot stay there forever. They didn't try more to look for other options to stay. They would have preferred to stay but you know if they (Germany) doesn't want you, you don't want to stay where you are not wanted. We wanted to stay in Germany because Bosnia was a post-war country and there was nothing there but if they don't want us here, what are the long terms consequences of it? They(parents) didn't want to force staying in a place where they know that they are not wanted.”

These examples demonstrate that restrictive asylum policies in the host countries as well as the Bosnian state's ethnically divided country profile had a big impact on migration decision making. Their movement continued until they found a safe place to stay. Migration in the first place occurred in order to escape from the war and then it continued to pursue better economic or legal status (in case of moving to a third country). Lastly those moved towards Bosnia to find the internal peace and higher quality of life.

Nevertheless, not only the restrictive regulations provoked the participants' return decision; there were also refugee-friendly policies which drove Bosnians back to their home country. Among the late returnees, I figured out that they all returned after obtaining the host country's citizenship. Double citizenship reduced the risk of return because they could be able to return to their host country whenever needed. This is also what Carling and Erdal (2014, p.4) state, the ability to be transnationally mobile gives the ex-refugees a sense of security and comfort; because it allows them to be independent from national structural constraints. Citizenship or indefinite residence rights build the transnational legal identity and the latter allows unrestricted transnational mobility. Having a back-up plan encouraged Bosnian refugees to do visits to their home country. Many of them felt very “different” after the first visit which incited them visit more regularly and consequently take the return decision. Voices of the field in fact corresponds completely with the theory of transnationalism. According to the theory, transnational identity allows cross border initiatives. The more migrants are capable of mobility; they collect more information about the post return conditions. This knowledge creates willingness, attachment and readiness for the home country, preparing them for the definite return (Cassarino, 2004, p. 262).

“Every time when I was going back from Bosnia to the US after the holiday, I was telling my friends how much fun I had in Bosnia; in Croatian coast or by the new's year eve in Sarajevo. I feel that people here enjoy the life much more than the people over there, even with less money”, told Vedad (32, IT manager). His visits allowed him to discover many elements that he did not know about Bosnia, preparing him for return. In that way, serious reintegration problems did not occur upon arrival because he was already familiar with the context through the previous visits. Hilmi's (41, social worker and consultant) return reason is also shaped by these visits but also by the lack of sense of belonging to his host country, Belgium: *“I was coming here very often already before and I was aware of what was waiting for me and I came. There wasn't any reason for me to stay here. No job, no relation... Why to stay there?”*

5.1.4) Economic- Professional Factors

The conflict created enormous devastation in the country and the Dayton Accord envisaged massive aid transfers to Bosnia. In the first year of peace, alone nearly US\$2 billion was guaranteed by multilateral and bilateral donors (Black, 2001, p. 178)). Without a doubt, this money flow provoked the returns, especially among the refugees who were not well established in the host countries.

“If Germany did it, we thought that we could also do it” said Harun (45, businessman) while explaining his return from Germany to Bosnia. He firstly flew to Turkey and stayed one year at his relatives. Lack of economic opportunities incited him to look for other strategies and he went to Germany to seek asylum. He stayed in Germany until the forced repatriation. *“The president of Bosnia was calling us back. Bosnia is a small country and with all the international aid we believed that we can make good business. Germany stood up after the second world war, we thought that Bosnia could do the same with that money. Our house was not destroyed and with the money that I saved, we constructed a new house and opened a business. I was motivated to come back. Well, that's how I was thinking 25 years ago though. If I have had today's mindset at that time, I wouldn't have come back”*.

He and many others who did not have a good standard of living in asylum, the expectations from Bosnia motivated their return. These comments draw attention to Raghuram's (2009) *development-migration* debate where he discusses migration as if it is an outcome of underdevelopment or development. These findings led me to add a new category to this discussion; migration (return) is an outcome of development expectation. Considering our sample is about the war refugees, the post-conflict development anticipation was a strong pulling factor for the refugees' return.

Another economic factor which triggered the return is the ownership aspiration. In the host countries, possession was inaccessible mostly because of the lack of sufficient capital. Moreover, some host countries had restricted investment regulations to the foreigners. Iman (30, optician) returnee from Turkey, reported that, even though she lived in Turkey 25 years, they (she and her husband) were not capable of investment due to the non-favourable loan regulations. They decided to go back because they wanted to build their family life with home ownership. In fact, even when there would not be any legal restrictions, the concept of being a refugee is not favourable for investments. Future uncertainty and always living in between two spheres hinder the long-term plans, and thereby the investment intentions. In some cases, ownership aspiration goes beyond the economic and institutional conditions: *“I would like to own an apartment in Sarajevo, in order to feel like I belong to here and that I feel like I am at home here. In order to say that I am going to "home", even though I do not live here. Just to have a base here...”*, said Asja (27, journalist-writer). For her, ownership brings her sense of belonging. Attachment to one location with a possession would provide her a base, a “home”, which she had never had in her life before.

Overall, the findings show that there is intense connection between the four factors. They are the causes and consequences of each other. The host state's regulations limit the access to ownership and urge the refugees go back to Bosnia to improve their livelihood conditions. The same state regulations hinder a sense of belonging in the host country and the returnees use the ownership as a tool to fix their problems.

The results also demonstrate that return is a very complex decision-making process. It is not possible to frame it into the pre-determined categories because they do not give room to the personal aspects such as age, marital status, gender or to the experiences abroad. This is why, the modified return migration model was a profitable tool to analyse this complex process, because it allows to see the heterogeneity among the return decision. The returnees having the same host country and same socio-economic status had different reasons to return because their capabilities were different. Therefore, I used the *decision* term in order to emphasis the role of agency even under coercive situations. Hence, the return, even when the host state repatriated the refugee, involved certain elements of agency and decision making on the part of the person. This is also how Bourdieu (1986) explained human behaviours, results of the battle fields between structure and agency. Return migration, as a human behaviour, occurs under this concept, between agency and structure, or voluntary and involuntary camps.

5.2) Re-establishment in Bosnia

“Return neither is a movement back to normal, nor is it easily a movement forward to change”¹⁴

Franz (2010, p. 55) defined return and re-integration, referring to the returnees’ feelings, as a *“dynamic and contested process which means having to negotiate one’s position in new contexts of power and inequality.”* This section will present Bosnian returnees’ position, experiences in their reestablishment process. This process is shaped by several factors and these factors have been grouped into two broad categories. Firstly, the impact of migration cycle on their re-establishment will be examined, under the three major capital framework. The second part will look through the lens of Bosnian state and war while investigating the re-establishment phase.

5.2.1) Impact of Migration on Re-establishment in Bosnia

“Gdje si bio kad je bilo najteže?”¹⁵

“Where were you when it was the hardest time?”

Displacement is a complex process deducing benefits and costs. As Halilovic et al. (2018, p. 66) mention, the expression of these benefits and costs differ from each other; the former shows itself in material terms whereas the latter displays itself in subjective terms. Considering we live in a capitalist world; materialised issues take much more attention and therefore occupy the debates much more than the subjective issues. For instance, if we give voice to the *development as an outcome of migration* approach, we will notice that the acquired skills abroad are supposed to bring development to the country of origin through the economic and social remittances (de Haas, 2009, 2010a; Raghuram, 2009). Destination countries are mainly the developed countries (or relatively more developed) comparing to the country of origins. What is acquired there, is considered a gain which will be transformed into developments, both individual and collective, for the home country. This approach should be discussed in many manners. Firstly, why are the skills in the country of destination considered superior and more valuable? Secondly; why is the value solely measured through material tools? Although there are many lost values due to displacement, these negative sides are not mentioned as much as the material ones. In this section, I will try to highlight both sides; the benefits and costs of displacement on the re-establishment. However, special focus will be given to the costs (subjective terms), given that it is not much elaborated in the scholarly world.

¹⁴ (van Houte & Davids, 2014, p. 72)

¹⁵ The popular song (by Dino Merlin) sang by the stayee children to the returnees upon their arrival.

5.2.1.1) Social Capital

“When we were sitting in the shelter, you were eating Nutella.”

Displacement influenced dramatically returnees’ social relations in Bosnia. The most mentioned issue regarding this theme is the tension between the returnees and stayees, especially when the massive repatriation occurred. In the literature, this tension, which is the cost of displacement in the subjective manner, was not enough elaborated. Nevertheless, almost all the participants reported that, it was one of the biggest challenges that they faced upon their arrival. The returnees were perceived as if they were coming from places of comfort, regardless of the legal, social and psychosocial challenges that experienced in the host countries.

Once the Bosnian refugees returned, they did not find the community very welcoming; on the contrary the community looked at them with suspicion. One of the focus group discussions conducted with those who stayed illustrated the so-called tension. They noted that the ones who stayed suffered the most, and if they want to employ somebody, they would prefer a stayee rather than a returnee because they far more deserve the employment. As Krasteva et al. (2018, p. 68) mention, locals consider the returnees as the “favoured” ones, who fled from the war, improved skills and made savings abroad. Moreover, the locals consider stayees more reliable and loyal in comparison with the returnees. They think that the ones who left during the war, can also leave the job any time and therefore they do not find them reliable. This finding demonstrates that, the returnees upon their arrival went through a re-adjustment process (Battistella, 2018, p. 3), which was similar to the adaptation process that they had in the host country. The comment below from one participant illustrates the issue from the returnee perspective: *“There is tension surely and I find it totally unfair. For example, I cannot talk about Bosnian political situation because I am considered as if I don’t know anything because I didn’t live here. It is always thought that I had lived a great life there (in the USA). I tried to explain them that our life was not easy, we also had many difficulties, but it still doesn’t work.”*

For the returnees who came back to Bosnia at school age, the most striking memory was also this tension. They were often bullied by the stayees for leaving the country during the war. Nejra’s anecdote, returnee from Germany (38, PhD candidate and teaching assistant) is a poignant illustration: *“They were doing some jokes like ‘when we were sitting in the shelter, you were eating nutella’. But it was okay, I wasn’t bothered so much, I would have done the same. I actually did it though, to the ones who returned after the war in 1996-97. Comparing to them I was the good one because I returned when the war was still going on, I had experienced the war... There were different levels among the returnees (laughing)”.*

Every returnee’s coping strategy with this tense situation was different. Nejra emphasized her wartime return and differentiated herself from the other returnees; whereas other participants applied other tools. For instance, Esmā, (31, PhD candidate and lecturer) returnee from the Netherlands, was wearing t-shirts with Bosnian flags to avoid the mocking and the exclusion. The stayee children were singing the very famous song *“Gdje si bio kad je bilo najteže?”*, meaning *“Where were you when it was the hardest time?”* to the returnee children. Therefore, they remained in friend circles composed only by the returnees. They described being an outsider despite having returned to their home country. Indeed, the returnee friendship circles did not only occur among the children. The late returnees also reported that their social friend circles are formed by other returnees. They admit the difference between them and the ones who stayed while the war and thus they prefer to hang out

with people with more similarities. The interesting fact is that, in the host countries almost all the interviewees reported that they were spending time only with the other Bosnian refugees. Further, once they were back, they continued to only associate with ex-refugees. Migration differentiated them from the crowd in both destinations, urging them to build their own communities at their places of residences.

5.2.1.2) Cultural Capital

5.2.1.2.1) Educational Life

The participants who returned to Bosnia at school age, mainly the ones who returned from Germany, faced serious educational problems. They lost a large part of their Bosnian language skills which influenced their capability to proceed with school. They had lower grades comparing to their peers. The latter is also the outcome of the shift from host countries' practical and slow learning structure to Bosnian theoretical and intense curriculum. In the post-war period, the curriculum went relatively faster to catch up the lost years. The participants were reporting that they were good students in the host countries but when they came back, they struggled extensively. Differences in teaching system, methods and materials were the main reasons why they had adaptation problems. The capitals that they acquired abroad were not transferable. The practical things or the foreign languages that they learnt in their host countries did not bring progress to their Bosnian school lives.

Mirela (33, financial manager), returnee from Switzerland, expressed this situation clearly with the following sentences: *"Actually I wanted to study psychology but since the high school was a hard period for me in means of adaptation to the new school system, I didn't have good grades and I wasn't accepted to Psychology. I had to study something else. I actually started to study languages, as my brother also did. I studied French language for two years, but I felt like this is not my profession and I quitted. Two of my friends were studying philosophy and I saw what they were talking about... I started to like it and therefore I applied for philosophy."* Migration, while ensuring her a safe place to live, cost her the freedom to study what she wanted. She tried the subject related to her acquired skills, but it failed to bring her meaningful results.

However, some participants managed to transfer the obtained skills into results. They studied the host country's language at the university and reached academic level in the subject of matter. They converted the acquired cultural capital into cultural and economic capital in the local context. These two opposite findings prove that the capability to transfer the means into outcomes differ from one to another. Each returnee has a different degree of agency which influences the coping strategies with the post-arrival challenges. Each migrant's level of agency or capability to convert capitals into each other is unique. This is because there are a diverse array of elements composing their capital package.

5.2.1.2.2) Lifestyle: Mentality, Perceptions and Engagements

As Bourdieu (1986) says, location is a very determining factor of the human behaviours. Bosnian refugees obtained different habitus during their period of asylum. This shaped their behaviours and way of thought, directly impacting on their re-establishment process in Bosnia. For instance, returnees from Germany pay a lot of attention to the self-improvement and development and want to use time in a very efficient way. *"The older I get, the more I want to keep my brain employed! It is a path to self-improvement, and for that reason I can never understand the people who sit in one cafe for ten hours. Working for yourself is such an important thing"* tells Azra, (29, English translator), returnee from Germany. She and the other returnees who attended school in Germany

reported that they invest considerable amount of time to accomplish their tasks while doing their jobs, which is not necessarily an advantage in the Bosnian labour market. The acquired capitals abroad do not have always a positive feedback in the home country. Acquired skills sometimes could even create problems, as Azra had experienced. She was fired from her job because the way how she was doing her tasks was not appreciated by her colleagues, due to jealousy. She admitted that these competences are not always welcome in the local context; they keep the returnee different from the crowd and can lead to uncomfortable situations.

Merjem's (34, economist), comments demonstrate the same problem, clash of capitals and their impact on the re-establishment: *"Me coming here in the beginning I felt little bit lost. They (stayees) are better with coping and dealing things. Here, there is less structure, and everything is up to the people. They are trained and better equipped to handle difficulties. And me, I am lost, and I am not used to do the things alone and it makes my life harder. In USA the life was easier."* Due to the asylum life, she could not develop certain skills which are necessary to survive in Bosnia. Migration therefore cost her and many others in many ways, and the reintegration process still suffers from these lost capitals.

The sense of security is an interesting finding while analysing the changes in perceptions. Many stayees had reported their concern about the eruption of a new conflict considering interethnic tensions are still largely present in the country. I asked also to the returnees if they feel secure in Bosnia. Nevertheless, from them I received very different answers, which carry the values of their host countries. The ones who returned from the USA, they said that they feel secured in Bosnia because there little theft, whereas the ones who came back from Germany emphasised on different aspects: They feel insecure because they would face difficulties if they ever have serious health problems, due to the incapacity of Bosnian healthcare system. They internalised the host country's value system and it framed their values.

Cultural transformation among the returnees was very visible and differentiated them from those who stayed. For instance, returnees were complaining that the stayees are nationalistic (Bosniak partisans) and narrow-minded. This difference could be explained due to that participants spent most of the conflict abroad, without experiencing the war as bad as those who stayed. It may also be due to their migration background, where they learnt and practised how to feel like a foreigner and hence, developed non-nationalist thoughts. Finally, it could be because they have spent a lot of time in a very mixed, cosmopolitan setting which might have influenced their way of thinking. One of the interviewees elaborated on his perception change through the migration. He described how before leaving from Bosnia, he thought that Sarajevo is the best place to live in and the Bosnians are the best people in the world. He was stating that not knowing anything besides from what you have, keeps you to be in love with this. Once the outside world is discovered, he recognized that his place is not the best. After moving to the USA, he noticed how prejudged he was towards the other nationalities. He understood how the "other" feel and experienced how insiders treat outsiders. This realization pushed the returnees to develop empathy regarding other ethnicities.

In fact, the remark above is valuable because it has a strong link with the current migration crisis. It is interesting to note how the displacement background influences people's thoughts and engagements towards to current migrants. Bosnia has a vital location on the Balkan Route and became a big hub of migrants due to its border to the EU. During the interviews I questioned the participants'

attitudes and engagements towards current migrants. All the participants shared their thoughts of solidarity, but only few of them engaged in concrete actions. *“We were accepted to Germany as refugees and we should be doing the same to the Syrian refugees. We forgot our past and we act very badly. We don’t show any understanding. We are very primitive; we are actually very undeveloped. When someone needs a help we don’t care, we only seek help for ourselves. My family went as a refugee had worked in Germany and no one said any word to them. But here, we don’t even give the basic rights to the kids. The Bosnian families don’t want that their kids go to the same schools with these refugee kids”* told Ilma (26, Project developer), to highlight the Bosnians’ lack of empathy. Having a displacement background certainly creates a different point of view regarding the current refugees, comparing to people who have never migrated.

Furthermore, transnational cultural identity plays a significant role on the cultural capital of the returnees. Even though Bosnia has many problems in terms of economy and politics, through the transmobility asset, the returnees could survive with their own tools. Post-transnationalism helped them to develop hybrid identities, enabling them to apply creative answers to new situations (van Houte & Davids, 2014, p. 79). In my sample, the late returnees are the most transnational. Not only because they hold double citizenship, but also because they spent more time abroad and were subject to a greater difference in vision. They reported that their mobility helped them to gain a broader perspective and drove them to discover opportunities out of unfavourable situations. They see much more possibilities because they built the capacity to see problems as opportunities. It could be summed up that migration cycle itself is a capital because it allows people to discover new aspects, bringing access to other forms of capitals.

However, it should be bear in mind that, the above-mentioned opportunities and challenges in the post-arrival period highly depend on the participants’ age during the asylum and also host country. The ones who attended primary or secondary school abroad internalised the host country’ cultural values more than those who did not attend school. Moreover, differing host countries formed the differing visions among the migrants. For instance, when I asked what bothered them the most after their return; the interviewees who had returned from Turkey emphasised on the lack of hygiene on public transport, whereas the returnees from the USA, prioritized the lack of access to the information and services. Their perceptions are shaped by their previous habitus and thus they had very varying struggling domains in the reestablishment process.

5.2.1.3) Economic Capital

It is largely known that remittances play a critical part in the economic re-establishment of the returnees. These remittances can be in social or financial and in this section, we will analyse how these remittances shape the economic life of the returnees in Bosnia.

School abroad had a large influence on the formation of financial capital in Bosnia. Esma (31, Lecturer and PhD candidate) spent four years in the Netherlands and went to Montessori school: *“That four years left bigger impact on me comparing the all the years in Bosnia. I still remember very well what I learnt at school there but I do not remember the ones in Bosnia because they were pure memorising things. And I apply the things that I learnt at school in my current jobs. Self-scheduling! I am doing multiple things, I am a lecturer at the university, I am an official court interpreter and I am also giving online German classes. I have the capability to do all of them and I arrange my schedule according to this. I couldn’t find myself just working in one thing from 9 am until 5 pm.”* Esma’s

migration experience influenced her choice of study and consequently her job opportunities. She managed to convert the cultural capital to economic wealth. In fact, the majority of participants stressed this conversion, reporting that the language skills that they acquired abroad facilitated their access to the job market in Bosnia.

It is necessary to explore the impact of asylum countries on the Bosnian refugees' educational and job choices. Almost all the returnees, studied and/or worked in the fields related to their host countries. What is interesting is that there is a clear distinction among of the type of choices and can be examined under two different categories¹⁶. The participants who have been to the USA, the UK and Malaysia, where there is a more market-oriented economy and school system; refugees studied, business management, finance and information technology. Whereas the participants who have been to Germany, where there is a technic oriented economy and school system, refugees studied non-competitive fields such as languages, development, culture, healthcare. While they were reasoning their choices, the participants from the second group country reported that they chose these branches for their own interest and for self-development whereas the ones who are from the first group countries chose these fields due to its monetary value.

Another subject of debate regarding the impact of migration on the re-establishment is the economic contribution. According to the literature, returnees are considered as potential contributors to the development of the country of origin given that they have savings to invest and new skills which could bring innovation to the home society (Battistella, 2018; Black & Koser, 1999; Faist, 2008). In contrary to this neoclassic approach, sociologists and human geographers think that returnees have very small or even negative influence on the local economy. (King, 2000, pp. 23–24). However, the first one remains the dominant approach in migration studies and raises questions regarding the perception of development. The latter is seen through a more Eurocentric perspective, as if innovation is the only way to development. Acquired skills abroad are considered more valuable and are expected to bring development. Nevertheless, the research findings demonstrate the opposite trend; that material and non-material contribution remain very low among the returnees. Many of them returned with savings but used them to buy or construct houses and basic consumption needs. Assuredly these remittances provided them with a sense of belonging and economic security, however it did not contribute to the country's overall development.

According to Debnath (2016), the impact of the contribution of the returnees to their places of origin could fall into 4 categories:

1-They involve in training or other educational activities where they could present the imported skills.

2-They transport money that they saved abroad and initiate entrepreneurial activities or actively save in the country of origin.

3-They use the "social capital" that they acquired abroad and contribute through their social network.

¹⁶ This categorisation is made to better visualise the impacts of host countries on the returnees' education/employment choices. Not every participant corresponds to this categorisation, but the majority of the sample demonstrates these characteristics.

4-They could be the social-changers in the home society by influencing the existing relations with people.

The respondents who work in the field of academia could fall into the first category because they conduct and organise their lectures according to the skills that they acquired in the host countries. Regarding the second category, only one participant opened a business with the economic and social remittances, however it became bankrupt after a short period of time due to its lack of consistency with the needs of home society. This inconsistency, according to Ghosh (2000, p. 185), is one of the major reasons why the returnees fail to contribute to the home country. Moreover, mistrust of the local political economy is an important factor in the low interest in entrepreneurial initiatives. During the interviews, I asked the participants if they favoured taking loans to do further investments in Bosnia, to question to what extent they intended to contribute economically. Responses highlighted the wounds of the displacement and their effects on the capabilities in economic manners: *“I guess I have a very refugee mindset. I don't like to take loans, if I have savings, I would do something but if I don't have, I wouldn't risk it. This is why I never got in Mortgage in the UK”*, said Luka (30, e-trader). Thus, the security mentality, as a result of migration hinders one to take risky initiatives such as starting a new business. Regarding the category 3 and 4, they are seen to a lesser extent in the sample because most of the returnees do not have social networks in the host country. In addition, the social changer concept remains very idealistic given that the returnees mostly interact with the other returnees rather than mixing within the society.

Furthermore, among the late returnees, transnational identity also became a tool to form economic capital. One participant reported that, thanks to his transnational legal and economic identity, he can earn a vast income and continue to live in Bosnia. He added that, if he was dependent on the national markets, he would not be able to stay in Bosnia. Late returnees, thanks to their transnational legal identity capital, have alternative plans in case they face economic strife in Bosnia. Besides the legal characteristic of the transnationalism, cultural transnationalism also plays a crucial part in the formation of economic capital in Bosnia. Asja, the returnee from Australia, reported that she gained access to high-skilled job market in Bosnia thanks to her Bosnian-Australian background. Her language skills or identity were never questioned due to her double nationality, quite the contrary to Australia where she could not access the high skilled labour market because of her unfamiliar name. She instrumentalised the capital, transnational identity, to realize firstly economic but also cultural and societal desires. She reported that she does not feel as a lower-class citizen anymore. She feels accepted and respected which is indeed the biggest reason why she stays in Bosnia.

To conclude the impact of migration on the Bosnian returnees' re-establishment process, we can say that each migrant had various experiences due their different capital packages. Some returnees could make use of acquired capitals and transformed them to different types of capitals and thus well beings. Whereas others were not capable of converting the news skills into a local context. This alongside the lost capitals (from pre-war Bosnia) meant they had a very challenging post-arrival period.

5.2.2) Impact of the Institution and War on Life in Bosnia

5.2.2.1) Disinterest

“Dobro je, samo nek’ ne se puca”

“It is okay, as long as nobody shoots”

The preceding section has called into question returnees’ economic contribution through the lens of displacement. In this section, economic and political contribution will be analysed through the impact of Bosnian conflict and institution.

Returnees’ low interest in their home country’s development has a strong relationship with the war and the post-war institution. Through the interviews, it was notable that returnees pay most of their attention to their individual satisfaction and happiness rather than contributing to the country. They plan to do investments when it is needed, and they reason their living in Bosnia because they feel better there. Often, they are not worried about the country’s political and economic future and therefore do not have any intention to contribute. This indifference helps to explain why they are not politically engaged. They were more interested in the Bosnian politics while in asylum but once they had returned, their interest relatively decreased. This was also due to corruption and constitutional crisis facing the country.

Another reason explaining their apathy is that respondents mainly work in foreign company and institutions, and they are detached from the national context and crisis. The ones who do not have this transnational legal or economic status, and economically not well-off, rely on the national situation and therefore are more politicized. When asking about their interest in Bosnian politics to question how much they are involved in country’s development, and how much they could bring change with their new skills, I received very similar answers: *“If you ask me if I am worried, I am not worried at all, why should I be worried? I do vote but that is all. As long as there is no war, it is okay. I think it is also connected how much you are well off. Why would you be worried about here? If you have money; you would only think about your holiday. I guess the people who worry, are not really well off”* said Hilmi (41, social worker and consulter), returnee from Belgium.

He referred to one Bosnian expression in his speech, which needs to be further investigated: *“Dobro je, samo nek’ ne se puca”* literally means *“It is okay, as long as nobody shoots”*. Once people had experienced the war, where they lost their home and the loved ones; little could worry them once more. This attitude was very present among the returnees but also among the stayees, explaining the lack of activism and socio-political movements in the country. Although everybody complains about the corrupted political system and politicians, there were no movements demonstrating this discontent. Additionally, the country’s complicated and divided political system affects this reluctance. Tripartite presidency restricts progress within the country and people are disillusioned from not seeing any development for many years. People who are not economically well-off prefer to leave rather than resist, whereas the ones who have financial comfort prefer to stay.

Nevertheless, among the participants, there were very few exceptions who are engaged in political movements, willing to make change in the society. Asja was one of them but her engagement is in fact related to her migration experience rather than the Bosnian war: *“My asylum experience influenced the way how I think politically. My parents are more social democrats, but I am more radical*

leftist. Being a foreigner and a refugee in one country makes you more progressive and more critical and also makes you think like why these opportunities do not exist to me. These different attitudes pushed me to become more leftist.”

The quote above in fact illustrates the complexity of the issue of the subject of contribution. This section demonstrated that the concept of *contribution to the development of the home country* is linked to many factors; economic welfare, institution, conflict, displacement, social class. The multiplicity of dimensions makes the explanation of one phenomenon harder, thus requires a careful examination. This links to the complex system theory (Serrat, 2009), which states that there are many potentials influencing the facts. Therefore, a phenomenon can never be explained with one dimension. For that reason, Bosnian returnees’ unwillingness to contribute to the development of their home compels a holistic and detailed examination.

5.2.2.2) No Return “Home”

“I was very happy when I was going back to Bosnia, but unfortunately we couldn't go where we used to live before. Repossession was not possible, our neighbours took our house and destroyed. I don't have even one picture from my childhood, can you imagine how difficult it is? Sometimes I see that my friends are posting childhood pictures on Facebook but me, I don't have anything, not even one toy... You cannot go back where you grew up, your house does not belong to you. Our Croat neighbours took our house from us. That's why nothing could be same as before. I can never forget; I do not want to forget. Today we could be neighbours, but you never know what will happen tomorrow. You never know what they think about you. I do not want to live together with a Croat or Serb. Therefore, I moved to Sarajevo, here is mostly Muslims.” (44, lawyer)

The most difficult phase of re-establishment process will be presented in this section. The repatriation, which means literally *return to home* will be discussed in multiple manners with the results of the research.

The quote above belongs to one participant who is originally from Mostar, which remains in the Federation. Before the war, population of Bosniak and Croat ethnicities were almost same and after the war Croats (48.4%) are slightly more crowded than the Bosniaks (44.2%) (Statistics Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013). She could not go back to her place of origin because her house was taken away by her Croat neighbours, her father was taken into concentration camp by Croat forces and Mostar no longer belonged to Muslims. As mentioned in the literature review, return to home is closely connected to the notions of memory, identity and community as much as the place of origin (Black, 2002, p. 126). For her, Mostar was not the “home”, simply because the elements which makes the “home” no longer existed.

Only 10 out of 26 Bosnian refugees could return to their home because their hometowns were still forming most of their ethnic group, Bosnian Muslims, considering the sample of this research composed predominantly by Bosniaks¹⁷. The rest of the sample could not return to their former place of residence because they would form the minority and also due to the lack of economic opportunities. For instance, for the participants whose hometowns remain in the Republika Srpska entity, such as Bijelina, Foca or Prijedor (see the map below), return to home was not an option.

Figure 15: Map of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Federation is colored in green and the Republika Srpska is in yellow.



Source: Ephotopix, 2019

Anisa (40, journalist), returnee from Germany, attempted to go back to her hometown, Foca. She started to work there as a journalist, but she found it difficult and moved to Sarajevo: *“I was working for Deutsche Welle in Foca and I was doing radio programmes. I worked for 5 months there as a reporter. I was reporting about the mass graves there. I was figuring out that the people whose bodies were found were actually the people that I was knowing. It was very difficult, I quit after 5 months and went to Sarajevo.”* Although she had a good employment opportunity in her hometown, her return didn't last long. Her hometown was not her home anymore because her community was killed or displaced, memories were harsh, and she became the part of the minority (Bosniak population in Foca fell from 48.6% to 6.9% due to the conflict [Statistics Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013]). Preconditions for human dignity were not provided; she didn't feel safe, thus moved away to another town where the Muslims were holding the majority. Her displacement journey continued, there was only a shift between her status: refugee to IDP.

¹⁷ Regarding the sample of this research is predominantly Bosniak returnees, the focus will be given to their *no return to home*. However, other dominant ethnic groups (Croats and Serbs) have also experienced the same issue, relatively less than the Bosniaks. Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that there are other ethnicities which are not involved in these three constitutional ethnic groups, such as Roma people. They are the most vulnerable ones given that they did not have any place to return where they could form the majority.

Human dignity is an important notion in Bosnian repatriation. International law defines repatriation as a voluntary process which should take place in safety and dignity (Fransen, 2015), to the place where human rights violations do not occur anymore (Noll, 2000, p. 137). During the interview with the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the term *human dignity* was highlighted, and they emphasised on the importance of its clear definition in the post ethnic conflict areas. In the Bosnian case, even though this term was mentioned in the international and national agreements, its content was always shallow. According to the ministry, that was one of the reasons why the returns to *home* were not successful. Guaranteeing dignity at a place where the war crimes occurred and the executors are alive without any penalisation¹⁸, was not promising. Thus, each ethnic group returned to the regions where they formed the majority rather than becoming part of a minority return.

Even though international community provided housing and property restitution to encourage the returns, as well as employment opportunities to provide economic security, their offers were condemned to failure because the conditions for human dignity had not been established. Anisa's story highlights this failure. When the people who committed massacres are not recognized as criminals but rather as heroes, even the most appealing employment and housing promises would not be enough for a sustainable return. Therefore, it is very important firstly to construct the moral basis before implementing practical solutions to encourage return. As the local and international NGOs emphasised during the interviews, if there was enough pressure on the state to guarantee dignity and safety in these sensible areas, returns would have been more stable, and the country wouldn't have been so ethnically divided. Doubtless, the international community was aware of this critical deficiency, however due to the pressure coming from the host countries because of the refugee burden and the impossibility of the Bosnian context, they applied fast track mass repatriation programmes.

Merjem (34, economist) and her family took the decision to go to the USA when their temporary protection ended in Germany. They did not have the chance to go back to home because that home was not belonging them anymore: *"My father was saying that, if we cannot go back where we're coming from, so Bijelina, doesn't matter so much if we're in another city or in another country. It is not my place, so I rather to go to somewhere else where there are opportunities."* After the conflict, Bijelina became the part of Republika Srpska where the Bosnian Serbs have the power and majority. Due to the ethnic cleansing and occurred fear incited Bosniak refugees to find new home.

In order to develop a holistic overview on the *no return home* issue, I questioned the institutions' support to return home. During the interview with German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), I questioned the support of GIZ towards the returnees coming from Germany, given that many of the participants of the research has fallen to IDP after return. They reported that it was very difficult to provide help that targets only the returnees in the Republika Srpska because it was

¹⁸ Lack of justice was highlighted by almost all of the institutions. In fact, *Annexe 7* was prepared to encourage the return of Bosnian refugees, especially the minority returns, by providing material sources. However, it failed to consider the most important precondition of the return: human dignity and security. Giving political rights to the war criminals created mistrust and insecurity feelings among the Bosnian Muslims, thus hindered the minority returns to the RS. The biggest reason is that Radovan Karadžić kept on holding the presidency seat of the Republika Srpska even after the war, despite the committed war crimes (including the Srebrenica genocide). It took 25 years until he is recognized as a war criminal by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in the Hague (Borger, 2019).

creating tension with the stayees. Not only because they were considered as if they were arriving with copious amounts of money, but also because of the tension between Serbs and Bosniaks. Providing support only to the returnees, who were basically only Bosniaks, was not possible since they had to cooperate with the municipality in that entity, which belonged to the Serbs. Therefore, they had to find the balance and cooperate with the Serb authorities. In general, very few of the participants were assisted during their repatriation. One third of the sample are late returnees, where assistance is out of the question. One third were those returned before the host country told them to leave, and they returned with their own resources. For the other third, the travel tickets were paid but cash-assistance for post-return did not take place, except for one returnee who came from Switzerland.

The other dimension which led to *no return home* is the displaced Bosnians' new characters. This is in fact the outcome of the migration rather than the Bosnian institution, but it is necessary to re-examine in under the no return home subject. It was mentioned that the combination of the values coming from the country of origin and destination's as well as the lost and acquired capitals due to migration phase formed new characters among the Bosnian returnees. Findings demonstrate that migrants, especially the ones who spent their childhood in exile, developed a very different personality and their perception of *home* has changed. Therefore, even if their places of origin have had the Bosniak majority, this would not have evoked *home* for them because they themselves changed and are unlikely to find the place how they left it.

The last factor influencing the *no return home* is the transformed social connections at the place of origin. They returned to places or social environments that appear to have changed, or, alternatively, where the local population perceive the returnees as strangers because of the change of rituals and beliefs that they have obtained at the phase of asylum (Rogge & Akol, 1989, p. 193). Many participants were reporting that when they were back to their place of origin, they had great difficulty to adapt because of the local community' close-mindedness, nationalist approaches and exclusionary attitudes.

In sum, because of the all mentioned reasons, the initial meaning of the repatriation is subjected to fail; Bosnian refugees returned to their country of origin but not to the original places. As Franz (2010, p. 58) stated; "*home is not only a physical setting or a base of material existence; it is also a ground of social relations and cultural meanings*". For the Bosnians' return, historical meanings were decisive; thus it was not enough to simply provide economic and social opportunities in their former place of residence, in order to encourage their return. Prerequisites for human dignity must have been present. Return to places where ethnic cleansings happened requires special care rather than basic repatriation calculations. Promising compensation of the properties or constructing housing units would underestimate this issue and this would only lead to an unsustainable return in numbers. The measures applied to encourage returns represents a more neo-liberal perspective, neglecting the non-material dimensions for the dignified return. Unfortunately, the international community spent little of their budget and time on lobbying and fighting for the establishment of basic human rights of the displaced people, rather more on flights, *pay-to-go* schemes to initiate return. This is understandable given that NGOs and the UN often rely on government grants. Competition with other NGOs triggers them to repatriate refugees at the lowest possible cost, at the fastest possible rate (Gerver, 2016, p. 36). Nevertheless, it is neither ethical nor humane way of dealing with the people who lost their houses and loved ones as a result of a horrific conflict.

5.3) Re-migration Aspirations: Staying or Leaving?

Before coming to the field, I assumed that the returnees would have intention to re-migrate because of the country's lack of economic opportunities and due to their connection with their former host countries. I imagined that having social and cultural capitals abroad would facilitate their migration plans. However, I failed to predict the distinction between the easiness to migrate and the aspiration to migrate.

Migration; basing on Sen's approach, "*freedom to choose where to live, including the option to stay*" (de Haas, 2014, p. 4). According to the results, 19 out of 26 returnees chose the option to stay rather than leave, exposing that easiness or capabilities do not necessarily bring people aspiration to migrate. This section will explain re-migration intentions of the returnees, which is directly determined by the two preceding sections; reasons of their return and their re-establishment process. First part of this section will analyse 19 returnees' unwillingness regarding migration and the second part concerns the other 7 returnees, demonstrating the reasons behind their re-migration intentions.

5.3.1) Reasons for Staying

5.3.1.1) Better Quality of Life

Better quality of life is used by most of the interviewees while reasoning their decision to stay in Bosnia. With this term, they refer to a more easy and comfortable life rather than a wealthier one. It correlates with Sen's *quality of life* definition, where he emphasizes the functions of wealth rather than wealth alone. Participants were arguing that Bosnian life is less stressful comparing to their country of asylums:

"In the USA, you're responsible of your acts, if you cannot achieve it is because you couldn't do it, you do not blame the others, or the state. There is too much responsibility and weight on you. In Bosnia, the state is not strong, and you can blame it with any of your unsuccessful act. For instance, if you cannot find a job it's because of the state, not you. And it makes the things lighter. Maybe that is why people are more happy here, less stress!" (34, economist)

However, better quality of life is a valid reason only if there is a minimum level of economic comfort. *"You know, if I was working for 200-300 euros per month here, there is no way that I would come back and stay here. I have the financial comfort, otherwise it is not possible to live here no matter how much nostalgia I have"*, said Luka (30, e-trader), returnee from the UK. He started a new business based in the UK, but he lives in Bosnia. Having sufficient income is the precondition for him, and likewise for the other returnees, to stay in Bosnia. They have better quality of life in Sarajevo, comparing to their life abroad and do not have intention to again move away unless they are economically constrained. Hence, the economic comfort is the key factor of their choice of stay and once it is threatened, they would emigrate to the countries where they have chance of employment. Nevertheless, they all still believe that they have more chance to achieve what they want to do in Bosnia in contrast with abroad. Nejla (24, medicine student), returnee from Montenegro: *"In a country where there are not many things, everything can be done well. I think, I will succeed in Bosnia earlier than anywhere else. I think that Bosnia is an ideal country to live, only we have to fight for a better tomorrow."*

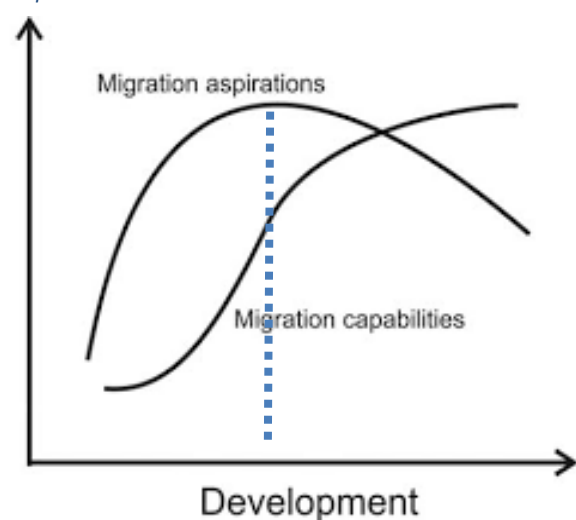
Moreover, economic comfort is not only related to the salary, but also to professional status. In asylum, all the participants' parents had to work in entry level jobs regardless how well educated they were. This fact made them realize that migration cost their parents extensively: they could not make use of their cultural capital that they brought from Bosnia. Parents had to work in simple jobs throughout their lives, which left substantial traces on the interviewees' minds. For that reason, they are not motivated to emigrate again because migration was rather a loss than gain and they would not like to leave the self-investments that they accumulated so far. Nejra's comment (38, PhD candidate and Research Assistant) below illustrates the caution regarding the re-migration idea and it summarises the voices of the other participants' thoughts:

"I would only consider going there (Germany) if I knew that I would be at the same level that I have now here. I am also looking through my career and maybe if I was a worker in factory here, I would have thought differently because I would also work there as a worker. But now for me, finding a job at a German university and doing what I am doing now, the chances are very low. I have been doing and educating myself for the last 18 years a lot for my career and I wouldn't leave it. Indeed, I found jobs in Germany as a lecturer, but it is not what I want to do. So, I wouldn't be happy there because I would lose so many things. People are going abroad saying that they would have great possibilities, better life and money, but you would have it in the next ten years but they do not know about it. Somethings you just cannot buy... But I never tell them not to go, they should experience it. They won't take you immediately to the position that you have here, you would start from the lowest degree even though you have a profession, and me I am not ready to start from there. I know that somethings won't work out there and therefore I don't go. I wouldn't like to waste the best years of the life. Maybe it's because of the age. When I was 25, I was thinking about to go away but at that time the things seemed better here and I didn't want to go. And now, I am 38 and I am not ready to restart."

Nejra's sentences necessitate extensive reflection and encompasses many questions. Firstly, it brings us back to the theoretical framework where we analysed de Haas' "capability-aspiration" model. As we see in the graph, migration "capability" and "aspiration" increase with the development whereas the migration "aspiration" decreases beyond a certain level of development. Nejra's comment is a very relevant demonstration of this model. She has achieved a certain level of development; she is capable to leave but she does not have the aspiration because she does not want to lose the collected capitals. In other words, she is "voluntarily immobile" (Schewel, 2019, p. 8) due to her low aspiration and high capability to move.

Given that the sample of the research is predominantly composed by the high-skilled returnees, the model is an applicable tool to explain the returnees' unwillingness regarding migration. Nonetheless, concerning the returnees who have relatively lower development degree, findings are

Figure 16: Evolution of migration aspirations and capabilities



Source: de Haas, 2010(a), p.17

contrary to de Haas' model. According to the model, below a certain level of development (see the left of the blue line), persons' aspirations to move increase proportional with the development. However,

participants who have the lowest development level hence the lowest capability (in comparison to the rest of the sample), have the highest aspiration to migrate. Thus, the capability-aspiration is inversely correlated (until the blue line), unlike the model. This inconsistency may be due to the lack of the sample's diversity. The sample is composed by the former migrants and none of them live under vulnerable circumstances. All the participants are above the minimum quality of life, whereas de Haas' model is prepared to include all types of individuals. Nevertheless, this inverse correlation between the capability and aspiration could be an evidence for Bourdieu's model (1986). Remembering that migration happens in direction to gain power and according to Bourdieu power means the possession of capitals and the ability to influence their value, we can say that the 7 returnees have intention to go away because they do not possess sufficient capital. Lack of capital and thus lack of capability hinders access to power. This issue urges them to emigrate in order to gain power. The other returnees have the power at home and therefore do not intend on leaving.

Secondly, it shows that lost capitals through the migration experience demotivates the idea of re-migration. Participants noticed that, them and their families lost family connections, economic and social assets, and sense of belonging while going away and they do not want to lose them again. In the first part of the *Results* chapter we analysed the impact of being ripped-away on the decision to return. The same reason is valid also for the aspirations to stay. Given that they always felt displaced abroad, they are discouraged to move away again. They managed to gain the sense of belonging back in Bosnia, and they do not want to waste it.

"You know what, when I started to work in this current job (job in Sarajevo), my boss introduced me to the other colleagues. When they asked where I am from, I said, I am from Australia but I have Bosnian background and then they said "ah no you are from Bosnia!". I really like that! But in Australia, they always ask where you are from, everyone is interested where you really come from. But here it is a nice feeling to say that I am from here, it is nice to see that I am accepted!" said Asja (27, journalist-writer), highlighting the importance of sense of belonging. Another returnee from the UK, emphasised the similar issue, while explaining his motivation to stay in Bosnia: *"English people would never consider you as British even though you are British for four generations. Thus, I can call myself only as London-Bosnian(laughing). I feel very at home here. Bosnians treat you as Bosnian, they joke about your language but still they treat you Bosnian"*. Treatment as local and acceptance were the key elements that they were missing in their life abroad and this made a direct impact on their return decision as well as to their unwillingness to the idea of migration.

Thirdly, we notice the importance of age in the re-migration aspirations. Nejra's *"(... and now, I am 38 and I am not ready to restart"* phrase is crucial to understand how the desires are dependent on the accumulated resources. Participants more than 30 years old had displayed lower motivation to go away comparing to the ones who are younger than 30. Investments in one place (material and non-material) discourage the change of residence. They did gather certain amount of cultural, economic and social capitals and they do not want to give up from them. Relation between the age and aspiration to migrate will be further examined in the next section.

Lastly, the impact of mobility trajectory on the re-migration idea is also a critical element to investigate. Nejra is the most integrated refugee among the all participants were in Germany. She is the only participant who remembers her asylum time with beautiful memories. Although these are positive memories, she still does not consider going away because of some characteristics of the host

country. None of the returnee from Germany (half of the sample) liked the lifestyle, thus do not have the motivation to live there again. Whereas the returnees coming from other countries such as Switzerland, Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, France appreciated the lifestyle; hence do not have negative overview regarding living abroad and consider doing it again.

Marital status or family composition is also a significant dimension for the mobility decisions. Most of the interviewees are single and want to stay in Bosnia because their parents live nearby, and they would like to be close and help them whenever they need. This desire is in fact the result of the displacement. Very few interviewees went all together with their family to the country of asylum. Mostly, there were always mother, father or a sibling who were left behind and this separation left wounds on the participants' lives. They do not want to be separated again. Nevertheless, even the ones who went abroad with whole family prefer to stay in Bosnia due their future familial plans: *"I am not planning to move away from here in the near future because I do not want that my (future) kids grow up in England. There, family and cultural values are very different and I do not want that they grow up with them. Also, quality of life is much better here for all of us."* said Luka (30, e-trader). It was interesting to see how much people plan their lives according to their future kids even when they are neither married nor have children.

All in all, the participants' voices helped us to reveal that age, marital status, socio-economic class, mobility trajectory (which country, with who) are the important components in determining returnees' capital package and hence their aspiration to move or stay. The next part is going to interrogate another important component, duration of stay at the host country, which is very influential on the returnees' decision to stay.

5.3.1.2) Long duration of stay abroad

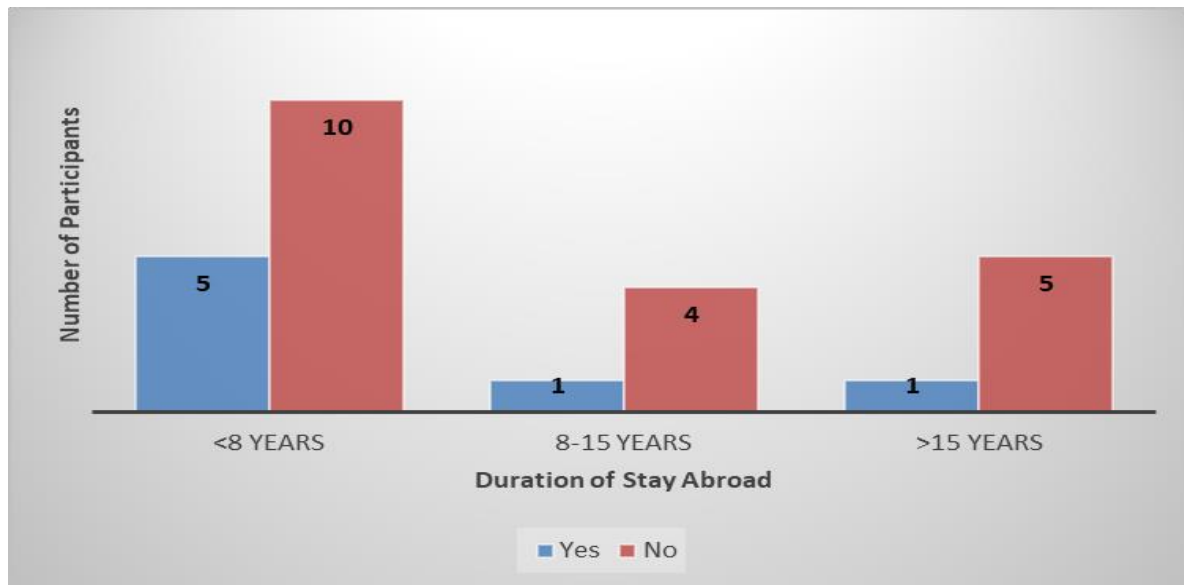
Duration of stay in the host country has indirect consequences on the re-migration aspirations. During the research, it was notable that motivation to stay in Bosnia is higher among the participants who had stayed abroad a relatively longer period. It is because the duration of stay in the host country/s influenced their re-integration capability and the latter effected the re-migration plans. This is also what Cassarino (2004) mentions; the migrants who come back early, without any preparation have a tougher re-establishment process, thus their re-migration is anticipated. Whereas, the ones who stayed longer, late returnees, they had time to plan their return. Almost all of them hold double citizenship, which allowed them to make multiple back and forth movements and collect information about the country of origin. Thus, they were better prepared, leading to smoother re-integration phase.

Furthermore, the longer they stayed abroad, they fantasized *home* more. This might be because they spent more time abroad as displaced person and it provoked more research for *home*. They applied multiple strategies to feel like at home; they moved to cosmopolite towns, they obtained the host country's citizenship, they oriented their studies according to the needs of the country. Nonetheless, even though they applied all the tools to be fully accepted, they still felt like a second-class citizen and felt less powerful in comparison to the locals. While conducting regular visits to Bosna, they noticed the changes in power relations. They discovered their capabilities in Bosnia, and they learnt more about their home country. These movements provided them a comparison between both countries, enabling them to make the right calculations before taking the decision to return.

Hence, it was a conscious return and is therefore more stable. This is the reason why they are more motivated to stay in Bosnia because they accumulated more reasons to be attached to Bosnia.

The graph below illustrates the relation between the duration of stay and intention to re-migrate. The first group represents the refugees who came back to Bosnia during or right after the war. The second one is the ones who stayed relatively longer, up to 15 years. The third one demonstrates the very late returnees.

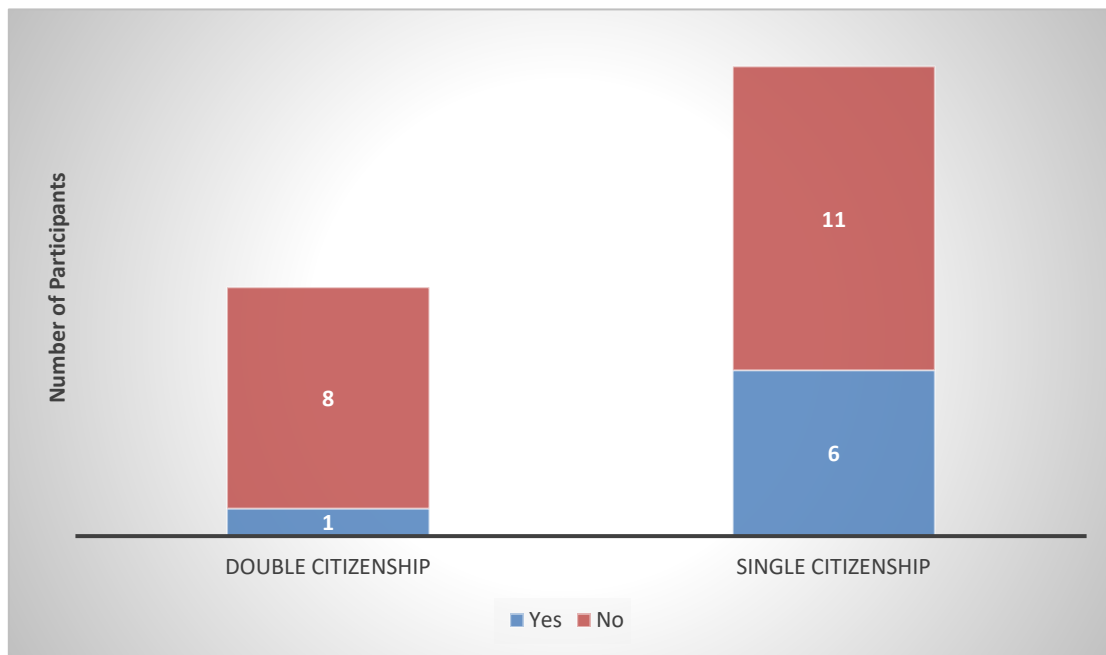
Figure 17: The participants' intention to migrate according to the duration of their stay abroad



In the first group, 5 returnees out of 15 consider emigrating to another country, whereas in the second group there is only 1 returnee out of 5. In the last group where we see the late returnees, the rate is even lower, only 1 returnee out of 6 imagine moving away. Due to the limited number of the sample as well as the type of the applied research method, we cannot make general assumptions out of this graph. However, it helps us to see the inverse proportionality between the duration of stay and the re-migration aspirations.

Late returnees' lower aspiration to migrate could also be explained with their transnational legal identity capital. Certainly, removal of legal borders between both states gives security and comfort to the migrants because they know they can leave anytime they need. This flexibility might have decreased the migration aspirations, which brings us to the capability-aspiration model, where we saw that the more capable have less aspiration to migrate. The figure 18 illustrates the relation between migration aspiration and transnational legal identity.

Figure 18: The participants' intention to migrate according to their type of citizenship



Among the participants holding double citizenship, 8 out of 9 want to stay in Bosnia whereas the participants who have only Bosnian citizenship, their motivation to stay is relatively lower: 11 returnees out of 17 want to stay in Bosnia. This finding could turn out another discussion within the popular idea that close borders lead to less emigration. The results show that the participants who possess transnational legal identity capital, which allows cross border movements without restriction, have the lowest motivation to migrate.

In sum, the voices of the field demonstrate that the majority of participants in fact do not consider to re-migrate again unless there are major political or economic crises. This is due to the sample's high-skilled background, thus the high capability. It is also a result of the previous migration causing lost capitals. Having experienced the outside world created more cautiousness in the re-migration decision-making. Abroad is not a "paradise land" anymore. One of the participants quoted one verse of a very famous Bosnian poet, (used at the cover page of this paper) to reason her unwillingness: *"The sun of someone else's sky will not warm you like you this one"*. It summarises why many returnees keep the idea of migration at bay.

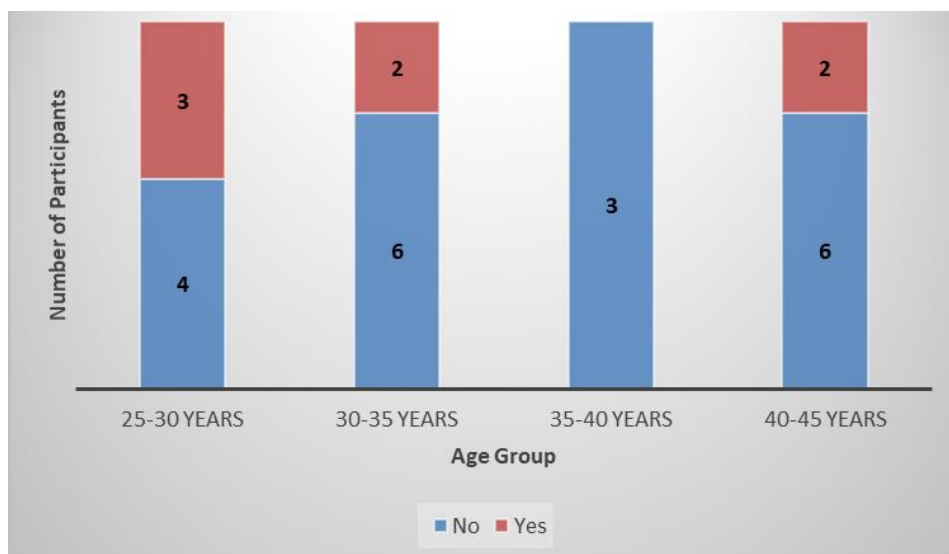
5.3.2) Reasons for Leaving

As it was mentioned before, only 7 participants out of 24 consider re-migrating in the foreseeable future. This section interrogates the reasons of their migration intention under three major themes: economic-career reasons, familial-personal reasons and political-institutional reasons.

Economic reasons are the most significant in urging Bosnians to leave. Kenan and Necip brothers, returnees from Germany (27 and 24 years old, waitress and logistic worker) are planning to re-migrate to their previous host-country. The older brother already arranged the papers and will emigrate soon with his wife and son. He has been preparing for this journey for a long time. He went to the German language classes to remember his language skills. He also went to a medical school thinking that it would be a good asset one day given that Germany lacks healthcare professionals. His brother in law lives in Germany and he provided the biggest support during this time of preparation. This support in fact proves the migration network theory which states that the networks in the country of destination increases the probability of migratory flows from the home country (de Haas, 2010c; Delechat, 2001, p. 458; Massey et al., 1993, p. 1590). If he had not had the acquaintance in Germany, he would not have been informed about the employment opportunities and it would have been a more difficult and risky migration. These acquaintances facilitated the process, but the aspiration to move away comes from the economic difficulties that he has been experiencing for long time. He applied multiple strategies to improve his life quality, but he ultimately he saw no other option than moving to Germany. However, the younger brother, for now, still wants to try his chance in Bosnia and if he does not succeed, then, he would also go to Germany with his family. It is critical to notice that even though they have serious economic difficulties, they still act cautiously regarding emigration.

Furthermore, most returnees who are planning to re-migrate are below 30 years old. Due to their young age, they take the migration decision easier. Given that they have relatively less investments and less to lose in life, they can be more courageous. As it can be seen in the table below, the youngest age group has the most number of participants who intend to migrate; almost half of the group. Older age groups have relatively less participants who consider going away: only one fourth of the participants in the 30-35 and 40-45 age group are planning to go away, whereas in the 35-40 age group there is nobody, probably also because of its smaller size.

Figure 19: The participants' intention to migrate by age group



Besides the economic and age factor, familial reasons are also very crucial in migration decision making. In the previous chapter we saw that some participants do not want to leave because they do not want to be far away from their parents, and also because they do not want to raise their children there. However, for most of the participants, having children is a reason to leave rather than to stay. They consider moving away from Bosnia when their (future) kids come to the school age. They experienced the both education system and they want to give the same opportunities to their children. *“But once I have family, the situation will be different. Financial security will become important, the education of the kids will become important and I can’t really see how it could be here. Even now I don’t feel safe, once I have a family it will be even more difficult. I don’t trust the system here.”* said Merjem (34, economist), returnee from the USA.

In particular, the late returnees reported that their family stayed longer abroad in order to give them better opportunities. They benefited from this and hope to give the same opportunities to their children as well. This illustrates the "household approach" in migration theories (Castles et al., 2014, p. 39). Migration is envisaged in order to give a better future to children in means of education, employment, human capital, and social security. In general, almost all the respondents who are planning to leave have children. There is only one exception, who does not have any children but still wants to leave as she requires more money to take care of her parents.

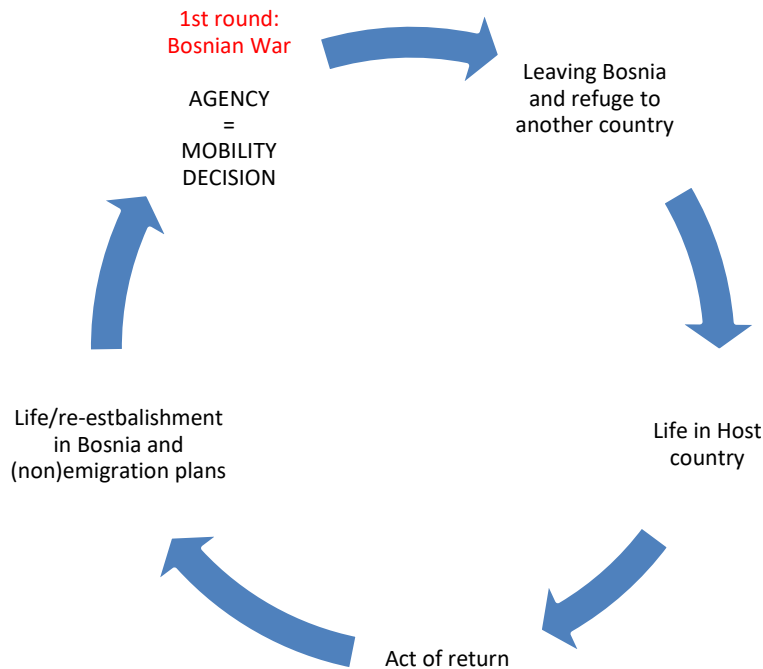
Nonetheless, all of these factors are interconnected. Some plan to leave to earn more money, in order to support their parents but also because they do not feel a sense of belonging in Bosnia. They do not feel at home. *“When you see that nothing has changed in the last 25 years, you don’t have any hope anymore. There is no future and the nationalism gives you fear. All the time there is tension and no progress”* said Edid (45, economist) while explaining his son’s recent emigration decision from Bosnia.

This quote in fact points out the third major reason of migration aspirations: institutional and political factors. Many participants reported that the country is even worse than post-conflict period. Ethnic tensions are still present, and the politics do not give any hope of change. Additionally, participants also complained that they do not feel safe because of the lack of juridical and medical security. If something serious happens to them, they do not have any system that they can rely on. Hence, they consider going back to their host countries where they experienced the security in many manners.

All in all, it is true that remigration idea occurs from the combination of many factors. Better life standards, better life for children, rule of law for everybody, medical and financial security or personal reasons... Comparing between both places and witnessing the key differences can motivate but also demotivate migration. According to Lee (1966), migration decision is determined by the calculation of the minuses and the pluses. The return and the desire/unwillingness to re-migrate are the result of these calculations. Migrants reflect on the positive and negative sides of their migration experiences as well as their current life conditions. According to the weight of minuses and pluses, they *decide to leave or stay*, which shows the role of agency in decision-making. So, the migration experience could be the cause of both plans to leave and stay. Regarding every individual’s asylum period and the re-establishment process differing from each other (various personal factors and mobility trajectory), their (non)migration aspirations and decisions also vary. This finding demonstrates that all the results chapters are the causes and consequences of each other. The figure 20 is the

illustration of this interconnectedness, which could help us to understand Bosnians' migration cycle through a more holistic view.

Figure 20: Bosnian migrants' mobility cycle



This scheme displays the whole migration cycle of the Bosnian refugees. In the first round, they decided to leave their country because of the conflict. But they had still capacity to decide to leave or not.¹⁹ They could have also stayed, as some of the family members stayed, but calculations were made and they chose to leave. On return the same calculations were also made. Even the ones who were repatriated by the host state, they still had certain agency; they could have stayed if they desperately wanted. The same approach is valid also for the post-arrival period and their re-migration aspirations. Returnees, according to the calculation of minuses and pluses, decided to leave or stay in Bosnia. These calculations are one-of-a-kind because they are created by the migrants' new forms of migration-specific cultural capital. To conclude, referring to Bourdieu's battlefield, all the migration decisions are the outcomes of the clash between structure and agency, and therefore they are all unique compositions which makes it difficult to develop an encompassing explanation of the process.

¹⁹ This case might not be possible under some extreme conditions. For instance, when the person's place of residence is completely destroyed by the adversary forces and the place is just located by the border to another country; person goes to another country because she/he doesn't have any other option. Thus, there is not much calculation, person goes away just simply to survive. However, we can also discuss this case because it still has certain amount of agency in his/her refuging act. The person could have decided to stay in the home country. This is why, individual does calculation regardless of the situation. She/he checks the options (fighting, hiding or going away) and decides which one is the most suitable to her/him. Possessing agency in extreme situations is a subject of debate but the sample of this research showed that even the participant who had been through very difficult moments, they still had agency to decide the best option for them.

6) CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine Bosnian refugees' return, their post-return livelihoods and re-migration aspirations in order to draw attention to the fact that the migrant 'problem' does not end once they return to their country of origin (Castles & Van Hear, 2005, p. 52). The "problem" is condemned to recur if the reasons of migration are not well understood. Throughout the paper, it is demonstrated that Bosnians' decision to go abroad (both times) and their return are strongly linked to their desire to improve their livelihood²⁰. They first fled from the country because there was a war and they wanted to go to somewhere where they could have access to their basic human rights. In other words, due to the incapability to reach certain resources in the home country, they took the decision to emigrate. Nevertheless, within time, their livelihood abroad started to be constrained by structural, political, economic and personal factors. These factors brought discomfort and hence encouraged them to migrate (return) in order to improve their livelihood. For the re-migration plans, likewise, the returnees who face difficulties, so called *incapability to reach certain resources*, consider leaving whereas others wish to remain. Thus, migration takes the form of a tool to improve their livelihood. However, it is also the cause of poor (material and non-material) livelihood conditions. During the study, we observed that migration caused a loss of certain capitals, inciting individuals to migrate (return or emigrate again) in order to better the life conditions. Hence migration acts as a double-edged sword; a cause and consequence of the lost capitals. Individuals thus try to use migration to repair the cost of previous migration, demonstrating the never-ending circle.

The findings from this research make several contributions to the current literature. Firstly, psycho-historical trauma is the only common reason of the Bosnian refugees' return decision, which has not yet been included in the return migration models. Forced displacement is the shared characteristics of these refugees and therefore forms the common reason for return. *Being displaced* among all the participants created lack of capitals and hence *power*, which urged them to return in order to regain it. Psycho-historical dimension is critical, because it humanises the subject of migration (Carling & Collins, 2018, p. 913), and brings it beyond mainstream explanations. None of the other factors are common among the returnees, proving the subjectivity of the return decision and the further migration decisions. Migrants' behaviours are neither predetermined by the location nor by the mode of arrival. Age, marital status, mobility trajectory (duration of stay, with whom migrated), level of transnationality shape the capital package of the persons, which makes their experiences and consequently aspirations very different from each other.

Secondly, return home was not evident for Bosnian refugees; many of them became IDP after the repatriation. *No return home* added extra challenges to the returnees' re-establishment process, because it influenced dramatically their capability to access resources. They had to build their livelihood in a new place with new people who did not welcome them as they expected. Abroad was not a 'bed of roses', nor was it *home*, causing them to remain in limbo.

²⁰ A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social sources) and activities required for a means of living (Chambers & Conway, 1991).

Thirdly, the findings about re-migration aspirations sheds new light on the causes of migration. At first, in contrast to earlier findings, it has modified the capability-aspiration model, showing that the least capable participants have the greatest migration intentions. In the second place, the study demonstrated the importance of the lost capitals through migration, in contrast to the literature's optimist perspective indicating that migration brings benefits.

To conclude, this research has highlighted multiple questions in need of further investigation. Firstly, the migration aspirations should be interrogated also among those who stayed, to have a comparative overview on how the migration background influences the idea of emigration. Secondly, considering Bosnia is currently hosting many refugees who are trying to proceed to Western Europe, it is worth investigating how the refugee background effects Bosnian people's attitudes towards these people.

*Ostajte ovdje!...Sunce tuđeg neba,
Neće vas grijat ko što ovo grije;
Grki su tamo zalogaji hljeba
Gdje svoga nema i gdje brata nije.*

Aleksa ŠANTIĆ (1896)

Stay here!... **The sun of someone else`s sky,**
Will never warm you like this one;
The bread has a bitter taste there
Where one has no one, where there is no brother.

6.1) Recommendations to Future Repatriations

Figure 21: "Europe: We are the one with whom you should talk with"

People of Bosnia sending message to the European Union and other international actors that they should be talking to the civil society, rather than the politicians.



Source: Launey, 2014

The poster above is originally prepared for a different purpose yet its content corresponds with the aim of this section. Drawing from interviews with the former Bosnian refugees and various institutions which took part in repatriation, numerous recommendations can be made. This can improve the assistance extended to returnees by institutions involved in both return and reintegration programmes.

a-Individual empowerment initiatives: Failure of Self-sustaining and Micro-loan projects²¹:

In place of providing direct aid to the returnees, supplying tools which could create employment was also a popular solution 25 years ago. However, representatives of multiple NGOs reported that individual empowerment initiatives failed, an important note for the IOM which runs similar projects under the *Assisted Voluntary Program*.

Self-sustaining projects forced returnees to take loans in order to run their newly opened businesses because offered tools were not only the dimension keeping the business alive. These loans had high interest rates and caused more vulnerable situations among the returnees. Furthermore, these projects consider all the returnees as entrepreneurs, yet these require certain skills. However, the neoliberal approach of encouraging refugees to build businesses fails to offer a sustainable solution. Everyone establishing their business creates vast supply rather than demand. High cost of individual production increases the product prices, decreasing the purchasing power of the locals and consequently the selling power of the business owners. Also, it should be kept in mind that in the post-

²¹ This recommendation is given for the cases when the returnees do not come back with any savings and when they are totally dependent on the aids of the (inter)national organisations.

war areas where everything is destroyed, urgency is with mass production rather than small individual initiatives. Employing these people in factories could bring more success and welfare in the long run.

b-Housing:

Another regret which was mentioned by the institutions is the post-war housing units. Houses were constructed without façade to offer a temporary solution. These types of housing were the quickest and cheapest way of respond to high demands. However, these temporary solutions become permanent and they end up harming both the household budget and the environment, given that people burn wood for heating and these houses consume much more energy.

c-Sharing Information:

The ministry reported that international actors did not sufficiently include local authorities in the post-war reconstruction. It cost them high amounts of money and energy to gather the same information after they left the country. Transformation of responsibilities should be done during the process not after the international actors left. Domestic government and the relevant ministries should be included in information and advice.

d-Immediate repatriation²²:

During the literature review and the interviews with the returnees, I have been questioning the Bosnian state's immediate readmission agreements with the host countries for the repatriation of its citizens. From my point of view, it is not logical to call one million people back home, where the state already had difficulties offering employment to the stayees. Nonetheless, the interview with the ministry offered a very holistic view regarding the sense of repatriation.

First, for the reconstruction of the country, the state needed labour. The refugees were expected to take part in this because stayees would not have worked for the reconstruction of others' houses. Secondly, from the statist perspective, calling the refugees back means a larger population, which means power; despite it being a burden in the beginning. Bosnia lost large proportion of its populations in the war and those still alive, fled. It was also important for fertility because the people who lost their lives mostly comprised of the younger generation. Given that the state's existence comes through its population, it was dependent on citizens who were living outside. Thirdly, they reported that the highest levels of return could be seen right after the peace establishment since refugees are eager to go back to their places of origins to gather with those left behind. Moreover, the least amount of spent time abroad equates to lower integration in the host country, creating more motivation to return.

d- Diaspora ministry:

Few NGOs as well as returnees emphasised the importance of having a ministry for the citizens living outside of home country. In case of mass refugee flows, where almost half of the population fled, it is important to have a ministry of diaspora to give the message that the state does care of them. In that way, the state has a proper source to inform the ex-refugees about opportunities in the home country, which could pave the way of returns.

²² The statements above represent state's point of view. However, the interviews with the returnees displayed that immediate return was not sustainable because it caused more re-establishment problems and subsequently more emigration intentions, comparing to the late returnees.

e- Reconnection of the disputed areas:

The means of transportation plays a big role in the reconciliation of the post ethnic conflict areas. Roads, besides providing the physical connection, help to have mental connections and reduce nationalistic feelings. They can help economic activities, cooperation and knowledge transfer. European Union is indeed a good example of how economic exchanges can bring disputed nations together again.

In sum, all the institutions underlined the necessity of building long-term solutions. Bosnia's current blockages on the way of development are the consequences of the temporary solutions which were introduced after the conflict. For instance, Dayton Peace Agreement was prepared as a temporary solution just to end the war, but it became permanent and is a main reason behind contemporary political problems. Or, the *Annexe 7* provided repossession rights to the refugees to encourage the return, but the returns were not sustainable because the agreement did not ensure safety and human dignity. Likewise, *two schools under one roof*²³ project was introduced by the OSCE as a temporary solution to encourage the return, but it became permanent and aggravated the ethnic divisions.

It should be kept in mind that the biggest opportunities come after the war when the populace is weary of the conflict. Thus, all the necessary elements for re-constructing the country as well as the society should take part in the agreements and in the projects. Offered solutions should be reflected deeply through a long-term lens, even though it can cost greater amounts of money and energy.

²³ In the Federation, Croat and Bosniak pupils are taught separately in the 'two schools under one roof' system in more than 50 locations (Lippman, 2015, p. 31). In most cases, Bosniak and Croat pupils enter through different doors, use different stairways and go to schools at different shifts; one ethnicity goes in the morning and the other one in the afternoon. Besides the physical separation, educational system is also separate, deepening the ethnic divisions. History of the country is taught differently in the curriculums which encourages them to identify themselves as members of their ethnicity.

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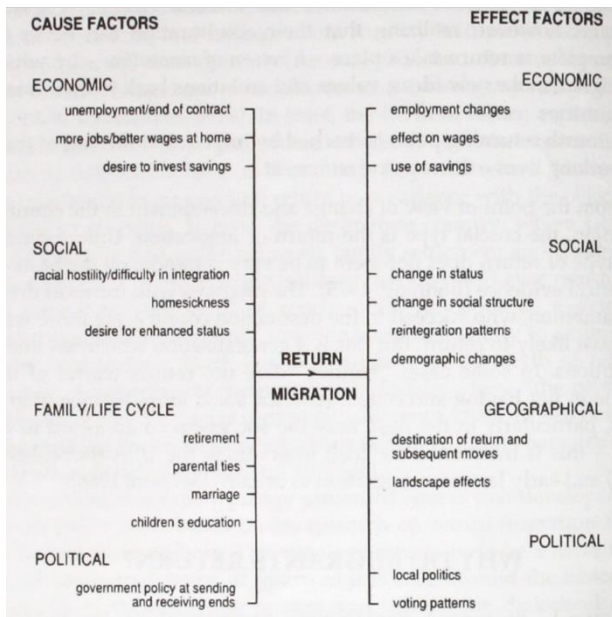
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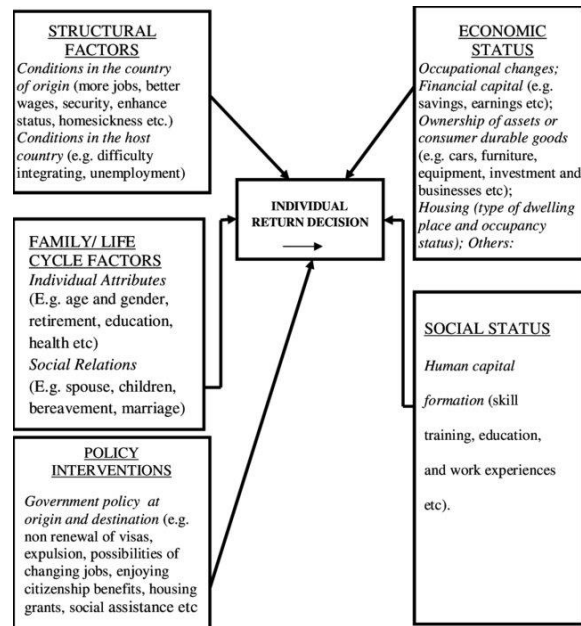
ANNEXE

1- Return Migration Models:

1a) King, 2000



1b) Yendaw et al, 2013



2- Bosnia and Herzegovina's governmental system and its impacts:

Country's governmental system is a result of the peace agreement in 1995. It is within the two political entities, Federation and Republika Srpska, which both are controlled by a central government. The latter is led by a rotating presidency between three presidents (one of each ethno-national group; Bosniak, Croat, Serb). Every eight months, the presidency changes from one ethnicity to another and additionally there are 14 prime ministers across the Federation and Republika Srpska (Launey, 2014). This decentralised system emerged considerable independence among the individual levels and thus caused lack of coordination across the entities. The highly decentralized governmental system creates considerable freedom among the individual levels which hinders the well-distribution of responsibilities. Lack of coordination causes accountability problems by the whole of the political representatives; main obstacles of the country's political, economic and social progress. One could say that, Dayton Peace Agreement, while ending the war, created social, political and economic chaos; failing extensively to satisfy the need for justice for Bosnian citizens (Porobic Isakovic, 2018; True et al., 2017).

3- Table overview* of the institutional and legal frameworks in the 12 different host countries during the Bosnian refugee crisis:

HOST COUNTRIES	TYPE OF RESIDENCY	ACCESS TO LABOUR MARKET AND EDUCATION	INTEGRATION MEASURES	FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Germany	Temporary residency. Forced repatriation once the Bosnian war ended	Limited: refugees last in priority system; unlimited only after four years of employment or one year of training.	No or very limited access, due to their special status.	Social assistance like natives.
Denmark	Short-term temporary protection (six months, renewable) initially; converted into permanent asylum for most refugees throughout 1995	Very limited: no initial labour market access, then subject to priority system. Full access only with asylum status granted in 1995; children exempt from regular school system until June 1994	Very few initially; integration measures only introduced in 1995.	Only provisional accommodation in refugee camps initially; access to social assistance only from 1995
The Netherlands	Initially temporary but most Bosnians received refugee status and thus permanent residency as early as 1993.	Little to no access to labour markets while asylum procedure ongoing. Full access to labour markets and education granted once refugee status was obtained.	Very few initially, with participation in language and integration courses on a voluntary basis first	Provisional accommodation initially; 445 Dutch Guilders monthly from social services; after 1993, full access to social security benefits
The USA	Refugee status was granted already when the Bosnians were outside of the USA: Arrival through The American Resettlement Programme. After 5 years of residency, they had the right to apply for citizenship.	Immediate access to the job market and to public assistance	Language classes were not provided, and integration remained very low	A lump sum of \$740, as a single payment, was allocated per refugee to the resettlement agency.
Turkey	Right to access to the refugee status, but very low information and access to refugee rights remained very low.	No legal access to labour market. Right to work could have been obtained once the refugee status was granted but most of the Bosnians were not in the process. Many Bosnians were not informed that the children can have access to education.	Language classes were not provided. However, integration remained very high despite the very poor economic and social rights. Bosnia and Turkey's common past was a big factor for their social inclusion to the society.	No direct financial assistance. Health services were provided free of charge, but Bosnians did not get any support for living.
Australia	Initially permanent residence, two years later access to citizenship	Legal access to labour market and education	Despite the fact that Bosnian refugees were Australia's "preferred humanitarian immigrants" (Colic-Peisker, 2006), the integration remained very low.	Cash assistance provided until the employment

France	Initially temporary protection, later right to access to permanent residence permit. No forced repatriation, return visits could be made without jeopardising their status	Legal access to labour market but access was framed with certain conditions. Immediate access to education	Language classes were provided.	Cash assistance 2000 Francs per month and easy access to the health services
Belgium	Initially temporary but later in 1998 Belgium provided permanent residency for the ones who want to stay and integrate.	Immediate access to the labour market and education	Language classes were provided.	Cash assistance provided during the asylum and for the return. 2.700 US dollar was paid for each Bosnian who wished to return.
Spain	Temporary residency and repatriation after the war	Immediate access to education and access to labour market took time.	Even though integration measures were low, relation between host community and Bosnian refugees were sincere	Financial support through the NGOs while in asylum
Switzerland	Temporary residency and forced repatriation after the war.	Limited access to labour market	Low integration measures	Cash assistance during the asylum. Re-integration programme included 4,000 Swiss Francs offered to each adult Bosnian refugee
Malaysia	Temporary residency was transformed to permanent residency. No forced repatriation	Immediate access to labour market and education	Even though integration measures were low, relations between host community and Bosnian refugees were sincere	Financial support was provided in the beginning. For the return, there was no re-integration support
The United Kingdom	Initially temporary protection and later permanent residency and access to citizenship. No forced repatriation, return visits could be made without jeopardising their status	Immediate access to labour market and education	Low integration measures	Cash assistance provided until the employment.
Montenegro²⁴/Yugoslavia				

* Table is prepared by the author based on primary and secondary sources

(Albert, 1996; Barslund et al., 2017; Brachet, 1997; Colic-Peisker, 2003, 2005; Colic-Peisker & Walker, 2003; Iseni, Ruedin, Bader, & Efionayi-Mäder, 2014; Kelly & Joly, 1999; Plein Droit, 1993; United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, 1998)

²⁴ Montenegro was still part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia at that time. The lack of a federal refugee structure drove the refugees hosted by acquaintances of local municipalities. Thus, official information about the the refugees' status and rights could not be provided.

4- Individual characteristics and migration history of respondents*:

Name	Sex	Age Group	Marital Status	Education Level	Occupation	Place of Origin	Country of Asylum	Duration of Stay Abroad	Double Citizenship	Type of Return	Intention to Migrate
Kenan	Male	25-30	Married	High School	Waitress	Sarajevo (BH)	Germany	<8 years	No	Involuntary	Yes
Necip	Male	25-30	Married	High School	Logistics Worker	Sarajevo (BH)	Germany	<8 years	No	Involuntary	Yes
Azra	Female	25-30	Married	Master	Translator (state agency)	Sarajevo (BH)	Germany	<8 years	No	Involuntary	No
Asja	Female	25-30	Single	Master	Journalist	Bihac (BH)	Denmark+Australia	>15 years	Yes	Voluntary	No
Ilma	Female	25-30	Single	Bachelor	Project Manager (Austrian organisation)	Caplijina(BH)	Germany	<8 years	No	Voluntary	Yes
Ajla	Female	25-30	Single	Bachelor	Doctor	Sarajevo (BH)	Monte Negro	<8 years	No	Voluntary	No
Luka	Male	25-30	Single	Bachelor	E-commerce	Sanica(BH)	UK	>15 years	Yes	Voluntary	No
Mirela	Female	30-35	Single	Master	Financial Manager (German organisation)	Sarajevo (BH)	Spain+Switzerland	<8 years	No	Involuntary	No
Lamija	Female	30-35	Single	Master	Journal Editor	Sarajevo (BH)	France	<8 years	Yes	Voluntary	Yes
Sumeja	Female	30-35	Single	Bachelor	Psychologist	Sarajevo (BH)	Germany	<8 years	No	Voluntary	No
Merjem	Female	30-35	Single	Bachelor	Economist/Banker	Bijelina (RS)	Germany + USA	>15 years	Yes	Voluntary	No
Esmā	Female	30-35	Single	Master+PHD	Lecturer-PHD Candidate-Official translator	Fojnica (BH)	Netherlands	<8 years	No	Voluntary	No
Ajlin	Female	30-35	Married	Master	Doctor	Tuzla (BH)	Spain	<8 years	No	Voluntary	No
Iman	Female	30-35	Married	High School	Dentist Technician	Mostar(BH)	Turkey	>15 years	No	Voluntary	Yes
Vedad	Male	30-35	Single	Bachelor	IT (US-American company)	Rotilja(BH)	USA	>15 years	Yes	Voluntary	No
Nejra	Female	35-40	Single	Master+PHD	Lecturer-PHD Candidate	Visoko (BH)	Germany	<8 years	No	Voluntary	No
Anisa	Female	35-40	Married	Bachelor	State worker - adminsitration	Foca(RS)	Germany	<8 years	No	Voluntary	No
Mahir	Male	35-40	Single	Master	Investmet consultant for diaspora	Prijedor (RS)	Netherlands	>15 years	Yes	Voluntary	No
Amina	Female	40-45	Single	Master+PHD	Real estate consultant-PHD candidate-lawyer	Mostar(BH)	Germany	<8 years	No	Involuntary	No
Harun	Male	40-45	Married	High School	Trade	Sarajevo (BH)	Turkey+Germany	<8 years	No	Involuntary	No
Hilmi	Male	40-45	Single	Master	Social Worker/EU consultant	Orasje(BH)	Denmark + Belgium	8-15 years	Yes	Voluntary	No
Merdina	Female	40-45	Single	High School	Hairdresser	Sarajevo (BH)	Macedonia+Turkey	<8 years	No	Voluntary	Yes
Faris	Male	40-45	Married	Bachelor	Economist/energy consultant	Kozarac(RS)	Malaysia	8-15 years	No	Voluntary	Yes
Edid	Male	40-45	Married	Master	Economist/Civil servant in ministry	Brcko (BR)	Turkey +Germany+ Australia	8-15 years	Yes	Voluntary	No
Hamza	Male	40-45	Single	Bachelor	Sport teacher	Doboj(BH)	USA	8-15 years	Yes	Voluntary	No
Emin	Male	40-45	Married	Master	IT (US-American company)	Sarajevo (BH)	USA	8-15 years	Yes	Voluntary	No

*Names of individuals cited in this research have been changed to respect the confidentiality and anonymity of participants.

5- Interview Guide and Consent Form

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction:

Hello, I am Özge, a master student at the University of Utrecht (Netherlands) and I came to Sarajevo in order to conduct research for my master's thesis.

My research topic relates to the experiences of repatriated Bosnians after their return and, especially question to what extent these experiences are linked to their "change" in the host country. Everything you will tell me will be used only for this research and your name will not be shared with anybody else. You have already consented to the interview with the form but the participation in this interview can be stopped at any moment if you do not want to continue. Also, if you do not mind, I am going to record our interview so that I do not need to take notes while listening to you. There is no right or wrong answers, I only want to hear your opinions. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Background Information:

- Age:
- Marital Status:
- Number of household members and their relations
- Owner or Renter?
- Level of Education (also of the other core family members)
- Occupation/Profession (also of the other core family members)
- Ethnicity
- Nationality (in case they are multiple, what are they?)
- Knowledge of other languages
- Place of origin
- Place of residence (also of the other core family members)

Opening Question:

-How long have you been living here?

Probe: Residential pattern (Where lived before and for how long?)

Key questions:

Questions about Asylum:

-Before the conflict, where were you living?

-When did you leave from there?

-How did you take the decision to go away?

Probe: Who were the decision makers? With who did you go away, and who were the ones left behind?

-Which place did you go to and how was the journey to there?

Probe: Why did you choose that destination and what kind of difficulties did you face on the way? Stressful or easy? How long did it take?

-How was your life like there?

Probe: What kind of protection did you get there? What was your occupation there and was it different than what you used to do before leaving? What kind of activities that you were doing (economical, political, sportive, humanitarian, social, etc)? Which town were you living? With who were you living with?

-How was your relationship with locals?

Probe: Was it difficult to adapt to the society and the language? Did you like your stay or did you always want to go back?

-How was your relationship with BiH and the left behinds?

Probe: How often were you getting informed about BiH?

Questions about Repatriation:

-When did you return to Bosnia and why?

Probe: Voluntary/involuntary? If it was involuntary, how much time was given to you before the repatriation? If it was voluntary, what were conditions in BiH which convinced you to come back?

-Did you live somewhere else before coming back to Bosnia?

Probe: If yes, what was the reason?

-Did you receive any kind of assistance from the host country/ home country/ an international organisation / non-governmental organisation while your return? If yes, can you please tell the time (before, while or after the return) and specify their nature?

Probe: Type of assistance: Information, cash, material, housing, food, medical, etc.

-What is your opinion about this assistance? What could have been done better?

Probe: What were the good and bad parts of these supports? Were you ever contacted by MHRR?

- When you were returning, were you alone or with people?

Probe: Who assisted you for your return?

-Which transport did you come back with? Was it difficult or easy?

-Where did you return to?

Probe: To the place of origin? If not, why couldn't you return to there and where did you go instead? Did you know any people in the new place?

#According to the rights of returned refugees, they have the right to repossess their property which was taken away during the war and, if it does not exist anymore, they can get a compensation. This law lasted for the first 6 years after its implementation. Was the person concerned and if yes, how was it practiced?

Questions about re-establishment:

-How was your relationship with the ones who stayed behind/stayees? Did you get any problem with them?

Probe: Did you experience any kind of discrimination or tension after your re-installment? Could be based on gender, ethnicity, decision to go away, etc.

-What was the main difference comparing to the host country and what was the main difficulty for you in the adaptation process?

Probe: language, friendship, exclusion because of being a returnee, etc.

-How was the attitude of the teacher to the other ethnicities? Were you talking about the war in the class?

-How do you think that different school systems influence your thoughts about education? What do you think about the educational system here?

-Do you find yourself different from the stayees?

Probe: High-skilled/low skilled, wealthy/poor, social changer?

-What kind of skills did you acquire in the host country and to what extent they influenced your life here?

Probe: For your career development, reintegration process, etc.

-Do you think that you are transmitting these skills, to the other Bosnians? If yes, how and which purpose?

-Do you ever feel like you should serve to this country?

-What did you need most after the return?

Probe: appropriate healthcare, school, job, housing

-What kind of job did you need most/ what kind of job would you have liked to work after you came back? Any Job related to your host country?

-What kind of economic activities were you involved in after your return and to what extent they were connected to your migration experience?

Probe: How did you get to them? Through your contacts or the assistance of any third party? Any side jobs?

- How often do you work and are you happy/satisfied with the job that you are doing now? Do you ever feel like you are over skilled for this job?

Probe: Why are you not satisfied, what would you prefer?

-What kind of other activities were you involved in after you were re-installed?

Probe: Social, artistic, humanitarian, sportive etc.

-What were the main obstacles for you while trying to restart your life in the new location?

Probe: Finding a job, reintegration, discrimination, alienation, ethnic issues, government, etc.

-How much interest do you have for the politics? Do you feel more politicized/depoliticized here?

- Why do you live in Sarajevo? Social, economic, ethnical reasons? How does it differ from the other towns? Do you think that here is the only place which could answer to your expectations?

- Do you feel at home? Do you feel like you belong to this society?

Probe: Do you feel safe?

-What is your priority or must to live in one place?

Probe: What are the things that do (not) satisfy you? Problems with the neighbours, authorities, family, job, etc.

-Can you imagine living in a place where you fall into minority in BiH if there is a good job opportunity?

-Would you have preferred to live in the place where you lived before the war? Why?

-In your opinion what is the main problem in BiH?

-Would you have liked to live in Yugoslavia? Do you prefer Yugoslavia over Bosnia?

Probe: Would you have preferred your pre-war home/life over the actual one?

-Did you ever go to your previous host country after the return? If yes, how often and for what purpose?

-If you could, would you have like to go back to your host country?

-Do you still have a connection with your host country? If yes, with who and why and how do you keep your relationships alive with them?

-How did your migration experience influence your re-establishment process?

Probe: Social, personal, political, economic, etc.

Closing questions:

-If you could live wherever you wanted, where would it be?

Probe: For you but also for your (future) kids what is the best place to live?

- Do you imagine moving away from here? Why (push and pull factors) and how?

Probe: Did you take any action for re-emigration? Permanently or temporarily? Under what conditions do you think that you will leave?

-What are your further plans / What is your dream for future?

-Would you like to add anything else?

CONSENT FORM

Participant no/initials:

Date:

Thank you for reading the information sheet about the interview. If you are happy to participate then please complete and sign the form below. Please initial the boxes below to confirm that you agree with each statement:

*Please
Initial box:*

I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials and will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.

I agree for this interview to be tape-recorded. I understand that the audio recording made of this interview will be used only for analysis and that extracts from the interview, from which I would not be personally identified, may be used in any conference presentation, report or journal article developed as a result of the research. I understand that no other use will be made of the recording without my written permission, and that no one outside the research team will be allowed access to the original recording.

I agree that my anonymised data will be kept for future research purposes such as publications related to this study after the completion of the study.

I agree to take part in this interview.

Name of participant Date Signature

Principal Investigator Date Signature