

Influence of Political and Socioeconomic Factors on Population Distribution in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Abstract

The findings suggest that the political situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina significantly impacts population distribution across the entire territory. It can be concluded that the deterioration of specific socioeconomic conditions (e.g., employment, living standards) in the country is reflected in the overall demographic trends. The paper provides an overview of the political processes before and after the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which have led to an imbalanced and potentially problematic distribution of population throughout the territory. Additionally, it discusses the detailed socioeconomic conditions in past decades, which have contributed to continuous migration from Bosnia and Herzegovina to European Union countries. Demographic analyses drew upon the results of the last two censuses conducted in 1991 and 2013, documenting the latest distribution of population and density changes.

Keywords

Bosnia and Herzegovina, influential factors, political factors, socioeconomic status, population distribution

Izveček

Vpliv političnih in socioekonomskih dejavnikov na porazdelitev prebivalstva v Bosni in Hercegovini

Ugotovitve kažejo, da politična situacija v Bosni in Hercegovini pomembno vpliva na razporeditev prebivalstva po celotnem ozemlju. Lahko sklepamo, da poslabšanje določenih socioekonomskih razmer (npr. zaposlovanje, življenjski standard) v državi odraža splošne demografske trende. Članek podaja pregled političnih procesov pred in po konfliktu v Bosni in Hercegovini, ki so privedli do neuravnotežene in potencialno problematične razporeditve prebivalstva. Obravnava tudi podrobne socioekonomske razmere v preteklih desetletjih, ki so prispevale k kontinuiranemu izseljevanju iz Bosne in Hercegovine v države Evropske unije. Demografske analize temeljijo na rezultatih zadnjih dveh popisov, izvedenih leta 1991 in 2013, in omogočajo prikaz najnovejše prebivalstvene razporeditve in gostote.

Ključne besede

Bosna in Hercegovina, vplivni dejavniki, politični dejavniki, socioekonomski status, razporeditev prebivalstva



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1 Introduction

For the past three decades, Bosnia and Herzegovina have experienced significant and profound demographic changes, including shifts in population size, redistribution, density, ethnic composition, and other demographic characteristics. These changes have varied in intensity across different stages and regions of the country. A large number of authors dealt with the issue of the demographic structure of the population, the birth rate and natural depopulation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, demographic aging of the population, social policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and BiH's out-migration. This needs to be seen in the context of research studies on the ethnic structure of municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina according to the changes in the demographic structure of the population that occurred from 1991 to 2013 (see for example Pejanović, 2018; Emirhafizović, 2018; Družić, 2020).

In this paper, the focus is on the elderly population, a distinct social group with unique needs arising from aging. These needs are crucial in the realm of social policy, which involves the community's organized and active efforts to ensure suitable living conditions and social security for the elderly. This study explores the extent to which various migration movements affect Bosnia and Herzegovina's demographic structure. These movements include local-level migrations (from rural to urban areas), the emigration of whole families to foreign countries, and the transit of individuals from the Middle East and other regions through Bosnia and Herzegovina.

2 Methodology

This research focuses on the hypothesis that political processes and socioeconomic conditions are crucial factors contributing to the uneven demographic development in Bosnia and Herzegovina. To examine this hypothesis, the research analyses demographic changes in population movements, distribution, and density before and after the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The aim is to explore how these processes influence internal population relocation and emigration from Bosnia and Herzegovina. The research employs content analysis, statistical methods, and comparative approaches using available data. The complexity of the research required the use of data that had to be taken from a variety of sources. In addition to literature, planning documents, maps, field sketches and statistical indicators were used.

The collected material and operating data were processed, according to their structure, by contemporary methods that also includes GIS technology.

3 Results

3.1 Political processes as influential factors in population distribution

At the end of the last century, radical geopolitical changes took place in the world, marked by the collapse of the socialist system, i.e., the Warsaw Bloc, the end of the Cold War, and the weakening of the Non-Aligned Movement. In 1990, the first multi-party elections were held in SFR Yugoslavia, which enabled the democratization process. After the Socialist Republics of Slovenia and Croatia separated from the SFRY and declared independence, a referendum on the same issue was announced on February 29 and March 1, 1992, in the SR of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Out of 64% of citizens that voted, 99% voted for an independent, sovereign state, the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a state of equal citizens and ethnicities. The European Union

internationally recognized Bosnia and Herzegovina on April 6, 1992, and on May 22 it was admitted to the membership of the United Nations as one of its 177 members (Nezirović & Sivac, 2018). After international recognition, on April 6, 1992, by holding Sarajevo under siege, the JNA (Yugoslav National Army) and the Serb paramilitary units of Federal Yugoslavia (a community of Serbia and Montenegro) initiated a military aggression towards Bosnia and Herzegovina and, as of 1993, the Croat paramilitary units of the HVO (Croatian Defence Council) became involved (Nezirović, 2022).

The war imposed on Bosnia and Herzegovina by Serbian aggression and Croatian political secession, the so-called Croatian regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Herceg-Bosna), significantly changed the demographic picture of Bosnia. Aggression represented the use of armed force by one state against the sovereignty, territorial integrity, or political independence of another state in a manner contrary to the Charter of the United Nations Organization and the spirit of international law. During the 1992-95 aggression, the most powerful movement of the population in the history of Bosnia and Herzegovina took place. The population left the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina in various ways by fleeing, forced displacement, and deportation. According to Der Fischer Weltalmanach and UNHCR, the culmination of this process was at the end of 1993, when the number of refugees and exiles amounted to over 1,700,000 people (Nezirović, 2022).

The consequences of the war were particularly reflected in the increase in mortality. A total of 104,732 people died, including 42,106 civilians and 62,626 soldiers, 1,601 children were killed in Sarajevo alone, and there are still 7,547 persons missing since the conflict. In July 1995, members of the Serb army committed genocide against the population concentrated in the protected zone of Srebrenica, coming from the municipalities of Bratunac, Bijeljina Foča, Han Pijesak, Rogatica, Sarajevo, Sokolac, Srebrenica, Srebrenik, Ugljevik, Višegrad, Vlasenica and Zvornik. Genocide is the heaviest, most complex, and most heinous form of crime in the history of humankind and one of the most complex social processes and phenomena resulting from collective ideology, politics, and practice.

One of the basic elements of the genocide against the non-Serb population was the violent expulsion and killing of the population from the territory that the aggressors considered to be the area of their ethnic choice. Due to political and religious reasons, 8,372 people were killed in the Srebrenica genocide. After the last war (1992-1995), the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina is administratively regulated as a state with two entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republic of Srpska (RS) and special administrative area of the Brčko District (Nezirović, Drešković & Mirić, 2018).

3.2 Internal displacement of the population

Due to war events, mass expulsions, and forced resettlement of the population, the spatial picture of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina was changed. This was especially evident in western, north-eastern, and eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ethnic cleansing, killing, and persecution of mainly the non-Serb population occurred in these areas. The changes that occurred in the distribution of the population after the aggression were expressed in the ethnic structure of the population. According to the 2013 census, the ethnic composition of the population consists of Bosniaks (1,769,592 or 50.1%), Serbs (1,086,733 or 30.8 %), Croats (544,780 or 15.4%) and

Others (130,054 or 3.7%), while 0.77% of the population did not declare their ethnicity (BHAS, 2013). See comparison of nationality composition between 1991 and 2013 in Table 1.

Table 1: Nationality composition in Bosnia and Hercegovina.

Nationality	1991	Nationality	2013
Muslims	1.902.956	Bosniak	1.769.592
Serbs	1.366.104	Serbian	1.086.733
Croats	760.852	Croat	544.780
Montenegrins	10.071	Others	130.054
Macedonias	1.596	National minorities	
Slovenians	2.190	Roma	12.583
Albanians	4.295	Albanians	2.659
National minorities		Ukrainians	2.331
Roma	8.864	Montenegrins	1.883
Czechs	590	Turks	1.108
Italians	732	Macedonian	738
Jews	426	Slovenians	937
Hungarians	893	Italians	391
Germans	470	Germans	365
Poles	526	Hungarians	350
Romanians	162	Romanian	32
Russians	297	Czechs	258
Ruthenians	133	Ruthenians	32
Slovaks	297	Slovaks	173
Turks	267	Jews	262
Ukrainians	3.929	Poles	258
Others	17.592	Russians	279
Non-declared	14.585	Slovenians	937
Regional	224	Non-declared	27.055
Unknown	35.670	Unknown	6.460
Total	4,377.033	Total	3,531.159

Source: BHAS, 2013.

According to the 2013 census, the Others represented 12,583 Roma, 2,659 Albanians, 2,331 Ukrainians, 1,883 Montenegrins, and 1,108 Turks. Out of a total of 17 national minorities whose rights are guaranteed, the most prominent national minorities are Roma 51%, Albanians 11%, Ukrainians 9%, and Montenegrins 8%, while the share of other less numerous groups is 4% or less (Figure 1).

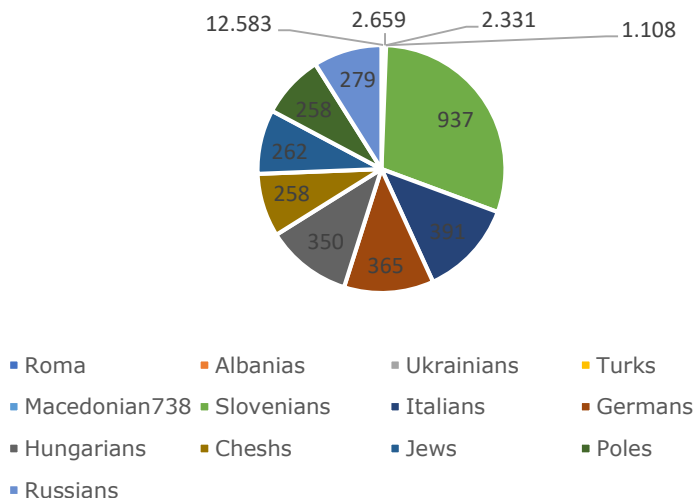


Figure 1: Nationality the ethnic composition of the national minorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
Source: BHAS, 2013.

Regarding the spatial distribution according to the administrative territory, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is home to 70.4% Bosniak population, 22.4% Croatian population, and 3.6% Serbian population. On the territory of the entity of Republika Srpska, 81.5% of the population are Serbs, 14% of the population is Bosniak, and 2.4% of the population is Croatian. Brčko District is home to: 40.3% Bosniak population, 34.6% Serb population, and 20.7% Croatian population (Figure 2).

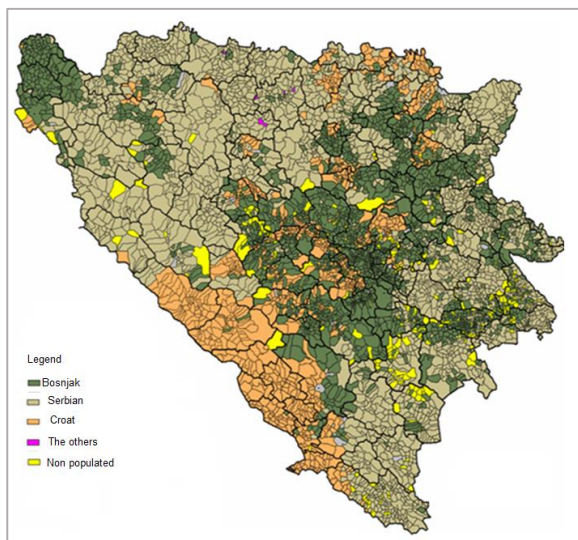


Figure 2: Ethnic structure of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the settlements in 2013.
Source: Nezirović, 2022.

The Bosniak population today constitutes the majority in the municipalities Bihać, Tuzla, Zenica, Travnik, Goražde, and Sarajevo. The Bosniak population decreased in 64 municipalities by up to 91% in Foča, Višegrad, and Rogatica. The Croatian population constitutes the majority in Herzegovina and central Bosnia, in the municipalities: Usora, Žepče, Kreševo, Kiseljak, Busovača, Vitez, and Dobretići. The Croatian population decreased in 85 municipalities. The Serbian population constitutes the majority in Banja Luka, Bijeljina, Doboј, Prijedor, Laktaši, Trebinje, Zvornik, Bratunac, Foča, Višegrad, and Rogatica. The Serbian population decreased in 89 municipalities (Table 2, Figure 3) (Pejanović, 2018).

Table 2: Changes in population distribution according to ethnic composition in the period 1991-2013.

Population by ethnicity (1991)	Number of settlements which have undergone changes	Settlement area (km²)	Settlement population after aggression
Bosniaks	186	1.245,67	The Serbian population
	31	253,97	The Croatian population
	3	5,21	The rest of the population
	105	408,26	Uninhabited settlements
Serbs	260	1.882,18	The Bosniak population
	34	367,41	The Croatian population
	6	41,24	The rest of the population
	220	1.456,10	Uninhabited settlements
Croats	98	585,77	The Bosniak population
	64	697,43	The Serbian population
	1	2,14	The rest of the population
	51	245,30	Uninhabited settlements
Other	3	2,80	The Bosniak population
	3	25,06	The Croatian population

	5	32,51	The Serbian population
Uninhabited settlements	9	13,04	The Bosniak population
	1	3,10	The Croatian population
	8	48,56	The Serbian population

Source: Edited by the author based on Pejanović, 2018.

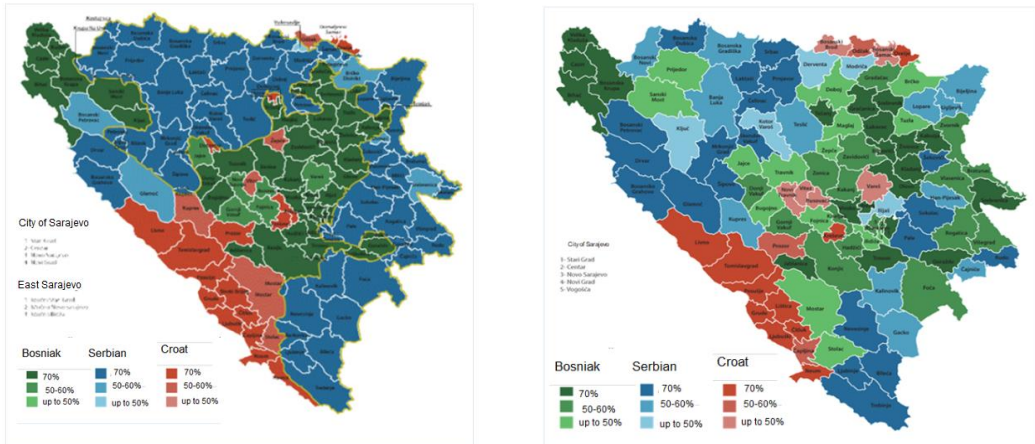


Figure 3: Changes in population distribution according to ethnic composition in the period 1991-2013.

Source: Ethno-map of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013.

3.3 Demographic aging of the population as an influential factor in population distribution

The changes that have occurred in the distribution of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the past decades confirm the importance of the influence of socioeconomic processes. The tendency of the social status and demographic aging of the population reduced natural growth, constant decline in the pace of the active population, and emigration from the country are facts that require a more active population in the overall socioeconomic development policy.

The process of population aging or demographic aging of the population, as opposed to individual population aging, implies certain demographic criteria. Just as biological changes determine the individual human aging process, the aging process of the population is determined by demographic changes, as well as the criteria for which this process is determined. Demographic aging is most affected by the decline in the birth rate (the so-called de-juvenilization or "aging from below"), the increase in the share of older residents (the so-called graying or "aging from above"), and the trend in mortality (Družić, 2020). In the process of long aging, the population decreases from 15 to 30 years compared to 30 to 49 years, where births are significantly less frequent, reducing overall fertility. According to its characteristics, the population of

Bosnia and Herzegovina today is aging, it is characterized by low vitality and low fertility, and therefore low reproductivity (Emirhafizović,2018). According to the appearance of the age pyramid from 2013, it is evident that biological regression gives a clear stamp on the age structure of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Generally looking, the largest population is middle-aged and old, representing a significant problem for the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The older mature population in the middle forties to late fifties is dominantly represented, with the column of the age interval 50-54 standing out for its widest range, and there is a marked gender asymmetry in favor of the female population aged 60 and over due to the average shorter life expectancy of the male population. The higher mortality of men during the war, as well as other factors, damaged the relatively balanced gender structure that existed in the early 1990s. Differences in the level of mortality by gender caused a disparity in the share of women and men of the third age (Cvitković, 2017).

Table 3: Population of Bosnia and Herzegovina by age groups in 2013.

Age	Population	Age	Population
0 - 4	174.064	45 - 49	260.928
5 - 9	176.980	50 - 54	276.575
10 - 14	192.675	55 - 59	258.537
15 - 19	242.742	60 - 64	223.251
20 - 20	228.056	65 - 69	153.569
25 - 29	252.318	70 - 74	140.455
30 - 34	252.633	75-79	117.267
35 - 39	249.266	80 - 84	62.636
40 - 44	241.138	85+	28.069

Source: BHAS, 2013.



Figure 4: Population pyramid of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2013.

Source: BHAS, 2013

The data on the actual state of the elderly population of Bosnia and Herzegovina after the last census in 2013 have not been sufficiently classified by age to this day. Therefore, the picture is not systematic and comprehensive. Many areas are not monitored at all through regular statistics or special research, such as the unfulfilled needs of the elderly for health care, their civic participation, material deprivation, subjective well-being, barriers to mobility, access to various social services, etc. Socio-demographic processes affect social policy significantly, which implies state redistribution of national income aimed at overcoming social risks, reducing social inequalities, and equalizing the living conditions of citizens (Puljiz, 2015).

The elderly population in Bosnia and Herzegovina accounts for over 40% of total social protection services. Older women use social protection more than older men. However, due to the longer life expectancy and the lack of care services (UNFPA, 2020). Due to low incomes (pensions) that are insufficient to cover basic living expenses, the economic situation of retirees is not favorable on average; the majority of this population directs their economic activity to rural agricultural production for the needs of their own household. Although most elderly people are covered by health insurance, their access to health care services is unsatisfactory, especially in rural areas.

On the other hand, their access to health care and medicines is limited due to low income or low availability of services. The leading causes of death in the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina are cardiovascular diseases 53.8%, malignant neoplasms 21%, and endocrine and metabolic diseases with nutritional disorders 5.5%. More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the total number of deaths annually are from these groups of diseases. Among the leading infectious diseases, most are respiratory (influenza/influenza-like diseases, varicella, streptococcal angina, TB of the respiratory system, measles, and others. A total of 4,438 people died from Covid-19 in 2020, representing 10% of deaths in that year. Regarding gender, 36% of those who died from Covid-19 were women, and 64% were men. The largest number of female deaths occurred in the age group of 80 to 84 years, while the largest number of male deaths due to Covid - 19 happened between the ages of 70 and 74. About 21.2% of adults are obese, 44.1% of adults consume tobacco, 28.8% consume alcohol, and only 24.6% of the population is physically active. Based on the above, it can be concluded that the picture of population aging in Bosnia and Herzegovina is not bright. Due to aging, the average life expectancy of residents could be more than 50 years (UNFPA, 2020).

3.4 Decrease in population activity as an influential factor in population distribution

The population is the carrier of economic development because it represents the demographic framework for forming the productive (work) force that initiates and directs all activities in the area (Ahmetbegović, 2015). In recent decades, Bosnia and Herzegovina has faced a dangerously high level of unemployment, an unsustainable wage deficit, external debt, and industrial capacities at 30% of their pre-war capacity. The general economic situation stems from the aforementioned problems, so some economic indicators have not shown an enviable tendency recently. In addition to the increase in the age of the population, there has been a change in economic activity in the total population. The ratio between the employed population and pensioners is 1:1.56. 1,624,924 inhabitants are economically inactive, out of which 277,185 or 17%

are pupils, students, and people over 15 years of age. 602,180 or 37% are retired people (pensioners), 449,188 or 28% are persons who do housework, 60,005 or 4% are incapable of working and 186,366 or 14% of others (BHAS, Census 2013).

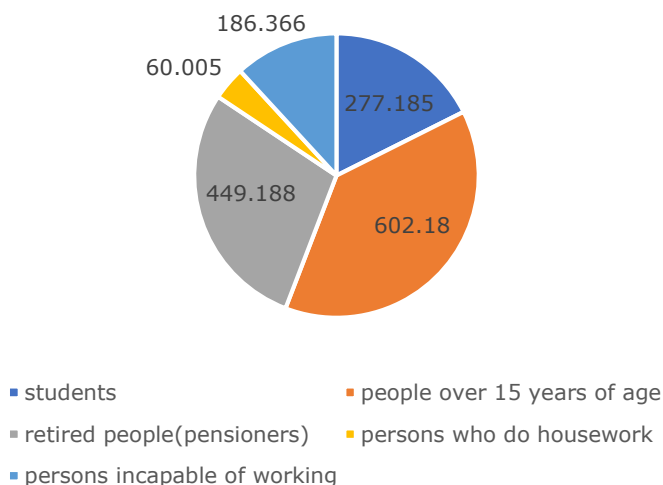


Figure 5: Economically inactive population of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2013.
Source: BHAS, 2013

The labor force or economically active population consists of employed and unemployed persons. There are 2,987,440 of the working-age population, of which 1,033,884 are employed, and 328,632 are unemployed. There have been significant changes in the analysis of the employed population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These changes relate to the increase of the working-age contingent of the population to 71.8%, the reduction of the pre-work contingent to 15.4%, and the increase of the post-work contingent to 17.6%. This is a direct consequence of the decline in biological reproduction of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These characteristics refer to the total population. Labor force participation rates vary widely by age and gender. The most active population is from 24 to 49 years old (69%). According to gender, the number of employed women is higher by 2.7%, but 21.6% of the total working-age population is inactive women. Regarding the number of women pensioners, there are twice as many as men (BHAS, 2013).

The analysis of the unemployed population shows that out of 328,632 people, 12.94% were previously employed, and 11% had no work experience. Unemployment is mostly a long-term problem: ½ of the total number of unemployed have been without a job for at least five years, of which ¼ are unemployed for over ten years. Also, many, if not most, of the unemployed can hardly be considered economically active. Barely 13% of the unemployed have been out of work for less than a year (BHA Census, 2013). According to the analyses carried out by the Agency for Statistics of BiH, the data for 2020 show that the majority of unemployed people are aged 25-49 (women-64.1%, men 57.5%). The number of inactive people aged 65+ has also increased (women to 33.8%, men to 39.9%) (BHAS, 2022). (Table 4, Figure 6).

Table 4: Population by activities and age groups 2020 in %.

Population	Economically active population	Employed	Unemployed	Inactive
female				
15-24	13,5	7,1	23,4	15,4
25-49	38,5	64,7	64,1	23,4
50-64	25,7	25,1	12,3	27,4
65+	22,3	3,1	.	33,8
male				
15-24	15	7,7	22,4	22,7
25-49	42	62,8	57,5	12,8
50-64	25,6	27,3	20	24,6
65+	17,4	2,2	.	39,9

Source: Edited by the author based on BHAS, 2022

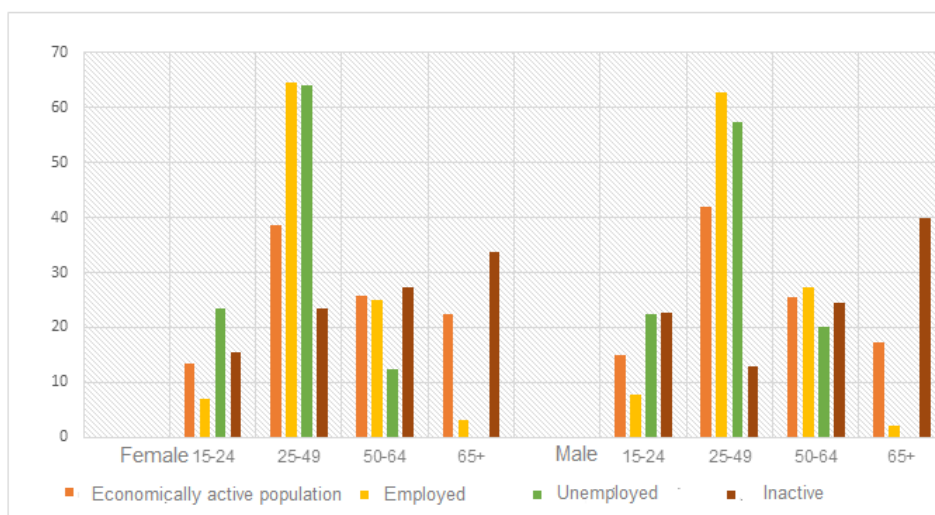


Figure 6: Population by activities and age groups 2020 in %.

Source: Edited by the author based on BHAS, 2022

Young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina have one of the highest unemployment rates in Southeast Europe, which represents one of the main problems that young people face in the labor market and is directly correlated with the quality of their life. This problem affects more women than men. Also, poverty affects young people more than other age groups. Households with three or more children, as well as households with the majority of elderly members and households whose home breadwinner is unemployed, are more exposed to poverty (UNFPA, 2020).

Due to the low standard of living, a large number of residents are unable to solve their housing issues. A flat is counted among those goods, such as food or water, which constitute the essential need for survival; and in contrast to them, it represents a good of permanent consumption. The construction plans also do not follow the structure of users, their needs, and possibilities, and the most affected in this category are employed people with low incomes. With the current level of income, and due to

the increase in property prices, a family is not able to afford to buy an apartment, which is why the concentration of residential units is expressed according to family members and by the number of households (two households live in one apartment), which confirms that about 1/3 of the premises are inhabited out of necessity. This especially applies to the population in larger cities (Korjenić & Nezirović, 2022).

3.5 Emigration as an influential factor in population distribution

High costs of living in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the indifference of the ruling structures in power regarding population standards, hyper unemployment, poverty, and social exclusion, especially of people in their twenties and thirties, have taken on epidemiological proportions, affecting decisions to marry and give birth, and are strong discouraging factors that encourage emigration from the country.

Larger emigration waves of Bosnians and Herzegovinians towards the developed countries of Central and Western Europe, mostly to Germany and Austria, culminated in the past decade, with the departure of young people in search of better conditions and opportunities for life being the most evident. Young people leave in search of a better job, but also a job in their profession that they cannot find in their homeland.

From 2013 to 2018, approximately 484,000 people emigrated from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Breaking down the numbers for the last three years: in 2019, there were 56,987 emigrants; in 2020, the number rose to 85,000; and in 2021, it surged to 172,000 individuals, equivalent to about 50,000 families. In 2022, the emigration count was 3,200 people. Over the past 20 years, a total of 93,210 individuals renounced their Bosnian-Herzegovinian citizenship. From January to October 2018, 13,198 people from Bosnia and Herzegovina found employment in Slovenia, and another 1,000 in Germany. By November 2018, the country witnessed the departure of 21,000 residents. The preferred destination countries for emigrants from Bosnia and Herzegovina include Germany, Austria, Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia, Norway, and the Netherlands (Nezirović, 2022).

Regarding emigration statistics, the only data available for Bosnia and Herzegovina are those maintained by the BiH Agency for Identification Documents, Records and Data Exchange. This agency tracks the number of citizens who deregister their residence in Bosnia and Herzegovina due to emigration. According to its 2022 records, 3,210 individuals were deregistered from Bosnian residence (MSB, 2023).

Table 5: Number of persons who cancelled their residence in BiH in 2022.

Rank	Country of immigration	Deregistered residents from Bosnia and Herzegovina
1.	Germany	834
2.	Austria	767
3.	Croatia	627
4.	Serbia	389
5.	Slovenia	326
6.	Montenegro	70
7.	Netherlands	30
8.	Other countries	167
Total		3,210

Source: MSB, 2023.

Based on available official data of the statistical agencies of the host countries and of the Diplomatic and Consular Representations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is estimated that the total number of persons originating from Bosnia and Herzegovina who live abroad amounts to approximately 2.2 million (MSB, 2023).

In connection with the migration of workers for temporary work abroad, the process of turning temporary into permanent emigration is evident (Nezirović, 2022). Bad employment prospects, low living standards, and political instability are still the main push factors for recent waves of emigration, while on the other hand, previously established networks of migrants (diaspora) facilitate migration to destination countries. The emigration of qualified people contributes very little to the development of the country, considering that remittances from abroad are mainly used for consumption and not for investment in socioeconomic development. There is little evidence of social remittances and the benefits of emigration in terms of exchanging skills and ideas or advancing democratic practices. The continuous emigration process from Bosnia and Herzegovina has not stopped until today, in the situation of slow post-war social and economic recovery. The population of Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to decrease.

3.6 Population and social policy

United Nations experts, who monitor population trends in the world, predict that the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina could almost be halved in the near future. The decline in birth rate and increase in mortality will result in a high natural population decline and a drastic reduction in the total number of inhabitants of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Currently, BiH does not have a single general population or migration policy that would directly relate to the issue of demographic development (UNFPA, 2020).

All observations related to long-term population trends in Bosnia and Herzegovina should be a clear warning sign to policymakers in BiH that immediate action and the implementation of more decisive measures are necessary. All of this points to the need for urgent mitigation and improvement of the situation with appropriate and effective population and social policy measures as part of the overall development policy of the country. Bosnia and Herzegovina needs an official population policy and needs to lobby for it. This would revitalize the basic function of the family. Also, this would not completely prevent, but it would suppress further emigration, especially from rural areas. The effects of continuous implementation of certain population policy measures become visible only after twenty years. It is a very complex and socially demanding issue. First, it is necessary for society to recognize prenatal population policy as its own need and interest and, after defining and adopting it, persist in implementing such population measures. Adequate economic protection of pregnant women, guaranteeing a job during pregnancy and maternity leave, including adequate material assistance in the education and care of children, especially in preschool age, and adequate health care are necessary. It is necessary to encourage the birth of the third and every subsequent child, introduce tax and other relief for such parents, etc. Instead, pregnant women today are rightly afraid of whether they can keep their jobs. Furthermore, it is important to revitalize the family, i.e., its basic functions, encourage the revitalization of multi-ethnicity in the entire territory of this country, and prevent vacating of rural areas and the natural accumulation of population in urban centers. It should also be insisted on the return of displaced persons and creating conditions

for solving housing problems for young people, and prior to that, ensure employment. It is imperative to make it really stimulating to stay in rural areas, especially for young people, and the return of the exiled population during the war to their former places of living (which need to be well connected with urban centers by communication), to provide educational, health, cultural and other infrastructure (Nezirović & Sivac, 2018).

In addition to this, it is important to harmonize the existing and adopt new legislation for the monitoring of environmental risk factors, improve laboratory equipment and continuously educate the employees of healthcare organizations, and implement the goals of the Strategic Health Development Plan faster, which especially refers to the faster reorganization of services in health centers and the reduction of differences in the availability of primary health care teams, the rationalization of hospital capacities, the introduction of incentive payment mechanisms and continuous professional education of employees, as well as the rejuvenation of staff in health institutions. In demographic processes, it is important to mention that emigration of the population is one of the pronounced characteristics that take place for various reasons, and the most common directions are a) underdeveloped areas - developed areas, where there is a situation where more developed cantons allocate significantly more funds for beneficiaries of social rights, in relation to underdeveloped areas.

For the aforementioned reasons, residents go to cantons where the income is higher, health care is cheaper, and thus represent an important factor in the field of social policy; b) entire families leave Bosnia and Herzegovina, get employed in third countries, and therefore a certain number of the working-age population does not continue financing pension funds, through intergenerational solidarity, so that payments to the Pension Fund are reduced, and its financing is called into question; c) the presence of migrants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, from the countries of the Middle East, opens a new issue of the relationship between the population and state support. Their rights are indeed regulated at the state level, but these migrants live in local communities and hence become a part of the obligation to organize life through material, housing, and health care at the municipal and cantonal levels. All of the aforementioned population migration movements, which are listed in this paper, require empirical research that should be carried out on the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, all intending to investigate the causes that lead to population migration and the consequences that migration will have on the demographic structure population and social policy of the state. - All types of media outlets must be involved in protection programs as mandatory collaborators emphasizing investigative journalism.

Special emphasis must be placed on popularizing and animating the local social community to become more actively involved in solving the common problems of people in a state of social need, among whom there are a very large number of elderly people. - The population, age structure, working ability, birth rate, and mortality represent the basic indicators of opportunities and economic development and, thus, the direction of the social policy of a country. Social and population policies are interconnected, interwoven, and act together. It is important to emphasize that demographic processes represent increasingly complex issues that social, population, and other policies should solve in the future. It is important to emphasize that key demographic processes, including changes in the family, and the departure of young people to European countries, with their old parents remaining behind, are gaining an increasingly important place in social policy. If, in the first post-war period, the family

had the strong support of the welfare state, due to advanced processes, dissolution, and individualization, the situation remains the same today, where the family is increasingly forced to transfer its family problems to the care and treatment of the state.

4 Conclusion

The population of Bosnia and Herzegovina is today, according to its characteristics, classified as aged, weakly vital, lowly fertile, and therefore weakly reproductive, decreasing in number, spatially unevenly distributed with worrying migration flows, exposed even after twenty-eight years to the consequences of war events due to Great Serbian and Great Croatian aggression. The complex picture of migration in Bosnia and Herzegovina points to the fact that managing various types of migration and migration flows do not support development processes. Bosnia and Herzegovina is known for emigration. The mass emigration of the 1990s turned into steady flow of economic migrants to developed countries in search of better employment and education opportunities. According to all previous analyses, the emigration of the able-bodied and fertile population outside Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue.

The migration of the young, educated population from Bosnia and Herzegovina will be a problem in the near future because human capital is lost through emigration, which jeopardizes the perspective of not only the demographic but also the social development of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is necessary to devise a prenatal policy that will have a motivating effect on childbirth, including the adoption of appropriate legislation that will, among other things, guarantee social security of fertile married couples, especially young ones, stimulation of their employment, relief in solving housing and other existentially important issues.

This is all necessary so that what experts from the United Nations say does not happen to us; if this trend continues, the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be halved by 2050. If something is not done about these mentioned problems, Bosnia and Herzegovina's settlements will become increasingly empty and remain without inhabitants.

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Povzetek

Članek predstavlja pregled političnih procesov pred in po agresiji na Bosno in Hercegovino, ki so privedli do neugodne razporeditve prebivalstva po celotnem ozemlju, pa tudi socio-ekonomskih pogojev v preteklih desetletjih, ki so povzročili nenehno migracijo iz Bosne in Hercegovine v države Evropske unije. V zadnjih treh desetletjih so se v Bosni in Hercegovini zgodile pomembne demografske spremembe, vključno s spremembami v številu prebivalstva, razporeditvi prebivalstva, gostoti prebivalstva, etnični strukturi in drugih značilnostih prebivalstva.

Te spremembe se razlikujejo glede na intenziteto v različnih fazah in regijah Bosne in Hercegovine. Glede na administrativne razdelitve je trenutna razporeditev prebivalstva naslednja: v Federaciji Bosne in Hercegovine je 70,4 % Bošnjakov, 22,4 % Hrvatov in 3,6 % Srbov; v Republiki Srpski je 81,5 % Srbov, 14 % Bošnjakov in 2,4 % Hrvatov; v Brčkem okrožju je 40,3 % Bošnjakov, 34,6 % Srbov in 20,7 % Hrvatov. Število bošnjaškega prebivalstva se je zmanjšalo v 64 občinah, število hrvaškega prebivalstva se je zmanjšalo v 85 občinah, število srbskega prebivalstva pa se je zmanjšalo v 89 občinah.

Te spremembe v razporeditvi prebivalstva v Bosni in Hercegovini v zadnjih desetletjih potrjujejo pomen socio-ekonomskih procesov. Trendi socialnega statusa, demografskega staranja, zmanjševanja naravnega prirasta, upadanja aktivnega prebivalstva in izseljevanja iz države zahtevajo bolj aktivno prebivalstveno politiko v celotnem socio-ekonomskem razvoju. Upad rodnosti in sprememb v smrtnosti vpliva predvsem na starajoče se prebivalstvo. Prebivalstvo Bosne in Hercegovine je danes značilno kot staro, z nizko vitalnostjo, nizko rodnostjo in posledično nizko reproduktivno sposobnostjo.

Na splošno največji del prebivalstva predstavljajo srednje in starejše osebe, kar predstavlja pomembno izziv za prihodnost Bosne in Hercegovine. Poleg povečanja povprečne starosti prebivalstva se je spremenila tudi ekonomska aktivnost celotnega prebivalstva. Obstaja 1.624.924 ekonomsko neaktivnih posameznikov, vključno s študenti, univerzitetnimi študenti in starejšimi od 15 let, skupno 277.185 ali 17 % prebivalstva. Upokojenci predstavljajo 602.180 ali 37 %; število posameznikov, ki se ukvarjajo z gospodinjstvi znaša 449.188 ali 28 %; število tistih, ki ne morejo delati znaša 60.005 ali 4 %; ostali prebivalci obsegajo 186.366 ali 14 %.

Delovno sposobno prebivalstvo šteje 2.987.440, od tega je 1.033.884 zaposlenih, 328.632 pa je brezposelnih. Analiza zaposlenega prebivalstva kaže na zmanjšanje predpokojninskega kontingenta na 15,4 % in povečanje popokojninskega kontingenta na 17,6 %. Mladi v Bosni in Hercegovini imajo eno najvišjih stopenj brezposelnosti v jugovzhodni Evropi, kar predstavlja eno glavnih težav, s katerimi se soočajo na trgu dela, in je neposredno povezano z njihovo kakovostjo življenja.

Pogoji visokih življenjskih stroškov v Bosni in Hercegovini, pomanjkanje skrbi s strani oblasti glede življenjskih standardov prebivalstva, visoka brezposelnost, revščina in socialna izključenost, zlasti med posamezniki v dvajsetih in tridesetih letih, so dosegli velike razsežnosti. Poleg vpliva na odločitve o poroki in rojstvu ti pogoji delujejo kot močan odvračilni faktor, ki spodbuja izseljevanje (zapuščanje države).

Glede na vse prejšnje analize se bo izseljevanje delovno sposobnega in rodovitnega prebivalstva iz Bosne in Hercegovine nadaljevalo. Potrebno je oblikovati politiko

spodbujanja rodnosti, ki bo imela motivacijske učinke na rojstvo, vključno z uvedbo ustreznih zakonodajnih predpisov, ki zagotavljajo med drugim: socialno varnost za rodno sposobne zakonske pare, še posebej mlade, spodbujanje njihove zaposlitve in olajšanje reševanja stanovanjskih in drugih življenjsko pomembnih vprašanj. Če se glede teh problemov ne ukrepa, bodo naselja v Bosni in Hercegovini postajala vedno bolj prazna in ostala brez prebivalcev.