

University of Pécs  
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**The effects of the Yugoslavian crisis on the ethnic relations of  
Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially Tuzla Canton**

Theses of PhD dissertation

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## THE PROBLEM AND ITS JUSTIFICATION

The growing ethnocentrism in Yugoslavia in the 1990's led to political division and broadening of the nationalism. This process culminated in the Yugoslavian war of 1991-1995, the events and consequences of which are more or less well known.

In the mixed population Bosnia and Herzegovina (henceforth BiH) the disintegration of Yugoslavia was accompanied by a *bloody (civil)war* (1992-1995) and *cruel ethnic cleansing*. Although the coexistence of various nationalities and religions dates back several centuries, the country still has become the symbol for ethnic conflicts and inhumanity. BiH heterogeneous ethnic structure presented a serious political problem after the war.

In its current form BiH is a very *specific, artificially held-together state* where the government formed under international supervision is weak, the current political affairs are complicated and tense. The Dayton (peace)agreement (1995) closing the bloodshed – essentially justifying ethnic cleansing and the boundaries formed by armed violence – did not bring a solution to the area's problems; none of the former war parties are satisfied with the current political-social-economical situation. One of the main characteristics of the country is its *ethnic and religious division*. The majority of the population is formed from members of three nations (Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian), but none of these ethnicities form a majority alone, which causes serious tension. Among the various religions the Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Islam are the most populous, but – in negligible numbers – protestant churches (e.g. Evangelist, Baptist), smaller sects (e.g. Krishna believers, Jehova's Witnesses, Adventists) and separatists (Vahabites, Džaferijas) are present as well.

The *war* of the early 1990's resulted in several *long term negative consequences*. While some of these are readily apparent and statistically measurable (e.g. people killed/missing, external and internal refugees, demolished residential buildings, economical loss, etc.), some types of consequences are hard to be recognized, which does not mean they don't exist. According to the Information and Documentation Center of Sarajevo (IDC) 100 000 dead or missing people are the victims of the war and 2.2 million had to desert their homes (which is more than half of the pre-war population). 1.2 million people emigrated, 1 million looked for a new place to live in BiH as internal refugees. Because of the *mass migration* during/after the war, the ethnic composition has changed in most *općinas*. The difference between the ethnic compositions of the two entities is significant; *both parts of the country* can be seen as *ethnically homogeneous*.

The *most fatal result* of the war – other than the loss of human lives – is the *disintegration* of families, local communities and the *traditional social structure*. The current Bosnian society is characterized by a *strong bias and prejudice against "others"*. Providing general human rights and fighting (positive/negative) ethnic discrimination is still a serious problem. Eliminating social exclusion and pushing back negative bias requires even more effort than before.

One of the *prerequisites* of *rebuilding* BiH *society* after the war is *peace* between the conflicting *ethnicities*, and in general *restoring trust between people*. In the current day BiH the question of ethnicity permeates every aspects of life. Strong ethno-nationalism makes social-economical conflicts seem like ethnic conflicts, making them seemingly unsolvable. This affects not only high politics, but the everyday lives of people. The thinking about different ethnicities determines their relations to them. The subjective values influenced by the social climate/pressure are a key factor in the forming of individual social relations, such as the dialogue between various ethnicities and religions.

Fifteen years after the war the *relations between Bosnians, Croatians and Serbians* are *still plagued by mutual distrust*. With the democratic improvements in BiH – compared to the previous social-political system – the terms for expressing different political, ethnical,

religious orientations and family traditions, but understandably after the war distance between members of other ethnic and religious groups has grown. By researching the *thinking about the “other”* and the *general system of values the dominant social phenomena and processes can be understood*.

*The topic of the dissertation is the multi-faceted investigation of the current ethnic relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the factors that shape them.* Our goal was to show how the events connected to the Yugoslavian crisis affected the ethnic coexistence of this multiethnic country. By fieldwork in a relatively large, multiethnic Bosnian entity we investigated how people of various ethnicities perceived/perceive the ethnic/ethno-political conflicts post war, and how the interethnic problems appear in the everyday life of Bosnia, if they appear at all.

The future of the West-Balkan and BiH is seen by many to be joining the European Union, which promises to be a long process. At the southern border of the EU, with our historical experience and existing social, economical and political connections Hungary may play a vital role in the integration of Balkan countries to the Union. Because of that it is important that Hungarian diplomacy and public opinion possess adequate information of this region. Efficient cooperation with the southern region cannot work without getting to know it first. Uncovering the various structures of this region is in the best interest of our country.

In Hungarian research among the Balkan countries the relatively close BiH is one of the most neglected areas. The Yugoslavian war and the following political restructuring, growing Hungarian-Bosnian diplomatic and economic relations, the questionable notions merging the Islam with international terrorism all account for a rise in interest towards the country. However in Hungarian academic literature, the latest works on BiH based on personal accounts were published en masse at the late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The most current works on BiH focus in detail on the country’s history, geography, politics, economy and demography, but the (post-war) ethnic relations are rarely explored. We lack real knowledge about the ethnicities of BiH, other than stereotypes. A fieldwork investigating local ethnic relations hopefully broadens our knowledge of BiH (which is mostly from foreign literature and the media). One of the main goals of the dissertation is to mitigate the lack of information in this topic.

## GOALS

Despite its seeming ethnic balance, Yugoslavia faced multiple conflicts since its creation. The Yugoslavia-wide conflicts – often “swept under the rug” plagued the internal affairs of each multiethnic member state, the possibility of the eventual disintegration was ever present. Despite the force-fed state ideology (Yugoslavism) there was a latent distance-keeping between various ethnic and religious groups. This is best shown through the “mini-Yugoslavia” BiH, where multiethnic coexistence has long standing traditions. Despite the regional identity, the present but often hidden ethnic conflicts were brought to the surface and sharpened by the war, inducing various negative processes in the country.

*To show the current ethnic relations in BiH, the following goals were pursued:*

- The present day ethnic relations are hard to understand without knowing the historical, political and social precedents, so we investigated *the shaping of the ethnic relations in BiH during the first and second Yugoslavia*, as while their ratios have changed, the ethnicities remained the same.
- Because of the noticeable intolerance against “others” an important aim was to uncover the *factors affecting the current ethnic coexistence*, for which we researched the following:
  - The state created by the Dayton agreement is dysfunctional in its current form. Connected to this we examined the *main obstacles of the political consensus of the three constituent nations and the population’s relations to the state*.
  - The ethnic concentration during the Bosnian war was accompanied by genocide and voluntary or forced migration. This resulted in ethnically homogeneous spaces as opposed to the earlier ethnicity-mosaics. In connection we analyzed the *migrant population and the process of return* after the war.
  - We investigated whether *intertwining religion and ethnicity* induces special processes in BiH, as well as people’s *behavior on religion*.
  - The war changed the meaning of the notion “minority” in BiH. In connection we investigated the treatment of national *minorities* in the classical sense, as well as that of any *constituent nationality* that became a minority in certain parts of the country. (The *problems of the Romany population*, the largest of the Bosnian minorities gained extra attention as their hardships cause additional tension to the relations of the constituent ethnicities.)
  - We inspected how the *three parallel educational system* (due to lack of state integration), and the *religious education in schools* causes *further ethnic separation*.
- In current BiH there are less and less ethnically diverse areas where the coexistence of the three constituent nations can be observed. *For the fieldwork observing the relations of Bosnians, Croats and Serbs* in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), *Tuzla Canton and its center, Tuzla* was chosen. In this area the multiculturalism remained even after the war, which made the region ideal for a deep empirical research based on the following criteria:
  - *Reconstructing the former population relations, ethnic spatial structures* of the area that is currently Tuzla Canton.
  - *Presenting and analyzing the war events and their consequences* affecting the Canton: the changes in ethnic composition, the demographic structure and the regional economy, the internal refugees and minorities.
  - *Questionnaire on the region’s ethnic relations*.
- Before these investigations could be executed, it was necessary to *review and reevaluate the results of earlier research on the coexistence of the traditional constituent nations of BiH*.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It can be said that most Hungarian research on BiH was not based on fieldwork, but on the academic literature and sources. To our knowledge, no Hungarian researcher examined the ethnic relations of post-war BiH via fieldwork.

In the selection of the research area our primary aspect was that the area (today's Tuzla Canton) should be continuous and relatively large. Other important aspects were that sufficient historical/statistical data, source and documents should be available; and that in the region – because of the composition of the population – ethnic cohabitation /mixing should be observable (i.e. the area should not be ethnically homogeneous). Our work is multidisciplinary, and we used both primary and secondary sources.

Our chosen topic required the *use of statistical data*. Lacking census data, in the analysis of the post-war population we could only use the estimates of Bosnian and international official organizations. The population and economic processes of Tuzla Canton are statistically well documented, thus in the connected parts – if it was possible – we used the data between 1996 and 2009. The published statistical data (estimates) used as primary sources were taken from BiH and FBiH Statistics Office databases/publications. As secondary sources we used reports from the Bosnian Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, the Helsinki Human Rights Committee, UN Development Program, International Crisis Group and Tuzla Canton government. Data from these databases and reports are used as tables and diagrams to illustrate trends and changes.

In addition to statistical data analysis and processing we used *document analysis* (connected academic literature, Tuzla Archives documents, earlier research results' reevaluation) and *interviews*. Up to date information was gathered from interviewees and from *local and international media*. Besides local and national daily and weekly papers we used online news portals such as the homepages of Deutsche Welle, Glas Amerike, Radio Slobodna Evropa.

For a more thorough investigation and to control the results, the research was conducted via not one, but multiple *fieldworks*. Our Bosnian presence was continuous from spring 2006, but the major part of the data collection was done between 1 January – 31 October 2007 during a Central European Exchange Programme study scholarship. Our fieldwork also received funding from the OTKA project no. 61432, between 2006-2010. Gaining the trust of *renowned, popular members* of the examined communities, regular *consultation* with interviewees allowed for clarification of the collected information, and to understand previously unclear connections. Using the method of *participant observation* the collected data was observed in practice as well.

The backbone of the research of Tuzla Canton's ethnic relations was our *questionnaire study* of late 2007. During the poll we used *random sampling* to ask students of the Canton's state university Faculty of Humanities, who provided us with a relatively homogeneous information base. Before the actual poll we tested the field and made a pilot study to confirm the understandability of the questionnaire and the target group's willingness to cooperate. With random sampling we tried to find a population where the three main ethnicities are all represented – the students of Tuzla were perfect for this criterion. The 19 question questionnaire was self-filling and anonymous. During the poll 600 questionnaires were used, 581 was usable for the research. Processing of the data was done by SPSS.

## RESULTS

### 1. Nationality and population relations in the first and second Yugoslavia

For a better understanding of the current ethnic relations of BiH in this chapter we provide a short summary of the nationality and population status of the first and second Yugoslavia, focusing on BiH. It is not our task to rewrite the history of Yugoslavia, thus this summary uses the results of earlier research. From the political history we only present the most important nodes connected to our topic.

Our research concluded, that BiH, situated between Croatia and Serbia, was always the object of the two nation's rivalry, which started at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and grew stronger during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The nations who had a parent nation outside the borders defined the fate of BiH, as they strived to join their parent nation and not to achieve the independence of BiH (SOKCSEVITS D. 2003). The first Yugoslavia was characterized during its lifespan by strong national opposition (e.g. fight for power and dominance, economic-financial redistribution, modernization differences), further strengthened by WW II. The existence of the Bosnian nation appeared as an old-new dimension between the Croatian and Serbian interests. The autonomy of the Muslims could only be codified in Tito's Yugoslavia (1971). Tito managed to stabilize the ethnic situation by creating the model of the federation communist state; the new Yugoslavia provided an entirely different existence for all non-Serbian ethnicities. The reemerging nationalist endeavors were hidden in an internationalist, communist shell by Tito, dampening their effects drastically (JUHÁSZ J. 1999).

The national composition of BiH, the most faithful vanguard of "brotherhood and unity" was specific in more ways than one. In spite of their different religions, Bosnian Muslims, Croats and Serbs had numerous similarities. The settlements of these ethnicities were closely intertwined, and ethnically mixed marriages bonded them even closer together. We can say that before the Yugoslavian war, the social, economical, political and ethnical conflicts of BiH were not as severe as to make coexistence impossible (CALIC, M. J. 1994).

The internal South – North, primarily economic migration process that was present during Yugoslavia's existence worked towards the ethnic homogenization of the constituent republics, which was strengthened by the Yugoslavian war. After 1991 the former Yugoslavian republics – except for BiH – turned into homogeneous national states.

### 2. Factors affecting the current ethnical coexistence in Bosnia and Herzegovina

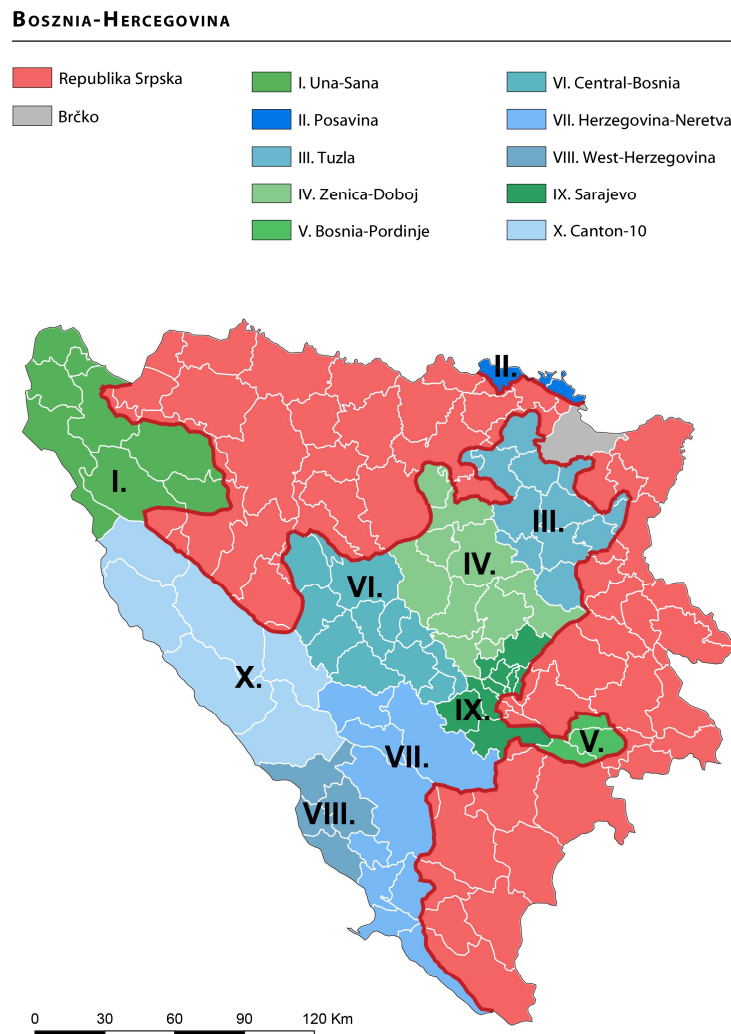
#### *2.1. The main obstacles of the political consensus of the three constituent nations, and the population's relation to the state*

Following the war, BiH remained a sovereign state, with internationally recognized borders. The division of the country (*Figure 1*) resulted in an intricate and cumbersome governmental structure. The roles of the central (state) offices are weak; the Head Representative of the Bosnian international community has veto over the entities' institutions' decisions. According to many international organizations (e.g. the International Crisis Group) and some local politicians the rights and deeds of the Head Representative hinder the development of the local governments and the self-governance of the country, and they suggest the closing of the Office of the Head Representative (OHR). It is still a question however, whether the nations of BiH are ready to live in peace with each other. The main obstacles of the consensus between Bosnians, Croats and Serbs are the Dayton Constitution justifying national division and reproducing social-political problems; protecting real or imagined national

interests; overly political social and economical questions; and the difference in the standards of living between FBiH and the RS.

Fifteen years after the war BiH still requires outside help. The reconstruction of the country progressed a lot, but the most pressing issue – the reform of the constitution – remains unresolved. The revision of (peace)agreement - that is considered discriminative even by the international community – to bring it closer to European standards still hasn't been done. In the more and more integrated West-Balkan region the only alternative BiH has left is to join the EU (which will result in a paradox situation: after the bloody disintegration of Yugoslavia the states of the region will once again become part of a larger union). The preparation for the integration of BiH has still a lot to be desired, and the current political forces seem to work on the final dissolution of BiH instead.

Examining the relations of the population and the state (KUKIĆ, S. 2003; GALLUP 2010) it shows that most of the people do not consider BiH a democratic country. The majority of the population is convinced they live in a state where certain ethnic communities enjoy privileges over others, and the fear of the future is still prevalent. Bosnian citizens trust international institutions more than those national institutions they elected. The majority of them do not believe that their country can become an equal partner of the EU.



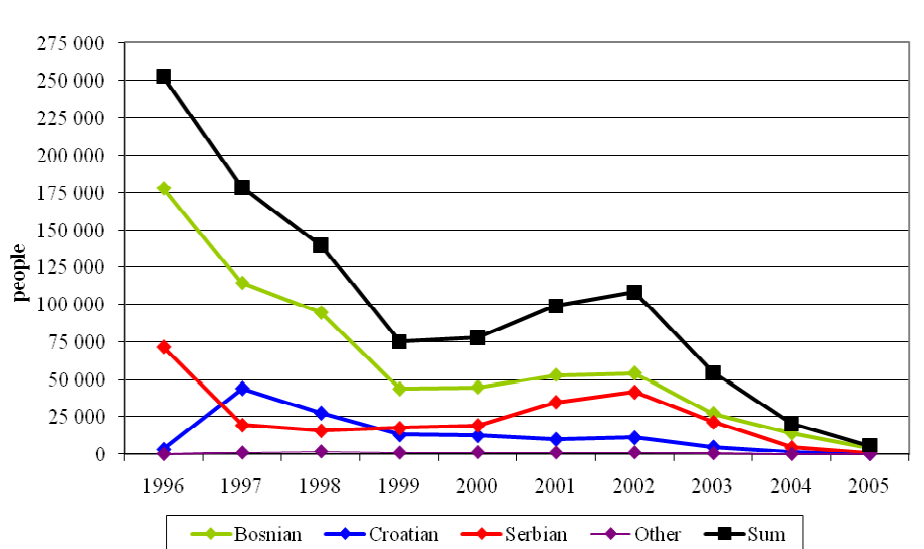
**Figure 1** Municipal structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Source: Based on [www.fzs.ba](http://www.fzs.ba) own ed. 2011.



## 2.2. Traits of the refugee population, post-war immigration

The re-immigration that is still underway in BiH, as opposed to the intentions of Annex 7 of the Dayton Agreement still strengthens the ethnic division, as the majority of the population moves to the areas where their own nation is the majority; the selling and swapping of real estate helps in the creation of ethnically homogeneous areas.

After the initial boom the number of returners has drastically decreased (*Figure 2*). In 2005 still around half million refugees are in around 40 different countries, with no intention of returning to BiH. 80% of the one million internal refugees already solved their situation by returning to their previous residences, or settled at their temporary location or emigrated from the country. During these years still over 180 000 people waited for the reconstruction of their status. Those with the intent to return arrived in nearly equal numbers from the FBiH and the RS, 45% Bosnian, 48% Serbian, 6% Croatian and 1% other nationality. Examining the pre-war residence, the difference between the two entities are apparent: while a majority of those registered in the FBiH stayed within their own entity, almost 100% of those registered in the RS is from the FBiH. Concerning the intention to return two-thirds of the registered internal refugees wanted to return to their pre-war residence; this intention was higher among the FBiH residents.



**Figure 2** The process of return to BiH based on ethnic composition (1996-2005)  
Source: Based on Ministarstvo za ljudska prava i izbjeglice BiH, Sarajevo, 2005.  
own ed. 2010.

According to the most recent data the number of returners in 2009 was third of the 2008 numbers, but it indicates just how unfinished this process is that this year still 48 000 families (around 158 000 people) requested immigration and the restoration of their pre-war residence. According to the data of the official institutions until 2010 around 743 000 refugees (internal and external) returned to the FBiH, 265 000 to the RS (MUHAREMAGIĆ, E. 2010). The return of minorities is still often accompanied by incidents; the number of these in the RS is much higher than in the FBiH. Other obstacles are negative discrimination education, employment, health- and social care and communal services. For the internal refugee population in addition to difficult livelihood the people's desperation and pessimistic (or completely lacking) vision of the future proves to be problematic.

### *2.3. The intertwining of religion and ethnicity, people's behavior towards religion*

In BiH – especially in the past 10-15 years – religion has become the basis of building an ethnic identity as well as the tool of political manipulation. Currently two different social behaviors can be observed concerning religion:

- In theory more and more people turn towards religion to fill the spiritual void of the socialist era and to help cope with the post war trauma. Many younger people find themselves in religion as they are not presented other – e.g. unified BiH - identity
- In practice the number of believers who practice their faith regularly is steadily decreasing. People take the parts from religious teachings they like, but don't follow the strict rules of the church.

While the Bosnian Catholic Church faces a problem in the decrease of the number of followers, the Orthodox Church achieved more success (in early 2011 for example the seat of Eparhija zahumsko-hercegovačka moved back from Trebinje to Mostar with the successful rebuilding of the Mostar Stara crkva, which provided a boost for the return of the Serbian population to the city). The main problem of the Bosnian Islam Church is the appearance of fundamentalism in the region. The presence of extremist wahabism causes the moderate Bosnian political circles to worry. While earlier they were only present in smaller Muslim villages near Zenica, Tuzla and Trvanik, they are now present in larger cities like Sarajevo and Mostar.

Religious identity as an integral part in the lives of the population of BiH is one of the most important segments of the shaping of local communities. As an important part of ethnic identity religion is often abused. In all three constituent nations the religious community and nationalist parties are in close connection. But while “official” religion in chapels and the media is overly political, its “common” form is mostly free of politics and problems.

### *2.4. The treatment of Bosnian minorities and the problems of the Bosnian Romany population*

Following the war the notion of “minority” went through a significant change in BiH. Nowadays two typical categories can be identified:

- Those members of a constituent nation who are in the minority in one of the country halves
- Members of a minority in the classic sense (e.g. Czechs, Albanians, Ukrainians, Slovenians, etc.).

The protection of the 17 minorities recognized by the 2003 law is only guaranteed on paper. Despite codifying international rights protecting documents Bosnian minorities are not protected according to general European norms. The definition of “minority” is missing from the constitution of BiH and the two entities, in legal and political rhetoric the “other” designation is used. The ethnic cleansing of the war and its consequences are still observable in the various segments of local social life, ethnic-religious discrimination is far too common. The main reason for this situation is in the workings of the leading nationalist parties and the political atmosphere created by them. The state infrastructure of BiH, the government's structure serves the three constituent nations and does not provide solutions for the needs and political representation of national minorities. Part of the population is excluding from governance and legislation.

The largest of the Bosnian minorities is the Romany population, official estimates put their number around 80-85 000. The war of 1992-1995 caused the dispersion of the Romany population, causing additional problems to the existing ones (lack of education, unemployment, poverty) and they are stricken by traditional prejudice and racial discrimination.

## *2.5. The effects of the Bosnian education system on ethnic relations*

In addition to personal experience and interactions the image of the “other” in BiH is strongly influenced by the political situation, the media and public education. This is why we considered the investigation of the local education from an ethnic point of view important, as in its current form instead of regenerating the BiH multiethnic communities it helps sustaining the ethnic division. Lacking a state integration, following the ethnic division three parallel school systems were created. These three systems work independently, providing additional causes for ethnic separation. Currently in BiH a new generation is raised where three different curricula in three (allegedly) different languages are being taught, listening to three different interpretations to their country’s history and have no interactions with each other.

The politically overloaded, spatially divided Bosnian education system is in no position to fulfill the needs of students, labor market and state, thus it cannot positively influence the standard of living. During the public education reform despite positive results a non-discriminative school system and the abolishment of segregation is still a huge challenge in BiH. In its current state, the education serves the systematic strengthening and long term survival of nationalism and ethnic impatience (e.g. “Two schools under one roof” segregated institutions, three curricula, ethnically offensive course books, propagation of collective values based on ethnic stereotypes, etc.).

### **3. Revision and reevaluation of earlier research results on the coexistence of the traditional ethnicities of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

The Bosnian war caused a deep rift in the coexistence of Bosnians, Croats and Serbs, as shown in sociological studies conducted right after the war. The largest break was in Bosnian-Serbian relations, they have the worst opinions of each other. The dissertation shows local recent studies (PUHALO, S. 2003, 2009; KRNETA, D. 2006) in more detail that confirms this. The results of the above mentioned studies implicate that the ethnicities of BiH are willing to live next to each other, but not with each other. The majority of the interviewees theoretically talked about tolerance, openness, freedom of speech, freedom of religion and cooperation with others, in practice however they are still cautious with members of a different religion, resulting in staying within their own ethnicity where they can feel more secure as an individual as in a multiethnic community. This trend towards ethnic homogenization can be understood in the light of war experiences and current destructive political processes.

### **4. Fieldwork inspecting the relations between Bosnians, Serbs and Croats**

Recent social, economical, political changes within the Bosnian culture resulted in a peculiar spatial structure of strongly separated units. We considered the micro study of one of these structures based on predetermined criteria an interesting researcher’s task. To conduct a fieldwork inspecting the relations between Bosnians, Serbs and Croats we chose Tuzla Canton, which was less involved in the war and, because of that, was less burdened by ethnic conflict. The continued existence of the multiethnic traditions was confirmed by our multiple year fieldwork.



#### *4.1. Reconstructing the former population relations, ethnic spatial structure of the current Tuzla Canton area*

Tuzla Canton was established in the northeastern part of FBiH, at the area formerly known as Tuzla region, in 1994, which was split into 13 governmental units according to Dayton agreement. Before the war this region (6820 km<sup>2</sup>) contained 22 općina, in 1991 24% of the Bosnian population lived in this area. From the 13 općina created in 1995 Čelić, Dobož-Istok, Sapna és Teočak (new) općinas were formed during the war from Lopare, Dobož, Zvornik and Ugljevik old općinas, which the Dayton agreement gave to the Bosnian Serbian Republic. From the previously existing općinas only three (Banovići, Srebrenik, Živinice) kept their original borders, while parts of the other six (Gračanica, Gradačac, Kalesija, Kladanj, Lukavac, Tuzla) were attached to the RS (*Figures 3-4*).

Nowadays after the Sarajevo Canton the Tuzla Canton is one of the largest and most densely populated regions in the FBiH. In 2005 with its 502 862 people population it was the most populated from the 10 cantons. In the integration of the northeastern part of BiH the urban center of the canton, Tuzla played/plays the most important role, being the most populated city of the area. Tuzla became the center of Northeast Bosnia during the Austro-Hungarian occupation of BiH, and retained this position ever since. It is not only the mezoregional, administrative and industrial center of its region, but as a university city it is the cultural and spiritual center of its area. The new governmental role coupled with its demographic and economic power can greatly speed up the development of the city.

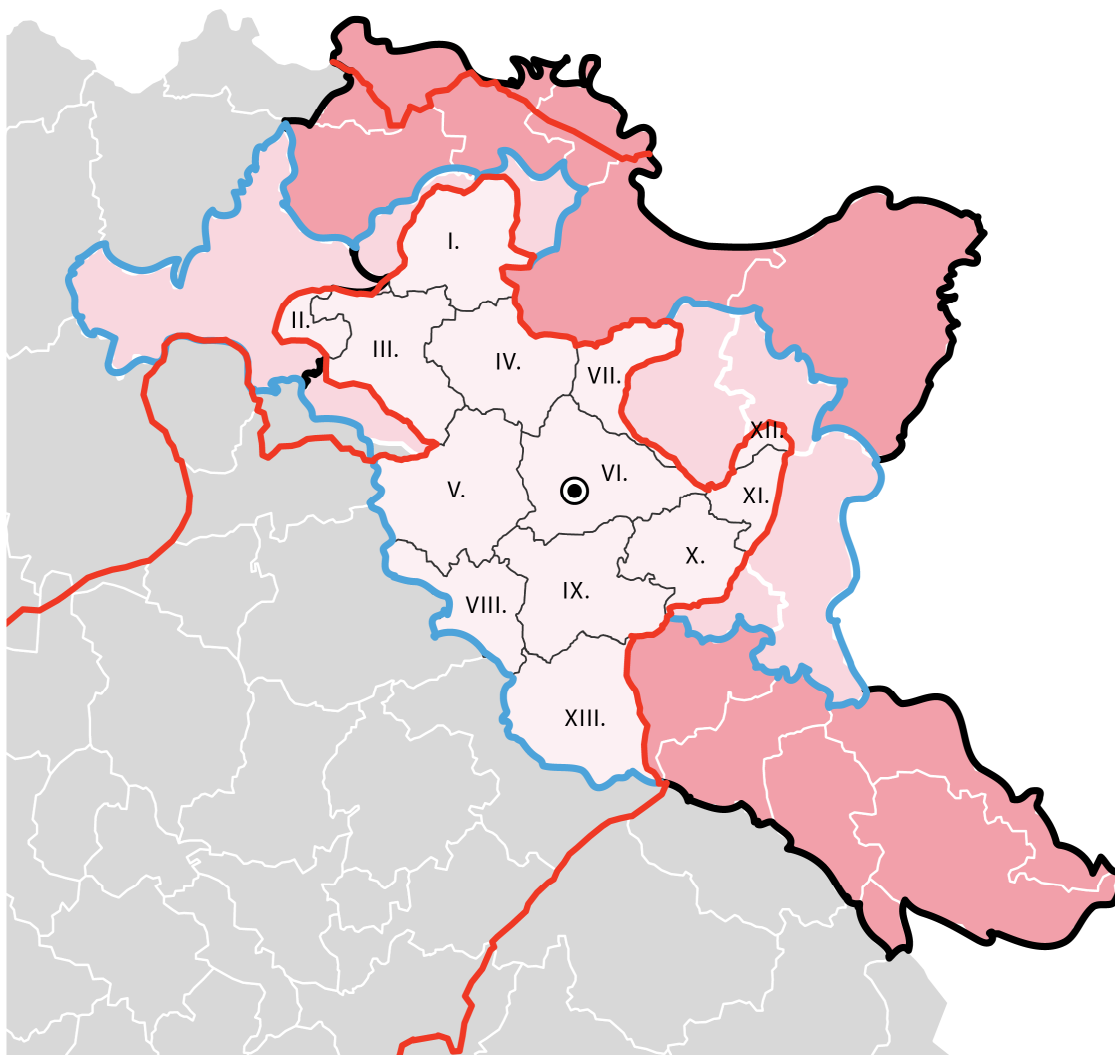
In the općinas of today's Tuzla Canton during the 1991 census around half a million people lived, two-thirds Muslim Bosnians, 28% non-Bosnians and 7% Yugoslavians. In 1991 in the 230 settlements of the area 21 (9%) had a Croatian, 42 (18%) a Serbian majority (*Figure 4*). Concerning the spatial distribution of the ethnicities, the Croatians lived in larger numbers – after Tuzla – in Gradačac, Živinice, Srebrenik and Lukavac općinas, while Serbians in the Kladanj, Gračanica, Lukavac, Gradačac, Kalesija and Banovići areas.

### JELMAGYARÁZAT

-  Az egykori tuzlai régió
-  A későbbi kanton alapjául szolgáló općinák
-  Tuzla kanton
-  Entitás-közi határvonal

### OPĆINÁK

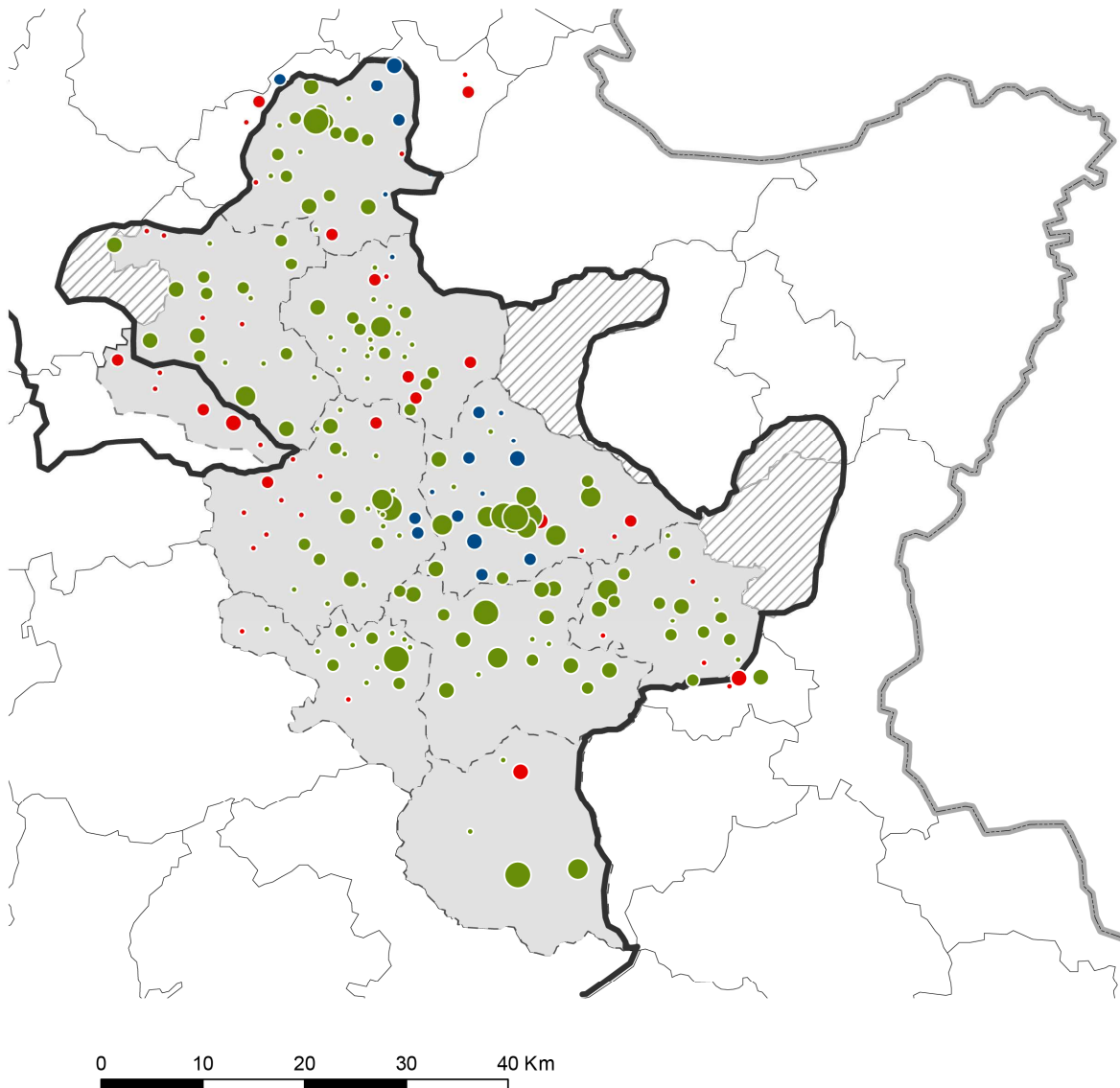
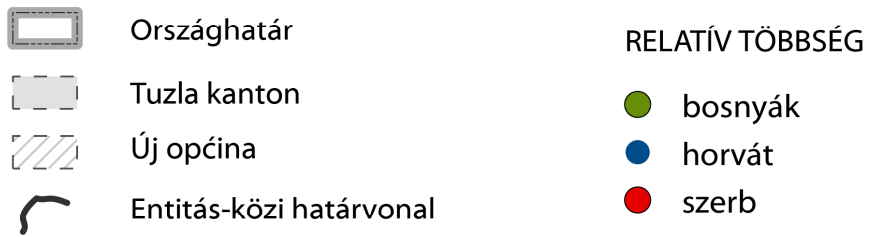
- |      |             |       |          |
|------|-------------|-------|----------|
| I.   | GRADAČAC    | VIII. | BANOVIĆI |
| II.  | DOBOJ ISTOK | IX.   | ŽIVNICE  |
| III. | GRAČANICA   | X.    | KALESIJA |
| IV.  | SREBRENİK   | XI.   | SAPNA    |
| V.   | LUKAVAC     | XII.  | TEOČAK   |
| VI.  | TUZLA       | XIII. | KLADANJ  |
| VII. | ČELIĆ       |       |          |



**Figure 3** The establishment of Tuzla Canton

Source: Based on <http://www.vladatk.kim.ba/> and FILANDRA, Š. (ed.) 1998. own ed. 2011.

## JELMAGYARÁZAT



**Figure 4** Ethnic distribution of the općina population of the later Tuzla Canton based on the 1991 census per settlement\*

\* Missing Čelić, Dobož-Istok, Sapna and Teočak (newly created) općina data, and with Gračanica, Gradačac, Kalesija, Kladanj, Lukavac, Tuzla full area data.

Source: Based on Popis stanovništva 1991. own ed. 2011.

Following the ethnic changes of the war today the large majority of the canton's population (90%) is Bosnian, followed by Croatians, Serbians and others. The "Yugoslavian" category disappeared with the union. Between 1991 and 2003 the local Serbians suffered a major (from 17% to 3%), the Croatians a smaller (from 8% to 5%) decrease in numbers (*Table 1*). The decrease of the Serbian population was not only caused by the moving of the Orthodox population, but also the fact that the Serbian majority marginal općinas were attached to the RS.

**Table 1** Ethnic distribution of the areas composing today's Tuzla Canton 1991, 2003  
(based on census and estimate, in percentage)\*

Ethnicity	Muslim/Bosnian		Croatian		Serbian		Jugoslavian		Other	
	1991	2003	1991	2003	1991	2003	1991	2003	1991	2003
Općina	1991	2003	1991	2003	1991	2003	1991	2003	1991	2003
Banovići	72,06%	95,11%	2,07%	2,02%	16,98%	1,49%	7,25%	-	n. a.	1,38%
Gračanica	72,04%	99,29%	0,22%	0,11%	22,93%	0,60%	4,28%	-	n. a.	0,00%
Gradačac	59,84%	95,46%	15,22%	3,92%	19,83%	0,62%	2,54%	-	n. a.	0,00%
Kalesija	79,26%	99,90%	0,08%	0,02%	18,32%	0,08%	0,66%	-	n. a.	0,00%
Kladanj	72,31%	97,96%	0,22%	0,20%	24,59%	1,05%	1,72%	-	n. a.	0,79%
Lukavac	66,73%	95,61%	3,78%	2,93%	21,32%	1,34%	6,01%	-	n. a.	0,12%
Srebrenik	74,65%	94,65%	6,73%	3,94%	12,98%	1,04%	2,94%	-	n. a.	0,37%
Tuzla	47,61%	74,91%	15,50%	12,72%	15,40%	9,34%	16,71%	-	n. a.	3,03%
Živnice	80,35%	93,08%	7,26%	4,83%	6,43%	1,36%	3,89%	-	n. a.	0,74%

\* Gračanica, Gradačac, Kalesija, Kladanj, Lukavac, Tuzla full area data.

Source: Based on Popis stanovništva 1991. and [www.fzs.ba](http://www.fzs.ba) own ed. 2010.

After the war, most Croatians remained in Tuzla, Živinice, Gradačac, Srebrenik, Lukavac, Čelić, while Serbians in Tuzla, Živinice, Lukavac, Srebrenik and Banovići općinas. Most of the other nationalities (1%, mostly Romany) live in Tuzla, Banovići, Živinice, Srebrenik and Kladanj.

#### 4.2. Social-economical consequences of the war in the Tuzla Canton area

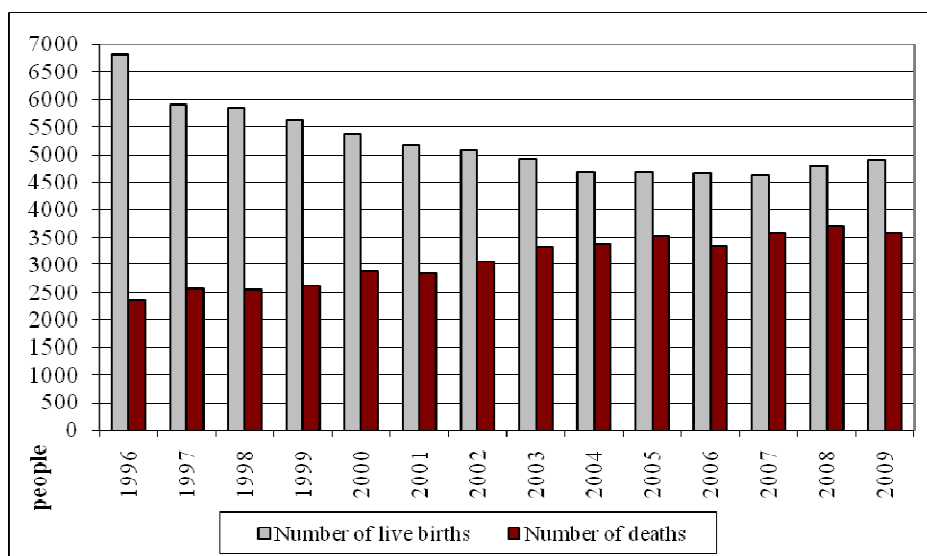
Within the ethnicities of the Tuzla region – compared to other BiH regions – reigned relative tolerance. With the war these relations did suffer, but did not make continued coexistence impossible. During the Bosnian war Tuzla and its vicinity played a major role in protecting the integrity of BiH and relieving other parts of the country. During the war the largest free area was in Northeastern Bosnia, which the Serbian-Crnagoran aggressor could not occupy despite numerous efforts.

##### 4.2.1. Economical and demographical characteristics of the canton

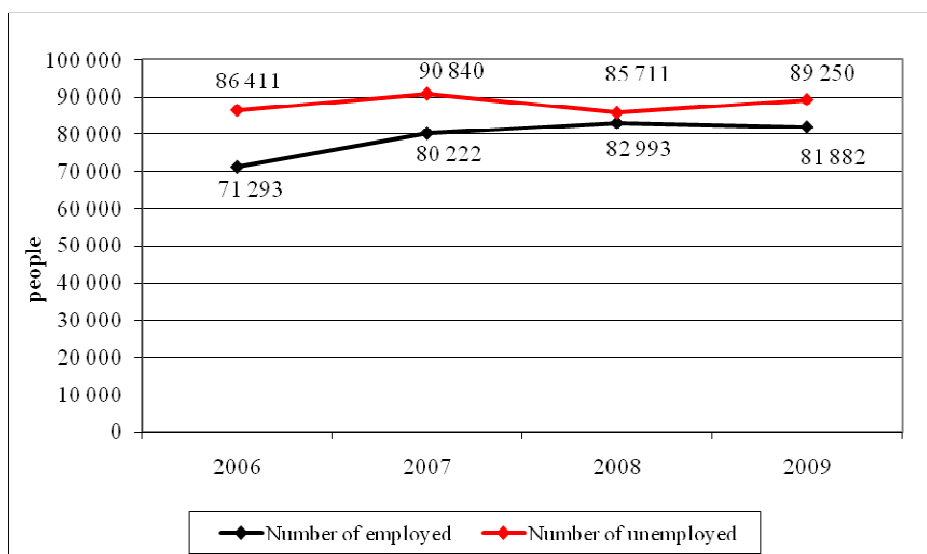
From the 1950's the Tuzla area played a more and more important role in Northeastern Bosnia's economy. The conjuncture of this region was based in intensive industrialization, which was based on the rich mineral- and raw material supplies, and which also determined the type of industrialization. The polarization of Tuzla as a regional center showed itself mostly in investments, trained workforce, concentration of the population and in mass production. By the end of the 1980's in employment and population Tuzla was ahead of most BiH regional centers. After the promising start, the dynamics of local economical growth slowed down, this affected the city's vicinity as well. The one-sided industrial structure, declining investments, the ageing of the technical apparatus resulted in an industrial decline;

the decreasing quality of life and more problematic employment resulted in migration losses. The Bosnian war of 1992-1995 caused serious damage in the economy of the region; the rebuilding is still not finished.

Until the late 1980's the Tuzla region was the fastest growing area of BiH demographically, but before the war the area was stricken by negative migration. The demographic effects of the war show in Tuzla Canton too. Compared to the pre-war era the natural growth of the population reached a critical point and is constantly waning. The number of births between 1996-2007 was greatly reduced (in 10 years to less than a third of the original value), and the number of deaths grew (Figure 5). The critical demographic status of the area is worsened by the constant increase of the elderly (over 65 years old) population. Among the productive population unemployment is very high (Figure 6). The decrease of the population is greatly influenced by hard livelihood, unfavorable economic situation (untrained workforce, low salaries, urbanization, abandonment of private village property, etc), low number of births, temporary and permanent emigration.



**Figure 5** Number of births and deaths in Tuzla Canton between 1996 and 2005.  
Source: Based on Statistički godišnjak/ljetopis FBiH, Sarajevo, 2005. and Tuzlanski kanton u brojkama 2010. own ed. 2010.



**Figure 6** Ratio of employed and unemployed in Tuzla Canton between 2003 and 2005  
Source: Based on Tuzlanski kanton u brojkama 2010. own ed. 2010.



#### 4.2.2. The internal refugee population of the canton

The forced migration during the Bosnian war that changed the ethnic composition of most parts of the country did not leave Tuzla Canton unchanged, most internal refugees were registered here. Between 1992 and 1995 from the more than 70 općinas of BiH 146 137 people migrated to this areas, leading to a very high concentration of population. The population of općinas forming the Tuzla Canton of today stayed relatively peaceful in the bloody war of the three ethnicities, no major incidents happened between local Bosnians, Croats and Serbs. As opposed to other, ethnically mixed cities of BiH (Sarajevo, Mostar) the majority of the Orthodox population stayed loyal to their birthplace and did not move en masse.

When the war ended, approximately 150 000 internal refugees were in Tuzla Canton, most of them from the RS. The migration wave was most prominent in the urban centers of the canton (mostly Tuzla and Živinice). By the end of 1997 76% of the population was local resident, 24% internal refugee. Their number decreased by fall 2009 to 17 000, 3% of the local population. According to local estimates, emigrants from the later canton's area were around 82 000. After the 2005 national registration 11 125 people named an općina of Tuzla Canton as their pre-war residence, 89% of them were Serbian. Until 2005 around 56 000, formerly Tuzla Canton resident Bosnians moved back to the RS. According to ministry reports in 2005 26 751 internal refugees were still in the researched area, 94% of them was from the RS.

The current demographic structure of Tuzla Canton retained all of the major traits of the division caused by the war. The area undergoes ethnic homogenization; the number of Bosnians growing above 90% is caused by the returnees. As for returning minorities (Croatian, Serbian), until 2005 14 113 people moved back to Tuzla Canton, 79% of them Serbian, 21 % Croatian. The returning of the minorities is decreasing, largely affected by local national processes (dominance in politics and power of the majority) and more favorable conditions at the temporary residence.

The returning process nears its end, but the area's pre-war ethnic composition has not been restored yet – and it probably never will be. Despite this, in the return of internal refugees Tuzla Canton – when compared to other BiH areas – is an example for success.

#### 4.2.3. Minorities in the canton

The composition and exact number of minorities of the classical sense in Tuzla Canton is unknown. This is because – in order to avoid discrimination – these people do not appear in official statistics as minorities, instead they name themselves part of the majority (Bosnian). There is no educational program for the minorities, all nationalities study following the Bosnian curriculum (the only exception is the Croatian Franciscan secondary school). From the local minorities the Romany population faces the most problems (national trend). Around 15 000 Romany live in Tuzla Canton. According to unofficial sources only 0,1% are employed, and only 3 of them has a tertiary, 100 a secondary education. Local schools (as schools everywhere in the country) are not prepared to avoid the discrimination of Romany children by students and parents of other ethnicities, and often by teachers. Facing a series of discriminations most Romany students leave school voluntarily.

In the fall of 2009 a positive change occurred in the treatment of ethnicities in Tuzla Canton. The local government accepted the legislation for the protection of the rights of the ethnic minorities; a first for all the cantons.

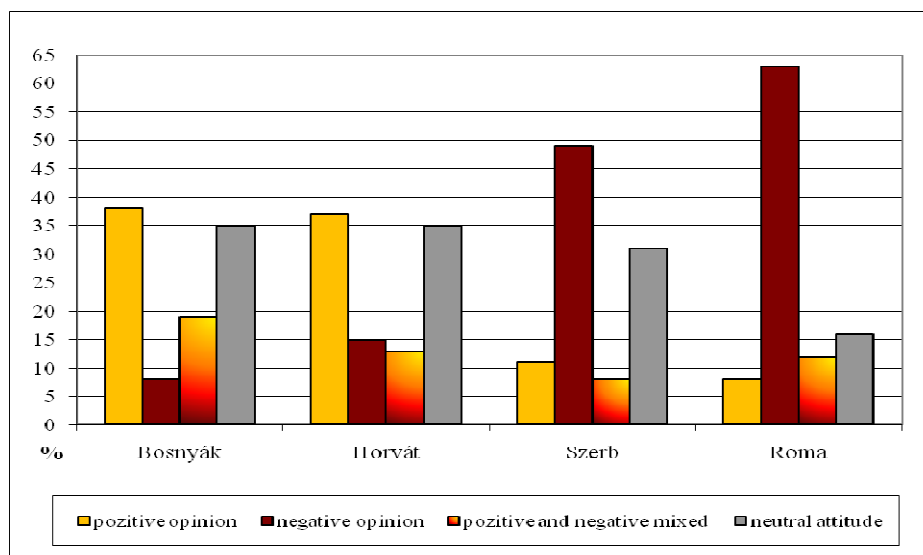
#### 4.3. Examining ethnic relations in Tuzla Canton with a questionnaire

During our fieldwork in a smaller segment of the Bosnian society/reality we examined the ethnic coexistence after the war. A generally accepted opinion that overcoming the conflicts of the war can only happen after a generational shift in the country. Because of this it is important to see the current Bosnian youths' opinions about the roles of various nationalities, social groups in the war, and their living next to each other in peace. Our hypothesis was that the younger generation is more accepting and easier to overcome the conflicts dividing the older generations, and that they can approach social-ethnic problems from different points of view. The majority of the interviewees selected during the sampling were born during the war, so they did not experience the ethnic diversity of Yugoslavia and did not remember the events of the war, however the opinions of their older family members shapes their relations to "others" too.

The results of the poll conducted in the University of Tuzla confirm that the centuries old traditions of coexistence in a local, ethnically diverse community cannot be completely shaken even by a cruel and bloody war. In addition, the politically generated, artificial adversities and everyday life is easily separated here.

Average age of the participant students was 21,2 years. 89% of them were Bosnians, 9% Croatian, 2% Serbian, 1% of other nationality; 2% atheist, 10% Roman Catholic, 86% Muslim, 2% Orthodox. 85% of them were from an općina of Tuzla Canton, 15% came from outside the canton.

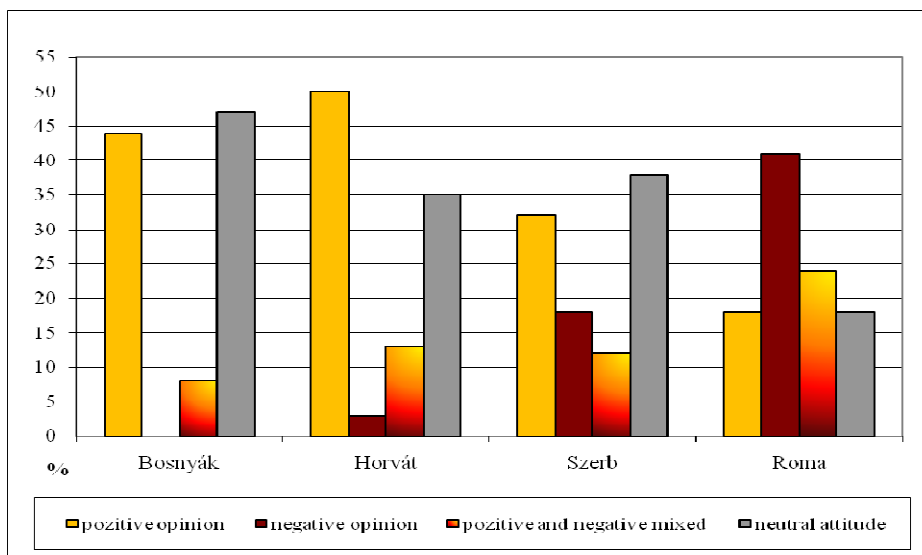
Most of the participants of the poll do not dismiss relations with different nationalities despite the war. It is a fact however, that their majority is more accepting towards their own ethnicity than towards the others, and all non-Romany interviewees are more rejecting towards Romany. The Bosnians are more accepting towards Croatians, but usually reject Serbians and Romany (*Figure 7*).



**Figure 7** Opinions of Bosnian respondents about themselves and other ethnicities (percentage)

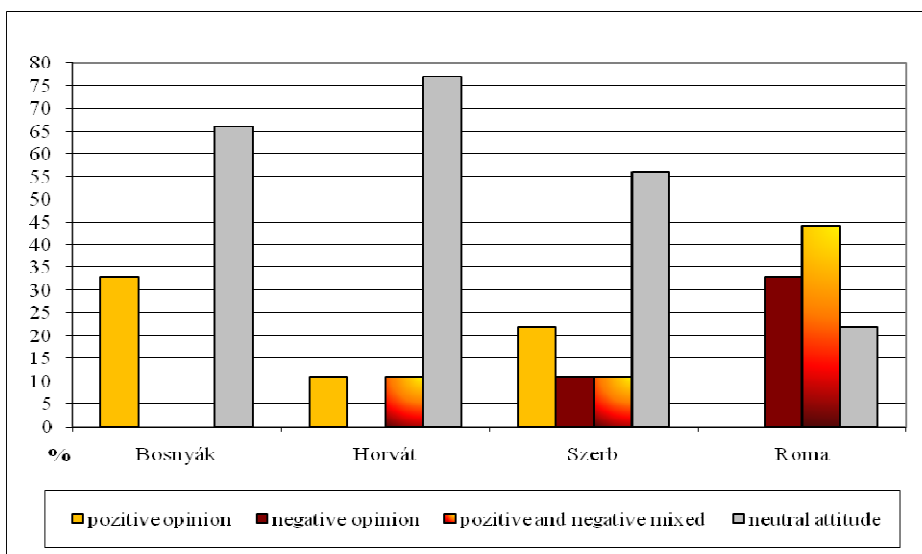
Source: Based on questionnaires own ed. 2010.

The opinions of Croatians about Bosnians are both positive and neutral; no one spoke of them negatively. Their relations towards Serbians are more mixed, and they also mostly reject Romany (*Figure 8*).



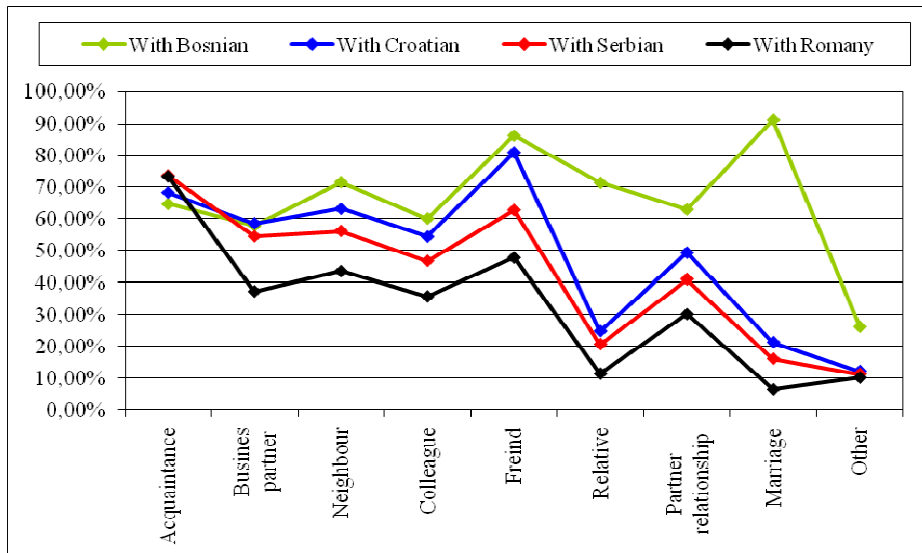
**Figure 8** Opinions of Croatian respondents about themselves and other ethnicities (percentage)  
Source: Based on questionnaires own ed. 2010.

Serbian participants' opinions about Bosnians are more neutral than positive. It is interesting that similarly to Croatians, none of the Serbians expressed negative opinions about Bosnians. They are also mostly neutral towards Croatians. They also reject Romany, none of the Serbian interviewees expressed a positive opinion about them (*Figure 9*).



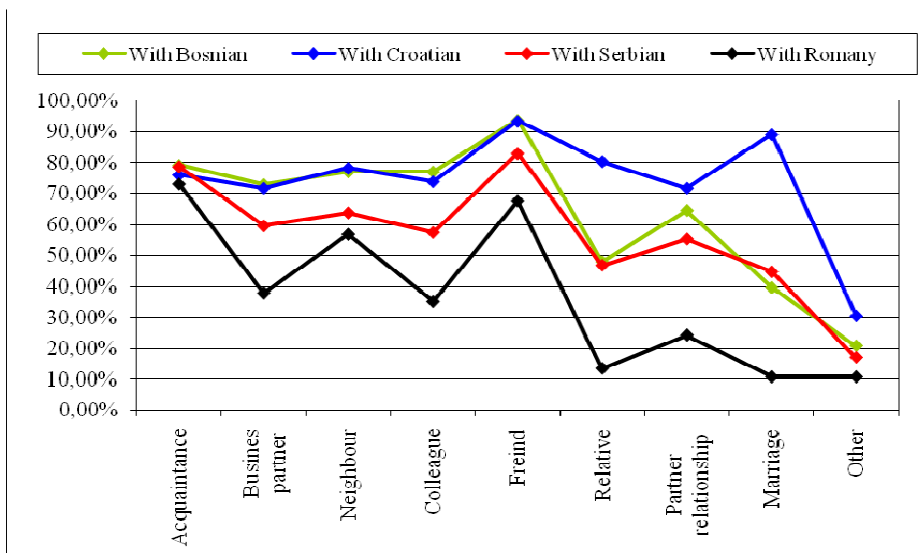
**Figure 9** Opinions of Serbian respondents about themselves and other ethnicities (percentage)  
Source: Based on questionnaires own ed. 2010.

94% of the respondents have, 6% don't have relations with other ethnicities. For the intensity of these relations, in 19% the relations are daily, 18% are weekly and 63% are rare, and in case of different ethnicities a loose connection was more often indicated. 61,4% of the respondents are willing to establish relations with all four nationalities (Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, Romany) in the future, 19% only indicated 3 ethnicities, usually rejecting Serbians and Romany. Only a few Bosnian respondent would be willing to marry someone from a different ethnicity and they would rather choose Croatians as friends as Serbians (*Figure 10*).

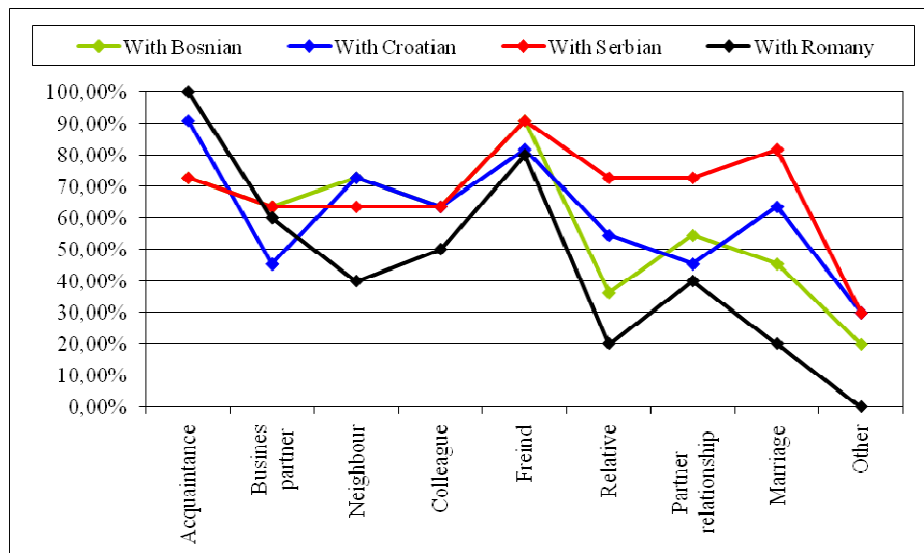


**Figure 10** Willingness of Bosnian respondents to form relations with other ethnicities (percentage)  
Source: Based on questionnaires own ed. 2010.

Croatians and Serbians would prefer to marry among themselves then with Bosnians, but they would gladly choose Bosnian friends (*Figures 11-12*). In case of Romany, mostly the “acquaintance”, “friend”, “neighbor”, “business partner” categories were marked, only 18% would marry them. With this the respondents did not confirm our prior expectation that because of the war the majority would reject other ethnicities and rather stay within their own. 87% of the respondents were affected by the war in some way (emotionally, financially, physically, etc.), yet they don’t completely reject other nationalities.



**Figure 11** Willingness of Croatian respondents to form relations with other ethnicities (percentage)  
Source: Based on questionnaires own ed. 2010.



**Figure 12** Willingness of Serbian respondents to form relations with other ethnicities (percentage)  
Source: Based on questionnaires own ed. 2010.

Two thirds of the participants had a negative change of opinion about different ethnicities, but three quarters deemed the relationship of Tuzla ethnicities mediocre or better. Their justification shows that 24% of the interviewees think that the area has exceptional ethnic relations and Tuzla is a great example among BiH cities. 4% think of the local relations as bad, 19% as underdeveloped. Over half of the respondents (51%) think of the city's ethnic relations as very good. Their most frequent reasons: historical traditions; openness; mixed population; liberal attitude; multi-ethnicity; formerly communist, now social-democratic city; less war trauma compared to other cities; large number of mixed marriages; diversion of the city power structure (ethnic representation); non-nationalist leadership. 26% think the relations are adequate, but there are some problems and some disagreement among the various ethnicities. Their most frequent reasons include: smaller ethnic incidents; uneven distribution of political positions. 4% called the ethnic relations of Tuzla negative. They claim the problems still persist and inter-ethnic disagreements are frequent. Their most frequent reasons: effects of the media/politics, disinformation about the "others", superficial relations, hypocrisy, hidden nationalism, rejection of understanding others.

Concerning general human rights respondents deemed the Romany population's situation the worse, the Bosnians the best. Tuzla Croatians are thought to have a better situation than Serbians. Although in Tuzla public education the Bosnian curriculum is used, non-Bosnian respondents still did not consider their own position in education worse than Bosnians. However, Croatians are in a better position with their Franciscan secondary school than the Serbians who don't have a separate educational institute in the canton.

In summary we can say that the restoration of the trust between BiH ethnicities will require a lot of time and even more goodwill, and only after that can the rift between Bosnians, Croatians and Serbians diminish. Only then can we say that BiH turned into a democratic country where individuals are judged based on their own values and abilities and not based on their ethnicities. When will this state of affairs happen, or will it happen at all? Very hard to predict.

The results above show that despite often negatively changing opinions, coexistence of Tuzla Canton ethnicities is better, more conflict-free than in other areas of BiH.

## **PRACTICAL APPLICATION AND POSSIBLE CONTINUATION OF THE RESEARCH**

Practical application of the research results could be possible in the following areas:

- Diplomatic, economic decision making. The dissertation can mostly help with local and regional international relations, international missions.
- Higher education. Mostly in various Balkan studies, international relations, geography, etc. majors.
- Inserted in general Balkan studies the topic can broaden our existing knowledge of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The work started with the dissertation is by no means finished. The following research directions could serve as possible continuation:

- In the poll the ethnic division of the respondents shows that the answers mostly convey the local Bosnian opinion as a result of the ethnic homogenization process in the areas. In the follow-up we plan to target local Croatians and Serbians to get their more detailed opinions.
- We plan to compare the urban and rural areas of the canton, as we presume that ethnic problems are more expressed in closed rural communities than in cities.
- It would be useful to include other, older age groups in our research and the repetition of the poll with the original sample to monitor their possible change of opinion.
- We plan to investigate other (not only Bosnian majority) social-regional structures (e.g. Banja Luka, Mostar, Sarajevo).

## LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

### HASANOVIĆ-KOLUTÁ CZ ANDREA

#### 1. Publications of which the dissertation was based on

##### 1.1. Studies, book chapters, etc.

1. M. CSÁSZÁR ZS. – HASANOVIĆ-KOLUTÁ CZ A. (megjelenés alatt): *A Balkán mint tér, mint fogalom geográfus szemmel.* – In. Jelenkor
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3. HASANOVIĆ-KOLUTÁ CZ A. 2010: *A boszniai háború hatása Tuzla kanton társadalmi – etnikai viszonyaira.* – In. **Modern Geográfia** (<http://www.moderngeografia.hu>), 2010. 1. szám, pp. 1-28.
4. HASANOVIĆ-KOLUTÁ CZ A. 2010: *Menekültkérdés Tuzla kantonban 1992 és 2008 között.* – In. **Mediterrán és Balkán Fórum** IV./1. PTE-TTK FI KMBTK, Pécs, pp. 10-17.
5. M. CSÁSZÁR ZS. – KOLUTÁ CZ A. 2009: *Baranya megye és Tuzla kanton társadalmi-gazdasági változásainak összehasonlító elemzése.* – In. **Közép-Európai Közlemények** II./1. (No. 3) pp. 18-29.
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9. BALI, L. – KOLUTÁ CZ, A. 2008: *Mogućnosti razvijanja prometa u Euroregionalnoj suradnji Dunav-Drava-Sava, s posebnim obzirom na mađarsku stranu pogranične zone između Mađarske i Hrvatske.* – In. NURKOVIĆ, R. (ed.): *Utjecaj prometa na regionalni razvoj.* Zbornik Radova, UNTZ PMF Odsjek za geografiju, Tuzla, pp. 131-135.
10. KOLUTÁ CZ A. 2008: *A demográfiai helyzet alakulása Tuzla kantonban az 1992-1995-ös boszniai háború után.* – In. **Mediterrán és Balkán Fórum** II./1. PTE-TTK FI KMBTK, Pécs, pp. 10-17.

11. **KOLUTÁ CZ A.** 2006: *A népesedés szociális és etnikai sajátosságai Tuzla kantonban (Bosznia-Hercegovina).* – In. PAP N. (szerk.): *A Balatontól az Adriáig.* Lomart Kiadó – PTE-TTK KMBTK, Pécs, pp. 299-314.

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## 2. Other publications

### 2.1. Studies, book chapters, etc.

1. GYENIZSE P. – **HASANOVIC-KOLUTÁ CZ A.** 2010: *A település története.* – In. NAGYVÁRADI L. – SZEBÉNYI A. (szerk.): *Bátaszék – Kisváros tájak és kultúrák találkozásában.* Kiadja: Bátaszék Város Önkormányzata, Séd Nyomda, Szekszárd, pp. 21-67.
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3. BALI L. – **KOLUTÁ CZ A.** 2008: *A horvát-magyar határmenti együttműködés fejlesztésének lehetőségei az euroregionális együttműködésekben, különös tekintettel a városokra.* – In. LÁSZLÓ M. – BUCHER E. (szerk.): *A terület- és településfejlesztés társadalomföldrajzi megközelítésben.* Geographia Pannonica Nova 4. PTE TTK Földrajzi Intézet, Pécs, pp. 321-331.



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