

**“Everybody will tell you we are in charge, but we are not”**  
**A Process-Mechanisms Analysis of Migration Management and EU Border Externalisation in Bosnia & Herzegovina, 2017-2022**

Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration **AVRR**

# WANT TO GO HOME?

Are you a migrant who needs to return **HOME** but lacks the means to do so?

## IOM AVRR can help you!

- INFORMATION** about return
- TRAVEL** document and airplane tickets
- MEDICAL HELP** and escort if needed
- SUPPORT** before, during and after travel
- ASSISTANCE** after your return home

**Contact:**  
IOM AVRR staff  
in orange jackets

FREE APP  
SUPPORT FOR MIGRANTS  
supportformigrants.com

**Albania:** +355 69 209 0152  
**Bosnia and Herzegovina:** +387 61 964 575  
**Montenegro:** +382 68 806 907  
**Kosovo\*:** +383 38 600 521  
**North Macedonia:** +389 70 393147  
**Serbia:** +381 63 624 016

The IOM AVRR staff consists of experts and staff members from the governments of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo\* and North Macedonia.

Angelo Braam  
4557549  
Utrecht University  
01-08-2022  
A Thesis submitted to  
the Board of Examiners  
in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of  
Master of Arts in Conflict Studies & Human Rights

Name of supervisor: Mario Fumerton

Date of submission: 01-08-2022

Trajectory: Research Project (15 ECTS) and Thesis Writing (15 ECTS)

Word Count: 26.577

**Abstract:**

This MA thesis employs a process-mechanisms analysis to examine the mechanisms of EU border externalisation, the gradual encroachment of EU border policies outside of its own territories, and how these enable the features and salient consequences of the migration management regime that is observable in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2017 until the present day. Based on literary studies and ethnographic fieldwork, I argue that two interrelated processes related to EU border and migration management can be witnessed: An “internationalisation of migration management as a form of transnational governmentality” and “a local turn” in the execution of migration management since 2021. Through describing these processes and explaining the mechanisms that enable them, this thesis sheds light on the general process of EU border externalisation and its consequences on migration flows in the Western Balkans and on the state of BiH.

**Keywords:** Migration governance, Migration Management, Externalisation, Liberal Peacebuilding, Transnational Governmentality, Local Turn, People on the Move (PoM), Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH).

*Title Quote by a high-ranking Bosnian politician involved in migration management (Interview 21, 19-05-2022)*

*Cover photo: IOM Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration programme poster, widely seen in Bosnian refugee camps and in offices of NGOs active in Migration management*

<b>List of Abbreviations</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Chapter 1 - Introduction: Bosnia &amp; Herzegovina &amp; Migration Management</b>	<b>5</b>
Research Statement and Significance	7
Outline	8
<b>Chapter 2: Theory &amp; Research design</b>	<b>9</b>
Theoretical background	9
Research Design	12
Researcher Positionality & Ethics	16
Final remarks	18
<b>Chapter 3: Liberal Peacebuilding, Dayton Accords and the Contemporary Bosnian State</b>	<b>19</b>
Introduction	19
Liberal Peace: Definitions and Academic debate	19
Historical context: Bosnian War and Main Ethnic Groups	21
Dayton Accords & Washington Agreement: Ethnic Divisions and International Influence Institutionalised	22
Consequences: Political deadlock and Foreign Influence	26
Current Political Opportunity Structure	27
Summary	28
<b>Chapter 4: Migration Flows inside BiH and the Internationalisation of Migration Management, 2017-2021</b>	<b>29</b>
Internationalisation of Migration Management in BiH	29
Migration management and its Salient Consequences	32
Mechanisms at work: Disregard, Venueshopping & Contracting	37
Summary	38
<b>Chapter 5: The state steps in: a “local turn” in migration management?</b>	<b>40</b>
Local turn: Definitions and Academic debate	40
Description of the Local Turn in Migration Management	41
Discussion of the Local turn and its Link to EU Border Externalisation	44
Consequences: Improved, but Contested Migration Management and Potential Future Developments	46
Mechanisms at work: Actor Activation and Brokerage	49
Summary	50
<b>Chapter 6: Conclusions</b>	<b>52</b>
Mechanistic Explanations of the Processes and their Consequences	52
Answers to Research Question	55
Discussion	56
References	<b>60</b>

## List of Abbreviations

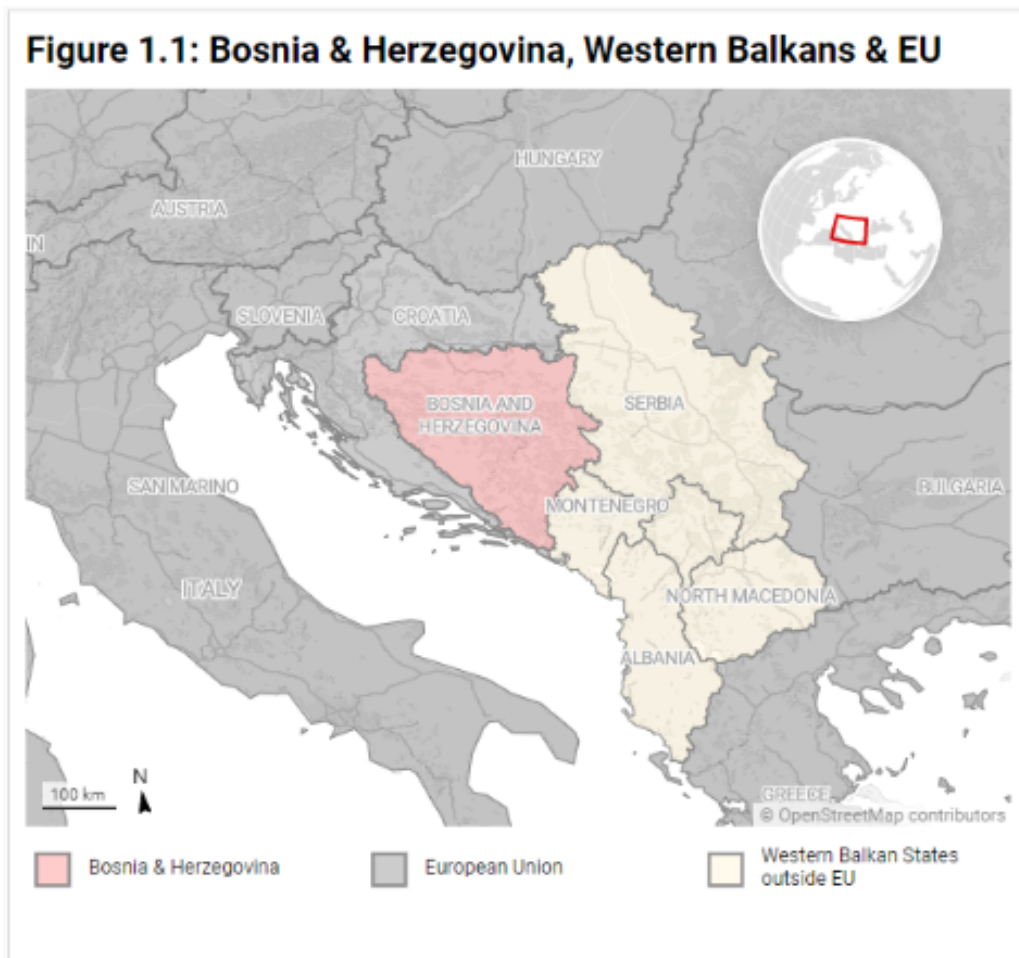
<b>BiH</b>	Bosnia & Herzegovina
<b>BVMN</b>	Border Violence Monitoring Network
<b>DKPT</b>	Directorate for the Coordination of Police Bodies
<b>DRC</b>	Danish Refugee Council
<b>ECHO</b>	European Commission Humanitarian Aid
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FBiH</b>	Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina
<b>HR</b>	High Representative of Bosnia & Herzegovina
<b>(I)NGO</b>	(International) Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>IOM</b>	International Organisation for Migration
<b>IPA</b>	Instruments for pre-accession
<b>PoM</b>	People/Person on the Move
<b>SAA</b>	Stabilisation and Association Agreement
<b>SFA</b>	Service for Foreigner's Affairs
<b>TRC</b>	Temporary Reception Centre
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

*We have a good relationship with the government, but only on the lower levels. But the decisions, they happen on the high level, and generally for citizens like us it is really really complicated to get access to these higher levels! Don't try to understand this. I'm living here and I'm born here and I don't understand anything! I work together with the government for 24 years and still I don't understand anything! And this is not only a problem for us or other organisations or for migrants but structurally and generally for the country*

~ Quote from a Bosnian national and employee for an international NGO engaged in migration management that sums up all that follows pretty well (Interview 3, 22-04-2022).

# Chapter 1 - Introduction: Bosnia & Herzegovina & Migration Management

Since 2017, the country of Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH), has seen more than 85.000 people on the move (PoM) arrive to and cross its territories<sup>1</sup> (UNHCR, 2022b). For this small state<sup>2</sup> that marks the westernmost entry point to the European Union (EU), these migration flows are unprecedented and have reportedly led to a so-called migration crisis, as claimed by a wide range of NGOs, media and academics alike (e.g. Kalan, 2018; IOM, 2021; Hodzić, 2020). While the majority of these people aim to reach the European Union, their journey often gets halted in BiH, this led to Bosnia becoming what Nezirović et al. (2021) call: “a depot for unwanted migrants” (Edmonda, 2018, p.1).



<sup>1</sup> Figures are from late 2021 and are likely higher, throughout interviews all informants stuck to the 85.000 number.

<sup>2</sup> Population: 3.5 million. Area: 51 209,2 km<sup>2</sup> (European Commission, 2021).

This increased influx of migration can be seen as a shifting of the *Balkan route*, the migration route between Turkey and Western Europe that since 2015, partly as a consequence of the war in Syria, which has seen millions of PoM travelling it to reach Western Europe (Edmonda, 2018). While initially, the majority of people on the move crossed neighbouring Serbia on the way to Western Europe, a tightening of visa policies inside Serbia and the increased construction of border infrastructures of the EU-Serbia borders have led to BiH becoming an alternative transit country for PoM (UNHCR, 2017; Bobić & Sanić, 2020).

The shifting migration routes and the halting of PoM throughout the Western Balkans can be understood as consequences of EU strategies of *border externalisation*, the gradual encroachment of EU border policies outside of its own territories (Casas-Cortes et al., 2016). Since the increased migration flows on the Balkan route since 2015, the EU became a more present actor in the territory. Through migration deals, accession agreements and investment in border infrastructures, the EU increasingly deters migrants on their way to the Union (Valenta et al., 2019; Lavenex, 2016). This process of externalisation, which, as this thesis shows, can also be witnessed in BiH. This is a central object of inquiry for this thesis.

Next to *border externalisation*, the related practice of migration management is examined. Since the increased influx of migration in BiH in 2017, the country has seen an increasingly international range of actors responding to the high number of people on the move (IOM, 2022a; DRC, 2022; Ahmetašević & Mlinarević, 2019). These actors execute *migration management*: activities that range from providing food, to assisting BiH with the asylum process to building camps for the people on the move (Panizzon & van Riemsdijk, 2018). While these activities are described by the relevant actors as aiding both PoM and the Bosnian state, they can also be understood as part of the EU strategies outside of its own borders.

Amongst this increase of international actors inside Bosnia, a prominent role of the European Union can be witnessed in funding migration management activities, advising political actors on legislation related to migration and by efforts aimed at harmonising BiH's migration legislation with that of the EU (European Commission, 2022; European Commission, 2015). Due to their prominent role, and their large share in funding migration management activities in BiH, the activities of migration management can be seen as part of the wider process of EU border externalisation, as shown later. Similarly, the externalisation policies can be considered a response to the migration flows in BiH, making them part of migration management. Because of that, the processes of *externalisation* and the *internationalisation of migration management* can be seen as interrelated

The processes of migration management and externalisation in BiH constitute an interesting complication because the activities of the EU and international NGOs have been met with controversy. Various NGOs and the EU have been accused of circumventing the central government of BiH and the European Union is accused of attempting to curb migration and complicate the movement of people outside its territories (Deidda, 2020, Valenta et al., 2019). Furthermore, the building of structures hosting PoM coincides with the phenomenon of pushbacks, forced expulsions by state authorities, from Croatia to BiH (BVMN, 2021; DRC, 2022). Both the externalisation policies and conduct of the Bosnian state are reported to constitute human rights abuses, notably the right to asylum and the right to freedom of movement (ibid).

The phenomena of migration management and EU border externalisation happen in the foreground of the Dayton Accords that ended the Bosnian war in 1995 and founded the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton Agreement, 1995). The Dayton Accords have



inherited BiH with a unique political system: it is governed by three presidents, has a specific role for the international community in its constitution and knows of complex layers of government divided between the state, entity and cantonal levels. As this thesis shows, the processes of migration management heavily depend on the institutions shaped by the Dayton Accords. The accords, which can be understood as a case of liberal peacebuilding<sup>3</sup> (see chapter 3), affect how migration management is executed and constitutes a cause for their negative consequences. Therefore, apart from explaining the processes of migration management and externalisation, this thesis aims to offer lessons on the consequences of liberal peacebuilding on the contemporary practice of migration management.

Through fieldwork following a process-mechanisms analysis, the processes and their constituent mechanisms of internationalisation of migration management between 2017-2021 and the subsequent “local turn” since 2021 were identified. The next section discusses the main research question and its significance.

## Research Statement and Significance

In order to make sense of a complex puzzle of migration management and EU border externalisation in BiH, this thesis employs a process-mechanisms analysis (discussed under methods, chapter 2) to research the following research puzzle statement:

*What mechanisms have created and enabled the key features and salient consequences of the migration management regime and EU externalisation practices that are observable in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2017 until the present day?*

This research question is socially significant for multiple reasons. First, it sheds light on the consequences of the Dayton Accords as a case of liberal peacebuilding. As chapter three shows, the Bosnian state structure is defined through the Dayton Accords, which is a product of liberal peacebuilding. The critique of the practice of liberal peacebuilding is abundant in academia. However, the link between liberal peace and migration management has not been given due attention. This thesis argues that a link between the two exists and that complications in executing migration management are strongly related to liberal peacebuilding.

Secondly, it shows how the European Union engages in externalised migration management and what the consequences are. This is socially relevant because NGO reports and academia alike claim that externalisation policies abuse human rights, complicate access to asylum procedures and disregard freedom of movement. By focusing on processes and mechanisms enabling externalisation policies this qualitative research project aims to define causal mechanisms of the processes under scrutiny.

Thirdly, it offers explanations on the multilevel nature of migration management and its workings (see Chapter 4). Rather than seeing the processes under scrutiny as an EU-driven practice, this thesis shows how different layers of government and non-government alike engage in and alter the outcomes of migration management. By offering a mechanistic explanation of migration management in BiH, which constituted a research gap, this thesis aspires to contribute to understanding how migration management

---

<sup>3</sup> Externally driven peacebuilding strategies with a focus on democratisation and free market orientation (Pfannenholz, 2015). This concept is fully defined in Chapter 3.

and its consequences can be understood through this analytical lens. This offers lessons for understanding migration management in general, and for the unique context of BiH alike.

## Outline

The structure of this thesis is as follows: Chapter two discusses the consulted theoretical framework and the employed research design. Chapter Three examines the Bosnian state structure as a case of liberal peacebuilding and demonstrates the argument that the current state structure facilitates the process of EU border externalisation. This is due to various dysfunctional characteristics of the state and the prominent institutional role of the international community (Mlinarević & Porobić, 2021a; Dayton Agreement, 1995). Chapter Four discusses the international migration management regime that emerged in 2017 following the influx of PoM in BiH as a case of transnational governmentality and defines its constituent mechanisms. Finally, Chapter Five discusses the mechanisms of the ongoing transition from an internationally governed migration management regime to a state-led migration response. The chapter furthermore discusses the challenges related to the planned local turn in migration governance.

Finally, in the conclusions, the causal workings of the mechanisms described in the preceding chapters are synthesised and explained and the research question is answered. The discussion section zooms out to discuss the relevance of the findings in the wider debates on EU border externalisation and liberal peacebuilding.

## Chapter 2: Theory & Research design

This research project is a dialogue between theory and evidence as put by Ragin (1994). To facilitate this dialogue, this chapter presents the theories that were consulted for designing this research project before giving a detailed description of the employed methods and research design.

While theory certainly plays a prominent role in the conducted research, the analytical part of the thesis is largely method-driven (process-tracing). In order to identify processes of migration management, a hypothesis was tested by ethnographic fieldwork, informed by theories on *Border Externalisation, Multilevel Migration Management and Transnational Governmentality*. Definitions of *processes* and *mechanisms* by Tilly & Tarrow (2007b), allowed me to create an analytical frame combining the theories.

Apart from the preselected concepts, the field research has led me to find resonance with additional concepts that offer explanatory value to the processes traced in Bosnia and Herzegovina, namely *Liberal Peacebuilding* and *Local Turn*. These concepts and debates identified in the field are discussed in their relevant empirical chapters, respectively Chapters 3 and 5.

The first half of this chapter discusses the theoretical debates and concepts and motivates the choices that were made. The second half of the chapter discusses how the central research question was answered by, first, breaking down the research puzzle statement into subquestions, based on the literature review and operationalised concepts and secondly, describing the data collection method of process-tracing, employed to answer the relevant research questions. Finally, statements on researcher positionality and ethical considerations are given to foster transparency and accountability

### Theoretical background

This section discusses the theoretical debates that this research project places itself in, which are: *Border Externalisation, Multilevel Migration Management and Transnational Governmentality*. Their definitions and relevance are discussed before moving on to the research design. Apart from these debates, theoretical insights were taken from Tilly & Tarrow's ideas on *processes* and *mechanisms*. Due to their strong methodological relevance, they are discussed in the methods section instead of here.

#### *Border Externalisation*

Externalisation refers to the territorial and administrative expansion of one state's asylum and border control policies to a third country implementing these policies (Casas-Cortes et al., 2016). In other words, border externalisation is the efforts of countries to control and deter migration flows outside of their territories, creating "borders outside the border" (Fitzgerald, 2019; Valenta et al., 2019). Externalisation is predominantly executed by high-income countries that are a destination for people on the move. Through a wide range of policies and instruments, externalising countries complicate access to their territories and asylum procedures (Fitzgerald, 2019).

Within the academic literature on externalisation, the European Union is prominently discussed as an actor externalising its border policies. As a major destination for PoM from all over the world, the European Union has been identified as an externalising actor since at least as early as 2005 (IOM, 2022b; Akkerman, 2018; Casas-Cortes et al., 2016). Back then,

it started responding to migration flows by engaging in neighbouring countries' border policies, facilitating increased border controls or signing agreements with third countries to accept deported people (Akkerman, 2018; Casas-Cortes et al., 2016). Eventually, after the increased migration flows to Europe from Africa, the Middle East and Asia since 2015, EU externalisation policies can be witnessed in nearly any country of origin or transit of PoM (Deidda, 2020; Bobić & Santić, 2019; Valenta et al., 2019). These activities that curb migration flows outside of the EU territory are executed, in the words of the EU, to counter illegal smuggling and secure the outside borders of the European Union (European Commission, n.d.)

As mentioned in the introduction, EU externalisation policies complicate access to asylum procedures in Europe, which is considered a human right according to the 1951 refugee convention (UNHCR, 2011). Consequently, externalisation policies are reported to stop migration flows in third countries, where people on the move are increasingly getting stuck without reaching their destinations, notably Turkey and Libya (Akkerman, 2018; Valenta et al., 2019). By looking at EU responses to migration flows through a lens of externalisation, lessons can be learned on how the European Union responds to migration flows outside of its boundaries and what this means for PoM and their human rights.

In recent years, the Western Balkans, including BiH, have been extensively studied by scholars on externalisation (e.g. Bobić & Šantić, 2019; Buzinkić & Avon, 2021; Lavenex, 2015; Valenta et al. 2019). All of the consulted literature concludes that all Western Balkan states experience EU externalisation, through migration deals, accession agreements and other instruments. Simultaneously, various NGOs report on the consequences of externalisation throughout the Western Balkans (e.g. BVMN, 2021).

While a literature review on externalisation on the Balkans identified elaborate discussions on Serbia and Greece, BiH is discussed to a limited extent. Bobić & Santić (2019) suggest migration routes shifting from Serbia to BiH since the successful externalisation efforts implemented in Serbia. As a consequence, they expect the practice to also occur in neighbouring BiH. Apart from that, Deidda (2020), provided the only Bosnia-specific analysis of externalisation, in which the occurrence of the practice was claimed.

Through this literature, a gap was identified to explain the process of externalisation through its constituent mechanisms: "relational aspects that enable externalisation". In this way, causal factors of the process and consequences of externalisation may be theorised. The operationalisation of externalisation in this process-mechanisms analysis is discussed under *methods*, after defining the closely related academic debate of *multilevel migration management*.

### *Multilevel Migration Management*

To understand *how* externalisation policies are executed, lessons were adopted from the debate on *multilevel migration management*<sup>4</sup>; the response to migration flows by actors throughout different levels of government (Scholten & Penninx, 2016). Scholten & Penninx (2016) argue that migration governance in and outside the EU has become increasingly dispersed over different levels of government and institutions. Therefore, they offer a framework for what they call multilevelness; the interaction of different levels shaping policy and governance. As the authors critique an *EU-central* approach, where the EU is the sole

---

<sup>4</sup> In the literature also referred to as *Multilevel Migration Governance*.

actor offering responses to migration, they offer a framework for better understanding the roles of different political actors on the field.

By defining four categories of multilevelling, they offer a framework for analysing how relations between different levels work. These categories are *centralist*, *localist*, *multilevel* and *decoupled*. *Centralist* relationships consist of a hierarchy, where the highest political organ issues policies that institutions lower on the ladder execute. In *localist* relationships, governance and policies originate locally while they become executed in different areas of the political spectrum. *Multilevel* relationships generate policies dispersed over the political spectrum and in *Decoupled* relationships governance is applied by certain governing actors without any relation to other governing actors in the same field. The authors argue that all four types have outcomes on how migration policies are executed and state that all four types are present in European contexts of migration and integration. These different types should be studied separately to show how different layers of governance are executed and what their effects are.

While Scholten & Penninx's framework only considers the study of layers of government involved in migration policies, Lavenex (2015) stresses the importance of studying non-governmental actors in the execution of migration policies. She described the prominent role of the international organisations UNHCR and the IOM in executing European migration policies, in her case in Morocco. Her study underlined the importance of studying NGOs in executing migration management in addition to government actors. Furthermore, Panizzon & van Riemsdijk (2019) identified the role of civil society actors, regions and cities in executing migration management. These studies show the relevance of studying migration management beyond the EU or governmental levels because of the importance ascribed to them.

By understanding migration management in Bosnia as a multilevel process, a research design was formulated that looks beyond EU and state actors and considers civil society as a source of actors engaging in migration management. In the case of Bosnia, the roles of civil society and NGOs have been claimed (Deidda, 2020; Mlinarević & Ahmetasević, 2018) In this way, an understanding of migration responses, shaped by a diffuse set of actors, can be retrieved.

### *Transnational Governmentality*

While departing from an understanding of migration management as multi-levelled, the concept of *transnational governmentality* was employed to further analyse the nature of actors on the field and define hypotheses. Ferguson & Gupta (2002) argue that in contemporary times of globalisation and market liberalisation, the state cannot be understood as the sole authority executing power and policies in a hierarchical way. Rather, we should understand conduct through the concept of what they call *transnational governmentality*. This relates to how different institutions, including but not limited to the state, shape conduct through calculated means historically associated with the state but nowadays executed by a variety of actors: non-governmental organisations and others.

In their case study, Ferguson & Gupta claim that transnational governmentality can be witnessed in many African states, through the establishment of NGOs that pick up functions traditionally associated with the state. This is possible because, in the studied states, central government authority does not encompass the entire territory and NGOs often pick up activities to fill gaps. Similarly, since the arrival of migration flows to BiH a range of international NGOs and other actors have entered the field to offer a response, usually associated with the state (Deidda, 2020). This practice has already been witnessed in

neighbouring Serbia where significant NGO-involvement in responding to migration has been recorded (e.g. Bobić & Šantić, 2020). Based on the theory by Ferguson & Gupta and evidence from neighbouring countries, there is a strong tendency to expect an increasingly transnational response to migration in BiH since 2017.

Apart from the transnational response to migration, Ferguson & Gupta stress the importance of *the grassroots*, local actors on the field, as actors shaped by transnational processes. They argue that also grassroots actors, in their example local NGOs, are often transnational in nature. Processes of globalisation, market liberalisation and development thinking lead to governing actors from civil society still depending on global structures beyond the state (Derks & Nguyen, 2020). They argue that *the grassroots* should be studied while keeping these dynamics in mind. By employing this logic in the analysis of BiH, a more detailed analysis of the nature and the degree of influence of the actors on the field in BiH can be made. This has led to more thorough scrutiny of the actors on the field and led me to define a hypothesis based on the suggestions of increased transnational engagement in responses to migration flows in BiH. These are discussed in the next section.

## Research Design

This research project was designed as a process-mechanisms analysis based on the theories by Tilly & Tarrow (2007) and informed by data retrieved through ethnographic fieldwork, literature studies and document analysis. This section describes the central working definitions employed in a process-mechanisms analysis, it discusses the research puzzle question and how it was operationalised into subquestions. Finally, it describes the method of process-tracing applied during field research and subsequent data analysis.

### *Process-mechanisms analysis: working definitions*

This research project can be understood as a processual puzzle as defined by Mason (2013). A processual puzzle is concerned with how a certain phenomenon works and how things continue, change or influence each other over time. This research project is concerned with the characteristics, changes and consequences of the migration management regime in Bosnia & Herzegovina between 2017-2022, which fits within the above definition of a processual puzzle. Keeping that in mind the type of analysis and methods are chosen.

In order to retrieve relevant data on the processes of migration management, a process-mechanisms analysis by Tilly & Tarrow (2007a) was employed. This type of analysis is employed to describe political processes and identify their causal mechanisms through qualitative research. To explain the process of migration management in BiH, the concepts of *mechanism*, *process* and *political opportunity structure* were leading in the analysis.

According to Tilly & Tarrow (2007). processes are built up by constituent *mechanisms*. *Mechanisms* are: “a delimited class of changes that alter relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations” (Tilly & Tarrow, 2007b, p.29). For example, a process of *radicalisation* could be understood as a combination or sequence of the mechanisms of *repression* and *identity activation*. Both mechanisms mentioned can be understood as changes that alter relations among specific sets of actors (elements in the above definition). Similarly, this thesis is concerned with defining the changes that alter the relationships between the relevant actors engaged in the processes of migration management. In other words, the mechanisms that enable the process.



Subsequently, mechanisms build into *processes* which they define as “regular combinations and sequences of mechanisms that produce similar (generally more complex and contingent) transformations of those elements” (Ibid, p.29). They illustrate that processes generally are phenomena that are not directly observable, such as evolution. However, they argue that the constituent mechanisms of processes like evolution are observable through mechanisms like courtship or sexual encounter. Similarly, the processes of migration management themselves cannot be witnessed directly. However, its constituent mechanisms such as *actor activation* or *brokerage* are observable through document analysis or ethnographic fieldwork, as this thesis later shows.

A third component of the analysis is the *political opportunity structure*: “the features of regimes and institutions that facilitate or inhibit a political actor’s collective action” (Tilly & Tarrow, 2007c, p.203). These are the properties of a regime that constitute the initial conditions that affect how mechanisms interact. In other words, the political opportunity structures offer the political context that the mechanisms and processes develop within. Tilly & Tarrow define six properties of a political opportunity structure, as given below (Tilly & Tarrow, 2007c, p.203):

- The multiplicity of independent centres of power within it.
- Its openness to new actors.
- The instability of current political alignments.
- The availability of influential allies or supporters for challengers.
- The extent to which the regime represses or facilitates collective claim-making.
- Decisive changes in items 1 to 5.

As this thesis is concerned with the migration management regime of the state of BiH, it gives significant attention to defining the political opportunity structure of BiH (Chapter 3). By defining this political opportunity structure, the causal working of the mechanisms in enabling the processes of migration management can be better explained, because it accounts for the institutional context that the processes function within.

Following the above definitions, my fieldwork has led me to define the constituent mechanisms of the processes of externalisation and migration management, allowing me to make claims. By understanding processes and mechanisms through the above definitions, I implemented a process-tracing method to identify them.

#### *Research Questions and Operationalisation*

Based on the defined empirical complications of the introduction, the consulted academic debates and the working definitions of the process-mechanisms analysis, the research puzzle question and relevant subquestions were defined. The central research question is as follows:

*What mechanisms have created and enabled the key features and salient consequences of the migration management regime and EU externalisation practices that are observable in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2017 until the present day?*

In order to answer this research question, subquestions were developed to define 1) the *political opportunity structure* of BiH, 2) the processes of migration management and 3) the mechanisms enabling the processes. Field research has identified two separate processes:

“the internationalisation of migration management” and the “local turn”, which are reflected in the adjusted research questions below:

- *What is the political opportunity structure that the migration management regime of BiH functioned upon between 2017-present?*
- *What are the processes, key features and consequences of the migration management regime in BiH between 2017-present?*
- *What are the mechanisms enabling the process of internationalisation of migration management in BiH between 2017-2021?*
- *What are the mechanisms enabling the process of the “local turn” in migration management between 2021-present?*

The subquestions above were answered by employing a process-tracing method, described in the next section.

#### *Methodology: Process-tracing through Ethnographic Fieldwork*

The primary data for this research project was collected through ethnographic fieldwork following the method of process-tracing as laid out by Collier (2011) and Ricks & Liu (2018). It also draws from process-mechanisms analysis presented by Tilly & Tarrow (2006), as described above. Through the analytical tools developed by the above authors, I was able to test a hypothesis on the field, describe two interrelated processes and claim causality through their constitutive mechanisms. Causality is claimed not by statistical analysis, but through a thick description following Geertz (1973), allowing qualitative data to comment on mechanistic causes of the processes.

Like Fumerton (2018), I inferred mechanisms from data retrieved from the relevant actors on the field. Based on my literature review and previous volunteering experience in BiH, a list of relevant actors was predefined. By employing a snowball method on the field, the list grew longer throughout the field research period. These relevant actors consist of the following: Bosnian Ministry of Security and its relevant departments, UN organisations (IOM, UNHCR, UNFPA, UNICEF), other international NGOs (Red Cross, Danish Refugee Council and others), the grassroots (various organisations and individuals) and international volunteer organisations (Nezirović et al., 2021; Deidda, 2020; Mlinarević & Ahmetasević, 2018; Personal Communication, 2021). Through analysing the relationships on the fields through a process-tracing method, I attempted to infer the constituent mechanisms.

#### *Process-tracing: a 7-step Method*

For the ethnographic part of this research project, the method of process tracing was implemented, building on the 7-step practical guide by Ricks & Liu (2018) and relying on a theoretical background informed by Collier (2011a; 2011b).

Process-tracing is a method aimed at identifying intervening causal processes. It presents a methodological basis for mechanism-based theorising, like the theories mentioned in the sections above (Checkel, 2008). As a method of qualitative field research, process tracing consists of the activities of *description* and *sequence* (Collier, 2011a). Description of the process under scrutiny allows for analysing trajectories of change and causation. Practically, this means that employing process-tracing requires a careful description of how events unfold over time (ibid). *Sequence* is the attention given to dependent and independent variables on the field that are employed to confirm or reject hypotheses and rival hypotheses. By inferring data from careful descriptive analysis based



on mechanism-based theorising, causal inference may be claimed if the hypothesis passes one of four empirical tests (ibid).

In order to identify causal mechanisms of the European externalisation policies and the migration management regime in Bosnia and Herzegovina through qualitative field research, the 7-step model for process-tracing by Ricks & Liu (2018) was implemented. The steps and their operationalisation are briefly discussed below.

**Step 1:** Process-tracing implements testing hypotheses based on theoretical assumptions. As explained in the theoretical framework, my assumption to be tested during the field research is whether a transnational governed migration government regime is increasingly observable over time, leading me to define the hypothesis:

*Between 2017 - 2022 increasingly transnational regimes of migration governance can be witnessed inside the territory of Bosnia & Herzegovina.*

In order to make convincing claims the counterfactual hypothesis was also tested during fieldwork:

*Between 2017 - 2022 there is no significant increase (or decrease) in transnational actors of migration governance inside the territory of Bosnia & Herzegovina.*

**Step 2:** Sequencing timelines function as an analytical tool for observing processes and are useful in identifying major events that *could* have shaped the processes under scrutiny. A preliminary timeline was adapted based on prior knowledge and literature review, which was updated throughout the data collection process. This functioned as a tool for listing potential mechanisms.

**Step 3:** Causal graphs were constructed that listed all moments where the relevant actors have made an action that *could* have caused the process. In practice this means that a list of moments and actions have been listed before and throughout the research process, resulting in a long list of possible causal mechanisms for the processes of migration management and externalisation. The potential causal mechanisms were analysed after data collection and discussed in their constituent chapters.

**Steps 4 & 5:** consider the counterfactual explanations opposing the hypothesised ones, to be defined through literature. Ricks & Liu (2018) underlined the importance of establishing steps 1-5 before data collection. While steps 1-3 were done before my research project, counterfactual mechanisms were not defined due to gaps in theories and literature. Instead throughout the data collection process, possible causal mechanisms were defined in an inductive sense that were tested after the collection period.

**Steps 6 & 7** relate to collecting evidence for both the hypothesis and its counterfactual. Through fieldwork, the hypothesis and its counterfactual, stated above, were tested by looking for resonance with the priorly defined potential causal mechanisms and subsequent processes. By a combination of careful description, defining causal mechanisms and their counterfactuals, and analysis to test the hypotheses through the four empirical tests, claims could be made on the mechanisms and processes of migration management in BiH.

#### *Data Collection & Triangulation*

For this research project, three months of ethnographic fieldwork were conducted inside Bosnia & Herzegovina, employing the methods outlined above. Between the first week of March and the first week of June 2022, the following data were collected:

- 22 semi-structured interviews with individuals engaged in or representing institutions engaged in migration management inside BiH, including:  
4 governmental officials, 10 international NGOs, 1 EU representative and the remainder being small Bosnian NGOs and individuals engaged in migration management.
- Direct observations at the main Bosnian temporary reception centres, the official shelter locations for people on the move: Blažuj, Lipa and Ušivak. Plus observations at a 2-day conference on migration in BiH in Sarajevo bringing researchers, experts and practitioners from the field together.
- Participant observations with an international volunteer NGO.
- Participant observations with people on the move during their daily activities and residence at squats aimed at comparing data from interviews with the reality experienced by PoM.
- Documents by various NGOs and governmental authorities on their engagement in migration management in BiH (Strategic reports, periodical reports).

Data collection was conducted in the three relevant cantons where migration management is executed (see Chapter 2). Interviews were focused on establishing a timeline of migration management and EU externalisation policies in BiH, finding causes for the processes under scrutiny according to the informants, and exploring ongoing dynamics within the migration management regime.

Claims from interviews were, where possible, triangulated with observations at refugee camps, claims from PoM that participant observations were conducted with and documents reporting on NGO activities in the country. In general, data was triangulated with document analysis before the collection through a literature review and post-collection through document analysis of documents collected on the field. By comparing and synthesising the data collected through the field amongst each other, and with the literature studied prior- and post-data collection, a thick description of the migration management regime could be made (Geertz, 1973). Analysis and empirical testing allowed me to make claims on the mechanisms and processes of migration management and EU externalisation in BiH.

Apart from the written analysis that constitutes the majority of this thesis, all presented figures and maps are made by me, based on the data from the sources mentioned above and the literature review executed before field research.

## Researcher Positionality & Ethics

This section discusses my position as a researcher and the ethical considerations made throughout data collection and analysis.

By definition, a researcher's findings are never free from bias, personality and assumptions (Sword, 1999 in Berger, 2015). A researcher's positionality depends on a potentially endless range of characteristics that shape their background. Characteristics like sex, religion, accent or life-experience influence their work in different ways (Berger, 2015).

Berger (2015) gives three main directions in which a researcher's positionality affects research: First, the researcher's position influences their access to the field. Secondly, the position might shape the power dynamic between researcher and informant. This could be the case when for instance, a financial dependency exists on the side of the informant. Third, the worldview and socialisation of a researcher influence how data and information are interpreted.

By reflecting on my researcher's positionality, I aim to increase the transparency of the research project and its findings. These sections intend to do so, by accounting for my worldview, describing my relevant background and discussing the issue of access on the field. That way, I intend to increase the credibility and transparency of my findings.

Being an EU citizen, a Dutch male student and my personal beliefs related to the circumstances in BiH affected my access to and findings on the field. I believe that being an EU citizen facilitated smooth access to my informants of interest. While the simple emailing of organisations and governmental authorities was often not enough to gather a response, me walking into buildings uninvited to request an interview was in general unquestioned, even though statements on this not being the usual way to act were made (e.g. Interview 4, 04-04-2022). I believe being a student from a Western-European country gave me easier access to the desired populations than other people wanting access, a large share of the interviewees commented on liking to speak with students and their supposed "innocence" (e.g. Interview 22, 26-05-2022). Similar access to authorities turned out difficult for other people I spoke with, while various PoM expressed their wish to speak with Bosnian authorities, they seldomly get the opportunity. Apart from PoM, various Bosnian researchers told me they were rejected to all Bosnian refugee camps for years, while I was granted access to the three main refugee camps.

Apart from my appearance and background, my beliefs and previous activities inside Bosnia are part of my positionality. My involvement with an NGO on the field in BiH makes me more of an active actor on the field than simply a researcher. Although I should not overestimate my rather small personal role. As a member of *No Name Kitchen*, an organisation that is involved in migration management, but also is known for criticising the Bosnian authorities and EU policies for inadequately dealing with PoM, my positionality as a researcher is affected. Especially as I share the criticism mentioned. Because of the criminalisation of the organisation's activities inside BiH, I was not able to mention my involvement with the organisation when introducing my research, which would most likely have blocked my access to informants. This could also have led to punitive measures from the authorities, which happened before to other associated members.

Regarding my worldview, I view the flows of migration as a consequence of a world system that unevenly distributes wealth and resources, driven by capitalism. This gives me more solidarity with individuals that try to cross borders in order to better their lives compared to those that build borders to protect their territories. Even though my research is motivated by these premises, I entered the research with an open mind and reported on my findings as transparently and as objectively as possible. I conduct my research on behalf of myself, as a researcher who wants to better understand how the migration management system in BiH works and to contribute to knowledge on the topic. This means that my research does not serve a double agenda for the organisation that I am part of, nor for advocating my personal beliefs.

### *Main Ethical Considerations*

Each research project comes with the need to critically reflect on the potential ethical implications that the research could have, so negative side-effects of the research can be limited or avoided. This section briefly highlights the main ethical considerations made before, during and after data collection.

In terms of consent, all informants for the field research were informed about my position as a researcher and my research objectives. After informing the informants about my position as a researcher, they were able to grant (or not grant) me consent for engaging in interviews or letting me participate in activities related to migration management. As the field where I engaged in research is characterised by tensions and possible sensibilities, guaranteeing anonymity is essential in preventing informants from facing the consequences of their information sharing. On the flip side of this, informants might want to be credited for the information shared. This means that informants wishing to stay anonymous are granted their anonymity while individuals and organisations that expressed agreement with crediting them are named by their name or organisation (for example the IOM and most of the interviewed Bosnian authorities).

A main ethical consideration in conducting fieldwork in a situation characterised by violence towards PoM is the consideration to engage in interviews with them to a very limited extent. This is a personal consideration and not a moral judgement on interviewing PoM. This consideration is based on previous experiences with PoM where I witnessed them spending severe efforts in addressing journalists and researchers through interviews. While there is also value for people for their situation to be heard and seen, their willingness to engage in interviews is often based on a hope for their situation to change. PoM inside Bosnia & Herzegovina struggle in a variety of ways, taking their time to engage in long interviews while already a lot has been written about them seems potentially problematic. My research does not change their situation by interviewing them, even though I do aspire to contribute to that. To still learn from the realities experienced by migrant populations in Bosnia, I engaged in participant and direct observations instead, in the form of hanging out or drinking tea together. In my previous work with NGOs, this was in general appreciated by PoM, and this does not generate unrealistic promises of changing their realities. Still, they were informed about my intentions and activities, but I did not take their time to engage in time-costly interviews.

As a third ethical consideration, my data have been stored carefully to protect the identity of informants. Written data have been written in such an illegible way, that they can only be understood by me. Audio recordings, their transcripts and analysis have been stored on an encrypted drive. Taking the above into account, I am aware of the ethical risks my research has and have outlined how these risks were handled.

### Final remarks

Now that the theoretical underpinnings and methodology used during the research project are stated, the remainder of this thesis focuses on the findings and their relevance. The next chapter starts by introducing the Bosnian state system as a consequence of liberal peacebuilding.

# Chapter 3: Liberal Peacebuilding, Dayton Accords and the Contemporary Bosnian State

## Introduction

This chapter examines the Bosnian state system that was implemented through the Dayton peace agreements that ended the Bosnian and Yugoslav wars in 1995, as an example of liberal peacebuilding (Glenny, 2001). This empirical part of the thesis starts by analysing the Bosnian state system because the system constitutes a *political opportunity structure*: “the features of regimes and institutions that facilitate or inhibit a political actor’s collective action” (Tilly & Tarrow, 2007c, p.203). As part of the process-mechanisms analysis, the political opportunity structure on which the mechanisms operate needs to be defined. In other words, this chapter offers the structural and institutional background to the processes that are the essence of inquiry of this thesis.

The concept of liberal peacebuilding is considered because of its explanatory value for analysing the processes of migration management between 2017-2022. The concept refers to the transnationally “*controlled approaches combined with the building of governmental institutions that can manage political and economic reforms*” (Paris, 2004, in Finkenbusch, 2021, p.165). This chapter highlights these approaches and discusses how they affect the Bosnian state system and therewith, migration management.

Simultaneously, interviews through ethnographic fieldwork have identified the Dayton Accords as the key institutional aspect influencing and complicating migration management today. Informants from all over the migration management regime, including state actors, unanimously commented that limitations resulting from the BiH state system make the execution of migration management a complex matter. The role of the state system in migration management inherited through the Dayton Accords is therefore a key finding of the research project, which requires elaboration in this chapter.

Rather than simply making the connection between the Dayton Accords and the applicability of the concept of liberal peacebuilding, this chapter aspires to go further. The approach has often been criticised for various reasons, but the link between liberal peace and seemingly unconnected issues such as migration management is not part of the academic discussion. By claiming that the two phenomena are related in the case of BiH, this chapter adds to the academic debate on liberal peace and its consequences.

This chapter starts by defining liberal peace and the academic debate surrounding the practice. Subsequently, it offers the historical context to the Dayton Accords, as this context is necessary for understanding 1) the Dayton Accords as a case of Liberal peacebuilding 2) the current ethno-nationalist division in Bosnian politics and 3) the role of the international community in BiH. After describing the political opportunity structure, conclusions are made that the ethno-nationalist divisions and the role of the international community are key to understanding the processes of migration management and EU border externalisation of 2017-2022.

## Liberal Peace: Definitions and Academic debate

Liberal peace is defined by Paris (2004) as *the controlled approaches combined with the building of governmental institutions that can manage political and economic reforms* (Paris, 2004, in Finkenbusch, 2021, p.165). In other words, central to practice is the fostering of

liberal values through international intervention and the belief that free markets and democratic politics are able to remedy a broad range of political, economic and social problems (Finkenbusch, 2021).

The practice gained prominence in policy circles in the 90s when after the disintegration of the Soviet Union and socialist states, the spread of liberal values of democracy, free markets and private ownership were boosted (Karlsrud, 2018). Early examples of liberal peacebuilding, mentioned by Karlsrud (2018), are Rwanda and Bosnia & Herzegovina, but since the implementation of the strategy in the early 90s it can be witnessed across a wide range of territories such as Kosovo and South Sudan (ibid).

Jabri (2016) argues that the practice of liberal peace follows a colonial rationality and can be understood as an incursion into the post-colonial political community, causing a resemblance to colonial relationships. A strong consequence according to Jabri is that due to the international presence in peacebuilding societies, a contradiction exists between state-building and the undermining of the state. Due to international authorities intervening in politics, legitimate national authority is undermined. According to her, this leads to a breakdown of social solidarity and an absence of legitimacy for the state (ibid).

In academia, the practice of liberal peacebuilding is criticised, as claimed by all authors above. Finkenbusch (2021) argues there is a consensus amongst critical scholars that the liberal peacebuilding paradigm does not generate results as expected (Finkenbusch, 2021). A lack of expected economic development and returns to authoritarianism can be witnessed in various states subject to the liberal peacebuilding project, such as Kosovo and Rwanda. This chapter aspires to contribute to the debate with the Bosnian case.

### *The Bosnian Case*

Following the academic debate and definitions above, the case of BiH and the Dayton Accords can be considered a case of liberal peacebuilding, as this section argues.

The Dayton Accords were largely brokered by “the international community<sup>5</sup>”, through negotiations between the US, EU member states, Russia, BiH’s direct neighbours and BiH itself (Glenny, 2001). The peace deal that defined the Bosnian constitution never passed through the Bosnian parliament but was brokered by “the international community” instead (Mlinarević & Porobić, 2021b).

Furthermore, the Peace accords have a strong interventionist character as discussed in the previous section, as the High Representative, a foreign national installed in BiH politics, has the authority to fire public officials and introduce laws. This resembles what Jabri calls a colonial rationality, and creates a strong power dynamic between the international community and BiH (Jabri, 2016). Even though BiH is strictly not a post-colonial state in the classic sense of the world, the country has a history of hundreds of years of occupation by the Ottoman empire and later the Austro-Hungarian empire, giving it a vivid history of occupation (Glenny, 2001).

The international institutions that have a foot inside the Bosnian institutions, most notably the IMF which assigns the head of the central bank, are known for their adherence to neoliberal policies and fostering of free markets (e.g. Mlinarević & Porobić, 2021b). For these reasons, the Dayton Accords should be seen as an example of liberal peace and its critiques should be addressed accordingly. The next section describes the historical context

---

<sup>5</sup> In this thesis *the international community* refers to Western European countries, the United States and occasionally United Nations institutions. These can be considered brokers of the liberal peace in BiH and have held a presence inside the state institutions since 1995 (Mlinarević & Porobić, 2021a; Dayton Accords, 1995).



that led to the signing of the peace agreements in the 90s and discusses afterwards the content of the peace agreements relevant to the current migration management regimes.

## Historical context: Bosnian War and Main Ethnic Groups

The Dayton Accords that defined the Bosnian constitution and state structure ended the Bosnian and Yugoslav wars (Glenny, 2001). As the Dayton Accords practically froze ethnic divisions in the country, which are still apparent today, it is worth briefly introducing the background of the conflict as part of the Dayton Accords.

The Bosnian civil war of 1992-95 was part of the larger Yugoslav wars following the gradual disintegration of Yugoslavia. This started with the declaration of independence of both Slovenia and Croatia, two of the six constituent republics, in June 1991 (ICTY, no date). These declarations are considered the starting point of the Yugoslav wars (ibid).

The root causes of the conflict are many and complex, and this thesis does not attempt to address all of them. However, the break-up of Yugoslavia and subsequent violence had a strong nationalist component. Slovenia and Croatia declared independence based on accusations that Serbs increasingly dominated the Yugoslav state, centralised in Serbia, which led to both regions founding nation-states. While Slovenia was relatively homogeneous (88% of Slovenian inhabitants were Slovenes), there was a large Serb minority in Croatia (12% of the population), regions with Serb majorities in Croatia where the main theatres of the Croatian war of independence of 1991 - 1995 (Lampe, 2022).

While Yugoslavia was disintegrating along ethnic lines in the 90s, the constituent state of BiH constituted the ethnically most diverse republic inside Yugoslavia. The *Bosnian question*<sup>6</sup> has been a topic of disagreement and nationalist aspirations in both Croatia and Serbia since the early nineteenth century, and the disintegration of Yugoslavia revived the matter (Glenny, 2001).

As a country with three main ethnic groups; Bosniaks<sup>7</sup>, Serbs and Croats, respectively representing 43.5%, 31.2% and 17.4% of the population pre-war, tensions in the surrounding republics culminated in BiH after it declared independence in March 1992 (Markowitz, 2007; Lampe, 2022). In the month of the declaration of independence, Serb fighters (the army of Republika Srpska supported by the Yugoslav National Army JNU) started hostilities countering the declaration of independence. Simultaneously, Bosnian Croats backed by the newly founded Croatian state declared their Croat republic in the south of BiH.

Over the following three and a half years, the Bosnian war continued along ethnic lines and became the deadliest episode of the Yugoslav wars. More than 100.000 people were killed in the conflict, various cases of ethnic cleansing were reported and atrocities culminated in the genocide of Bosniaks in Srebrenica in 1995 by the army of Republika Srpska (ICTY, no date; Glenny, 2001). Hostilities ceased in November 1995 when the international community got involved in brokering peace negotiations.

The Dayton Accords were signed between Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia and the federal republic of Yugoslavia, backed by six additional international governments and

---

<sup>6</sup> The Bosnian question is the political and social issue discussed on academic and political levels since the 19th century and discusses the relationships between Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs in Bosnia and the wider region, and the future and belonging of the territory of BiH (Bennett, 2016).

<sup>7</sup> Bosniaks are the official term used for Bosnian muslims, who comprise the largest ethnic group of the country.

entities<sup>8</sup>. This marked an effective end to the conflict and froze the ethnic territorial divisions of the country. The next section discusses the content of the accords relevant to understanding the current state structure and its role within migration management and externalisation policies.

## Dayton Accords & Washington Agreement: Ethnic Divisions and International Influence Institutionalised

The Dayton Accords and the preceding Washington agreement from 1994 were the two key documents that defined the state structure and institutions of BiH and had a range of consequences that are relevant for understanding migration management in BiH today (Mlinarević & Porobić, 2021a; Interview 3, 25-03-2022). First, it created a country divided between two political entities and ten cantons with a high degree of autonomy. Secondly, it institutionalised ethnic divisions throughout the territories and represented them along ethnic lines, giving minority representations the power to veto legislation at various levels of government. Thirdly, it grants the international community a prominent presence inside the state's institutions, most notably the High Commissioner for Bosnia & Herzegovina, an external statesman with far-reaching political powers (Dayton Agreement, 1995). This section discusses these three phenomena before moving to explanations of how these phenomena affect migration management. (See figure 3.1 for a geographical distribution of authorities in BiH and figure 3.2 for a schematic representation of the authorities).

In general, the Dayton Accords and its 11 annexes shaped a framework for the immediate cessation of hostilities (Annex 1), defined the inter-entity boundary lines (Annex 2), formulated election law (Annex 3) and drew the constitution of Bosnia & Herzegovina (Annex 4) (Dayton Agreement, 1995). Simultaneously it froze the status quo at the time of hostilities and institutionalised population divisions brought about by the ethnic cleansing of the war and sanctioned a permanent presence of the international community in BiH (Glenny, 2001; Mlinarević & Porobić, 2021b).

### *Geographical and Institutional Divide along Ethnic Lines*

One main consequence of the Dayton and Washington accords is that the country got divided into different entities based on ethnic divisions. Annex 2 of the Dayton Accords divided the entire country of BiH into two entities based on their ethnic composition: “Republika Srpska” and the “Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina”<sup>9</sup> (Dayton Agreement, 1995). Republika Srpska consists of all areas with a Serb majority and the Federation consists of all areas with a Bosniak, Croat or combined Bosniak-Croat majority. The Brčko district in the North-West of the country, with no ethnic majority, remained outside the scope of the Dayton Agreement and later became a region governed independently (Interview 8, 13-04-2022). Both political entities have their own governments as executive authorities for their respective territories and provide their share of the presidency of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In practice, this agreement leads to a situation of two states within a state that have their own governments and execute their internal policies (such as migration policies) (Lampe, 2022).

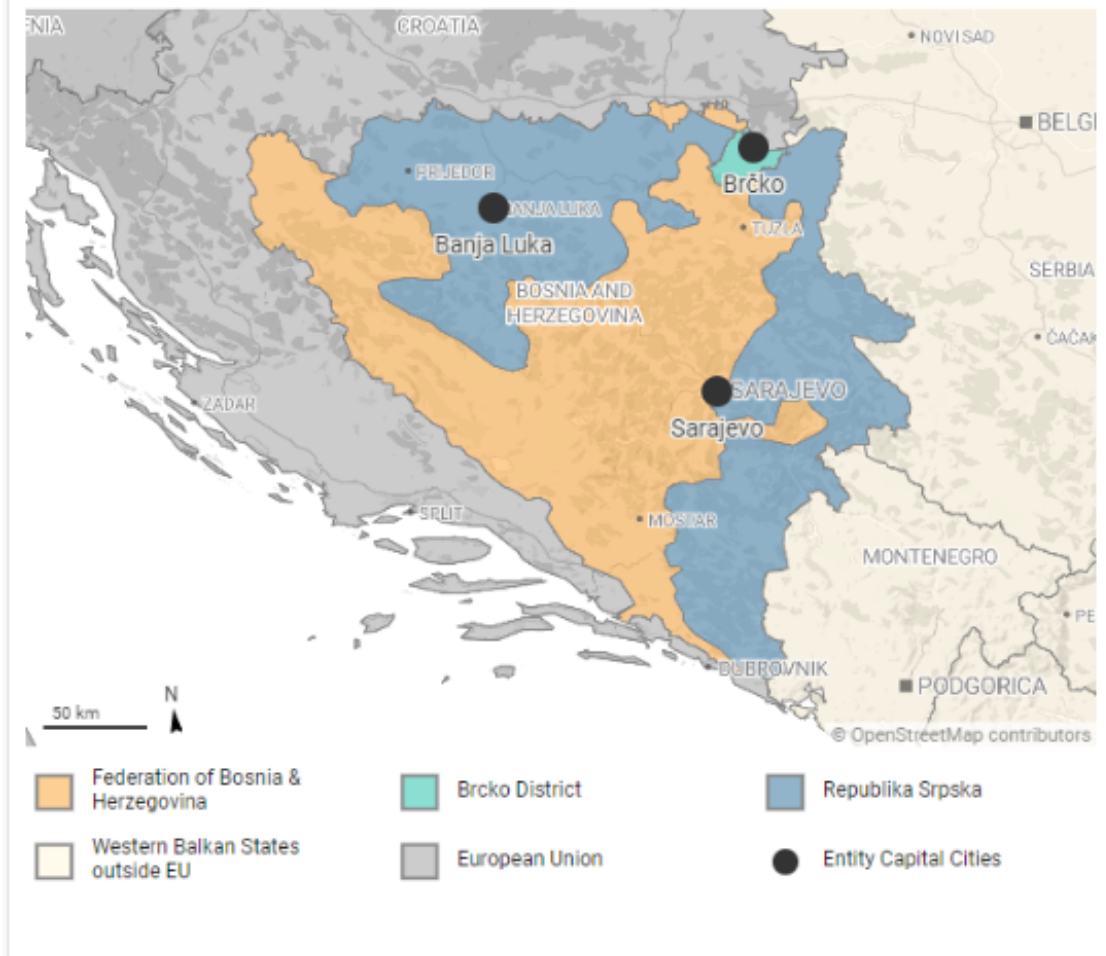
---

<sup>8</sup> Apart from the warring parties (BiH, Croatia & Yugoslavia), the accords were signed by delegates from the EU, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States (Dayton Agreement, 1995).

<sup>9</sup> Hereafter referred to as Federation of BiH, or simply the Federation.



**Figure 3.1: Bosnia & Herzegovina, Political Entities**



Next to entity-level ethnic divisions, the Federation of BiH, one of the entities, is itself divided into ten cantons that are also ruled based on ethnic divisions. The Washington agreement of 1994 divided the federation into ten cantons with their own governments and constituent ministries that are responsible for the legislative and executive functions of government (Washington Agreement, 1994). The federation has its own presidency with one Croat and one Bosniak member, and its own government of which at least a third has to be a Croat member. Apart from a central government, each canton has its government which has executive, legislative and judiciary power over the canton. Each canton's government should reflect the ethnic composition of its population (five cantons have a Bosniak majority, while three have a Croat majority, and two are mixed). The cantons have a high level of autonomy and carry the responsibilities<sup>10</sup> not expressly granted to the federal government (Washington agreement, 1994). On all these topics, the cantonal governments can reject federal and state-level decision-making, which has consequences on a wide range of issues including migration, as shown later (ibid).

On top of the ethnic divisions in the entities and the cantons, as described above, different sectors of the central government are divided along ethnic lines. Annex 4 describes the constitution of the newly founded state of Bosnia & Herzegovina and its institutions. The

<sup>10</sup> These are: Police, Education, Housing, Public Services, Land Use, Internal Financing, Social Welfare provision, Energy production, Tourism development and Radio & Television (Washington Agreement, 1994).

institutions and divisions relevant for this thesis are the parliamentary assembly, the presidency and the Council of Ministers (Dayton Agreement, 1995). All these three organs have a defined share of representation of one of the three ethnic groups. The presidency of BiH consists of three presidents, represented by one Bosniak, one Croat and one Serb. Both the higher and lower chamber of the parliamentary assembly consist of two-thirds of members from the Federation and a third of Serb members. Furthermore, they have a minimum number of seats assigned to each ethnic group. The Council of Ministers, the executive organ of the Bosnian government, counts nine ministers out of which no more than two-thirds of the ministers may be appointed from the Federation. The deputy ministers shall not be of the same ethnic group as their minister. Apart from the above-mentioned constituent parts, the constitutional court and the central bank also have their seats divided along ethnic lines. These different sectors of government are mentioned because their authorities and divisions allow them to influence migration management (see Chapter 4).

Throughout all of the geographical and institutional divisions mentioned above, representatives of the different ethnic groups hold veto powers on a wide range of issues. In Annex 4 of the Dayton Accords, where all layers of government are discussed, it is mentioned that whenever one ethnic group sees a decision as destructive to the vital interest of the group, they may block the decision. This practically means that if a majority of one ethnic group sees itself threatened by proposed legislation or activities, these proposals can be vetoed. This phenomenon can be witnessed at the higher levels of authority at the presidency of BiH until all the way down at the municipal level. This means that an almost absolute consensus needs to be reached for complicated political decisions, which in practice rarely happens (Markowitz, 2007).

As Chapters 4 and 5 show, this high degree of autonomy of the different political divisions and the possibilities for veto make the implementation of migration management in BiH a complicated matter. The high degree of autonomy has partially led to different entities and cantons heading their own way in dealing with migration management. Other cantons reject hosting any migrant at all (N1, 2020; Interview 8, 13-04-2022). Veto complicates decision-making on migration issues, notably at the level of the Council of Ministers, where budgets for migration management are decided. This internal division is further complicated by the amount of influence the international community has inside the institutions of BiH.

### *International Influence*

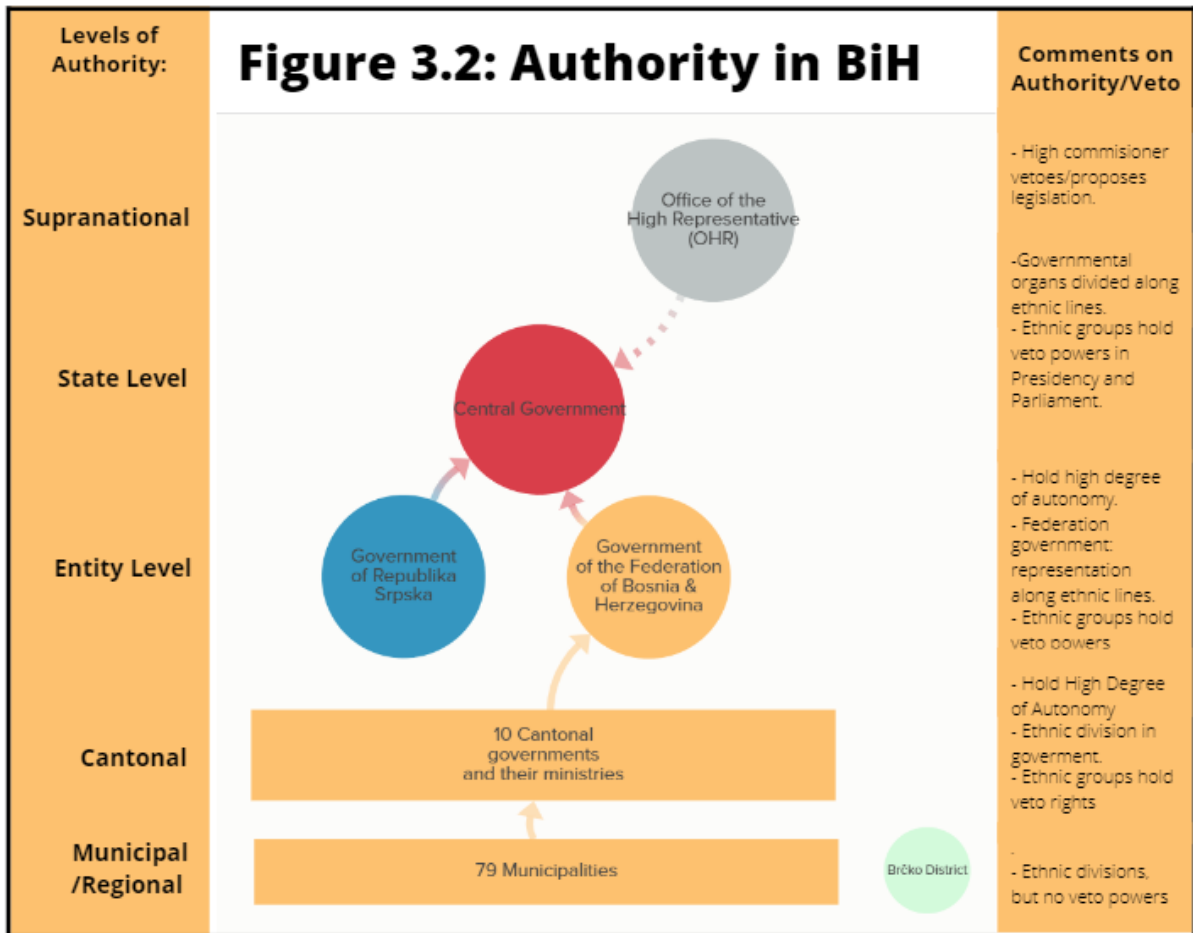
Next to the above-mentioned internal divisions inside BiH, the Dayton Accords grant the international community significant powers through, most notably, the High Representative for Bosnia & Herzegovina (HR). The HR is a foreign national with far-reaching powers that was installed through the Dayton Accords. He is appointed through UN security council resolutions and is mentioned in the accords as the final authority on its implementation. Therefore, he can fire governmental actors for not complying with the contents of Dayton. Apart from his influence on legislation, the HR is tasked to engage with non-governmental organisations inside BiH in their implementation of the Dayton Accords (1995).

While the Dayton Accords are not entirely clear on the powers of the HR, Dijkstra & Raadschelders (2022), claim that the HR and its office are responsible for interpreting their own authority, which in practice leads to a form of controlled democracy where the High Representative can practically veto governmental decisions for not complying with the Dayton Accords. Since its establishment, the HR has imposed laws and removed Bosnian functionaries more than 900 times, reportedly to commit to the accords (Mlinarević & Porobić, 2021b).

As the Dayton Accords were largely brokered by foreign powers, the institution of the High Representative can be considered a permanent presence of the international community inside the Bosnian political system. While various internationally-led peace negotiations were held since 1991, the Srebrenica massacres of 1995 were followed by increased international attention and mediation by various foreign regimes, notably the US (Mlinarević & Porobić, 2021a; Daalder, 1998). The peace agreements themselves have never been passed through the Bosnian parliament and the mediators have stayed involved in Bosnian politics ever since peace negotiations in 1995 through the establishment of the High Representative (Mlinarević & Porobić, 2021b). This foot inside Bosnian politics has turned out beneficial for the EU concerning migration management, as the following chapters show.

Apart from the HR and its office, a few other governmental organs contain foreign nationals. The members of the Human Rights Chamber were to be appointed by the Council of Europe, the European Court for Human Rights appointed three members of the constitutional court, and the International Monetary Fund appointed the governor of the Bosnian central bank plus similar dynamics can be seen in smaller institutions (Mlinarević & Porobić, 2021b; Dayton Accords, 1995). All these institutions have similar ethnic divisions amongst them as the governmental ones mentioned in the paragraphs above. However, the head of the institutions mentioned in this section always constituted a foreign national (ibid).

Through the previous paragraphs, it can be concluded that BiH has a complicated state system, with diffuse layers of authority, various possibilities for veto and includes a seat for a foreign official with far-reaching political powers. Figure 3.2 gives a visual simplification of the Bosnian state system relevant for migration management before moving on to the consequences of the unique state system of BiH.



### Consequences: Political deadlock and Foreign Influence

The dynamics described above have led to two salient consequences for the state of BiH. On the one hand, the state experiences political deadlock almost continuously, making the country challenging to run, while the practice of liberal peacebuilding allows for a high degree of political influence from external actors.

Due to the many layers of authority and the many options of veto inherent in the system, many political discussions face a deadlock in parliament. The Croatian nationalist party HDZ has been vetoing proposals for various budget changes in the past two years in order to advocate for changes in electoral law. As a result, various budget proposals in parliament have been turned down including proposals not on the topic of elections (France24, 2022; N1, 2021; Interview 22, 2022). Boycotts and vetoes are a common phenomenon in BiH making political decision-making by definition problematic, as almost all layers of government have access to vetoes (McEnvoy, 2013; Bahtić-Kunrath, 2011). Outside of the state political levels, also the entity and cantonal levels have a degree of autonomy that allows them to reject legislation, for example on migration as the next chapter shows.

In terms of foreign influence, the liberal peace is claimed to increase foreign influence over BiH. The general academic debate tends to agree that the hegemony of the West over other territories gets confirmed through peacebuilding paradigms and that it stabilises an unequal and unjust international order (Finkenbusch, 2021; Jabri 2016). Furthermore, it is claimed that it rarely results in the goals of developing markets and fostering peace as

intended (ibid). Similarly, the same can be said for BiH, Mlinarević & Porobić (2021) claim that the liberal values highlighted in the Dayton Accords did not lead to a peaceful and thriving state but led to the extraction of cheap labour, natural resources and profit from the territory of BiH through market liberalisation. In addition to the establishment of the HR, described above, this suggests a strong international influence on BiH.

Furthermore, the Dayton Accords led to a cessation of hostilities during the Bosnian war. However, the underlying causes of the fighting and claims for independence have never been addressed properly. Up until today, ethno-nationalist officials, notably Serb president Dodik, threaten to disintegrate the country of BiH in order to establish separate states (AFP, 2021; RFE, 2022).

These signs suggest that instead of becoming a strong, free market-oriented state, Bosnia is in a high state of dependency on international actors while facing internal instability. The internal instability is well illustrated by the media, as headlines mentioning a “political crisis” resurface in BiH continuously (e.g. Gadzo, 2021; Tamkin, 2018). Taking all these considerations into account, a general political opportunity structure can be defined for BiH.

## Current Political Opportunity Structure

This section presents the Bosnian state system as a political opportunity structure as defined by Tilly & Tarrow (2007c), the properties of a regime that explain why mechanisms produce differing results from one context to the other. Four properties of a political opportunity relevant to migration management are 1) The multiplicity of independent centres of power within it. 2) Its openness to new actors. 3) The instability of current political alignments. 4) the availability of influential allies. Shedding light on these properties of the regime allows for explaining the processes of migration management and its substituent mechanisms.

As defined above, BiH has an extraordinary multiplicity of independent centres of power. The country has a state, two entities and ten cantonal governments that legislate, execute and can veto related to migration management.

The openness to new actors engaging in the field can be considered high in Bosnia. The independent centres of power are allowed to engage in their own foreign relations outside of the central government. Simultaneously, the system inherently allows for a high degree of international intervention. For the same reasons, there is an availability of influential allies (property 4), as the US, EU and other international actors are inherently involved in Bosnian politics.

Current political alignments, as political alignments in BiH in general, are unstable. This can be witnessed by the continuous political deadlocks, media accounts and data through interviews that Bosnia almost continuously experiences a political crisis.

That being said, it can be concluded that BiH suffers from a political opportunity structure that makes dealing with politically complicated issues, such as a large influx of migrants, difficult to deal with. Political deadlocks and vetoes can be expected in any complicated issue, and it is highly likely that influential external actors meddle in the phenomena in Bosnia.

Based on the above, I deem the political opportunity structure in Bosnia a blueprint that facilitates European Union border externalisation policies: the encroachment of EU border policies onto third territories. Complications within the state structure will highly likely produce the need for external actors to get involved in migration management, while the European Union already has its foot within the state structure in addition to being BiH's main

trade and development partner. For these reasons, in combination with data from the literature review (see Chapter 2), it can be expected that the Bosnian state structure facilitates EU border externalisation.

## Summary

This chapter has examined the state system of BiH as established through the Dayton Accords of 1995 and which is still in place today. The state system of BiH is a unique system, which has institutionalised ethnic divisions by assigning each ethnic group: “Bosniaks”, “Serbs” & “Croats” a defined representation in almost all of the state institutions. In higher layers of government (Presidency, Parliament, Federation government, cantonal governments), regulations and decisions can be vetoed if a majority of one of the ethnic groups sees itself threatened.

Apart from ethnic power divisions, the state of BiH grants power to a range of international actors to arrange domestic affairs such as the High Representative, a foreign official that can instigate law changes and fire Bosnian officials, and the head of the central bank which is appointed by the International Monetary Fund. Many of the aspects of the Dayton Accords can be seen as constituent practices of liberal peacebuilding, dominant policy strategies to foster peace and democracy through market liberalisation. How the practice of liberal peacebuilding affects migration management is further discussed later on.

Based on the internal divisions and international rule in Bosnia analysed in this chapter, a political opportunity structure was defined. The political structure, with diffuse centres of authority, low state capacity and a high degree of influence for external actors can be considered a blueprint where external influence can be expected in case of politically complicated issues. Upon this structural background, the mechanisms and processes of migration management and EU externalisation policies are analysed in the following chapters.

Now that the political opportunity structure has been defined, the next chapter discusses the first process identified through the field research: the internationalisation of migration management between 2017-2021. Understanding the divisions and relationships that this chapter defined as a phenomenon of liberal peacebuilding helps to understand the processes and dynamics described in the remainder of this thesis.



## Chapter 4: Migration Flows inside BiH and the Internationalisation of Migration Management, 2017-2021

“IOM is here in Bosnia, in the first place, because there is a lack of response from the Bosnian government, nor will, nor funding, nor capacity. We assist the Bosnian government in increasing this capacity.” ~ High-ranking IOM officer (Interview 20, 19-05-2022).

The above quote is illustrative of the migration management regime that could be witnessed in BiH from 2017 - 2021. This regime consists of a large range of actors that, depending on the specific moment in time cooperate, overlap or engage in “decoupled” forms of migration management (Scholten & Penninx, 2016).

As part of the process-tracing methodology, ethnographic fieldwork has identified two consecutive processes of migration management and EU border externalisation. These processes are: “the internationalisation of migration management from 2017 - 2021” and “the local turn since 2021”. The first process is the main object of scrutiny in this chapter.

For the purpose of this process-mechanisms analysis, the information in this chapter is organised as follows. Firstly, the chapter describes the relevant aspects of internationalisation. This descriptive part of this chapter is largely based on interviews with international NGO staff, relevant Bosnian governmental authorities, locals witnessing and aiding PoM and observations with NGOs and PoM alike, making a thick description of the situation and its processes feasible. Data from the field was triangulated with data from academic literature and by a document analysis pre- and post-field research. Based on these descriptions, I claim that the process of internationalisation is characterised by governmental inaction which led to the appearance of diverse actors on the field.

Secondly, this chapter describes how the migration management activities unfolded under a transnational regime. Furthermore, it discusses the salient consequences of the process and looks at them through a lens of EU externalisation. These are characterised by a highly regional concentration of migrants and migration management, an increase in Bosnian discontent with the BiH government and the phenomenon of backlogs that contribute to a dysfunctional Bosnian asylum system.

Thirdly, this chapter defines a sequence of mechanisms that enabled the internationalisation of migration management. These mechanisms are: “disregard”, “venueshopping” and “contracting”. Their causal working is explained in the respective section. Combined, this chapter illustrates how transnational migration management appeared in BiH and how this relates to externalisation.

### Internationalisation of Migration Management in BiH

The process-tracing done through ethnographic fieldwork has identified the process of internationalisation of migration management, which is described in this section. The relevant aspects of this process that this section describes are, on the one hand, the influx of migrants in BiH in 2017 and subsequent governmental inaction on the other, the arrival of international governmental organisations and other actors to the field of migration management and the general unfolding of migration management as an EU-sponsored activity throughout the period.

### *The Arrival of Migration Flows and Subsequent Governmental Inaction:*

After the closure of the Balkan corridor (see Introduction), the rerouting of PoM through Bosnia & Herzegovina started. Since then, the country witnessed 24,000 arrivals to its territory in 2018. This increased every year until 2020, with a slight drop in 2021 (Safić, 2021) This rerouting marked the start of the Balkan Route through BiH and the start of migration management in the country (Bobić & Šantić, 2020, Deidda, 2020).

A major finding of the research project is that government authorities have refrained from engaging in migration management since the beginning. Informants from all across the migration management regime underscored that there was inaction from the Bosnian government. Activists and local inhabitants from Una-Sana canton, a hotspot of the migration flows, commented that the government did not offer a response to the influx of migration between 2017 and 2021. Additionally, the IOM and EU informants that prepared Bosnia for an influx of migration stated that the state has remained inactive in its response (Interview 4, 04-04-2022; Interview 22, 26-05-2022). These accusations are confirmed by a high-ranking Bosnian politician who claimed that; “We have only been doing something about migration in the last two years<sup>11</sup>” (Interview 21, 19-05-2022). The only activity that the Bosnian authorities were involved in continuously since 2017 was the registration of PoM into the asylum system, executed by the Service for Foreigner’s Affairs (SFA) (SFA, 2022; Interview 5, 05-04-2022).

A clear cause for inaction could not be identified through field research. However, informants did offer suggestions. Authorities within the Ministry of Security mentioned that the state did not have the capacity to engage in a response to migration management. This is confirmed by officials from two large NGOs that have been active in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2017 who both stated that additionally, the state did not show any willingness to engage in the migration issue and preferred to let Europe and international organisations solve the problem. While a clear causal mechanism could not be defined through the available data, the *political opportunity structure* did provide the institutional background for this inaction (See Conclusion).

The governmental inaction had consequences for both the living conditions of PoM inside BiH and the externalisation policies that the EU executed through the presence of international NGOs that arrived to BiH, as these offered a response to the migration influx soon after the arrival of PoM to BiH.

### *2018: Arrival of NGOs and the Unfolding of Migration Management in BiH*

Now that the lack of governmental action has been introduced, it becomes feasible to describe the arrival of international NGOs in BiH and make sense of it related to other forms of migration management. In the period of 2017-2021, the EU became the main actor in the field of migration management in Bosnia, mostly through its main implementing partner; the international organisation for migration (IOM). Apart from that, various other international and local NGOs, mostly funded by the EU, started engaging in migration management during the period. Furthermore, a lack of government response was compensated for by Bosnian citizens and activists starting to engage in migration management themselves (Ahmetašević & Mlinarević, 2018).

While the BiH government did not respond to the influx of PoM since 2017, both the EU and the IOM started working on preparedness in 2015/2016. Before the arrival of the

---

<sup>11</sup> Meaning only in 2021 and 2022.



PoM into BiH in the winter of 2017/2018, BiH had two asylum seeker camps inside the country, the Salakovac camp close to the capital Sarajevo and the Delijas camp in the Herzegovina-Neretva region of the country. Occupancy of these two camps has generally been low, because Bosnia never received a significant number of asylum applications (Interview 7, 08-04-2022). These two camps can be considered as an example of migration management prior to 2017. When numbers of PoM indeed started rising in the winter of 2017/2018, thousands of PoM were to be found on the streets and in abandoned houses in both the Una-Sana canton and Sarajevo. Back then, the IOM expressed that a response to the newly emerging migration flows would be necessary (Interview 4, 04-04-2022). The Bosnian authorities did not respond to this call, which was confirmed by both IOM officials and Bosnian state officials alike (Interview 4; 04-04-2022; Interview 5, 05-04-2022; Interview 21, 19-05-2022). As this call was not answered by Bosnian authorities, an EU-financed IOM, which was already present in BiH since the 90s, started working on a migration response themselves.

Instead of cooperating with the central government, the IOM engaged in *venueshopping*, bypassing state authorities to engage with local authorities (Panizzon & van Riemsdijk, 2018). In the three cantons with a high influx of migration (see Figure 4.1), The IOM arranged an initial response to the migration influx with local authorities. These are the cantons of Una-Sana, Tuzla and Sarajevo and their relevant municipalities.

Through *venueshopping*, the IOM and local authorities identified the first camp for hosting the migrant population in the town of Cazin, a former hotel named Sedra that opened space for hosting up to 400 PoM (Safić, 2022). Over the remainder of 2018, three other camps were opened in the Una-Sana canton, in a similar vein. The establishment of the temporary reception centres (TRCs), in all these cases, happened through the IOM bypassing central state authorities and collaborating with local authorities in the Una-Sana canton. The IOM collaboration with the Bihać municipality led to the establishment of the Vucjak, Borici and Bira camps, and in Velika Kladusa the Miral camps. The Bira, Sedra and Miral camps were all private properties, identified by the IOM and rented with EU support, as claimed by IOM officers, EU delegates and local authorities such as the municipality of Bihać (Interview 4, 04-04-2022; Interview 9, 22-04-2022; Interview 17, 11-05-2022). The engagement of the IOM with local authorities can be understood as a form of decoupled migration management, where locally executed migration management happens in absence of coordination between the different policy levels (Scholten & Penninx, 2016). As later sections show, this decoupled form of migration management is characteristic for the 2017-2021 period.

Along with the IOM, a large range of other NGOs, mostly international, increasingly became present on the field in 2018 and 2019. Various UN-affiliated organisations have shown their presence (UNHCR, UNFPA, UNICEF) and other international NGOs (Danish Refugee Council, Save the Children, Medicines du Monde, Caritas, Catholic Refugee Services, Ipsia, Jesuit Refugee Services) in addition to the Bosnian Red Cross. Most of these NGOs started to engage in migration management since the number of PoM started to increase in 2018. These entered the field with service distributions in TRCs and outreach<sup>12</sup> activities. Various observers have described the response as ad-hoc measures to deal with large flows of people that the state had no capacity to deal with (Interview 9, 22-04-2022; Interview 20, 18-05-2022). In the 2017-2021 period, the presence of these organisations can

---

<sup>12</sup> Outreach are NGO service provisions that reach PoM outside of official TRCs, such as food distributions and information campaigns (DRC, 2020).

be witnessed in outreach activities and in offering services at the TRCs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This illustrates that the response was highly transnational.

Out of the aforementioned international organisations, the majority claimed that the EU is the main funder of migration management in BiH. The main implementer of migration management, the IOM, is almost completely funded by the EU (IOM, 2021; Interview 4, 04-04-2022; Interview 22, 26-05-2022). This is confirmed by both the IOM and EU officials inside the country. Furthermore, the Danish Refugee Council, which has taken a prominent role in providing health services at the camp, claimed that most of its funding comes from the EU (Interview 8, 13-04-2022). The claim of an EU official that the lion's share of migration management activities in BiH is funded by the EU is in line with NGO statements and by representatives of the Bosnian government, making it highly likely that NGO activity and migration management are EU-driven. This is a significant finding for externalisation and is discussed at a later stage in this thesis.

The above paragraphs describe the increasingly transnational character of migration management in BiH. Apart from an internationalised response, a national counter-response can be witnessed as well, which is discussed in the next section.

## Migration management and its Salient Consequences

While the description from the above section is relevant for understanding a lack of governmental action and external influence that cause the migration management, this section again employs description to portray the further unfolding of the migration management regime in BiH in order to define its salient consequences. These consequences are 1) increased local discontent towards the central government due to an unevenly distributed PoM population and governmental inaction 2) Local actors and international volunteers appearing to fill the gaps and 3) a backlog that makes the Bosnian asylum system practically dysfunctional. Consequences 1 and 2 are visible in specific regions only, due to the dispersed geographical nature of the migration management regime in BiH. In order to explain these consequences this section first comments on the geographical dispersion of migrants and its causes.

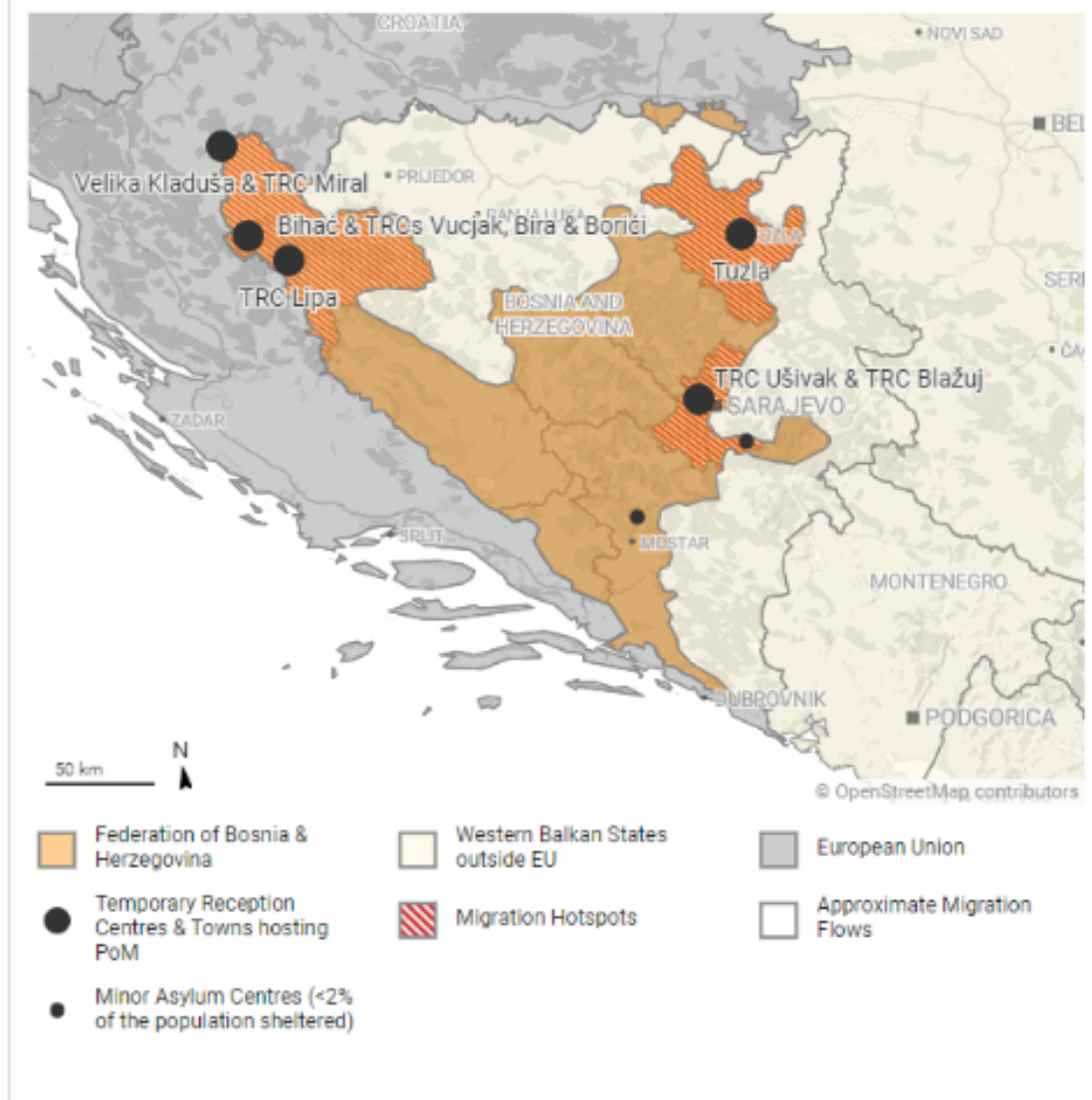
### *Regional Dimensions to Migration Management*

From 2017 up to the present, migration flows and migration management have seen a very localised response inside Bosnia and Herzegovina. Out of the Federation's ten cantons, only the Tuzla canton, Sarajevo canton and Una-Sana canton host migrants and offer migration management. This section discusses the geographical, political and external factors that led to a dispersed distribution of PoM throughout Bosnia.

Within BiH, migration towards Western Europe occurs along East-West routes. Generally, migrants enter the country from either Serbia or (to a lesser extent) Montenegro and exit the country from the Una-Sana canton in the North-West of the country. The dynamics of the migration routes are reflected in the places where migration management occurs (see Figure 4.1). Both the canton closest to the entry point (Tuzla) and the canton closest to the exit point (Una-Sana) have witnessed high populations of PoM that have subsequently led to international NGOs being present in these regions. Additionally, Sarajevo, the capital, has witnessed large populations of PoM travelling through for various reasons such as housing or services offered by NGOs. These geographical factors contribute to the geographical dispersion of migration management.

Political factors also contribute to the geographical distributions of a migration response. Both the Republika Srpska entity and 7 out of 10 cantons of the Federation refuse to contribute to migration management inside the country, leaving three cantons with the job of hosting PoM. This refusal by Republika Srpska and the cantons is possible due to the high degree of autonomy that the regions hold. Throughout the studied period, the Serbian member of the presidency has claimed that *migrants have no place in Republika Srpska*. Informants from the field have confirmed Republika Srpska’s rejection (N1, 2020; Euractiv, 2021, Interview 3, 25-03-2022; Interview 8, 13-04-2022). The cantons of the federation engaged in similar vetoes regarding the hosting of migrants. This political blockage functions as a mechanism that the next section discusses.

**Figure 4.1: Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina Migration Management and Hotspots, 2017 - 2022**



Additionally, external dimensions affect the local distributions of PoM in BiH, particularly in the Una-Sana canton. The Una Sana canton is the main region from where PoM cross the border to Croatia on their way to Western Europe, but it is also the region where PoM face the highest degree of so-called pushbacks and other deterrence

mechanisms. Pushbacks are the forced expulsions of migrants/refugees by state or other border authorities from one territory to another without regard for their personal circumstances or their (potential) asylum procedure (ECCHR, 2022). This is a practice witnessed in various locations along the borders of the European Union, notably Greece, Hungary and more recently the Croatian-Bosnian border (Koka & Veshi, 2020; Valenta et al. 2019). While pushbacks are a controversial topic denied by Croatian authorities and EU authorities alike, due to their disregarding of human rights law and the refugee convention, they are systematically claimed to happen on a daily basis on the Bosnian-Croatian borders since 2018.

The Border Violence Monitoring Network (BVMN), an umbrella organisation for various organisations active on the refugee routes, and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), an international NGO present inside BiH, have been reporting on the issue extensively since 2017 and 2018 respectively (BVMN, 2020; Ahmetašević & Mlinarević, 2021; Interview 12, 29-04-2022). The abovementioned actors report on pushbacks through the collection of testimonies from PoM that experienced the pushbacks. DRC has recorded over 30.000 pushbacks from Croatia to Bosnia between 2019-2021. Similarly, BVMN has reported 24.990 pushbacks since 2017 in the Balkans region, of which 45% were from Croatia to BiH (ECRE, 2021; BVMN, 2022). During fieldwork, almost all informants (Bosnian locals, NGO employees, IOM officers, SFA functionaries, and local politicians of Una-Sana Canton) claimed that pushbacks were the main reason for the high rates of PoM in Una-Sana and subsequent migration management activities. Additionally, all PoM of the over 50 PoM I encountered during the research period reported having experienced pushbacks at least once during their journey. While the pushbacks have received significant attention in international media and NGO reports, informants from higher layers of the BiH government and an EU representative were not able to comment on the topic. These pushbacks are partially responsible for Bosnia becoming, what Nezirović et al. call: a depot for unwanted migrants (Nezirović et al. 2021).

The dynamics discussed above have led to migration management and populations of PoM becoming concentrated in only three cantons of BiH. In these regions, close to 90.000 individuals resided during 2017-2022 (IOM, 2022b). Simultaneously, almost all NGO activity in the country and a large share of migration management by locals<sup>13</sup> happened in these parts of the country. As the next section shows, this had negative consequences for the local population, and the asylum system has led to other actors stepping in.

#### *Consequence 1: Increased Local Discontent*

A combination of lack of engagement of the authorities and the uneven distribution of PoM in the country led to discontent amongst the local population, particularly in the Una-Sana canton. In 2019, BiH saw another increase of PoM entering and transiting its territory and witnessed more people on the streets of the before-mentioned hotspots than the year before. The Una-Sana canton in the North-west of BiH saw the development of what has been referred to as a crisis, both in media, NGO and academic reports (BVMN, 2021; Deidda, 2020; N1, 2022). In 2019, the number of people on the streets in Una-Sana increased, which subsequently led to the opening of new reception centres combined with

---

<sup>13</sup> See “Filling the gaps” section below.

an increase in negative reporting on PoM in the media<sup>14</sup>. Due to the nature of the transnationally governed migration regime and the different layers of BiH government, various forms of tension and conflict surfaced; notably, tensions between Bosnians and PoM that altered the migration management system and tensions between the official regime and locals, which this section discusses.

Although Bosnians have shown a strong sense of solidarity with PoM since 2017, throughout 2019 more tensions related to migration could be witnessed in Bosnian society. Bosnian nationals that were interviewed commented that after more than a year of hospitality, inhabitants of the Bosnian hotspots started to grow wary of the constant influx of migration. The towns of Bihać and Velika Kladusa in the Una Sana Canton, both counting a population of around 40.000 inhabitants, have been seeing multiple thousands of migrants squatting and being present in their surroundings. Simultaneously, media reports started reporting more negatively on having migrants in the country, their supposed relation to crime and the inaction of NGOs to change something about the situation. These tensions happened when the Bira camp, located in the centre of the town of Bihać hosted more than 1500 migrants, its official maximum capacity (Imamović, 2019; LA times, 2019). Locals living in the vicinity of the reception centres were increasingly protesting the situation while hospitality towards the PoM decreased (Imamović, 2019). This led to the closure of the Bira camp as claimed by various local aid workers and an informant from the mayor's office of Bihac (Interview 9, 22-04-2022; Interview 17, 11-05-2022).

This local discontent was expressed in a variety of ways; local activists and NGO workers aiding migrants were threatened continuously and the discourse that the Bosnian government and international NGOs were not interested in solving the situation for the local population started to increase. This was claimed by all interviewed Bosnian informants from all three cantons hosting migrants (e.g. Interview 1, 09-03-2022; Interview 16, 10-06-2022). As expressed by one Bosnian national working for one international NGO throughout the crisis: “Those who had to pay the price of the migration crisis were those who had nothing to do with it, they were the local population” (Interview 9; 22-04-2022).

### *Consequence 2: Filling the Gaps: Diverse Actors on the Field and a Lack of Coordination*

Parallel to the development of the transnational migration regime, a diverse range of actors entered the field that claimed the official response to migration flows was not adequate. These actors, consisting of a wide range of Bosnian locals and volunteer NGOs, stepped in to fill the gaps that the official responses left behind (Mlinarević & Ahmetasević, 2018; Placek, 2020). This section discusses their role on the field and the gaps they claim to fill.

Since 2017, prior to the establishment of an international migration management regime, local actors from BiH have offered aid to PoM in various ways in various locations throughout the country. As Mlinarević & Ahmetašević (2018) illustrate, local assistance to PoM has been witnessed in all areas of BiH, including the areas where there is no official assistance for PoM. During the fieldwork, interviews were conducted with six Bosnian nationals who fitted the category described above. While some of them supported PoM individually, others established NGOs throughout the 2017-2022 period. What all of these actors showed consensus on was the statement that the response from both the Bosnian state and the international community has not been adequate in responding to the migration flows since 2017. Various actors claimed that the authorities were doing nothing and that the

---

<sup>14</sup> Largely referred to as “Illegal migrants” in main Bosnian media outlets and state authorities alike (N1, 2022; Interview 5, 05-04-2022).

EU funded internationalised migration management regime was more effective in defending the interests of the EU than improving the situation of PoM or Bosnian nationals (Interview 13, 06-05-2022; Interview 14, 06-05-2022).

Another group of actors that emerged to fill the gaps can be described as volunteer NGOs, smaller international NGOs mostly run by volunteers, that have been offering a response to migration. During fieldwork, observations and personal contacts with three of the volunteer NGOs were conducted. Like the local actors on the field, the volunteer NGOs claimed that the regular response to migration in BiH is not adequate and claimed to be addressing the gaps that the migration management system left.

Local actors and NGOs alike faced obstacles in executing their activities with PoM, partly due to legal barriers related to the field. While both groups experienced threats from dissatisfied locals, both groups also faced state repression. Local activists often faced the police trying to stop their activities with PoM, claiming it undermines the migration management system. Volunteer NGOs faced similar threats, while additionally experiencing legal hurdles or expulsions from the country for aiding migrants.

The above dynamics were explained by Bosnian governmental actors to be undermining the official policies of hosting PoM in camps, and a lack of coordination was experienced to complicate matters rather than solve them. Both volunteers and locals alike understood government repression to be a part of European strategies to keep PoM away from the border and in camps located outside of the urban centres.

This emergence of various actors on the field and their conflict can be seen as a response to a migration management regime that was considered inadequate, as claimed by the different actors described above.

### *Consequence 3: Backlog and Asylum System*

The last consequence, mainly relating to the lack of state action towards migration, is a backlog of asylum applications that BiH has ended up with since 2017, as more than 85.000 people entered the country since 2017 and most of them ended up in the asylum system.

The core problem with this backlog is that the Bosnian state did not (and still does not) distinguish between PoM with an intention to seek asylum and those passing through to Western Europe (see Introduction) (Interview 7, 08-04-2022). Those wishing to apply for asylum have to register with the SFA in BiH and clarify their attestation for asylum, this gives them the so-called white card that grants access to TRCs and in theory enables them to take the next steps in the asylum procedure within 14 days (Refugees.info, 2018). In practice, also those PoM with no interest in applying for asylum register for the white card for the purpose of staying in the TRCs for a limited amount of time or simply because they do not understand what they are registering for, as claimed by UNHCR informants and camp staff alike (Interview 7, 08-04-2022; Interview 10, 24-04-2022).

Apart from the UNHCR, other consulted INGOs and Bosnian state institutions claimed tens of thousands of PoM applied for asylum without the intention of staying in the country (Interview 3, 25-03-2022; Interview 9, 22-04-2022). The UNHCR claims that, in figures from 2021, that since 2017 more than 75.000 PoM have been registered as asylum-seekers, while between 90 and 100% of those requesting asylum disappeared from the country before receiving a decision (UNHCR, 2021; Interview 7, 08-04-2022). In practice, this means that the SFA, the authority tasked with asylum applications, has to go through tens of thousands of asylum applications although they cannot handle them in a timely manner, according to UNHCR informants (ibid). This leads to asylum applications taking a year or longer to be finalised, often to find out that the applicant has long since left the



country. This problem has been acknowledged by both SFA and Ministry of Security informants during fieldwork (Interview 5, 05-04-2022; Interview 9, 22-04-2022).

This backlog and lack of action from the BiH authorities since the beginning of 2017 have made the country end up with a large backlog that makes the Bosnian asylum system dysfunctional. In the meantime, the UNHCR claims to advise the Bosnian authorities on improving the asylum system. Drafted improvements have so far not passed through parliament (Interview 7, 08-04-2022).

## Mechanisms at work: Disregard, Venueshopping & Contracting

So far, this chapter has been concerned with the description of the identified process of internationalisation of migration management. This section defines and discusses the workings of the mechanisms that enabled this process, as part of the process-mechanisms analysis. This approach regards processes to be constituted of mechanisms: “a delimited class of changes that alter relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations” (Tilly & Tarrow, 2007b, p.29). Through the data, three mechanisms were inferred.

The first mechanism that enabled internationalisation was an attitude of *disregard* by the Bosnian central government. The PoM that entered the country between 2017 and 2021 have barely seen a response from the Bosnian central government, which led to the involvement of international organisations and Bosnian citizens to offer a response instead. This disregard has left gaps in the response to the number of PoM that were already identified and expected by the EU and the IOM beforehand. Disregarding these flows of migration eventually led to other actors picking up the response, which a range of international organisations came to execute.

While suggesting passivity, I understand *disregard* to be an active mechanism of the Bosnian authorities. The Bosnian state has two ministries that are charged with dealing with migration flows in the country: the Ministry of Security and the Ministry of Refugees & Human Rights. While the former only engaged in the procedure of asylum applications in the 2017-2021 period, the latter did not take part in the migration response at all. Additionally, as claimed by IOM, the EU and NGO informants, the Bosnian authorities were informed and prepared to expect an increased influx of migration but decided not to act (Interview 04-04-2022; Interview 5, 05-04-2022). Various interviewed Bosnian politicians commented that their institutions either underestimated the seriousness of the issue or stated that they expected the European Union to offer a response instead. Based on these observations, disregard can be understood as an active mechanism.

A second mechanism in the sequence that was identified through fieldwork is *venueshopping*. The gap left by the disregard of the central government was filled by *venueshopping*: the identification of competent on the field (Panizzon & van Riemsdijk, 2019). As claimed by IOM informants, the agency funded by the EU reached out to various other actors on the field instead, which were found in the Una-Sana and Sarajevo cantons. In the Una-Sana canton, the cantonal government, three municipalities and various private individuals owning large properties were identified for collaboration. Through negotiations with these actors, camp locations and management strategies for PoM were agreed upon. Finally, the identification of relevant actors led to the management of TRCs in locations approved and funded by the EU, giving them a high degree of authority. The dynamics written in this paragraph were confirmed by informants throughout the migration



management sector, most notably the local politicians that were part of the negotiations (Interview 17, 11-05-2022; Interview 21, 19-05-2022).

In sequence with *venueshopping*, the *contracting* of NGOs by the EU was identified as a final mechanism. The main implementer of migration management in BiH, the IOM, is almost fully funded and its activities agreed upon by the EU. Furthermore, almost all other NGOs receive their funding either directly or indirectly from the EU to engage in their migration management activities, as identified through fieldwork. Even though UN agencies and the various international church-affiliated organisations have their own mandate and source their funding from elsewhere, they operate in the camps that are constructed and run completely through EU funding.

The role of NGOs as subcontractors of the EU has been studied before by Lavenex (2015), who claims that particularly the IOM can be seen as a contractor executing EU policies. Unlike other UN agencies in BiH, the IOM is the only UN agency that has to do its own fundraising for migration management activities, signifying an institutional dependency on external actors. Additionally, the IOM has a less clearly defined mandate than, for example, the UNHCR, which is also active in migration management in BiH that has its activities linked to the 1952 refugee convention (ibid). This makes the IOM a more suitable contracting partner for migration management activities as its activities are more open to negotiation. This is reflected in the fact that the IOM has tenfold the staff compared to UNHCR and received more than €100 million of EU funds for migration management in the studied period (IOM, 2022a). One EU representative went as far as calling the IOM a “for-profit organisation” that the IOM is a for-profit organisation, illustrating the relationship of IOM as a contractor of the EU.

The sequence of *disregard-venueshopping-contracting* suggests the causal factors of the process of internationalisation of migration and its subsequent consequences as discussed in this chapter. These mechanisms function on the political opportunity structure defined in chapter 1 and facilitate European border externalisation as will be discussed in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

## Summary

This chapter has described the process of the establishment of a transnationally governed migration management regime in BiH since the arrival of large numbers of PoM in 2017. Due to a lack of government involvement in the matter, and the EU and the IOM preparing a response to migration flows in the region, a migration management regime consisting of large INGOs engaging with cantonal governments and municipalities in offering a response to the flows can be witnessed.

The consequences of these dynamics are multifold. Firstly, migration hotspots became highly localised not only due to geographical factors but also due to the international community acting in specific regions of the country; the Una-Sana, Sarajevo and Tuzla cantons. This means a limited share of the local population had to carry the burden of hosting thousands of PoM in their respective regions. This caused tensions and renewed discontent toward the Bosnian government. Secondly, the country ended up with an asylum seeker backlog of such a length that the asylum system can practically be considered dysfunctional. Upon the state system and its unique institutionalised relationships between different ethnicities, defined in the previous chapter, these processes and their

consequences evolved. A sequence of three mechanisms enabling the process under scrutiny was identified.

Due to the mechanism of *disregard* of the central government and a high degree of autonomy of municipalities and cantonal governments, the EU and the IOM could employ the mechanisms of *venueshopping* for authorities and partners in executing migration management, which were the Bihać, Cazin and Velika Kladusa municipalities, the Una-Sana cantonal government and a range of local individuals such as the owner of the Sedra hotel which became a TRC in 2018 (Safić, 2021). Subsequently, through *contracting*, the EU and the IOM contracted a range of (I)NGOs to offer service provisions for PoM. The mechanism of *disregard* and the EU- and IOM-initiated mechanisms of *venueshopping* and *contracting* paved the way for enabling an increasingly transnational response to migration management in BiH between 2017 and 2021. From 2021 onwards, the process of the *local turn* could be witnessed, which the next chapter discusses.

## Chapter 5: The state steps in: a “local turn” in migration management?

Since late 2020/early 2021 a second process regarding migration management, “the local turn”, in BiH can be witnessed. As a countertrend to the internationalisation of migration management since 2017, an increasingly important role of the Bosnian state can be observed in taking over the response to migration flows. Since then, the state started getting involved in running camps and taking charge of coordination between the actors on the field. Simultaneously, the state plans to transition various NGO-led activities back to state responsibility, such as the provision of health services for PoM. Because this thesis is concerned with identifying the processes and mechanisms of migration management and EU externalisation, this chapter discusses the local turn.

The local turn coincided with a change of guard within the political regime. Since the admission of Selmo Cikotić as the minister of security, the Ministry of Security started acting proactively in offering a response to the migration flows in Bosnia & Herzegovina. This change within the *political opportunity structure*, described in Chapter 3, was essential in facilitating this local turn, as this chapter describes below.

In order to comment on the mechanisms and salient consequences of this second identified process of migration management, this chapter is organised as follows: First, the identified local turn is defined and linked to the academic perspectives on a local turn from peacebuilding and development studies. Secondly, the process and applicability of the local turn in BiH are described. Thirdly, the local turn is discussed as a process guided by the influence of international NGOs and the EU. Fourth, the salient consequences are discussed. Finally, mechanistic explanations are given for the process of the local turn and what this means for EU border externalisation.

Combined, these descriptions and mechanisms aspire to offer a thick description of the current migration management system in BiH, its issues and how they can be understood as an example of EU border externalisation.

### Local turn: Definitions and Academic debate

The *local turn* is a concept or process referred to in various social sciences, notably in studies on peacebuilding, development or migration studies (Finkenbusch, 2021; Paffenholz, 2015; Emilsson, 2015). A local turn relates to activities executed by an international range of actors, such as migration management, peacebuilding or other, where more local actors become increasingly engaged in the process. Generally, this can be witnessed in regional governments taking charge of integration projects (ibid), formulating peacebuilding strategies on a more local level as opposed to global, or offering alternatives to international development based on local epistemologies (Emilsson, 2015; Escobar, 2015).

A local turn is often claimed to be an alternative to universalist, hegemonic approaches where international actors implement policies in third countries. As opposed to these hegemonic approaches, claimed to leave third countries in a state of dependency rather than improvement, a local turn is often presented as a panacea for peacebuilding (MacGinty & Richmond, 2013). Sceptics of the local turn often criticise the stance for its romanticising of the local or ignoring global structures (ibid). By placing the BiH case into this debate, the idea of the local turn as a panacea can be problematised.

By understanding the local turn as the process where the national authority takes over a process from transnational governance, the case of migration management in BiH fits

as an example of a local turn. Migration management increasingly became local from 2021, and local actors gained influence on the practice. However, the already-apparent international influence remains present, posing limits to the local turn.

As the remaining sections show, the local ownership of the migration management regime that is developing is a complicated one, characterised by contradictions.

## Description of the Local Turn in Migration Management

This section describes the process of the local turn since 2021 which consists of 1) a description of a turnover in the political landscape, 2) the unfolding of transitions of NGO activities to state ownership and 3) the state taking charge of coordination activities.

### *Change of Administration and Increased Commitment to Migration Management*

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Bosnian government was barely involved in migration management until 2021, when it started taking over functions related to PoM. Through fieldwork, it was assessed that the entering office of Selmo Cikotić was essential for the Bosnian state to step into migration management. Informants that consisted of various government officers and high-ranking officers from NGOs commented that the admission of Cikotić correlated with an increase of efforts by the state.

The informants had varying explanations on why exactly the change of one individual within the government could lead to drastic changes in migration management. But on the question *if* there were drastic changes since the admission of Cikotić there was a clear consensus amongst governmental and NGO authorities (e.g. Interview 9, 22-04-2022; Interview 11, 28-04-2022). This suggests a cause of the turnover that enabled a local turn in migration management.

While the admission of Cikotić was in 2020, the state visibly got more engaged in executing migration management in 2021. According to the informants, the government took an active role in coordination between different actors of migration governance and started to facilitate various transitions from transnational migration management to state-run activities. This was particularly visible since the taking over of migration management in TRC Lipa in November 2021 (IOM, 2021; Interview 22, 26-05-2022) These findings put the period between the admission of Cikotić in July 2020 and the subsequent takeover of activities in the Lipa camp in November 2021 at the starting point of the local turn of migration management (IOM, 2021). After this initial period, various transitions from NGO to state can be witnessed.

### *Transitions from Global to State*

Through fieldwork various trends of the local turn in migration management were identified, notably the increased Bosnian initiative in TRCs, the provision of security forces in TRCs and the start of the transition of health services for PoM to the state. This section discusses these developments.

The first case of the BiH government taking charge of migration management was the case when the temporary tent camp Lipa burned down in December 2020. The camp opened earlier in 2020 and was reported to lack most of the basic facilities for PoM such as heating and water supplies. It was run by the IOM with the assistance of various INGOs until the IOM decided that due to *mostly political reasons* the needed services could not be provided (IOM, 2020; UNHCR, 2020). On December 23rd, 2020, the day of the planned closure, the camp burned down for reasons that are not proven. In the months following the

burning down of the camp, which left more than 1500 PoM in the cold, the Service for Foreigner's Affairs (SFA) started to prepare for a state take-over of the camp. After the burning down of the camp, the SFA took over the provision of emergency tents to provide a provisional option for hosting people until a new camp would be finished. The Bosnian Council of Ministers, one of the highest decision-making bodies of the country, approved that the location of the burned-down Lipa camp would be used for establishing a state-run temporary reception centre. This was the first decision of its kind in the Bosnian central government related to migration management (Sarajevo times, 2020). Up until today, the camp is run by the SFA (Interview 10, 24-04-2022).

In the meantime, various informants from both the IOM and the Bosnian Ministry of Security mentioned that the state increasingly taking control over camp activities takes place (Interview 10, 24-04-2022; Interview 18, 11-05-2022). For example, the security provision in all Bosnian TRCs became state-provided as claimed by both state authorities and the IOM. Prior to the state taking over, the IOM hired private security staff to safeguard the TRCs. At the time of writing a police body of the Ministry of Security took over this activity. One high-ranking official of the Ministry of Security described the process as a process of taking back control: "IOM spent millions on security in the camps, but they [security guards] did nothing, they had no mandate to intervene, they could simply observe and evacuate the staff when needed. Now since we got involved, we can finally control what is going on" (Interview 21, 19-05-2022).

Apart from taking ownership over running TRCs in BiH, the state takeover of functions related to PoM outside of camps can also be witnessed. At the time of fieldwork, in the first half of 2022, spokespersons from the Ministry of Security and the larger INGOs claimed that many services provided to PoM are in the process of transitioning. One notable transition that is currently ongoing is the transition from an NGO-run health system for PoM, to the inclusion of PoM into the state health system. The Danish refugee council (DRC), has been providing health treatments and referrals to hospitals throughout the 2018-2021 period and can be considered the main actor executing health in migration management. Various informants from DRC mentioned that their activities related to health will be transferred to the state, a process which was already taking place at the time of research but which is estimated to last between 2 and 3 years (Interview 8, 13-04-2022; Interview 12, 29-04-2022).

On the timespan and executability of the transitions above, a variety of actors expressed concerns. IOM informants are preparing the state for the takeover of camp management in other parts of the countries, but could not anticipate exact dates, because political decision-making slows down the process and makes the transition seem far off (Interview 18, 11-05-2022). Additionally, according to a DRC informant, a transition of health provision from NGO to the state would mean that PoM would not rely on NGOs providing doctors and health services, but that they would go to doctors and hospitals provided by the public system (Interview 12, 29-04-2022). It was commented that the transition has reached the stage of referring PoM to Bosnian public hospitals, while NGOs keep paying the bills for healthcare. A final transition would mean that the Bosnian state would finance their own migration management activities and localise the process, which is complicated by various factors as discussed later.

### *Coordination*

A third case where a local turn can be witnessed is a certain degree of leadership that the Bosnian state has been taking since 2021. All actors engaged in the official share of migration management claimed that before 2021, coordination efforts between actors on the field were limited due to limited participation of the state (Interview 11, 28-04-2022; Interview 12, 29-04-2022 ). Since 2021, the state has been present through cooperation with organisations on the field and engagement in daily coordination with actors on the field.

To illustrate the above, Informants in the Una-Sana canton described coordination as having periodical meetings with a range of organisations on the field, including the INGOs, the SFA, the municipality and the cantonal government. Furthermore, the groups coordinate all their activities through Whatsapp groups, inform each other of developments in and outside the TRCs and divide tasks alike (e.g. Interview 15, 09-05-2022, Interview 16, 10-06-2022). The Bosnian Red Cross, responsible for providing food and facilitating the task division amongst NGOs, commented on the fact that since coordination started, migration management could be executed more efficiently in BiH (Interview 11, 28-04-2022). This development is something all informants from INGOs on the field could confirm, as one NGO worker commented: “whereas one group of migrants would get 1000 bags of rice and the rest would get nothing in 2019, nowadays there is barely any overlap between our activities”(ibid). The comments above came specifically from the Una-Sana canton, but officials from the Ministry of Security commented that coordination groups in the Tuzla canton and Sarajevo canton were functioning similarly.

The start of coordination activities between the different layers of government, NGOs and various other actors on the field suggests a localised migration management system driven by the Bosnian state. However, to what extent this process can be understood as local can be debated. For instance, while the international INGOs and governmental authorities are included in official coordination networks, the actors mentioned under *filling the gaps* (chapter 4) are not part of official coordination activities. Various local actors engaged in migration management expressed not being part of any coordination group. They were sceptical of coordination, seeing it as keeping affairs amongst inaccessible governmental layers and their international partners (Interview 14, 06-05-2022; Interview 19, 13-05-2022). The local in the local turn can in this sense not be understood as a local/grassroots turn as often expressed in literature. Furthermore, volunteer NGOs can not participate in official coordination due to bureaucratic hurdles and difficulties with official registration in the country, which, according to the Red Cross, is a requirement for engaging in coordination of the activities (Interview 11, 28-04-2022).

Both the logic of coordination and the exclusion of some actors were illustrated in the following quote by a representative from the Ministry of Security:

“We just want all whoever is doing activities in Bosnia to work within the system. Without this coordination a lot of EU money is wasted, everyone can give blankets but if everybody does that, they will be wasted, thrown away. If we can control what is going on. No, not control, but manage, we can prevent these kinds of problems.” (Interview 21, 19-05-2022).

This quote signifies the overlap of activities between different actors on the field while it describes a certain logic to events of the state stepping in. As expressed, a lot of EU money was wasted before, but with coordination, more directed actions could take place in the country. Working within the system can be understood as doing an effort to keep PoM in

the TRCs of BiH. All actors engaged in outreach and coordination activities do recommend PoM to come to stay in the camps, and a logic of keeping PoM from the streets has been underlined by various actors, including all layers of government interviewed for this research. Independent locals and volunteer NGOs are often accused of being a pull factor for PoM to the towns and the border areas, making their activity undesirable for the actors engaged in coordination.

## Discussion of the Local turn and its Link to EU Border Externalisation

While a local turn was identified in BiH, one could simultaneously argue that this localised process is still facilitated through international partnerships, if not caused by them. In particular, throughout the whole development of the migration management regime, a strong role of the EU can be witnessed and is confirmed by almost all actors on the field. This section further problematizes the local turn by analysing the role of the EU in drafting migration management, the practice of capacity-building by NGOs and the legal commitments that BiH is bound to which facilitate the localised approach to migration management.

### *Drafting of Migration Management*

As admitted by informants from various layers of Bosnian authority, the IOM and the EU, the current practice of migration management is an outcome of negotiations between the three actors. As a high official of the Ministry of Security mentioned, all these actors have their own interests in migration management and engage in negotiations as such (Interview 21, 19-05-2022). Even though the informant commented that the three actors tend to either agree or find consensus on 90% of the topics discussed, the EU and the IOM have a power position. This is confirmed by a local politician from the Una-Sana canton that claimed that EU decisions were decisive on moving PoM from the Vucjak camp because of it being located too close to the EU borders in 2019 and its decision in 2020 to close all TRCs located on private property for its expensive running costs (Interview 17, 11-05-2022). The person in question furthermore commented that up to the time of research, the collaboration between the EU delegation and the Bihać municipality has been stronger than collaboration between the different layers of the Bosnian government.

Even though the processes witnessed right now are part of a local turn in migration management, they can still simultaneously be seen as a constituent part of externalisation. The European Union is still part of all activities of migration management, fully funds the TRCs in the country and is involved in creating capacity for BiH to deal with the increased population of PoM staying on its territory. Negotiations and funding as part of EU involvement can therefore be considered as part of the mechanisms enabling externalisation policies in BiH and are discussed as such in the mechanisms section below.

### *Capacity Building by INGOs*

Just like the EU presence inside BiH, INGOs are part of the process of localising the migration management of BiH. As seen in the strategic documents of 2016-2020, it can be seen that ownership, capacity-building and preparing the Bosnian state for hosting large numbers of PoM is a central objective facilitated by cooperation between BiH and the INGOs (Ministry of Security of Bosnia & Herzegovina, 2016). These dynamics lead to the situation where the local turn that is witnessed could be understood as an orchestrated local turn, also by INGO efforts. All INGOs interviewed for the purpose claimed that they were in BiH to help



the Bosnian state in building capacity for being able to host PoM through BiH institutions. Therefore, capacity building of NGOs and the EU alike can be understood as orchestrating a localised response to migration flows.

### *EU Accession and Related Documents*

One other aspect affecting the local turn in Bosnian politics is the mechanisms towards EU accession for BiH. BiH was identified as a potential candidate for EU accession in 2003 and has been following steps and agreements towards accession since (European Commission, 2022). Bosnia is a potential candidate for EU-accession, meaning the country may in the future apply for becoming a candidate for EU membership but would first have to commit to EU standards regarding political, economic and reform criteria in addition to unanimous approval of EU member states to become a candidate (EU-monitor, 2022).

The EU offers candidate countries direct financial assistance to make the applicant commit to EU standards, while BiH as a potential candidate receives indirect funding, in the case of migration management through the IOM (IOM, 2018). Both through the EU's humanitarian fund ECHO and the *instruments for pre-accession* (IPA), BiH receives funding for managing its migration flows and adjusting its institutions. While IPA funding was fixed for the 2014-2020 period, the sudden increase in migration led to extra IPA funding for migration amounting to €314.9 million for the 2018-2019 period (European Commission, n.d.).

The Stabilisation and Accession Agreement (SAA) signed in 2015 between the EU and BiH defined action points for stabilising the country, and amongst others offers ways to support BiH for aligning its laws more closely to the EU (European Commission, 2015). One of the headings of the agreement regards migration, which mentions that BiH should commit to preventing illegal migration to its territory and foster readmission (ibid). These strategies and documents constitute a foundation for making Bosnian involvement in migration management possible.

Through fieldwork, it was established that EU accession is something that the Bosnian state has been striving for, and that EU demands for these accession requirements are taken seriously to some extent. Spokespersons from the Ministry of Security claimed that perspectives for EU accession leads to Bosnia making adjustments in amongst others its migration policies (Interview 21, 19-05-2022). Furthermore, they claimed that all their funding goes through the IOM. On a similar note, an EU representative in BiH claimed that BiH shows very limited progress in the EU accession requirements and the planned adjustments, meaning BiH would have to rely on external assistance for the foreseeable future, notably through the IOM (Interview 22, 26-05-2022). These claims are also supported by the 2021 EU report on the Bosnian progress of accession procedures, where it is stated that BiH is making very limited progress and that BiH should in the coming year:

“significantly improve the management of migration and asylum system, and ensure effective coordination; ensure sufficient and suitable accommodation facilities, fairly distributed among all entities and cantons; ensure access to asylum procedures; increase border surveillance, including human resources and equipment; improve the legal framework and capacities for voluntary and forced returns” (European Commission, 2021, p33).

That being said, these documents and comments show a strong EU influence in the local turn of migration management.

## Consequences: Improved, but Contested Migration Management and Potential Future Developments

The local turn described above became increasingly visible in BiH in 2021 and is still unfolding. Therefore, clear consequences could not be defined based on the data. However, potential consequences of the local turn could be defined. As a first consequence, the local turn has led to increased coordination, and as a result better migration management, according to the actors involved. However, the local turn is still affected by the *political opportunity structure*, which complicates its unfolding. As a second potential consequence, the local turn allows to Bosnian state to start planning further activities of externalisation, aimed at deterring migration to the EU and deporting PoM from BiH. This section reflects on these possible consequences and speculates on the future of migration management in Bosnia, based on data through ethnographic fieldwork

### *Improved, but still Complicated Migration Management*

A major finding on the current state of migration management was that it significantly improved since 2021. All actors on the field mentioned that, due to increased activity from the state, coordination between NGOs and improved accommodation infrastructures for PoM, migration management reached a higher level in 2022 (e.g. Interview 9, 22-04-2022). The number of PoM with no access to services significantly dropped, and tensions between the local population and PoM significantly decreased, notably in the Una-Sana canton (e.g. Interview 17, 11-05-2022; Interview 12, 29-04-2022).

While a majority of the informants claimed that the state of migration management was incomparably better in 2022 than in the preceding years, a range of concerns was still expressed complicating the process: the ongoing political deadlocks and a lack of state capacity to finalise the local turn.

The Ministry of Security, the state organ with the competence for handling migration issues, is a ministry belonging to the central government of BiH, renowned for its political deadlocks. While the Ministry of Security drafts migration management through negotiations with INGOs and the EU, plans still have to pass through parliament to be adopted. In terms of migration management, this turned out problematic since the state stepped in in 2021.

The Council of Ministers (Bosnian: *Vijeca Ministara*), the executive branch of government, is responsible for adopting budgets to execute governmental decisions (*Vijeca Ministara*, 2022). This turned out problematic in 2021 and 2022 for various reasons; in these years the Council of Ministers was not able to adopt budgets fitting government-decided legislations, as decision-making has been blocked throughout the whole period (*Al-jazeera*, 2022). While the deadlock was caused over disagreement over reforming the Bosnian electoral law, it did have the consequence that migration-related budgets could not pass parliament (*ibid*). Through fieldwork, various officials claimed that political deadlock continues to block all decisions on migration management that have to go through parliament, as claimed by governmental officials and an EU representative alike (Interview 5, 05-04-2022; Interview 21, 19-05-2022; Interview 22, 26-05-2022).

To illustrate this, two governmental officers from different agencies claimed that the SFA budget, responsible for all migration-related affairs, has not been approved by the Council of Ministers since 2017 (Interview 5, 05-04-2022; Interview 21, 19-05-2022). Next to that, the deadlock has made it impossible to implement any budgetary changes to enable any migration policies (*Al-jazeera*, 2022). In this way, various migration policies that were agreed upon between the different governmental bodies had to be stalled. An example is *the*

*strategic action plans for migration 2021-2025*. Like the 2016-2020 document, the plan was drafted by the Ministry of Security in coordination with EU authorities and INGOs (Ministry of Security, 2016; Interview 22, 26-05-2022). This means that drafted plans requiring institutional budgetary changes, cannot be executed. A quote by an EU official illustrates how the political system and its deadlocks make effective implementation of migration management challenging up to this date:

“We are here to transfer the ownership of the activities to the Bosnian state and to provide resources. We draw documents, advice on practices and everything but the Council of Ministers and other governmental bodies simply fail to adopt. We encourage the state to hire more personnel, to have more people present in the camps but so far this does not happen. In terms of budget, not a single cent has been assigned to migration in recent budget proposals. The Bosnian authorities seem to be expecting that the European Union will end up paying for it” (Interview 22, 26-05-2022).

Strongly related, and partially caused by the political divide illustrated above, are limited state capacities that make a local turn in migration management difficult. The state authorities that were studied during field research; the SFA, the DKPT, and the ministry of health are part of the transition to state, but all show signs of a lack of capacity to execute migration management as planned.

The SFA is the main body responsible for executing migration management, responsible for registration and asylum procedures, camp management and fighting smuggling and human trafficking amongst many other activities outside the scope of migration such as the issuing of tourism visas. Since the arrival of migration to BiH in 2017, the SFA has not seen an increase in staff, while more than 85.000 PoM were registered in the country. This, together with an increase in retirements amongst staff members, has led to a severe shortage of staff executing migration management (Interview 20, 18-05-2022). This shortage can be seen in the backlog of asylum applications as discussed in the previous chapter and the shortage of SFA staff present inside the TRCs (Interview 7, 08-2022; Interview 10, 24-04-2022). As the political deadlock makes staffing as intended not yet possible, the lack of capacity remains an obstacle to the local turn in migration management. Similar shortages of staffing were mentioned at the DKPT, making the provision of security inside TRCs complicated.

Another transition that remains complicated to execute is the transition of health services to the state. Similar to the other two institutions above, the Ministry of Health lacks funding to employ sufficient staff at state hospitals in BiH. This shortage, in combination with an inefficient state insurance system, causes long waiting times for hospital appointments (Interview 12, 29-04-2022). As expressed by a Bosnian national employed with an NGO providing health;

“If I want to get treatment as a Bosnian citizen, I have to wait 6-7 months before treatment happens. The Ministry of Health arranges treatments, and people have to apply for a treatment through the state insurance structures, where a lot of bureaucracy and a lengthy procedure is present” (Interview 12, 29-04-2022).

While this fits within a transition to local structures, for PoM this practically means that health services will not be accessible before attempting to cross borders to Western

Europe. PoM stay in TRCs between 33 to 100 days on average before attempting to leave the country, based on IOM sources (Interview 18, 11-05-2022, Safić, 2022). This means that it is likely that a large share of PoM will be unable to access requested health services after the transition is completed. Taken together, these three planned transitions highlight the difficulties of transitioning NGO-run activities to the state.

### *Future Plans*

Prior to the fieldwork, and through discussions at a conference on migration in Sarajevo, fears of Bosnia becoming a deportation zone for migrants as part of EU externalisation policies were expressed by NGOs, activists and researchers in the field alike (e.g. Observation 1, 31-03-2022). Throughout the field research, these remarks were tested by asking responsible authorities about these remarks, in order to speculate on the future of migration management and EU externalisation policies. These questions did generate data on potential salient consequences. As a potential consequence of the current migration management regime and EU externalisation, drafted plans of deporting PoM from BiH were identified.

As claimed by officials from the SFA, the Ministry of Security and the IOM, the Bosnian state is developing mechanisms for the return of PoM to their countries of origin. In addition to the voluntary return programme executed by the IOM, plans exist to facilitate forced returns for each PoM considered an *illegal migrant*, which constitutes the majority of PoM in BiH (see Chapter 4). Readmission agreements are being developed between BiH on the one hand, and countries of origin on the other, notably Morocco, Pakistan and Bangladesh, from which many PoM in BiH originate (IOM, 2022a; N1, 2021). While some agreements have already been made, returning PoM requires the identification of the country of origin of PoM and arranging charter flights, as exclaimed by various BiH officials (Interview 5, 05-04-2022; Interview 18, 11-05-2022). According to one SFA official, there are current plans to develop standards and cooperation on a Western-Balkan regional scale, to allow internal readmissions of PoM and facilitate the deportation of PoM to countries of origin. According to this source, the EU border agency FRONTEX and the EU would cooperate in establishing this regional cooperation and finance these activities. Only one source was able to confirm inter-Balkan cooperation on returns. The other informants mentioned in this paragraph mentioned that strategies to deport PoM from BiH to countries of origin are currently developing.

If the statements in the above paragraph would materialise, which cannot yet be confirmed through the data, it would have severe consequences for the PoM that are stuck in Bosnia and the wider Western-Balkan regions. As mentioned in Chapter 4 and various other sources, PoM are stuck in Bosnia as a consequence of EU and Croatian deterrence mechanisms such as pushbacks and return agreements (Bobić & Santić, 2021; Ahmetasević & Mlinarević, 2022; Deidda, 2020; Valenta et al., 2019). This number of people being stuck, signified by the backlog of asylum applications in BiH, face the risk of being deported to their countries of origin before being able to arrive in Western Europe. This is claimed to be the main destination of almost every PoM inside BiH. If these plans would find fruition, they could be considered a next chapter in EU externalisation policies where PoM can be returned to their countries of origin before ever reaching the EU. While these plans cannot be confirmed as of yet, and their development depends on limiting factors such as the Bosnian political system, it remains a dynamic to be scrutinised and monitored accordingly. This would require further policy analysis and research, not only in BiH but on policy developments across the whole Western Balkans region.

## Mechanisms at work: Actor Activation and Brokerage

Now that the process and the consequences of the local turn are described, how can we explain the sudden engagement of the Bosnian state and its consequences? A mechanism identified for the direct cause of this local turn is *actor activation*, facilitated by a turnover in the political regime. A second mechanism identified is *brokerage*, where through the intermediary role of the EU, the interaction between the Bosnian state and PoM was fortified.

The admission of the minister of security Cikotić can be considered as a mechanism I termed *actor activation*. This event has led not only for Cikotić to emerge on the field as an actor engaged in migration management, it has enabled the Ministry of Security, meaning the central government, to engage in migration management. This change of guard signifies the *actor activation* on the field of migration in Bosnia, which can be seen in the state engaging in running camps, transitioning activities to the state level and taking lead in the coordination of field activities.

Various explanations on why the change of minister led to an increasingly Bosnian-led response were given by informants. A high official of the Ministry of Security explained that personal merit and solidarity with migrants were causal factors for the state picking up migration management. A high-ranking Bosnian officer for an INGO also confirmed this but commented that this should be the normal state of affairs when a ministry has the competence to deal with these issues (Interview 9, 22-04-2022). Previous ministers did not act because the system allows for inactivity, according to this official. A politician working for the Bihac municipality moreover commented that the admission of Cikotić facilitated more effective migration management in the Una-Sana canton, due to Cikotić belonging to the SDA political party. Because the Bihać municipality was also ruled by the SDA party at the time of research, the usual political deadlocks could be avoided (Interview 17, 11-05-2022). Media and NGO reports from 2021 reported widely on the increased involvement of the Bosnian government since the appointment of Cikotić, notably on the state-run activities in the Lipa TRC (e.g. Infomigrants, 2022). While these explanations do not offer hard causal evidence as to why the government got involved, the combined explanations do offer a strong suggestion for *actor activation* as a mechanism enabling a local turn in migration management.

A second mechanism that was identified as enabling the local turn in migration management was *brokerage*; “the production of a new connection between previously unconnected or weakly connected sites” (Tilly & Tarrow, 2007, p.215). While there were weak ties between the Bosnian state, the PoM crossing its territories and the international actors engaging in migration management until 2021, *brokerage* led to a connection between these sites. Facilitated by accession agreements, the state had to adopt legislation similar to EU legislation on migration, meaning it had to get involved in managing migration. Similarly, SAA and ECHO funds increasingly orchestrated the role the Bosnian state could deliver in Bosnian migration management. As an intermediary producing these agreements and instruments, the EU took an intermediary role in *brokerage*. Through a range of negotiations with the Bosnian state and NGO actors, the EU appeared as a brokering partner for the Bosnian state to pick up activities related to migration management.

While EU *brokerage* has been present for much longer than the local turn started, it required the preceding mechanism of *actor activation* to find fruition. The SAA entered into force in 2015, readmission agreements originated in 2006 and a local role for the Bosnian government was already defined in the strategic documents for migration in 2016 (European Commission, 2016, 2017; Ministry of Security, 2016). Nevertheless, the *actor activation* of

2020 has increasingly led to the implementation of shared objectives of the local turn. The previous *disregard* (see Chapter 4) disabled the implementation of the Bosnian state to engage in migration management while a sequence of *actor activation* and *brokerage* has led to the Bosnian state emerging as a present actor.

## Summary

This chapter has described the process of the state stepping into migration management in BiH, discussed the salient consequences of this local turn and defined the mechanisms enabling the process. Both domestic political mechanisms and international institutional mechanisms enabled a local turn in migration management in Bosnia from 2021.

The local turn is characterised by the state taking over a share of migration management activities after the previous inaction during the 2017-2021 period. This taking charge can be seen in the state running TRCs since 2021, state leadership over coordination efforts and planned transitions from NGO services to state services. This transition has led to migration management becoming more adequate in responding to PoM than in the preceding years, as attested by almost all actors on the field.

While the increased localisation of migration management can be witnessed, the truly local character of the process should be questioned. Through the influence of the EU and international NGOs on the field, the localisation of migration management in BiH is facilitated. Furthermore, the activities are increasingly in line with EU standards on migration as part of the accession procedure for BiH. As such, BiH increasingly engages in migration management as defined and negotiated through EU efforts. This can be considered an example of border externalisation as the concluding chapter discusses.

The localisation of migration management as planned is severely limited by the state systems and capacities as analysed in Chapter 3. The state system characterised by a diffusion of authority and deadlock, which made migration management a complicated task in the first place, still exists. Agreed policies between the EU and the Ministry of Security are still blocked in parliament and state capacity remains limited to fully tackle the issue of increased migration flows. Potential readmission strategies might add a new layer to migration management inside BiH and could be understood as a new chapter of externalisation policies of the EU. While the latter dynamic remains suggestive, the process of BiH aligning with EU migration policies is ongoing and remains to be monitored accordingly to understand what this means for the country hosting a large population of migrants itself and for the migrant population who might not reach the EU as a consequence.

After the description of the local turn, the constituent mechanisms of the process were explained. Firstly, *actor activation* due to a change of guard inside the Ministry of Security has enabled the state to step into the migration management regime. The appointment of Cikotić as the minister of security has coincided with his ministry taking active efforts towards migration management, has seen the establishment of coordination amongst all actors on the field and has led to a situation where actors on the field believe that migration management is becoming adequate. Furthermore, Cikotić belonging to the same political affiliation as the ruling political party in the Una-Sana canton reportedly enabled improved collaboration on the field.

This *actor activation* has also enabled the previous *brokerage* efforts of the EU. Since the change of guard, the EU, the IOM and the Ministry of Security started to engage in negotiations over migration management more effectively. As part of *brokerage*, structural

mechanisms of EU accession agreements, stabilisation agreements and NGO strategies towards local ownership enabled the Bosnian state to more effectively engage in migration management, as the corresponding funds and assistance allow the Bosnian state to offer a response to migration flows. Their initial lack of capacity did not allow them to do so. These two main mechanisms of *actor activation* and *brokerage* allow for an increasingly localised approach to migration management. How these mechanisms relate to the *political opportunity structure*, defined in Chapter 3, is explained in the concluding chapter.



## Chapter 6: Conclusions

More than 25 years after the implementation of the Dayton Accords in 1995 that ended the Bosnian war, Bosnia and Herzegovina still finds itself with a state system that makes governing the country complicated. The state system, divided along ethnic lines, with an important role for the international community<sup>15</sup> in various institutional positions, is plagued by division and deadlock. The divisions that the Dayton Accords were supposed to alleviate are still present and fears of separation and renewed conflict remain an annual returning phenomenon. Upon this system, a migration management regime has been evolving since 2017. The arrival of tens of thousands of PoM and its response function through this complicated system.

This thesis has described the processes that the migration management regime of BiH went through between 2017 and the present, and defined the mechanisms that enabled these processes and their consequences. This conclusion synthesises the constituent parts of the process-mechanisms analysis of Chapters 3 - 5, answers the central research question and discusses the meaning of the findings. The central research question is as follows:

*What mechanisms have created and enabled the key features and salient consequences of the migration management regime and EU externalisation practices that are observable in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2017 until the present day?*

To answer this question, a process-tracing method was employed to identify the political opportunity structure, the features of the processes of migration management, and their salient consequences. Through literature studies informed by studies on migration management in the Balkans and on transnational governmentality, a hypothesis and a counter-hypothesis were formulated, which were:

*Hypothesis: Between 2017 - 2022 an increasingly transnational regime of migration governance can be witnessed inside the territory of Bosnia & Herzegovina.*

*Counter-hypothesis: Between 2017 - 2022 there is no significant increase (or decrease) in transnational actors of migration governance inside the territory of Bosnia & Herzegovina.*

Below follows a mechanistic explanation of the identified processes of *the internationalisation of migration management* and the *local turn of migration management*, after which the research question is answered and the hypothesis rejected.

### Mechanistic Explanations of the Processes and their Consequences

As part of the process-mechanisms analysis, a thick description of the processes of internationalisation and localisation of migration management was offered. Simultaneously,

---

<sup>15</sup> In this thesis *the international community* refers to Western European countries, the United States and occasionally United Nations institutions. These can be considered brokers of the liberal peace in BiH and have held a presence inside the state institutions since 1995 (Mlinarević & Porobić, 2021a; Dayton Agreement, 1995).

the *political opportunity structure*, meaning *the features of regimes and institutions that facilitate or inhibit a political actor's collective action* (Tilly & Tarrow, 2007c, p.203), was defined to offer the institutional background that the studied processes function within. According to Tilly & Tarrow (2007), processes are constituted by *mechanisms*: “a delimited class of changes that alter relations among specified sets of elements in identical or closely similar ways over a variety of situations.” This section contains a synthesis of the identified *political opportunity structure* and the mechanistic explanations from Chapters 4 and 5.

### *Political Opportunity Structure*

Chapter 3 has identified the *political opportunity structure* of BiH, and the properties of a regime that explain why mechanisms produce different results from one context to the other. The properties of the regime relevant for this analysis are 1) a multiplicity of centres of power, 2) an institutional openness to new actors, 3) instability of current political alignments and 4) the availability of influential allies.

Because of its institutional arrangements, defined in the Dayton Accords of 1995, the state of BiH contains a high multiplicity of centres of power. The agreements have defined a role for one central government, two autonomous entities with their own governments, ten cantons and 79 municipalities. Furthermore, the High Representative of Bosnia & Herzegovina, a foreign official tasked with the implementation of the Dayton Accords has a high degree of power. All these different centres of power have a high degree of autonomy and all but the municipalities have options for vetoing legislation. Taken together, these centres of power constitute a multiplicity.

The country holds an institutional openness to new actors. The Dayton Accords have granted the international community a fixed presence in the institution of the High Representative, and the different entities and cantons are allowed to conduct their own foreign relations. Therefore, an openness for actors to engage in migration management is highly probable. This is exactly what happened as the mechanistic explanation of the *internationalisation* of migration management below shows.

The political arrangements in BiH have been unstable throughout the studied period. The multiplicity of political actors and their divisions along ethno-nationalist lines have produced deadlocks throughout the political spectrum. The veto powers of the three members of the presidency complicate decision-making processes while the relatively high degree of autonomy of the entities and cantons makes central decision-making almost impossible. BiH is often claimed to be in a political crisis, confirmed by all informants and media alike, signifying a high instability of political arrangements. This degree of political instability made centralised decision-making on migration management extremely complicated while vetoes rejected proposed legislation.

Lastly, as a signatory power of the Dayton Accords and present through the office of the High Representative and its own delegation in Sarajevo, the European Union is always present as an influential partner. As the preceding chapters have shown, the EU has picked up a central role in managing migration, as it funds the majority of the migration response in BiH. Together with the BiH government and other international actors, negotiations are made and migration management is drafted.

These properties of the regime were defined through the Dayton Accords in 1995 which are an example of liberal peacebuilding. The liberal peace in BiH has therefore created a system with diffuse layers of authority, is characterised by internal conflict and political crisis and has properties of institutional openness to new actors. Through these

efforts of liberal peacebuilding, the processes and mechanisms of migration management in BiH have to be understood.

#### *Mechanisms enabling Internationalisation*

Chapter 4 has identified an increasingly transnationally governed migration management regime in BiH between 2017-2021. The mechanisms of an attitude of *disregard*, *venueshopping* and *contracting* were identified as causal mechanisms.

*Disregard* refers to the active attitude of inaction by the central government of BiH during the first four years of migration. A lack of response to the migration flows made the country end up with large populations of PoM stuck on the streets. The lack of action can be explained by the *political opportunity structure* of constant political instability in BiH, the availability of the EU as a powerful ally and the multiplicity of centres of power within the country. Vetoes and the high degree of autonomy of the various layers of government complicate decision-making on the process. The availability of the EU as an influential actor was a factor that allowed the BiH state to *disregard* the situation, as claimed by various officials. This attitude of *disregard* required alternative actors to offer a response instead.

Because of this mechanism of *disregard*, the IOM and the EU engaged in the mechanism of *venueshopping*: the identification of alternative actors on the field to engage in migration management. Because of the multiplicity of centres of power, alternative actors could be found on the field. These other actors consisted of the cantonal governments of Sarajevo and Una-Sana, the relevant municipalities and private actors on the field. Because of the high degrees of autonomy of the cantons, the IOM and EU could circumvent the central government and collaborate with lower layers of government instead. Through the institutional presence of the EU and the IOM in the country since the foundation of BiH, they could appear as influential actors on the field to *venueshop* for partners.

A final mechanism in the sequence is *contracting*. After *venueshopping* for locations to shelter PoM, a large range of international NGOs was contracted to engage in migration management. All the NGOs present on the field reported that the EU was the main funder of their activities, including the IOM, the main implementing partner of migration management. If not funded by the EU directly, international NGOs often operated in TRCs that were funded by the EU.

The above factors make the lion's share of the response to the migration flows between 2017 - 2021 a highly transnational one. *Disregard* by the Bosnian state authorities allowed the EU and the IOM to *venueshop* for relevant partners and *contract* a broad range of NGOs that became part of an increasingly transnational regime of migration management. This process halted in 2021 after the admission of minister Cikotić for security, when a local turn in migration management could be witnessed.

#### *Mechanisms enabling the "Local Turn"*

Chapter 5 has identified the process of the local turn in migration management that could be witnessed since the admission of minister Cikotić in 2020 and the subsequent increase of engagement of the Bosnian state since the opening of the Lipa camp in November 2021. The mechanisms of *actor activation* and *brokerage* were identified.

In contrast to the mechanism of *disregard* that enabled the internationalisation of migration management, the mechanism of *actor activation* was identified as doing the opposite: localising the migration management activities. The single event of the admission of a new minister of security in 2020, has led to an increasingly active role of the Ministry of Security in responding to the migration flows. The state started taking over camp

management, took leadership over coordination between the actors on the field and increasingly started taking back activities from the NGOs to be executed by the state. At the time of writing, this process is still ongoing.

While clear causal factors for the sudden engagement of the government could not be identified, various reasons for the renewed engagement were mentioned by informants. These ranged from personal merit to new political alliances between the diffuse centres of power to pressure from the EU. While the exact reason for this change could not be proven, this change of regime as a catalysator for increased engagement was confirmed by various actors on the field, from all over the spectrum of the migration management regime.

In sequence with the mechanism of *actor activation*, the mechanism of *brokerage* enabled the local turn. *Brokerage* refers to the efforts by the EU that *produce new connections between previously unconnected or weakly connected sites* (Tilly & Tarrow, 2007c). The engagement of the EU in signing accession and stabilisation agreements, return agreements and coordination to harmonise border and asylum procedures with the state of BiH, facilitated a local turn. Particularly, the documents for EU accession required the Bosnian government to execute its migration response independently. This means that through *brokering* activities, the BiH state increasingly engages in its own migration management response. While the activities of *brokerage* can be witnessed as early as 2006, the preceding mechanism of *actor activation* was necessary to alter the political opportunity structure so the Bosnian government could start acting. As this local turn is facilitated by external actors, the meaning of “local” in local turn requires further scrutiny.

While the local turn in migration management is still in its first steps, the process is still dependent on the Bosnian state system. Various plans for further Bosnian ownership of the migration management efforts have been drafted but are on hold due to deadlocks inside the BiH political institutions. Each complicated political issue is subject to this deadlock and the migration management system is no exception. This deadlock in addition to a lack of state capacities will make it unlikely that a fully local turn will be realised in the foreseeable future. Potential future deadlocks could bring this process back in time. In the meantime, the IOM is contracted to be the main implementer of migration management in BiH and the EU will likely keep funding these activities, at least for the next three years that contracts are made for. Taken together, the *political opportunity structure* described above still complicates migration management in BiH today.

## Answers to Research Question

Through the above mechanistic explanations, the key features and salient consequences of migration management can be stated. As two interrelated processes were identified, this answer is twofold.

The first identified process was the internationalisation of migration management from 2017 - 2021. Three salient consequences were identified. The response to the migration flows was characterised by inaction from the central government and the response executed by a whole range of international actors instead. The consequence was that only three cantons in BiH engaged in migration management, and had to host the whole population of PoM. This, and the reportedly inadequate and uncoordinated response by the migration management regime have led to a discontented population of BiH, notably in the Una-Sana canton. Furthermore, it has led to a range of actors, local and international, “filling the gaps” in migration management, as there was a lack of government response and the transnational migration management regime was deemed inadequate by the alternative

actors. Lastly, the inaction of the Bosnian government and the lack of state capacity have led to the country having to deal with a backlog of tens of thousands of asylum applications making the system practically dysfunctional. This backlog is apparent until today.

The second process of the local turn could be witnessed from 2021 and two salient consequences were identified. On the one hand, localisation has led to an increased and improved response from the Bosnian state as it got engaged in running camps, executing coordination activities and started transitioning NGO services to the state. However, this local turn should be understood as a facilitated local turn, where the EU mechanism of *brokerage* plays a central role in facilitating the Bosnian state to engage in its own migration management response in line with European standards.

A potential second consequence of the local turn is the drafting of future plans regarding deportations. Now that the EU and the Bosnian state are reaching unprecedented heights of collaboration, agreements that facilitate returns from BiH to countries of origin such as Pakistan and Bangladesh have been drafted and continue to be developed. This means that BiH could become a place for the deportation of PoM before they ever reach the European Union. While these future developments were not proven during research, various governmental informants claimed their likelihood. If the plans find fruition depends on whether the *political opportunity structure*, characterised by deadlocks and vetoes, allows them to evolve.

Getting back to the initial hypothesis, it can be rejected that an increasingly transnational regime of migration management can be witnessed inside BiH. This dynamic could be witnessed from 2017 but was halted in 2021. Instead, an increasingly local response could be witnessed from 2021. However, the local response is still highly influenced by external dynamics and can be understood as subject to policies of externalisation. The final discussion below critically reflects on the findings from this thesis and discusses them in the light of liberal peacebuilding and externalisation.

## Discussion

The findings presented in this thesis are a synthesis of a wide range of sources that consist of academic literature, participant observations and almost 25 open-ended interviews collected in a three-month period between March and June 2022. Through the combination of a process-tracing field research method and a process-mechanisms analysis, two processes of migration management and externalisation in BiH were identified: the internationalisation of migration management of 2017-2021 and the local turn since 2021. While the mechanisms and processes identified are discussed above, this section discusses the relevance of the findings for the academic debates on liberal peacebuilding, migration management and border externalisation and reflects on their limitations.

### *Liberal Peace:*

The findings in this thesis are presented as a consequence of the liberal peace: the externally driven peacebuilding strategies with a focus on democratisation and free market orientation (Pfannenholz, 2015). The finding of the Bosnian state structure as a case of liberal peacebuilding was not a new one. In contrast, the Bosnian case is presented as a classic example of liberal peacebuilding, as the practice just took hold in the early 90s (Finkenbusch, 2021; Jabri, 2016; Mlinarević & Porobić, 2021a). Still, viewing the processes of migration management in the light of liberal peace offers lessons on EU externalisation and the peacebuilding practice alike.

Like any political process in Bosnia, the unfolding of migration management depends on the state structure inherited through the Dayton Accords. As this thesis has shown, the divisions and deadlocks that are inherent to this state structure made the establishment of an effective migration management regime complicated up until this day. While serious improvements have been made since the start of the local turn in 2021, drafted plans fail to pass parliament and a lack of state capacity keeps obstructing proposed plans to finalise the local turn. Throughout the migration management regime, actors kept on expressing concerns about whether plans for localisation could be executed effectively, all of them referred back to the political system that complicates matters.

In terms of EU border externalisation, the findings suggest that the state structure simultaneously facilitates and complicates EU efforts in executing migration management. On the one hand, the attitude of disregard on the side of the BiH government combined with the high degree of autonomy on the side of the other layers of government, allowed the EU to identify alternative partners on the field and engage in migration management *decoupled* from the central state. While this allowed the EU to orchestrate the initial responses in 2017/2018, the plans drafted between the EU, the Ministry of Security and NGOs continue to be obstructed in parliament. As these are deadlocks resulting from the state structure inherited through the Dayton Accords, it can be suggested that also EU externalisation policies get obstructed as a consequence of the liberal peace.

Taken together, this thesis amounts to a critique of the liberal peacebuilding paradigm. While critiques on the practice are already abundant, this critique adds to the pile by showing that the deals can have consequences decades after implementation and, in the case of BiH, complicate migration management. The BiH case suggests that states affected by the liberal peace are likely to be more easily influenced by foreign powers on their migration policies. This premise should be kept in mind and monitored accordingly when an interplay between peacebuilding and migration management is at stake, which could be imagined in places such as Libya and Syria.

#### *Migration Management:*

This thesis looked at the events related to migration through a lens of *multi-level migration management* and *transnational governmentality*. Based on these academic insights that view migration management as an activity executed by a diverse range of transnational actors, expectations for the field were shaped. Indeed, a highly international migration management regime shaped by transnational relations was identified. This confirmed the expectations through the studies that were consulted.

Apart from confirming the theoretical debates, this thesis offers new insights on migration management retrieved through the process-mechanisms analysis. Through the analysis, two interrelated processes and their constituent mechanisms were defined. These mechanisms, rather than merely stating the multi-level nature of migration management, offer possible explanations for *how* migration management is executed through a web of changing relationships. By understanding migration management as constituted by a web of interrelated processes and mechanisms, a deeper understanding of the *how* of migration management may be retrieved.

A major limitation of looking at the Bosnian processes through a process-mechanisms analysis is that it analysed the situation through a relational approach within the country. This thesis does not account for factors that could have happened outside of the country or its direct region, such as political negotiations or decision-making within the European Commission. Furthermore, dynamics within Bosnia are described as

consequences of national and regional dynamics. However, the migration flows and their responses are global developments. For instance, the Ukrainian war affected NGO conduct in BiH due to related changes in the budget (Interview 3, 25-03-2022). Also, efforts to fortify borders elsewhere, such as the borders between Iran and Turkey, influence the flows of migration to Europe (Augustova, 2021). These are just two examples of external factors not accounted for in this thesis, which could be multifold.

That being said this thesis offers explanations for how the migration management regime developed based on relational aspects inside the country. Further research could broaden this scope by looking at how migration management is negotiated outside of BiH, for example at the European Commission.

### *Externalisation*

Lastly, this thesis has shed light on the process of EU border externalisation in BiH: the encroachment of EU border and migration policies in BiH (Casas-Cortes et al., 2015). The findings described above could be understood through a lens of externalisation, however, caution should be made, as findings that confirm externalisation were limited. Therefore, the findings in this thesis merely suggest that the events in BiH *can* be understood as cases of externalisation, rather than being a strong confirmation of them.

One might interpret through these findings that the migration management regime established in Bosnia constitutes a purposefully implemented system designed by the European Union, aimed at stopping migrants abroad. However, the consulted authorities did not confirm this. The documents published by the European Commission and statements by an EU representative during field research claimed that their activities in Bosnia were merely functioning to increase BiH's state capacity, aid them in dealing with their migrant crisis and prepare them for potential EU-accession (European Commission, 2022; Interview 22, 26-05-2022). Nevertheless, harmonisation of border and asylum policies and the suggested potential consequences of deportation reported above do provide strong suggestions that the processes and mechanisms described above can be understood as externalisation. The state of BiH increases its capacity for hosting PoM and engages in partnerships to eventually deport them. These drafted plans need to be monitored accordingly to theorise on their consequences. If executed, these plans would constitute further barriers for PoM to apply for asylum and execute their right to move.

This thesis contributes to the debate by showing that policies of border externalisation are negotiated in BiH. The academic debate on externalisation portrays a situation where the EU is in charge of executing migration management outside its boundaries (e.g. Üstübüci, 2019; Casas-Cortes et al., 2015). This thesis brought into question who is in charge of executing migration management. On the one hand, the academic literature suggests that the EU is in charge of migration management where it externalises its policies. On the other hand, almost all actors on the field suggest that the Ministry of Security and its competent organ the SFA are in charge of migration management. As the title quote of this thesis suggests: they themselves claim they are not.

While all NGO informants state that the Ministry of Security has full authority on the migration response nowadays, the analysis presented in this thesis shows a more complicated picture. The higher levels of government engage in negotiations between themselves, the EU and the IOM as the main implementers of migration management. While these actors reach conclusions amongst each other, various other layers of government in Bosnia have to cooperate to realise drafted plans, which often complicates the process (see Chapter 3). This means that even the EU, which almost completely funds migration



management in BiH and is accused of implementing migration management through externalisation, does not have sole authority on the matter (e.g. Deidda, 2020; Akkerman, 2018). As quoted by an EU representative: “the EU is involved in drafting legislation and collaborating on migration issues, but the political system of BiH makes establishing an effective migration management system an extremely difficult process”, hence the limited progress (Interview 22, 26-05-2022; European Commission, 2021).

That being said, migration management and externalisation in BiH are executed as a result of an interplay between different actors, processes and mechanisms, strongly dependent on the Bosnian institutional context. This migration management regime that developed from 2017 faced severe complications between 2017 and the present, and these are expected to continue for the time being. As this regime complicates access to asylum procedures and the right to move for PoM, and could potentially worsen it based on the drafted plans, the process needs to be monitored accordingly. How this situation could be prevented is strongly related to political decision-making and is beyond the scope of this thesis to address. However, this thesis functions as a reminder to critically reflect on political decisions regarding peacebuilding and migration management, as their consequences for the case of BiH and beyond are manifold.

## References

- Abikova, J., & Piotrowicz, W. (2021). Shaping the Balkan corridor: Development and changes in the migration route 2015–16. *International Migration*, 59(5), pp 248-265.
- AFP (2021, October 10). Bosnia's Serb leader Dodik unveils plans to dismantle 'failed country'. *France 24*. Retrieved from: <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20211022-bosnia-s-serb-leader-dodik-unveils-plans-to-dismantle-failed-country>
- Ahmetašević, N. & Mlinarević, G. (2018). People on the Move in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2018: Stuck in the Corridors to Europe. *Heinrich Böll Stiftung -office for Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Albania*. Retrieved from: <https://ba.boell.org/en/2019/02/21/people-move-bosnia-and-herzegovina-2018-stuck-corridors-eu>
- Akkerman, M. (2018, May 11). Expanding the fortress: The policies, the profiteers and the people shaped by EU's border externalisation programme. *Transnational Institute*. Retrieved from: <https://www.tni.org/en/publication/expanding-the-fortress>
- Al Jazeera (2022, June 6). Vijeće ministara BiH usvojilo Nacrt budžeta. *Al Jazeera Balkans*. Retrieved from <https://balkans.aljazeera.net/news/balkan/2022/6/6/vijece-ministara-bih-usvojilo-nacrt-budzeta>
- Augustova, K. (2021). Impacts of EU-Turkey Cooperation on Migration Along the Iran-Turkey Border. *IPC-Mercator Policy Brief*. Retrieved from: <https://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu/Content/Images/CKeditorImages/20210503-21054423.pdf>
- Bahtić-Kunrath, B. (2011). Of veto players and entity-voting: institutional gridlock in the Bosnian reform process. *Nationalities Papers*, 39(6), pp 899-923.
- Bennett, A., & Checkel, J. T. (Eds.). (2015). Process tracing. *Cambridge University Press*.
- Berger, R. (2015). Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative research*, 15(2), pp 219-234.
- Bernard, H. R. (2017). *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Bobić, M., & Šantić, D. (2020). Forced migrations and externalization of European union border control: Serbia on the Balkan migration route. *International Migration*, 58(3), pp 220-234.
- Buzinkić, E. & Avon, M. (2020). Pushbacks as a Technology of Crimmigration. In *Causes and Consequences of Migrant Criminalization* (pp 157-170). *Springer*.
- BVMN (2021, July). Balkan Region: Illegal Pushbacks and Border Violence Reports. *Border Violence Monitoring Network*. Retrieved from <https://www.borderviolence.eu/wp-content/uploads/July-21-Report-BVMN.pdf>
- Casas-Cortes, M., Cobarrubias, S., De Genova, N., Garelli, G., Grappi, G., Heller, C., ... & Tazzioli, M. (2015). New keywords: Migration and borders. *Cultural Studies*, 29(1), pp 55-87.
- Checkel, J. T. (2008) Causal Mechanisms and Civil War, presented at 104th Annual Convention of the American Political Science Association, 30 August, 2008.
- Collier, D. (2011a). Teaching process tracing: Examples and exercises. *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 44(4), pp 823-830.
- Collier, D. (2011b). Understanding process tracing. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 44(4), pp 823-830.
- Council of Ministers of Bosnia & Herzegovina (no date). BACKGROUND ON THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. Retrieved from [https://www.vijeceministara.gov.ba/o\\_vijecu\\_ministara/default.aspx?id=1752&langTag=en-US](https://www.vijeceministara.gov.ba/o_vijecu_ministara/default.aspx?id=1752&langTag=en-US)
- Croatia.eu (2022). The Adriatic Sea and Islands. *Croatia.eu*. Retrieved from <https://croatia.eu/index.php?view=article&id=11&lang=2>

- Daalder, I.H (1998, December 1). Decision to Intervene: How the War in Bosnia Ended. *Brookings Institution*. Retrieved from: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/decision-to-intervene-how-the-war-in-bosnia-ended/>
- Dayton Agreement (1995). US Department of State. 10 August 1995.
- Dean, M. (2017). Governmentality. In Bryan Turner: *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social Theory*, pp 1–17
- Deidda, E. (2020). Bosnia and Herzegovina: A Migrant Hotspot at the Gates of Fortress Europe. *Linköping Thesis Archive*. Retrieved from: <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?dswid=-4780&pid=diva2%3A1445745>
- Derks, A., & Nguyen, M. T. (2020). Beyond the state? The moral turn of development in South East Asia. *South East Asia Research*, 28(1), pp 1-12.
- Dijkstra, G. S., & Raadschelders, J. C. (2022). THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE IN BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: The Unusual Institutional Arrangement of a Non-Authoritarian, Yet Controlled, Democracy en Alto Representante En Bosnia-Herzegovina. *World Affairs*, 00438200221087971.
- DRC (2020, November 11) Thousands of refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina will face hardship during winter. *Danish Refugee Council*. Retrieved from: <https://drc.ngo/it-matters/feature-stories/2020/11/winter-in-bosnia-and-herzegovina/>
- DRC (2022). Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Danish Refugee Council*. Retrieved from: <https://drc.ngo/our-work/where-we-work/europe/bosnia-and-herzegovina/>
- ECCHR (2017). Pushback. *European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights*. Retrieved from: <https://www.ecchr.eu/en/glossary/push-back/>
- ECRE (2021, October 22). Balkan Route: Tens of Thousands Pushed Back from Croatia, Evidence of Pushbacks and Border Violence in Romania Presented to UN Rights Body, “Stonewalling” of Asylum Seekers in Serbia Airport. *European Council for Refugees and Exiles*. Retrieved from: <https://ecre.org/balkan-route-tens-of-thousands-pushed-back-from-croatia-evidence-of-pushbacks-and-border-violence-in-romania-presented-to-un-rights-body-stonewalling-of-asylum-seekers-in-serbia-a/>
- Edmonda (Pseudonym) (2018). Migrations' changing scenario: the new Balkan Route and the European Union. *Rivista Di Studi Politici Internazionali*, 85(2 (338)), pp 189–206. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26540670>
- Emilsson, H. (2015). A national turn of local integration policy: multi-level governance dynamics in Denmark and Sweden. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 3(1), pp 1-16.
- Escobar, A. (2015). Degrowth, postdevelopment, and transitions: a preliminary conversation. *Sustainability Science*, 10(3), pp 451-462.
- Esthinktank (2017). Protection of the vital national interest in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *European Student Think Tank*. Retrieved from: <https://esthinktank.com/2017/12/04/protection-of-the-vital-national-interest-in-bosnia-and-herzegovina/>
- European Commission (2015). Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina enters into force today. *European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations*. Retrieved from: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP\\_15\\_5086](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_15_5086)
- European Commission (2021). Bosnia and Herzegovina 2021 Report. *COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT*. Retrieved from: [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/bosnia-and-herzegovina-report-2021\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/bosnia-and-herzegovina-report-2021_en)
- European Commission (2022). European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations Factsheet: Bosnia & Herzegovina. *European Commission*. Retrieved from: [https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/europe/bosnia-and-herzegovina\\_en](https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/where/europe/bosnia-and-herzegovina_en)

- European Commission (no date). Bosnia and Herzegovina - financial assistance under Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance II (IPA II). *European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations*. Retrieved from: [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/enlargement-policy/overview-instrument-pre-accession-assistance/bosnia-and-herzegovina-financial-assistance-under-instrument-pre-accession-assistance-ii-ipa-ii\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/enlargement-policy/overview-instrument-pre-accession-assistance/bosnia-and-herzegovina-financial-assistance-under-instrument-pre-accession-assistance-ii-ipa-ii_en)
- Ferguson, J., & Gupta, A. (2002). Spatializing states: toward an ethnography of neoliberal governmentality. *American ethnologist*, 29(4), pp 981-1002.
- Finkenbusch, P. (2021). Liberal peace: from civilising mission to self-doubt. *Global Change, Peace & Security*, 33(2), pp 163-176.
- Fitzgerald, D.S., (2019). Chapter 1: The Catch-22 of Asylum Policy. In D.S. Fitzgerald: (2019). *Refugee beyond reach: How rich democracies repel asylum seekers (pp. 1-19)*. Oxford University Press.
- France24 (2022, March 9). In fractured Bosnia, Croats call for change. *France24*. Retrieved from: <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20220309-in-fractured-bosnia-croats-call-for-change>
- Fumerton, M. A. (2018). Beyond Counterinsurgency: Peasant Militias and Wartime Social Order in Peru's Civil War. *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies/Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe*, (105), pp 61-86.
- Gadzo, M. (2021). Bosnia's political crisis: What you should know, in 600 words. *Al Jazeera International*. Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/10/21/all-you-need-to-know-about-bosnias-crisis-in-600-words>
- Geertz, C. (1973). Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of culture. In *The cultural geography reader* (pp. 41-51). Routledge.
- Glenny, M. (2001). Chapter 9: The Balkan Vortex: Nationalism, war and NATO, 1989–99. In M. Glenny: *The Balkans Nationalism, War and the Great Powers 1804–1999 (pp 644-732)*.
- Halmin, R. (2022, March 24). 'Migrants'? 'Refugees'? Terminology Is Contested, Powerful, and Evolving. *Migration Policy Institute*. Retrieved from: <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/terminology-migrants-refugees-illegal-undocumented-evolving>
- Hedström, P., & Ylikoski, P. (2010). Causal mechanisms in the social sciences. *Annual review of sociology*, 36, pp 49-67.
- Hodžić, K. (2020). Understanding the migrant crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Kriminalističke teme*, (5), pp 77-98.
- ICTY, (no date). The Conflicts. *Legacy website of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia*. Retrieved from: <https://www.icty.org/en/about/what-former-yugoslavia/conflicts>
- Imamović, A. (2019, February 10). Kamp Bira u Bihaću premašio kapacitete, pune ruke posla za IOM. *N1*. Retrieved from <https://ba.n1info.com/vijesti/a315088-kamp-bira-u-bihacu-premasio-kapacitete-pune-ruke-posla-za-iom/>
- Infomigrants (22, April 28). Bosnia: Migrants moved to Lipa camp by authorities. *Infomigrants*. Retrieved from: <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/40170/bosnia-migrants-moved-to-lipa-camp-by-authorities>
- IOM (2021, November 19). From Tragedy to Opportunity: New Centre to Help Stranded Migrants Opens in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *International Organisation for Migration*. <https://www.iom.int/news/tragedy-opportunity-new-centre-help-stranded-migrants-opens-bosnia-and-herzegovina>

- IOM (2021). Bosnia and Herzegovina Crisis Response Plan 2021: Funding Requirements. *International Organisation for Migration*. Retrieved from: <https://crisisresponse.iom.int/response/bosnia-and-herzegovina-crisis-response-plan-2021>
- IOM (2022a). Bosnia and Herzegovina Migration Response Situation Report: 25 April 01 May 2022. *International Organisation for Migration*. Retrieved from: [https://bih.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11076/files/documents/01\\_iom-bih-external-sitrep\\_25-april-01-may.pdf](https://bih.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11076/files/documents/01_iom-bih-external-sitrep_25-april-01-may.pdf)
- IOM (2022b). INFO SHEET MIGRANT PRESENCE OUTSIDE TEMPORARY RECEPTION CENTRES. *International Organisation for Migration*. Retrieved from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/bosnia-and-herzegovina/info-sheet-migrant-presence-outside-temporary-reception-centres-0>
- IOM (2022c). IOM's Migration Response. *International Organisation for Migration*. Retrieved from <https://bih.iom.int/ioms-migration-response>
- Jabri, V. (2016). Post-Colonialism: A Post-Colonial Perspective on Peacebuilding. In O.P. Richmond, S. Pogodda & J. Ramovic: *The Palgrave Handbook of Disciplinary and Regional Approaches to Peace*, pp 154-67. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Kalan, D. (2019, February 20). In Bosnia, a Migrant Way Station Is Becoming a Winter Prison. *Foreign Policy*. Retrieved from: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/02/20/in-bosnia-a-migrant-way-station-is-becoming-a-winter-prison-bihac-croatia-borici-refugees/>
- Karlsrud, J. (2018). From liberal peacebuilding to stabilization and counterterrorism. *International Peacekeeping*, 26(1), pp 1-21.
- Koka, E., & Veshi, D. (2014). Illicit Return Practices of Irregular Migrants from Greece to Turkey. *International Journal of Law and Political Sciences*, 14(1), pp 45-51.
- Lampe, J.R. (no date). Bosnian War European history [1992–1995]. *Britannica Encyclopedia*. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/event/Bosnian-War>
- LA times (2019, November 19). Dangerous conditions in Bosnian migrant camp, rights group says. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from: <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2019-11-16/dangerous-conditions-in-bosnian-migrant-camp-rights-group-says>
- Lavenex, S. (2016). Multilevelling EU external governance: the role of international organizations in the diffusion of EU migration policies. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 42(4), pp 554-570.
- MacGinty, R., & Richmond, O. (Eds.). (2013). *The liberal peace and post-war reconstruction: myth or reality?*. Routledge.
- Markowitz, F. (2007). Census and sensibilities in Sarajevo. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 49(1), pp 40-73.
- Mason, J. (2017). *Qualitative researching*. Sage.
- McEvoy, J. (2013). We forbid! The mutual veto and power-sharing democracy. In J. McEnvoy: *Power-Sharing in Deeply Divided Places*, pp 253-277.
- Ministry of Refugees and Human Rights (2022). Ministarstvo za ljudska prava i izbjeglice. Retrieved from: [http://www.mhrr.gov.ba/Default.aspx?langTag=bs-BA&template\\_id=127&pageIndex=1](http://www.mhrr.gov.ba/Default.aspx?langTag=bs-BA&template_id=127&pageIndex=1)
- Ministry of Security of Bosnia & Herzegovina (2016). Strategy in the Area of Migrations and Asylum and Action Plan for the Period 2016-2020. Retrieved from: [http://www.msb.gov.ba/PDF/Strategija\\_ENG\\_2016.pdf](http://www.msb.gov.ba/PDF/Strategija_ENG_2016.pdf)
- Mlinarević, G., & Porobić, N. (2021a). Chapter 1: Dayton Peace Agreement – The Peace Agreement That Was Not, in G. Mlinarevic & N. Porobic: *The Peace that is not: 25 years of*

- Experimenting with Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina - Feminist Critique of Neoliberal Approaches to Peacebuilding* (pp 4-16). WLPF: Geneva.
- Mlinarević, G., & Porobić, N. (2021b). Experimenting with Neocolonialism: Civilian Administration of the Peace Agreement, in G. Mlinarevic & N. Porobic: *The Peace that is not: 25 years of Experimenting with Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina - Feminist Critique of Neoliberal Approaches to Peacebuilding* (pp 55-81). WLPF: Geneva.
- Murray Li, T. (2007). Governmentality. *Anthropologica*, 49(2): pp. 275-81.
- N1 Sarajevo (2020). Relocation of 900 migrants failed, police returning them to burnt-down Lipa camp. *N1*. Retrieved from: <https://ba.n1info.com/english/news/relocation-of-900-migrants-failed-police-returning-them-to-burnt-down-lipa-camp/>
- N1 Sarajevo (2021). Fmr High Representative: Serb and Croat election boycott could end BiH state. *N1*. Retrieved from: <https://ba.n1info.com/english/news/fmr-high-representative-serb-and-croat-election-boycott-could-end-bih-state/>
- Paffenholz, T. (2015). Unpacking the local turn in peacebuilding: a critical assessment towards an agenda for future research. *Third world quarterly*, 36(5), pp 857-874.
- Panizzon, M., & Van Riemsdijk, M. (2019). Introduction to Special issue: 'migration governance in an era of large movements: a multi-level approach'. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 45(8), pp 1225-1241.
- Placek, M. (2020). Migration Governance in Areas of Limited Statehood: The Case of Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Leiden University Faculty of Governance and Global Affairs*. Retrieved from: <https://studenttheses.universiteitleiden.nl/access/item%3A3190981/view>
- Ragin, C. (2019). The Process of Social Research: Ideas and Evidence. In Ragin & Amoroso (2011): *Constructing Social Research: The Unity and Diversity of Method* pp 57-77. London: Sage.
- Refugees.info (2018, October 10). Bosnia: How to register and claim asylum. *Refugees.info*. Retrieved from <https://blog.refugee.info/bosnia-how-to-register-and-claim-asylum/>
- RFE (2022, June 7). Bosnian Envoy Imposes Funding Decision For Elections. *Radio Free Europe*. Retrieved from: <https://www.rferl.org/a/bosnia-herzegovina-funding-election/31887619.html>
- Ricks, J. I., & Liu, A. H. (2018). Process-tracing research designs: a practical guide. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 51(4), pp 842-846.
- Safić, S. (2021). Migration Management in Bosnia and Herzegovina: a Functional Analysis of Domestic and International Institutions' Response to the Migration Crisis. *International Burch University Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences*. Sarajevo: Burch University.
- Sarajevo Times (2020, December 21). Council of Ministers reached an Agreement on Lipa Camp: Migrants will stay. *Sarajevo Times*. Retrieved from <https://sarajevotimes.com/council-of-ministers-reached-an-agreement-on-lipa-camp-migrants-will-stay/>
- Scholten, P., & Penninx, R. (2016). The multilevel governance of migration and integration. In *Integration processes and policies in Europe* (pp. 91-108). Springer, Cham.
- Strik, T. (2020). Mechanisms to prevent pushbacks. In *Fundamental Rights Challenges in Border Controls and Expulsion of Irregular Immigrants in the European Union* (pp. 234-258). Routledge.
- Tamkin, E. (2018, March 21). Bosnia Is Teetering on the Precipice of a Political Crisis. *Foreign Policy*. Retrieved from <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/03/21/bosnia-is-teetering-on-the-precipice-of-a-political-crisis-balkans-election-law-dodik/>
- Tilly, C., & Tarrow, S. G. (2007a). Chapter 1: Making Claims, in C. Tilly & S.G. Tarrow (eds), *Contentious politics* pp 3-24. Oxford University Press: Chicago.

- Tilly, C., & Tarrow, S. G. (2007b). Chapter 2: How to Analyze Contention, in C. Tilly & S.G. Tarrow (eds), *Contentious politics pp 25-43*. Oxford University Press: Chicago.
- Tilly, C., & Tarrow, S. G. (2007c). Appendix A: Concepts & Methods, in C. Tilly & S.G. Tarrow (eds), *Contentious politics pp 201-10*. Oxford University Press: Chicago.
- UNESCO (2008). People on the Move: Handbook of Selected Terms and Concepts. *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation*. Retrieved from: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000163621>
- UNHCR (2011). The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*. Retrieved from: <https://www.unhcr.org/about-us/background/4ec262df9/1951-convention-relating-status-refugees-its-1967-protocol.html>
- UNHCR (2017). Border fences and international border control in Europe. *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*. Retrieved from: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/55249>
- UNHCR (2020). MONTHLY SITUATION REPORT-DECEMBER 2020. *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*. Retrieved from: <https://data2.unhcr.org/es/documents/download/85229>
- UNHCR (2022a). Asylum and Migration. *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*. Retrieved from: <https://www.unhcr.org/asylum-and-migration.html>
- UNHCR (2022b). Bosnia and Herzegovina. *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees*. <https://www.unhcr.org/bosnia-and-herzegovina.html>
- Valenta, M., Lønning, M. N., Jakobsen, J., & Župarić-Iljić, D. (2019). European asylum policies and the stranded asylum seekers in southeastern Europe. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 32(Special\_Issue\_1).
- Washington Agreement (1994). 18 March 1994. Retrieved from: [https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/file/resources/collections/peace\\_agreements/washagre\\_e\\_03011994.pdf](https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/file/resources/collections/peace_agreements/washagre_e_03011994.pdf)