

**Attitudes and Values in Republika Srpska**  
**A Sociological Survey on the Eve of the Elections 1996**

**Medium/CEIFO**  
**Belgrade, July 1996**

# A Study of Attitudes and Values in Bosnia and Herzegovina 1996

## Introductory Remarks in November 2024

On the eve of the first post-war elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina a sociological investigation, financed by SIDA, the *Swedish International Development Agency*, was undertaken. One survey was conducted by the agency *Medium* in Belgrade, another by the agency *Puls* in Split. It was a cooperation between Kjell Magnusson of the Department of East European Studies, Uppsala university, at the time guest researcher at the Centre for Research in International Migration and Ethnic Relations, CEIFO, University of Stockholm, and his colleagues Nenad Bulat and Damir Štrelov in Split, and Srbobran Branković and Mirjana Milanović in Belgrade.

Kjell Magnusson wrote a draft questionnaire which was discussed and finalized with the colleagues in Split and Belgrade. They handled the complex issue of sample design, provided skilled interviewers who collected the data, and prepared the analysis in SPSS. The reports were completed during Magnusson's visits to Belgrade and Split. The survey was undertaken in the predominantly Bosniak, Croat, and Serb areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and conducted in three languages: Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian. The number of respondents were about 1000 in each region. Details may be found in the texts below.

The report on Republika Srpska was written in July 1996, whereas the report on the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and a third, comparative, study were finished in August 1996:

*Attitudes and Values in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina 1996* [35 pp.]  
Nenad Bulat, Kjell Magnusson, Damir Štrelov

*Attitudes and Values in Republika Srpska 1996* [37 pp.]  
Kjell Magnusson, Srbobran Branković and Mirjana Milanović

*Attitudes and Values in Bosnia and Herzegovina 1996* [88 pp.]  
Kjell Magnusson

The reports were disseminated among researchers and experts, but for various reasons were not published to a broader public. A couple of years ago they were made public on my Swedish home page. Recently *Academia.edu* suggested they be available at their site.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the social scientists in Belgrade and Split who made this project possible through their skills and experience, and who received me with friendliness and interest. Special thanks to Associate Professor Jens Sörensen, University of Gothenburg, who in 1996 was the SIDA official who approved of the project.

Uppsala, November 5, 2024

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This text is a preliminary report about a survey of attitudes and values of citizens of Republika Srpska. The investigation was conducted by the *Center for Research in International Migration and Ethnic Relations* (Stockholm University, Sweden) and the *Public Opinion and Marketing Center "Medium"* (Institute for Political Studies), Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia. It was financed by the *Swedish International Development Agency*, Stockholm. The data collection was carried out between 20 and 30 June 1996 on a sample of 1199 randomly selected respondents representing the adult population of RS.

Research design: dr Kjell Magnusson

Sample design: dir. Srbobran Brankovic

Report written by: dr Kjell Magnusson, dr Srbobran Branković and Mirjana Milanović

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# **Introduction**

## **A. Temporal framework of the investigation and major events during the period of data collection**

The investigation was undertaken at a time of very intense political activity, focusing on the implementation of the Dayton Accord and the preparation of elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the period immediately preceding the field work, and during the data collection itself, bitter conflicts were evolving between the main political actors in Republika Srpska (RS), as well as between the leadership of RS and representatives of the international community. Special tensions were created by, on the one hand, the efforts to make Radovan Karadžić, then president of RS, resign from his position, in accordance with the Dayton agreement, and abstain from participation in the elections, and, on the other, by the contradictory reactions of those around him to these demands.

20 June. The city committee of the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) in Pale suggested that the party put forward Radovan Karadžić as its candidate in the presidential election in RS. This was the first time that Karadžić was officially mentioned and proposed as a candidate.

21 June. In European diplomatic circles it was predicted that the president of the Hague Tribunal, Antonio Cassese might resign, as the signatories of the Dayton Agreement refused to honour their commitment to extradite individuals indicted as war criminals in former Yugoslavia.

The possibility of Radovan Karadžić running for president caused violent reactions. At the EU-summit in Firenze it was declared that the nomination of Karadžić would constitute a serious violation of the Dayton agreement, and the mere suggestion of his candidacy a provocation.

22 June. The High Representative of the International Community, Carl Bildt, stated after the EU-summit that the world would prevent Karadžić from participating in the elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The news agency Reuter reported that Radovan Karadžić would give in to the pressure of the international community and resign in the near future. He would be replaced by the present minister of foreign affairs of RS, Aleksa Buha.

23 June. The foreign minister of RS, Aleksa Buha, declared that news reports that Karadžić would resign and be replaced by himself as president, were merely speculations on the part of journalists. He also said that the decision

about who would be the presidential candidate and first name on the SDS list was to be taken on the party conference on June 27-28.

24 June. Meeting between Milošević and Carl Bildt. After the meeting Bildt stated that continuing insistence that Karadžić remain in political and public life, would lead to a degree of political self-isolation that might endanger the existence of RS and the Serbian people in Bosnia.

25 June. A meeting attended by the presidents of FR Yugoslavia (Zoran Lilić), Serbia (Slobodan Milošević), and Montenegro (Momir Bulatovic), and the vice-presidents of Republika Srpska, Biljana Plavšić (to whom Radovan Karadžić earlier had transferred his prerogatives in the area of foreign policy) and Nikola Koljević. A statement was issued in which Karadžić's avoidance to fulfil his commitments according to the Dayton Agreement was severely criticized, and the parliament of RS was called upon to appoint an acting president with full prerogatives.

Immediately after the return of Biljana Plavšić and Nikola Koljević to Pale, a session with the parliament of RS began, during which the statement of the three presidents was discussed.

The president of OESC, Flavio Cotti, decided that elections will be held in Bosnia on September 14.

26 June. The statement from the previous day caused great interest in Yugoslav and international public opinion. BBC reported that Karadžić would resign during the next few days. At the same time, Momčilo Krajišnik issued a statement that Karadžić was prepared to resign from his position.

The news agency BETA reported that Radovan Karadžić had engaged a lawyer who would be his representative at the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague.

The prime minister of RS, Gojko Kličković, declared that Radovan Karadžić would not participate in the forthcoming elections, but would retain his function as president of the SDS.

27 June. Nasa Borba published unconfirmed reports from a meeting of the Central Committee of the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) in Pale, that Radovan Karadžić had signed his resignation, but would realize it only on two conditions: First, that RS would retain a minimum of privileges as a state within Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that international guarantees for its security be given. Second, that the town of Brčko would remain under Serb control.

At the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague a public hearing concerning the accusations against Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić started.

At the same time three new indictments were issued against 17 individuals being accused of war crimes. Among the indicted were members of all three major ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

28 June. At the session of the Central Committee of the SDS, Karadžić declared: "If we are not given guarantees for what we have the right to demand, and for which we have been fighting, I will come forward as a candidate of SDS, and I will win."

A statement was made by the American mediator for former Yugoslavia, John Kornblum, that the USA will not allow Karadžić to present any conditions related to his resignation.

30 June. Local elections were held in Mostar. SDA (the national party of the Muslims) and HDZ (the national party of the Croats) received most of the votes.

## **B. Methodological Report**

In cooperation with the Centre for Research in International Migration and Ethnic Relations at the University in Stockholm, the Public Opinion and Marketing Center "Medium" in Belgrade undertook an investigation of attitudes and values among citizens of Republika Srpska. The data collection was carried out between 20 and 30 June 1996 on a sample of 1199 randomly selected respondents representing the adult population of RS. Instructions of interviewers were organized on 19 June in Banja Luka (for interviewers in the regions of Banja Luka, Doboj and Brčko) and in Bijeljina (for interviewers in Podrinje and Herzegovina).

### **1. General purpose of the investigation**

The purpose of the investigation was:

#### **1.1 To describe:**

- views of the citizens of RS on current political issues, like the implementation of the Dayton Accord, the status of Bosnia and Republika Srpska, and the forthcoming elections.

- the main political ideas that are currently influential among the citizens and potential voters of RS.

- the attitudes of the citizens of RS to certain basic political values, like democracy, nation, or state.

- ethnic distance and stereotypes, and, in particular, views on the possibility of a multi-ethnic society in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**1.2 To explain** certain findings under 1, especially their relation to demographic characteristics of the respondents, but also to the character of media exposure and sources of information. The explanation presupposes an analysis of findings under 1, above all a comparison of current political attitudes with more general political value orientations.

## 2. Sample

### 2.1. Type of sample.

The survey was conducted on a stratified random sample of 1199 respondents. The population was defined as the voters of RS, i.e. adult citizens of RS (18 years and older).

**Table 1 Stratification structure of the sample**

Stratum	Number of respondents	%	Communes	Number of sample points	Number of respondents per sample point
1. West	529	44.1	Banja Luka, Prijedor, Čelinac, Kotor Varoš	33	16
2. Central	240	20.0	Doboj, Brčko	20	12
3. North-East	250	20.9	Pale, Bijeljina, Bratunac, Zvornik, Višegrad	25	10
4. South-East	180	15.0	Trebinje, Biléca, Srbinje (Foča)	15	12
Total	1199	100.0			

## **2.2 Stratification and sample structure according to strata.**

The stratification was performed according to territorial criteria. Republika Srpska was divided into four strata: 1) West (the region of Banja Luka), 2) Central (the region of Doboj - Brčko), 3) Northeast (Pale and Podrinje), and 4) Southeast (Herzegovina). As the basis for stratification were used earlier identified differences in political orientations, as well as political traditions of the regions. As information based on pre-war census data are practically useless, due to massive migrations, the stratification proportions were determined based on estimates by the Institute of Geography at the University of Banja Luka.

As there is no census information which would allow for later corrections of the sample (using weighting procedures), optimal attention was given to the instruction of interviewers, and to the control of data collection, by strictly observing the procedure of random selection. For the same reasons, it was decided to use as many sample points as possible and minimize the number of respondents of each sample point<sup>1</sup>.

## **2.3 Selection of communes, sample points and respondents**

The sample was created in three phases. At first, communes were randomly selected from the list of municipalities, without replacement. As there is no statistical information about the number of inhabitants on the municipal level, this time the usual procedure of selection, based on a probability proportional to the share of every commune of the total number of inhabitants, was not used. It was assumed that a reasonable territorial allocation of the sample was ensured by the stratification, and that the proportional representativity of each stratum was guaranteed by given proportions.

In the second phase local communities (mesne zajednice) were also randomly selected, from the register of local communities. The total probability for urban localities was 0.6, for rural 0.4. This proportion was based on estimates that migrations due to the war have resulted in such a ratio between the urban and rural parts of the population.<sup>2</sup> In urban localities random selection of streets was also employed.

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<sup>1</sup>The reasons referred to in this context is to minimize as much as possible any random distortion of the sample (due to a possible predominance of characteristics of the population at one sample point). Due to the fact that there are no valid census data, through which such distortions could be identified, it was decided to increase the number of sample points.

<sup>2</sup>Refugees from parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina which are now within the territory of the Federation and from Krajina (Republic of Croatia) have for the most part been settled in the towns,

In the third phase respondents were selected in the localities. Interviewers would start from a point determined by Medium's local supervisor and then enter every second home. In the house an individual with the closest date of birth was selected. In case of refusal, the interviewer would turn to the next household.

## 2.4. Demographic Characteristics of Sample Structure

Although there is no reliable statistical information available, the age structure of the respondents might be regarded as satisfactory. It corresponds to the age structure of Medium samples in surveys organized in other parts of former Yugoslavia.

**Table 2 Age**

18-25	1.00	205	17.1	17.1	17.1
26-35	2.00	261	21.8	21.8	38.9
36-45	3.00	313	26.1	26.1	65.0
46-55	4.00	190	15.8	15.8	80.8
Over 55	5.00	230	19.2	19.2	100.0
Total		1199	100.0	100.0	

The male-female distribution at first glance seems to be inaccurate, as the number of men is considerably higher. However, it is perfectly possible that this sample structure in fact does not differ significantly from the population. It is known that men who are military conscripts, were (and still are) strictly forbidden to leave the territory of RS.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, even older men who are no longer conscripts, in general stayed in their homes to guard family property, while women and children were sent away as refugees.

**Table 3 The male-female distribution**

Male	1	744	62.1	62.1
Female	2	455	37.9	100.0

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in order to enable easy access to humanitarian aid, and probably because there were a large number of abandoned flats in urban areas.

<sup>3</sup>Men were able to leave SR and enter Serbia only with a permission signed by general Mladić, the commander of the Army of RS.

**Table 4 The urban-rural structure**

Village	1	474	39.5	39.5
Town	2	725	60.5	100.0

The educational structure, however, most likely differs from the true structure of the population. This is a phenomenon well known in investigations which are using random selection of respondents. It is usually explained as a marked tendency of individuals with lower education to refuse participation in interviews. This, however, has not significantly affected the prognostic power of investigations in other parts of former Yugoslavia, probably because the educational structure of those who participate in elections is higher than in the population at large.<sup>4</sup>

**Table 5 The educational structure of the sample**

No school	1	11	.9	.9	.9
Unfinished primary sch	2	63	5.3	5.3	6.2
Primary school	3	126	10.5	10.5	16.7
Professional school	4	224	18.7	18.7	35.4
Secondary school	5	537	44.8	44.8	80.2
Higher school	6	126	10.5	10.5	90.7
University	7	112	9.3	9.3	100.0
	Total	1199	100.0	100.0	

2.5. Altogether 545 individuals who were selected according to the procedures just described, refused to be interviewed. Keeping in mind the situation in which the survey was carried out, as well as the percentage of refusals in other contexts (Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia), the proportion of individuals who accepted to participate is to be regarded as relatively satisfactory.

3. The data collection was carried out by interviewers who were given special instruction and had already been tested in four earlier investigations in the area (December 1995, March 1966, April 1966, and May 1966). The majority are unemployed sociologists, psychologists, political scientists, or students who are completing their studies in these disciplines. By origin, all are familiar with the territory in which the survey was conducted, which made it possible to avoid dialectical differences, that might have generated reserve or resistance among the respondents.

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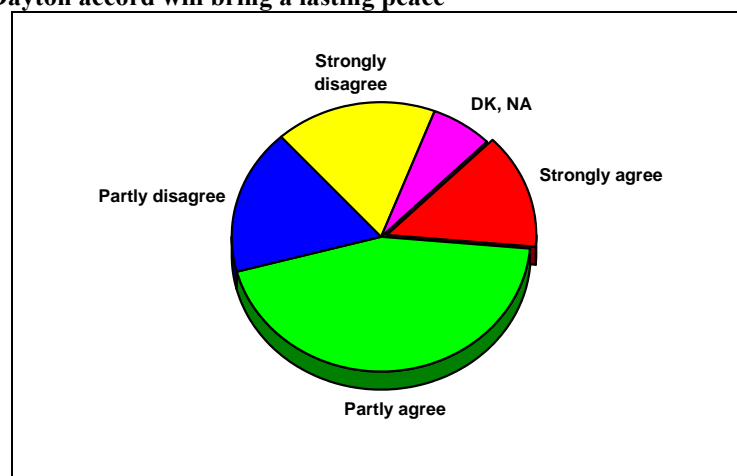
<sup>4</sup>This was found in a number of Exit poll surveys undertaken during elections in Serbia.

4. The survey was conducted during face-to-face interviews. The interview proceeded according to a standardized questionnaire consisting of the usual elements in investigations like this: an identification part, demographic characteristics, and questions related to the explicit purpose of the project. In terms of methodology, most items were formulated as scales, which is normal in view of the level of ambition of the investigation. Although the interviews were carried out in very difficult conditions (a lasting war psychosis, dramatical political events) the questionnaire as such was in general positively evaluated by those who participated in the survey.

## Dayton and the Future of Bosnia

It seems that a majority of the respondents, albeit with some hesitation, believe that the Dayton accord in the end might bring a lasting peace. It should be noted, though, that the answers given to several items of the questionnaire imply a view of the peace process which differs substantially from the official interpretation of the international community. Not only do the Serbs in Bosnia not expect the refugees to return to their homes, many obviously do not accept the idea even in principle. In fact, almost half of the respondents strongly disagree with this important stipulation of the peace accord, and there is practically no difference between refugees and others in this respect, which would have been natural.

Graph 1 “The Dayton accord will bring a lasting peace”



The blame for the problems that prevent the full implementation of the agreement is largely put on Muslim and Croat politicians in Bosnia, as well as on Croatia and the International Community. However, fifty, respectively forty, percent of the respondents, believe that the Republic of Serbia and Serb politicians in Bosnia are highly or somewhat responsible for the current obstacles. Admittedly, there is a marked difference in the intensity of the judgments. While Croat and Muslim politicians are perceived by 67 and 80 percent as being highly responsible, only 15 percent would place Serb politicians in that category.

To the outsider it might seem surprising that so much blame is cast on the international community, after all it should be clear by now that all sides have seriously obstructed the peace process, but this attitude conforms to fairly widespread feelings in post-Yugoslav press and public opinion, to the effect that the war in the Balkans was ultimately caused by foreign powers. There is also considerable irritation towards Europe, which, according to the respondents, is acting in its own interest, has not done all it could to ameliorate the situation, or treats the inhabitants of the region as primitive peoples.

Perhaps the most interesting results concerning the Dayton agreement are related to the issues of armament, the future role of IFOR, and the civilian presence in Bosnia. While there is apparent dissatisfaction with the foreigners and a profound ambivalence towards the external involvement, those who want IFOR to remain, and the international presence in Bosnia to continue, are more numerous than those who take the opposite position. In fact, 45 percent feel that the situation would be worse without the administrators and observers from abroad.

It is hardly unexpected that less than one percent of those who participated in the survey approve of the anticipated supply of arms to the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is surprising, however, that 70 percent of the respondents are in favor of a general disarmament in the region as a whole. Only a minority (17 percent) has chosen the option that all parties to the conflict should rebuild their military strength. This surely contradicts a common stereotype about Serbian psychology.

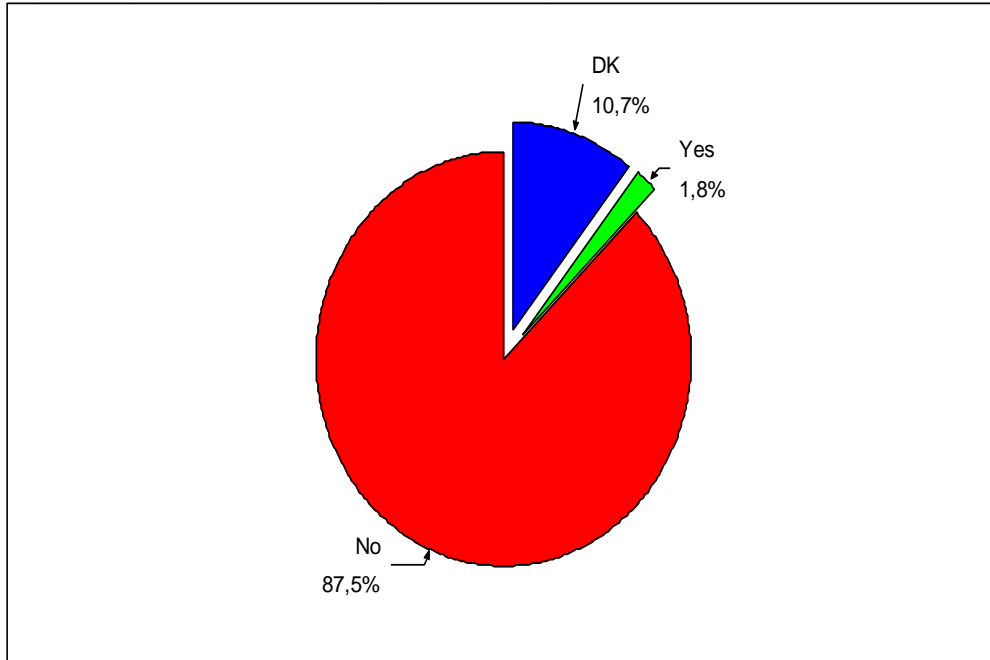
As the issue of indictment and a possible extradition of the Bosnian-Serb leaders Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić became highly salient during the period of data collection, it is natural that questions related to the War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague would provoke considerable emotions. In any case, a large part of the respondents (52 percent) feel that it would be better to forget the past and go on living. Only 12 percent are of the opinion that a trial is a precondition for a normalization of the situation in Bosnia, while more than a third have not answered the question. There is, moreover, a general distrust of the Tribunal, and less than two percent believe in a fair trial.

These attitudes are consistent with the dominant view that Croats and Muslims are the major instigators of war, while the Serbs are the main victims.<sup>5</sup> They might also be understood in the context of an important self-image among a large majority of the respondents, namely that throughout history Serbs have only been conducting legitimate wars of defence (89 % agree strongly), and suffered more than others (85 % agree strongly). While these statements are well-known stereotypes, they are most probably highly salient in the present situation.

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<sup>5</sup>This is confirmed by findings from other surveys conducted by Medium in the RS.

**Graph 2 Do you think that the Hague Tribunal against war criminals will be fair?**



It seems, therefore, that the inhabitants of Republika Srpska have accepted the Dayton Accord to the extent that it has brought an end to war, while at the same time they do not accept fundamental aspects of the agreement.

On the crucial issue of the constitutional character of the Bosnian state, the opinions differ radically from the spirit of Dayton. In one item of the survey, the respondents were given five alternatives, ranging from a centrally ruled Bosnia to partition. As expected they rejected any kind of unitary state but were also against a federal structure with two - or three - autonomous entities, i.e. what might be referred to as the ideal and real outcome of the peace process so far. An overwhelming majority of more than 80 percent in fact wants a partition of Bosnia.

This view is consistently reflected throughout the results. For example, 84 percent strongly disagree with the proposition that Bosnia should remain a unified state, and more than 90 percent explicitly want Republika Srpska to be a part of Serbia. (A logical consequence is that 74 percent allow for the unification of Herceg Bosna with Croatia).

In other words, the policies conducted by the government in Pale are supported by a majority of those who took part in the investigation.

As the views on these matters are so strongly held, there is comparatively minor differences between social groups and categories that sociologists and political scientists traditionally utilize to explain their data. However, there are a few interesting patterns, that deserve mentioning.

For example, there are regional differences concerning the role of the international community. The proportion of respondents who wants IFOR to prolong its mandate is quite strong in the Banja Luka area (80 %), while in Herzegovina it is negligible (5 %). Similarly, in the Western region, a clear minority is "tired of international civilian interference" (23 %), whereas in the Southeast an overwhelming majority (80 %) wants the foreigners to leave. It is also indicative that respondents in the Southeast have a very different view on the issue of armament/disarmament than those in other areas of the Republika Srpska. In Herzegovina only 18 percent demand a total regional disarmament.

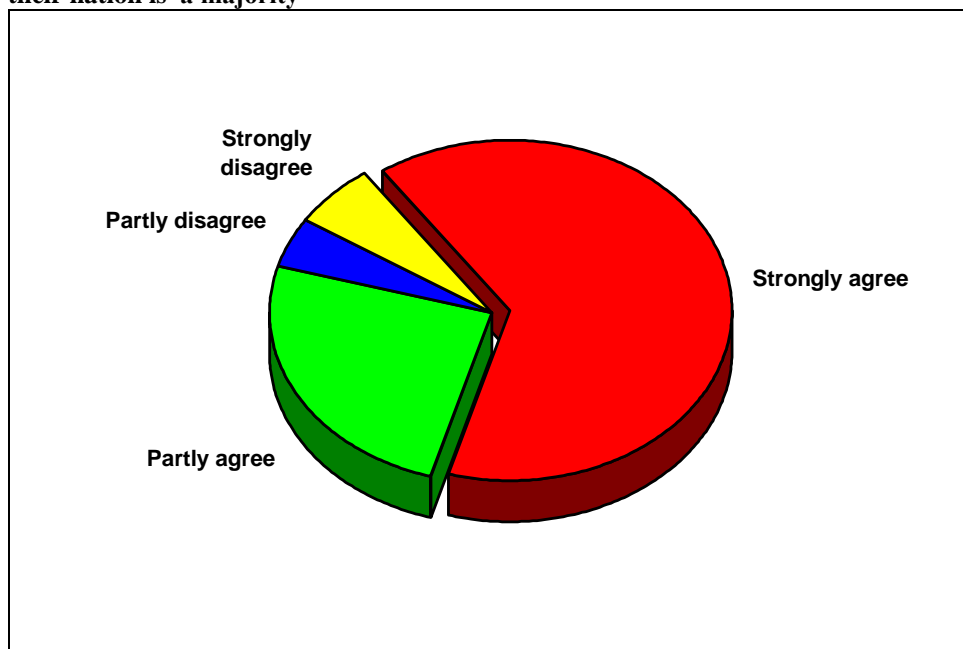
## The Character of Bosnia

Several items were constructed to measure the identification with Bosnia as a geographical, political and cultural entity. In all these instances a large majority of the respondents gave negative answers: They are not proud of being citizens of Bosnia, they do not feel close to the other peoples living in the country, they do not think that Bosnia has a specific spirit that should be preserved. And very few are bound to Bosnia, in the sense that they would find it hard to live anywhere else.

It is, therefore, obvious that the primary allegiance of the respondents is ethnic affiliation, not Bosnian identity. For example, confronted with the statement that it would be better if people in Bosnia forgot about national differences and identified simply as Bosnians, only 7 percent give a positive answer, whereas 85 percent strongly disagree.

This is no wonder, since 60 percent feel that national identity is very important, 22 percent somewhat important, while only five percent think it is unimportant. Moreover, given the choice, 70 percent explicitly state that being a Serb is more important than being a Bosnian. To only eight percent the two identities are equally important. Similarly, most respondents believe that in principle every nation should have a state of its own (89 %), and that people can feel secure only if they live in a country where they constitute a majority (88 %).

**Graph 3 “People can feel completely secure only if they live in a country where their nation is a majority”**



On the other hand, as seen elsewhere in the report, most respondents feel that what used to be called Serbo-Croatian is one language. But only 30 percent believes this makes the inhabitants of Bosnia one and the same people.

In much of Western European writing on the Bosnian conflict, it has been taken for granted that Bosnia and Herzegovina is a multicultural society where ethnic differences play a minor role. It is therefore interesting to look at how the respondents understand the concept of a multi-ethnic society in general, and the situation in Bosnia in particular.

When asked to give their own views of the character of a Multiethnic society, about 30 percent chose an option which implies that different ethnic groups are living in harmony side by side, each preserving its own culture. They do not mix, however, and intermarriage is an exception. 40 percent chose the second alternative, a society where ethnic groups also preserve their culture, but where individuals are mixing freely, and intermarriage is fairly common. Less than 17 percent define multiculturalism as denoting a society where ethnicity is unimportant, intermarriage very common, and where ethnic differences will disappear.

Now, the Western European understanding of the concept tends to be equivalent to the third option, which only a minority subscribes to. Almost half of the respondents identify with the second alternative, which is actually a mirror of the situation which characterized Titoist Yugoslavia, both normatively and in practice. Interestingly enough, almost a third has chosen the first alternative, which might be labelled the millet option, since it largely corresponds to the social relations characterizing Bosnia during more than four hundred years of Ottoman rule.<sup>6</sup>

More than 75 percent of the respondents strongly or partly agree that intermarriage in principle is a bad idea. This is also reflected in items concerning social distance (see below), where 15 percent declare that they would be prepared to marry a Croat, and 7 percent a Muslim. It should be remembered, that these figures correspond to the situation in Bosnia between 1945-1990, when the rate of intermarriage was actually below the Yugoslav average, and

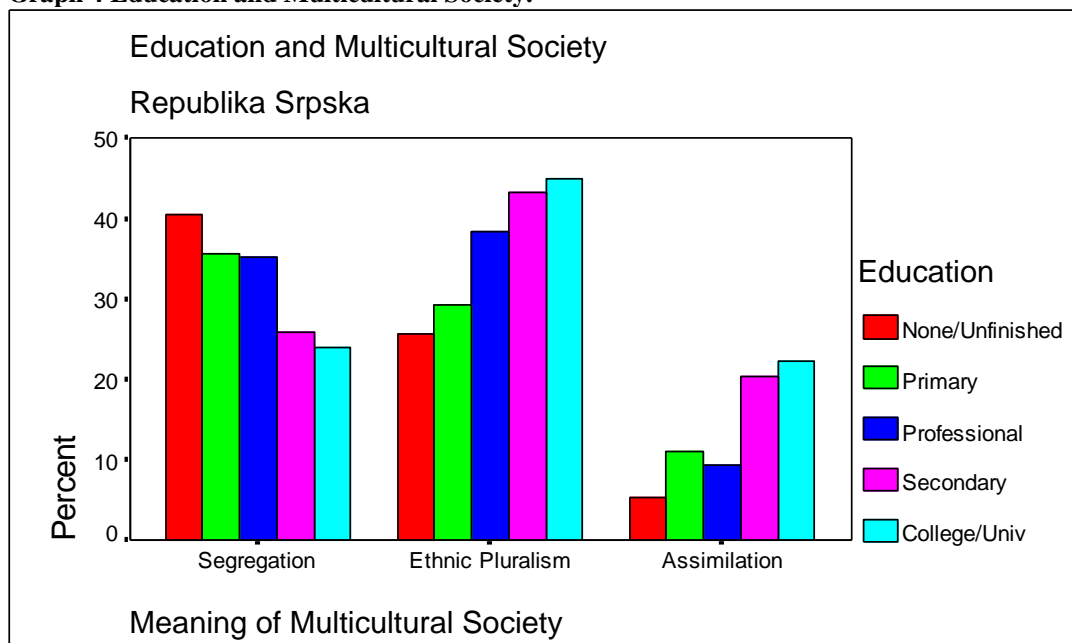
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<sup>6</sup>Incidentally, this view has been actively promoted in Ljiljan by its former editor in chief, Džemaludin Latić, the Muslim writer and politician.

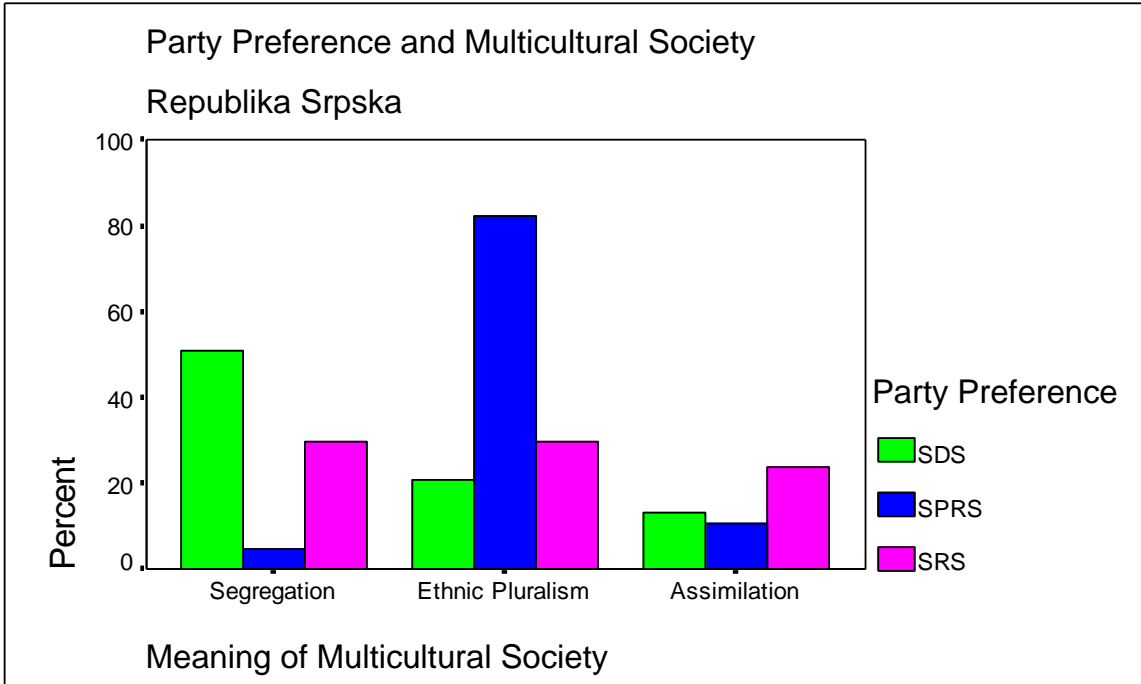
marriages between Croats and Serbs were more common than between Muslims and Serbs or Croats.

Turning to the views of the situation in Bosnia, more than half of the respondents strongly or partly agree with the statement that pre-war Bosnia and Herzegovina was an example of a true multi-ethnic society. 46 percent feel that it was a society which functioned reasonably well, in spite of certain tensions. Finally, about a third argue that under the surface there were always tensions in Bosnia. However, only a minority reports that they personally experienced conflicts or tensions before the war: 14 percent rather often, and 6 percent very often.

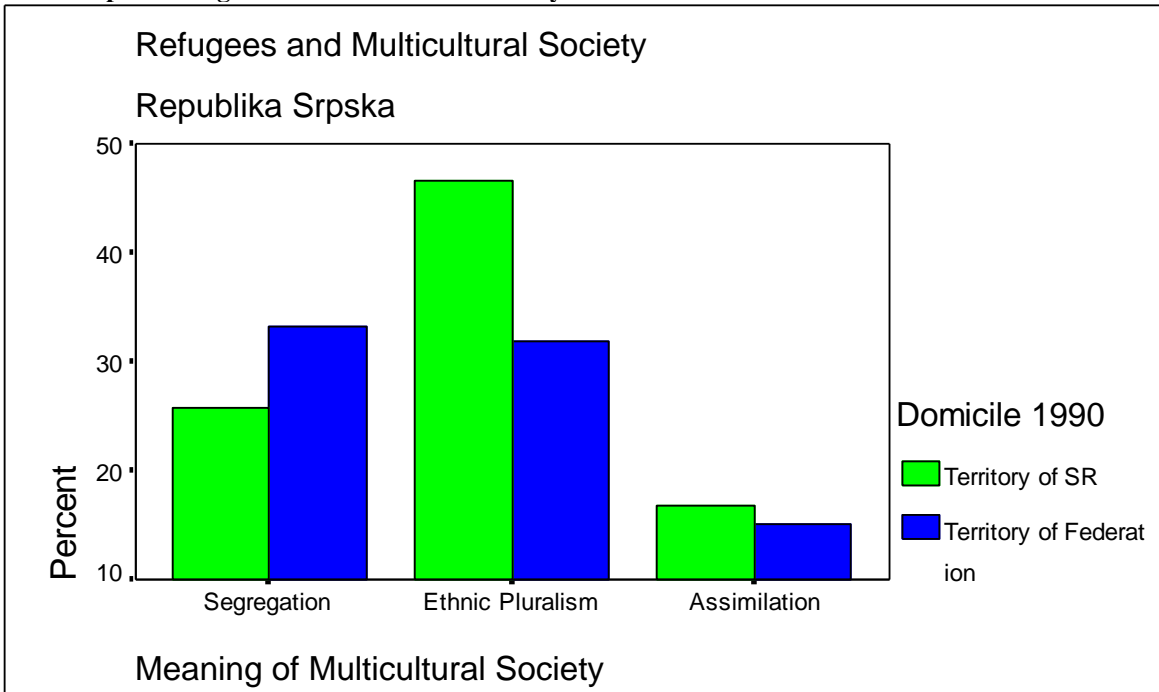
**Graph 4 Education and Multicultural Society.**



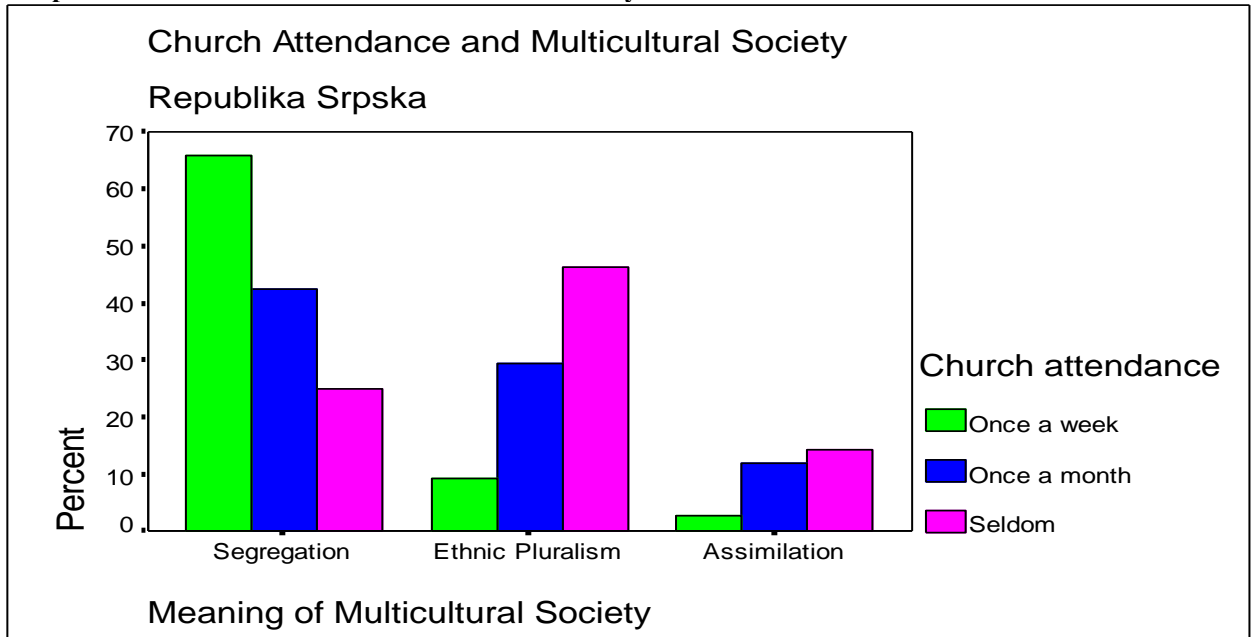
**Graph 5 Party Preference and Multicultural Society**



**Graph 6 Refugees and Multicultural Society**



**Graph 7 Church Attendance and Multicultural Society**



## **Ethnic Distance**

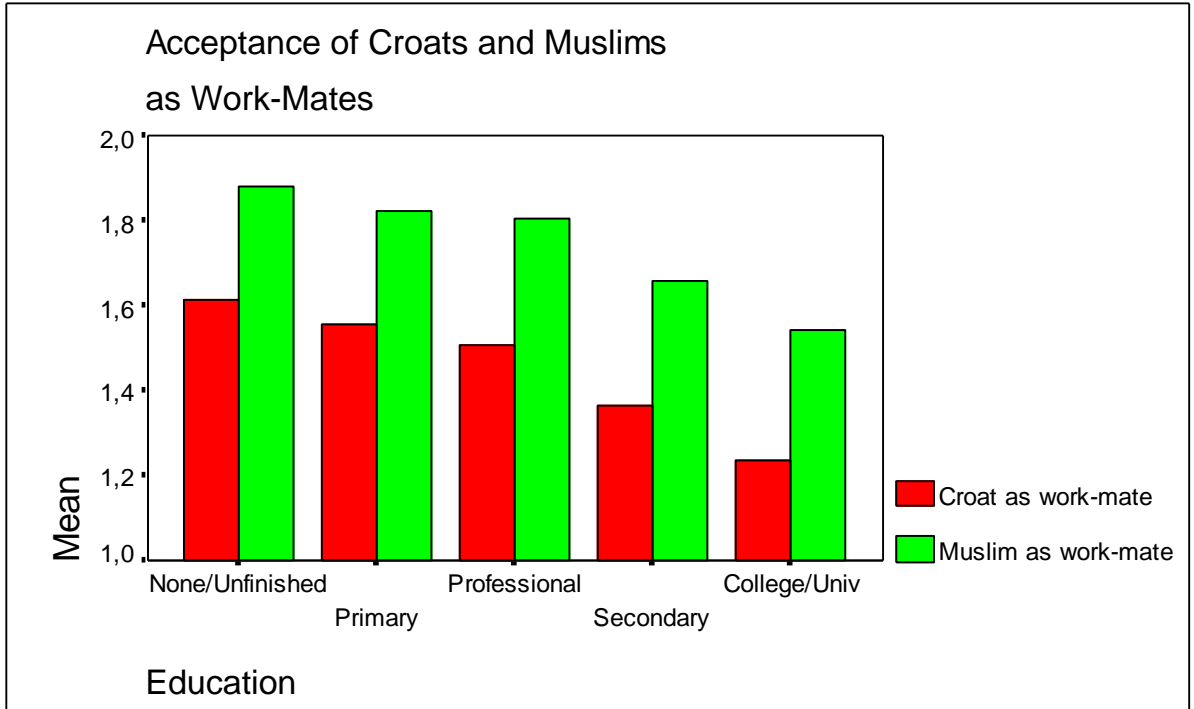
As part of the investigation, traditional scales of social distance were also employed. The idea is to measure to what extent people are prepared to accept relationships involving different degrees of intimacy with members of outgroups. Given the specific conditions in Bosnia the results are not unexpected, but nevertheless striking. The proportion of acceptance is diminishing dramatically when respondents are asked whether they would accept a Croat or a Muslim living in the same town or village, as a work-mate, as a friend, and finally as husband or wife. Very few agree to the latter option. Furthermore, the respondents in general find it harder to accept Muslims than Croats.

In this context there are some interesting differences between social categories. Those with lower education, or those who are closer to the Church tend to be more intolerant. For example, while 75 percent of those with a university degree would accept a Croat as a work-mate, only 37 percent of the respondents with uncompleted primary school would do the same. 30 percent of the most highly educated would accept a Croat as husband or wife, which only 2 percent in the lowest category does. Similarly, only 25 percent of those who attend religious services every week would accept a Croat as a work-mate, against 88 percent of those who never go to church. Or, while only 7 percent in the most religious category would accept a Muslim as a work-mate, about 60 percent of the non-religious would.

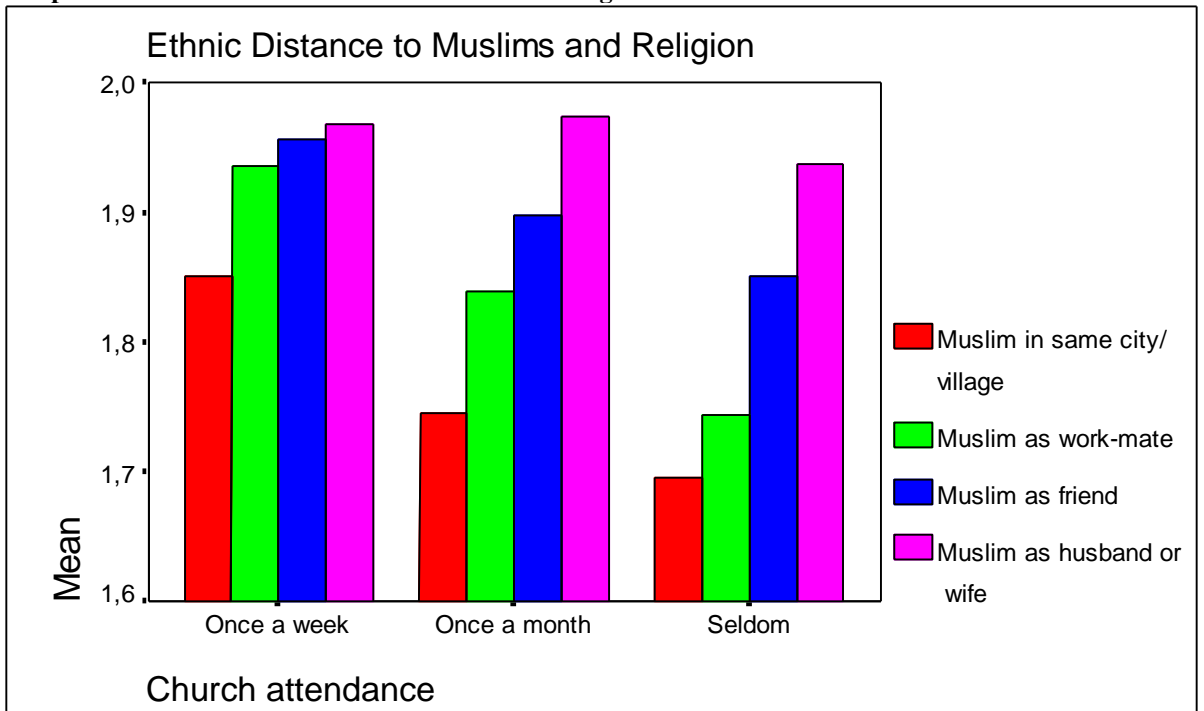
In view of the earlier discussion of Bosnia as a multi-ethnic society, it might be argued that this is a consequence of the war. One of the items in the questionnaire dealt with this issue, and 86 percent stated that they think that it is now impossible for the peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina to live together. However, when comparing responses of those who have been more affected than others by the war, it turns out that there are no tangible differences due to direct participation in the hostilities, having been wounded, or forced to leave one's home. There are certain regional differences, but the interesting point is that the most obvious differences in this respect, as in some others, are related to level of education, media influence, political orientation and church attendance.

In other words, it seems that the war has affected the population as a whole, regardless of direct involvement or concrete personal losses. Instead, basic social characteristics and institutional factors are associated with certain value orientations, filtering, as it were, the common experience.

**Graph 8 Ethnic Distance. Croats and Muslims as Work-Mates**



**Graph 9 Ethnic Distance towards Muslims and Religion**



## **Elections**

An overwhelming majority, 84 percent, intends to vote in the forthcoming elections. In view of the recent controversy concerning the issue of voters' registration, it is interesting, and indicative, that more than 80 percent are of the opinion that voters should register in their present place of residence. Only 1,5 percent think that people should vote in the town or village where they lived before the war, whereas 13 percent hold that the place of registration under certain conditions should be voluntary, which is, incidentally, what is stipulated by the Dayton agreement. This, again, is a clear sign that the inhabitants of Republika Srpska are not interested in a reunification of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Although they plan to vote, the respondents are in general sceptical about the possibility of organizing free and fair elections. More than half anticipate manipulations and tricks during the elections, and more than forty percent do not expect the campaign to be fair. The same proportion suspects that the media will not be objective.

As to the outcome of the elections, about 50 percent expect that the ruling party, certainly or probably, will win the elections, whereas 30 percent believe the opposition has a chance. It should be noted that by opposition is obviously meant the pro-Milošević Socialist Party. There is a general and clear tendency that those who are critical of the present government in Republika Srpska, and most suspicious about the forthcoming elections, are to be found among the members or sympathizers of the SP.

In practice there are only three political parties with noticeable following. 36 percent sympathize with SDS, 28 percent with SP, and 6 percent with SRS. The remaining parties together get about 9 percent of the potential votes, while 15 percent abstain from answering the question.

## **Political Issues**

The respondents were asked to indicate the importance of certain issues which might be discussed during the election campaign. The highest priority is given to questions concerning economy and welfare, which is hardly surprising. On the second and third place are political democracy and independence of media, followed by military issues. It is symptomatic that problems related to the Dayton Agreement, i.e. the return of refugees or punishment of war criminals, are considered important by only a minority of the respondents. Another interesting aspect is that privatization is rated fairly low, like the social role of religion.

**Table 6“What issues are important in elections?” Percentage Very important**

Issues	Very important	Not at all important
Economy and Welfare	72.0	0.7
Political Democracy	64.6	0.5
Independence of Media	62.5	0.6
Education	55.0	2.3
Army and Defence	47.5	8.3
Corruption and Crime	47.1	6.8
Social Role of Religion	23.7	5.8
Privatization	21.4	17.2
Return of Refugees	10.5	24.4
Punishment of War Criminals	9.7	55.6
Bosnian Unity	1.8	79.7

There are interesting differences related to the political orientation of the respondents. Those who sympathize with the ruling party in Republika Srpska, the Serbian Democratic Party, have other priorities than the followers of the Milošević-oriented Socialist Party. The latter more clearly stress issues like economy/welfare, political democracy, media independence and education, whereas the sympathizers of SDS to a higher degree than the socialists consider defines, privatization, corruption and crime, and the social role of religion to be important. These differences are accentuated among members of the two parties. In other words, the SP in this context seems to represent a more urban and modern political orientation, while the SDS is more closely bound to traditional values, in particular religion. This is also confirmed by the social characteristics of the followers of the parties. On the other hand, the Socialist Party is not liberal, and, consequently, privatization, which is otherwise rather low on the list of priorities, has more advocates among those who favor SDS. This is quite logical in view of the economic policies of the regime in Belgrade.

For both groups, however, aspects like economy and welfare or political democracy are more important than army and defence. Issues related to the Dayton Agreement, are considered unimportant.

**Table 7 "What issues are important in elections?" Party Affiliation**

	Members		Supporters		Non-member's
	SDS	SPRS	SDS	SPRS	
Army and Défense	59.5%	43.0%	47.5%	41.7%	48.4%
Economy and Welfare	68.0%	92.2%	70.7%	84.8%	72,0%
Privatization	38.5%	1.6%	27.7%	7.4%	23.1%
Political Democracy	57.4%	93.0%	58.3%	83.3%	
Independence of Media	57.3%	93.8%	58.8%	82.3%	61.5%
Corruption and Crime	49.6%	43.0%	53.7%	47.5%	50.6%
Education	58.9%	91.4%	51.2%	77.0%	52,0%
Bosnian Unity	1.6%	0.0%	.3%	2.0%	2,0%
Return of Refugees	16.7%	5.5%	8.8%	9.0%	11,0%
Punishment of War	12.3%	3.1%	7.4%	9.5%	11,0%

## **Political Orientations**

In general, the interest in politics is on a moderate level - 13 percent are very interested, and another 34 percent rather interested in politics - but a fairly large percentage are members of a political party, probably a consequence of the social characteristics of the sample. About ten percent each are members of the Serbian Democratic Party and The Socialist Party of Republika Srpska, the main protagonists in the forthcoming elections.

Several items were used to measure political orientations, in particular the understanding of democracy. When asked to choose between two alternatives 56 percent identified democracy with economic equality, and 36 percent with political freedom. Similarly, 63 percent are of the opinion that the primary role of government is to satisfy basic economic needs of the population, while 27 percent stress the importance of promoting individual initiative.

This tendency is further reflected in responses to a series of items concerning the subjective importance of various aspects of democracy. Economic progress is rated highest (83 percent), followed by the guarantee of basic needs (77 percent). This pattern would be natural in the situation in which Republika

finds itself at the moment, and a substantial majority stress the importance of both a fair judicial system (77 percent) and political pluralism (72 percent). However, only half of the respondents believe that free criticism of the government is a necessary condition for a democracy, which illustrates the transitional character of the present political system.

Looking at factors associated with political orientations, age does not play a very important role in differentiating between various dimensions. Education is more important, as is media influence (TV-channel), party preference, and especially, party membership. The results are somewhat ambiguous, though. Members of the Socialist Party emphasize the importance of economic equality and economic prosperity, while the followers of SDS give higher priority to the judicial system and freedom of media. On the other hand, members of SP rate political pluralism higher than those of SDS, while less than half of the members of both parties feel that criticism of government is important.

A similar pattern emerges on items concerning confidence in institutions and organizations, and especially when it comes to satisfaction with the present government. In this context the influence of church attendance is prominent.

## **Language and Media**

The general orientation of the Bosnian Serbs is further illustrated by items related to language use and attitudes toward language.

When asked about the name of their mother tongue, a large majority (85,8 %) stated that they speak Serbian, while only 12,7 percent would prefer the term Serbo-Croatian. A negligible proportion of the respondents refer to their language as Bosnian, Croatian, or by some other name (0,8 %).

As to the interesting and controversial question whether Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian<sup>7</sup> is one or several languages, 44 percent of the respondents believe that it is "basically the same language", while 32 percent think it is "the same language with certain differences". Only 5 percent are of the opinion that this is a case of "completely different languages". In this case there are few significant relationships with demographic variables.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Since 1993 the language is officially called Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian by the government in Sarajevo.

<sup>8</sup>Among respondents with a high-school background, 50 percent believe that it is one language. Those on the lowest level of education (43 %) as well as those with a university degree (55 %) have very

On the sensitive issue whether Bosnian should be the name of the official language of Bosnia, it turns out that an overwhelming majority of the respondents (91 %), regardless of education, age, or social origin, strongly disagree with this position.

In view of recent developments after the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the respondents were asked whether they regret that linguistic differences between Serbia, Croatia, and Bosnia tend to increase. While 14 percent think it is a pity, 47 percent do not regret this at all. Neither in this case do demographic variables play any significant role, but it might be noted that the least regret is felt by those with a primary education (20 %), and the most by those with a university degree (35 percent), which seems logical.

When asked whether there should be separate schools or classes for Serb, Croat or Muslim children, a fairly large proportion of the respondents agree with such a solution. About a third of (32,4 %) strongly agree, 27 percent partly agree, while 22 percent do not agree. It is, however, characteristic that with lower level of education the preference for separate schools is more pronounced (57 percent of those who have not finished primary school are in favor, against 28 percent of those with a university degree. However, the association is relatively weak.<sup>9</sup>

Neither does place of residence (rural/urban) have any influence on this attitude. Similarly, age is not very important, although those above 55 are most willing to accept separate schools (37,6 %).

Finally, 62 percent of the respondents agree very strongly with the statement that Serbs and Croats living in Bosnia should have the right to use the standard languages of these republics. 22 percent agree partly, whereas only 6 percent give a negative reply.

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similar views. The Coefficient of Contingency (0,17990) shows a weak association. In other words, the level of education has little influence in this case.

Similarly, place of residence does not have any important effects. A little more than half of the respondents living in cities or towns (54 %) are of the opinion that it is one language, whereas more than a third of those living in rural areas (38,6 %) give the same answer. The results also show that age is of little importance in this respect (Contingency Coefficient = 0,06470).

<sup>9</sup> Contingency coefficient = 0,19427.

These results very clearly reflect the unique language situation in Bosnia and former Yugoslavia. From a purely linguistic point of view the differences are minor, as perceived by the respondents. On the other hand, those differences that do exist are accentuated, and become the basis for new nation-building projects. In this way language acquires a distinct symbolic value with important political implications. So, even though a majority of the Bosnian Serbs do feel that it is more or less the same language, they are not prepared to use the label Bosnian, but would, to a fairly large extent, prefer separate schools or classes. This is another illustration of the lack of a common Bosnian identity.

The role of media as source of information is crucial, and of considerable importance for the creation of political attitudes. When asked about their primary source of information about current events, 41 percent of the respondents refer to TV, followed by discussions with other people (28 %), radio (21 %), and newspapers (6 %). This illustrates the outstanding importance of TV in Republika Srpska.

A majority of the respondents (59 percent) state that they most often watch SRT (Serbian Radio Television in Pale), while considerably fewer (27,5 %) are watching RTS (Belgrade). The Croatian (2,3 %) and Bosnian (1,1 %) TV-channels are far behind. It should be noted in this context that a great part of the inhabitants of SR, for technical reasons are not able to choose their source of information.

As to newspapers and magazines, the most widely read are *Vecernje novosti* (16,3 %), *Glas Srpski* (15,7 %), *Politika* (11 %), *Srpsko Oslobođenje* (6,6 %), *Telegraf* (6 %) and *Politika Ekspres* (3,8 %). In other words, the respondents are more or less solely dependent on papers which are close either to the regime in Pale or Belgrade. Serbian independent papers or journals, like *Nasa Borba* or *Vreme*, are hardly present, not to speak about press from the Federation. It is clear that, although a comparatively small part of the population is reading daily newspapers on a regular basis, the presence of Belgrade is considerable, and seems to be important among certain social categories.

As far as radio stations are concerned, the respondents are mostly listening to Radio Republika Srpska (35,5 %), Radio Belgrade (17,2 %), BIG Radio (16,3 %), and Radio Banja Luka (7,3 %). No one listens to Croatian Radio, and less than one percent of the respondents report that they listen to Radio Herceg Bosna.

Looking at media exposure, the crucial role of TV is, again evident. While half of the respondents every day spend at least three hours watching TV, only 15 percent read a newspaper every day.

## **Ratings of Politicians**

At first, we will look at the ratings of all politicians from a list presented to the respondents, and then we will examine the popularity of politicians identified as hard- or soft-liners within the leadership of the Bosnian Serbs. After that we will discuss the factors which have been most important in influencing the evaluation.

The present investigation on the whole confirms findings from earlier studies. General Mladić is still the most popular personality among the Serbs of Bosnia, followed, as in Medium's May-investigation, by Nikola Koljević and Slobodan Milošević, whereas Karadžić is only somewhat less popular than Milošević. The political leaders of other ethnic groups are rated very low, regardless of their ideological or political orientation. This means that the differences between the lowest values accorded to a Serb politician (M. Dodik) and the highest given to a politician of different ethnic affiliation (the Croat Kordić) amounts to a whole unit on a four-point scale. Similarly, the moderate Muslim politician, Haris Silajdžić, leader of the Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina (which is in favor of a Bosnian state based on the concept of civil society) and the distinctly more radical Alija Izetbegovic (whose party is inspired by Islamic ideals) are evaluated almost identically (the difference is only 7/100 on the scale). Croat politicians are somewhat less negatively evaluated than Muslim, which only shows that Serbs perceive Muslims as being a greater threat than Croats.

The table below shows the average ratings of politicians from RS and the Federation in the public opinion of RS. Earlier investigations in RS have indicated that there is a bitter conflict going on in the political life of the republic between radical and moderate politicians. As representatives of the radical option are regarded Radovan Karadžić<sup>10</sup>, Momčilo Krajišnik<sup>11</sup>, and Biljana

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<sup>10</sup>President of the Republika Srpska and the Serbian Democratic Party. Accused of war crimes by the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague. By the end of June, after pressure from Belgrade and the international community he transferred his duties to vice-president Biljana Plavšić.

<sup>11</sup>Speaker of the Parliament of Republika Srpska

Plavšić<sup>12</sup>. General Ratko Mladić<sup>13</sup> refers to himself as a soldier who does not want to interfere in politics, but analysts regard him as very radical, although, from time to time, he came into severe conflicts with Karadžić. The moderate wing consists of leading politicians of the Socialist Party of Republika Srpska (SPRS), a local branch of Milošević's Socialist Party of Serbia. The moderate character of Mr. Milošević must, of course, be related to the current situation on the political scene of RS. Milošević is otherwise regarded as the initiator and main creator of policies which were carried out by the leaders of the Bosnian Serbs, until the signing of the Dayton agreement. In Serbia Milošević is still looked upon as a radical politician, not only as a representative of tough policies in the area of ethnic relations, but as a man of radical leftist convictions to these politicians also belong Rajko Kasagić<sup>14</sup>, Živko Radišić<sup>15</sup>, and, to some extent, Predrag Radić<sup>16</sup>.

It is obvious that Karadžić and Milošević, as leaders of two conflicting political programs, enjoy a fairly high degree of popularity. In fact, Milošević is still very positively evaluated among both radicals and moderates. Karadžić's popularity is only somewhat smaller.

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<sup>12</sup>Until the end of June vice president of RS; since then performing the duties of Karadžić.

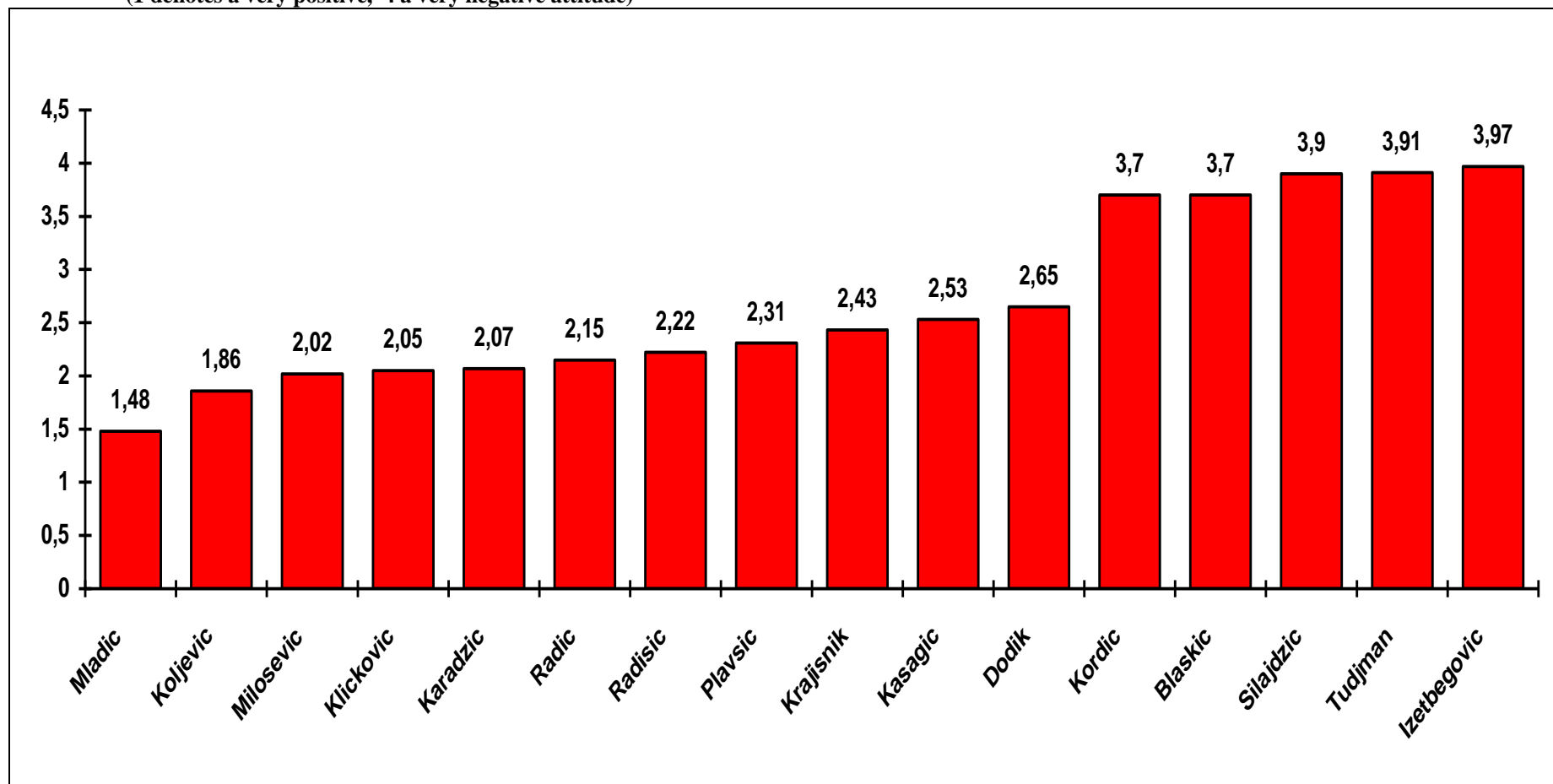
<sup>13</sup>Commander of the Army of Republika Srpska, also suspected of war crimes.

<sup>14</sup>Prime Minister until May 15, when he was removed by Karadžić. According to political analysts, Kasagić had to go because he was Milošević's man in the leadership, and because he was more positive towards cooperation with the representatives of the international community, than the followers of Karadžić.

<sup>15</sup>President of the Socialist Party of Republika Srpska.

<sup>16</sup>Mayor of Banja Luka, the major city of RS. For years in bitter conflict with Karadžić, leader of the Sarajevo line in RS, who tries to marginalize the role of Banja Luka in political decisions. In the beginning of July, after his exclusion from the SDS, he formed the Democratic Patriotic Block which advocates a democratization of political life in RS, above all in the media, but who in terms of ethnic relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is not very different from the ruling SDS.

**Graph 10 Average ratings of politicians**  
(1 denotes a very positive, 4 a very negative attitude)



The fact that these politicians represent conflicting political options, and that the potential voters are well aware of this, is illustrated by the correlations between the ratings that the respondents have given the representatives of the radical and moderate alternatives. There is a high positive correlation between the ratings of Slobodan Milošević, Rajko Kasagić and Živko Radišić.<sup>17</sup> The same is valid for the ratings of Radovan Karadžić, Momčilo Krajišnik and Biljana Plavšić (which means that those who have a high opinion of, for example, Karadžić, generally have a high opinion both of Krajišnik and Biljana Plavšić, and vice-versa). On the other hand, the ratings of politicians belonging to the two opposing options are generally (but not always in statistically significant way) negatively correlated (which means that respondents who give a positive evaluation of politicians belonging to one group, have a very negative view of politicians belonging to the other, and vice-versa).

The cases of Ratko Mladić and Nikola Koljević<sup>18</sup> are interesting. Ordinary people, especially war veterans, regard Mladić as a capable and daring soldier, and political analysts have generally assumed that he enjoys a high degree of popularity among the citizens, regardless of their political orientation. However, there is a high positive correlation between his ratings and those of the hard liners, whereas the correlation with the moderates is either very low, or negative. That is, Mladić is not perceived by the ordinary voter as a neutral military man, but as a political hard-liner. Nikola Koljević, on the other hand, was considered by many as Milošević's most important ally in the Karadžić leadership. It seems, however, that people do not think so: Koljević's ratings are highly correlated with the ratings of Radovan Karadžić, Momčilo Krajišnik and Biljana Plavšić, and much less with those of Slobodan Milošević, Rajko Kasagić, or Živko Radišić.

It is very difficult to give a social definition of Milošević's followers, as there are no important differences in the ratings between members of various professional, generational, or other categories, usually referred to as demographic. As far as Karadžić is concerned, there exists a statistically significant correlation (albeit not high) between level of education and the views respondents have about him as a politician. He is, namely, most popular among respondents on the primary school level or lower, while his popularity decreases with increasing levels of education, so that his average rating among those with a

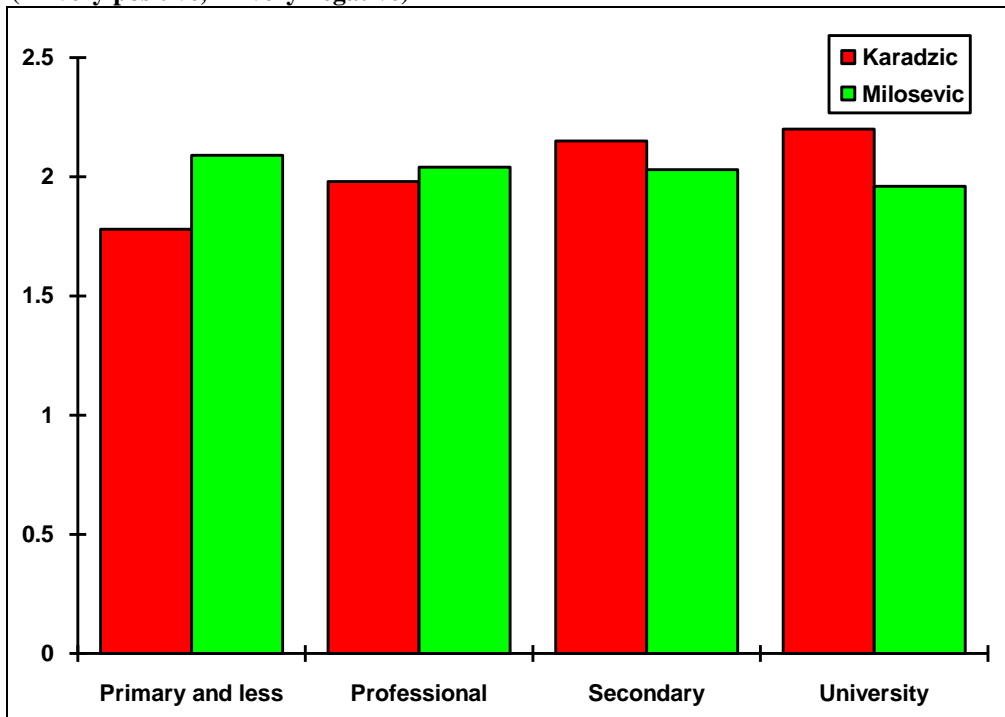
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<sup>17</sup>Correlations are measured by the Pearson Correlation Coefficient.

<sup>18</sup>Together with Biljana Plavšić vice-president of SR.

college or university degree is half a unit lower on a four-point scale than in the first educational category.

**Graph 11 Average ratings of Milošević and Karadžić according to education**  
(1 - very positive, 4 - very negative)

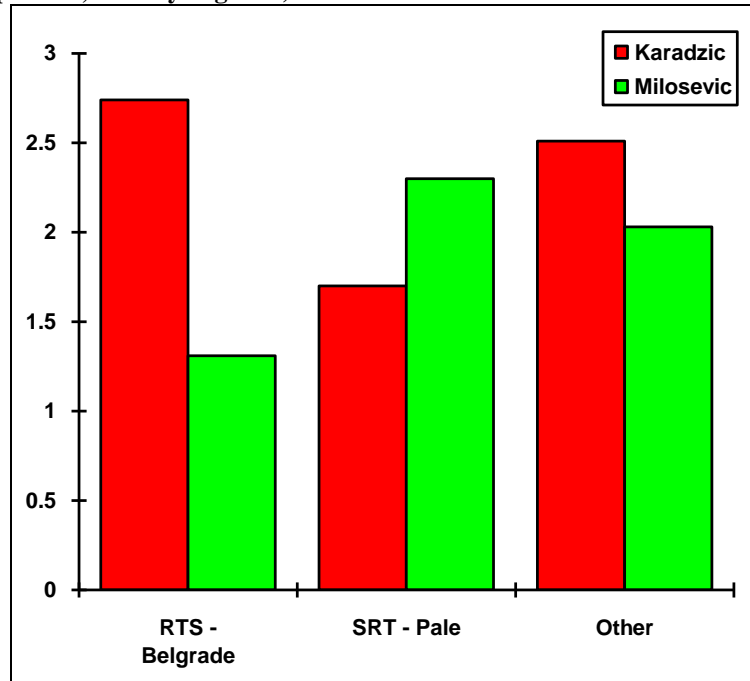


This could probably be explained by the fact that Milošević managed to acquire extensive sympathies through his populist policies: his seductive rhetoric, primarily based on nationalism, was not addressed to any single social group. He appealed to the Serbs as a nation, not as members of distinct social classes or professions, and, insisting on unity and homogeneity, he actually tried to suppress such differences. A decade has passed since he enthroned himself as an untouchable national leader, and in the meantime his position has become less dependent on propaganda, or rather, less dependent on the susceptibility or resistance to propaganda influences among various social strata. Karadžić also built his popularity on nationalism, but his conflict with Milošević forced him to rely on propaganda, which consequently makes him more popular among social categories which are less resistant to media influence.

This does not mean that Milošević no longer needs propaganda. Source of information is the variable most highly correlated with the views of the Serbian president (Contingency Coefficient = 0.48565,  $p =$

0.00000)<sup>19</sup>. However, in the case of Karadžić this association is even more pronounced (Contingency Coefficient = 0.54586; p = 0.00000 \*1.) Besides, Milošević is more popular among those who get their information from SRT in Pale, than is Karadžić among those who are watching RTS in Belgrade.

**Graph 12 Average ratings of Milošević and Karadžić among the viewers of SRT and RTS (1 - very positive, 4 - very negative)**

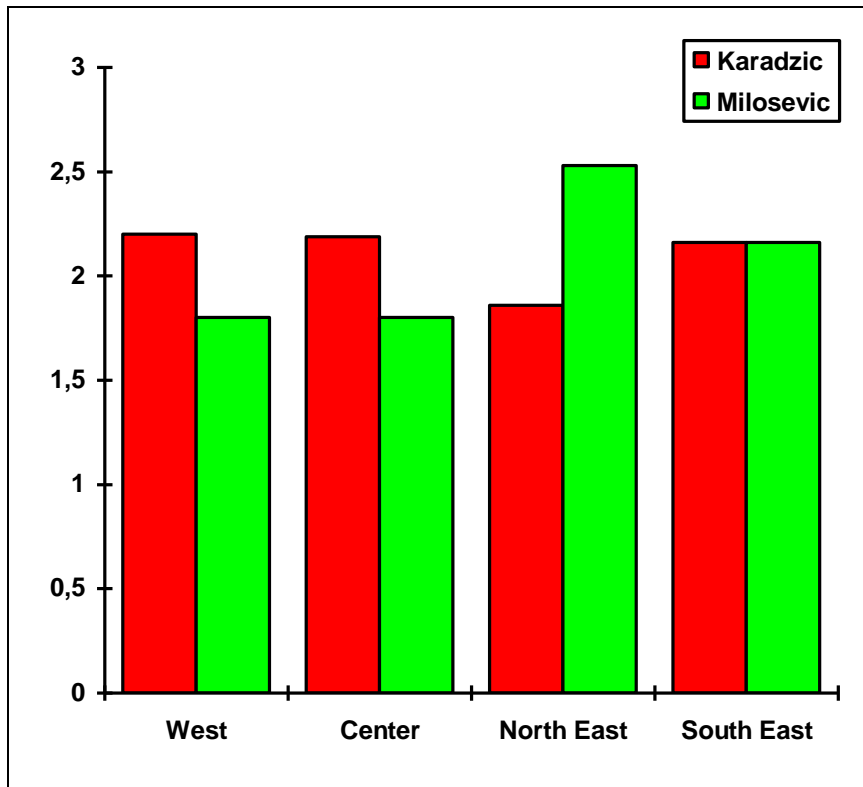


There are substantial regional differences in the influence of the two politicians. Milošević is considerably more popular in the western (the region of Banja Luka) and central parts of RS, while Karadžić is more popular in the north-eastern (Podrinje, Pale) and south-eastern parts (Herzegovina). Many relate these differences to historical divisions going back to World War II. While in the western and central regions there was a massive anti-fascist movement lead by the communists, in the eastern parts (gravitating towards Serbia) there was an even stronger (also anti-fascist) četnik-movement with a royalist and nationalist orientation. Similar differences have been noted in earlier investigations in RS.

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<sup>19</sup>By source of information is meant answers to the question: "What TV channel do you watch most often?". A large number of citizens in RS are not able to choose TV channel. Almost 90 percent of the respondents get their information either through the Serbian Radio and Television (SRT) of Pale, or through the Radio and Television of Serbia (RTS) in Belgrade. Both channels, however, are under strict control - RTS under Milošević, SRT under Karadzic.

**Graph 13. Average ratings of Milošević and Karadžić according to region  
(1 - very positive, 4 - very negative)**



It seems that the escalation of the political conflict between RS and the international community has strengthened the radical and weakened the moderate alternative in RS. This might at first glance seem paradoxical. It should be remembered, though, that years of everyday propaganda in powerful media have created certain stereotypes among the citizens of RS (as in Serbia, for that matter). Biased coverage of political events, in particular of inter-ethnic conflicts in former Yugoslavia, was consciously promoted, in order to achieve support for current (short-term) actions of the political leadership. Serbs were always and exclusively presented as victims or defenders, and Croats and Muslims exclusively as aggressors. This led to a powerful mobilization of public opinion, which was largely supporting the political leadership of the Bosnian Serbs. However, this short-term effect of political propaganda (which was reflected in an overwhelming support of the policies of the regime), by lengthy intrusion, was transformed into a lasting disposition, into a stereotype meaning: "A life together with Muslims and Croats is impossible".<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>In an investigation undertaken in RS in April 1996 the following question was posed: "Do you believe that Muslims, Serbs and Croats can live together in peace, or that the harm of the war

Similarly, reports on the unfair position taken by the West and the whole international community, and their empathy with the Muslims and Croats resulted in stereotypes of the West and the international community as enemies of the Serbs, that there is even a concentrated international conspiracy against the Serbs.<sup>21</sup>

These stereotypes started having effect in their own way on peoples' attitudes towards political leaders. The very strong anti-western sentiments, therefore, probably played a crucial role for the important changes in the public opinion of RS towards Karadžić and Milošević, which occurred during an investigation carried out between May 12 and 22.<sup>22</sup> The president of RS, Radovan Karadžić, on 22 May decided to remove the prime minister of RS, Rajko Kasagić. The decision, as well as its later justification, made it clear that Kasagić, against the wishes of the hard-liners around Karadžić, had developed good relations with the High Representative Carl Bildt, and with other representatives of the international community. Immediately after the resignation of Kasagić, there were declarations of support from western countries, the international community, and even Milošević himself. Once again, the formula "help that kills" proved its effectiveness, which had been illustrated already in 1992 in the case of Milan Panic, the American businessman of Serbian origin, who, as a leader of the democratic opposition, challenged Milošević in the presidential elections of Serbia.<sup>23</sup>

In fact, at that time the state-controlled media of Serbia interpreted the Western support of Panic as the final proof of the "anti-Serbian policies" of Milošević's adversary. In the case of Kasagić, such an interpretation was not even necessary. It was enough just to publish the declarations that were arriving from

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has made it impossible for them to live together in peace again"? 81 percent of the respondents answered that a life together is no longer possible, whereas 8 percent believe they can, and 10,5 percent do not answer the question.

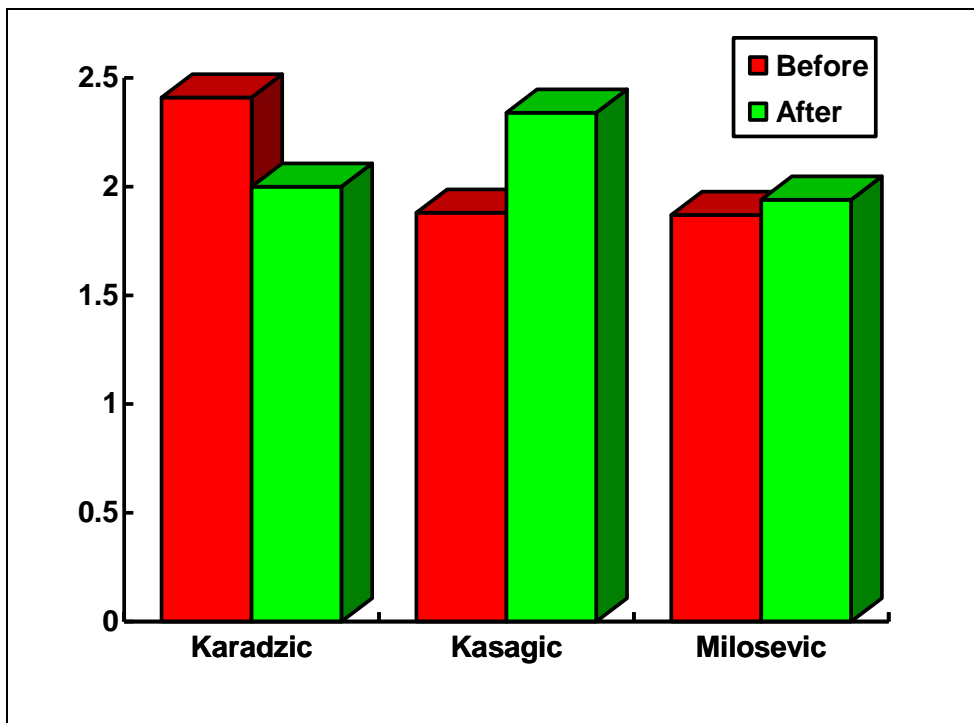
<sup>21</sup>For example, in an investigation undertaken in July 1995, 47 percent of the citizens of Serbia are of the opinion that foreign powers are responsible for the condition in which Serbia finds itself; only 24 percent believed that the main culprit is the leadership of Serbia, headed by Milošević.

<sup>22</sup>A sample of 1205 randomly selected respondents, representing the adult population of RS.

<sup>23</sup>The presidential campaign evolved in a context of the total media domination of Milošević's party, which amounted to an unprecedented attention on Milošević in the leading state media. In the course of the campaign the West constantly increased its support of Panic, but his rating only fell as the support grew.

the West. The rule (prejudice) that "Whom the West promotes, is acting against the Serbs" started to function automatically. This is revealed by the ratings of Karadžić, Kasagić and Milošević in the parts of the survey that were conducted before, respectively after the publication of the decision.

**Graph 14 Average ratings of Karadžić, Kasagić and Milošević before and after the decision to remove Kasagić (1 - very positive, 4 - very negative)**



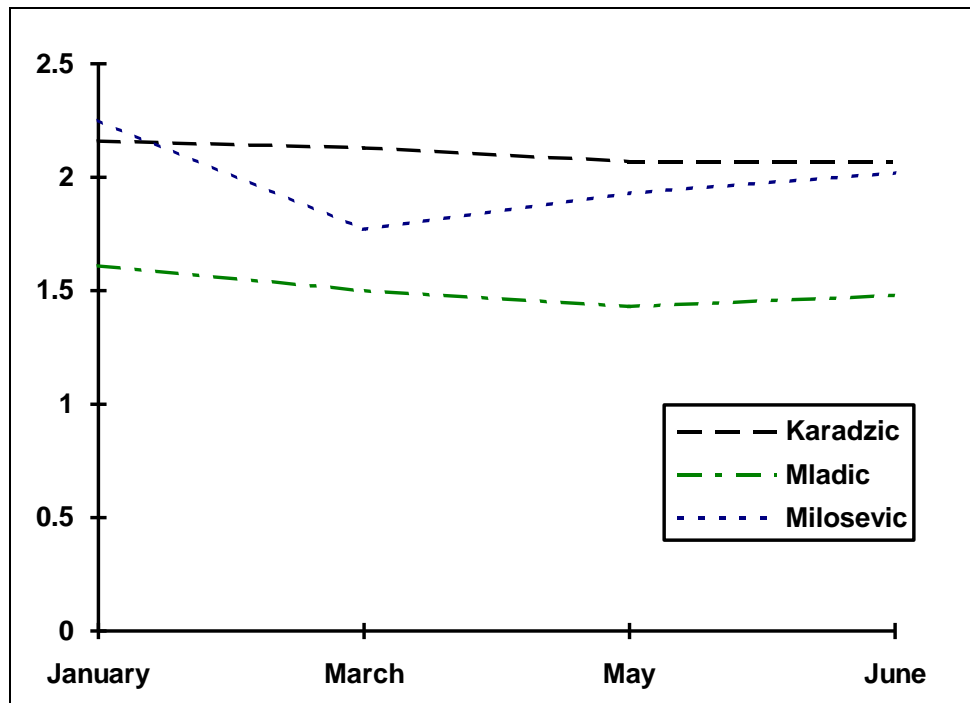
It is clear that the rating of Kasagić fell drastically, that Karadžić, substantially improved his own, and that Milošević himself, in spite of the great popularity he enjoys among Bosnian Serbs, was affected after having aligned himself with the West.

The table below shows that the increasing international pressure on Radovan Karadžić, starting in the beginning of May, not only did not weaken his rating, but even slightly improved it, whereas the position of Milošević during the same period was considerably weakened.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>The low rating of Milošević in January might probably be interpreted as a result of the still fresh impressions of the Dayton Accord, which many in RS understood as a political defeat.

**Graph 15 Average ratings of Karadžić and Milošević: January - June 1996**  
 (1 - very positive, 4 - very negative)



### **Influence and Social Profile of Major Political Parties**

The present investigation has confirmed earlier conclusions that the two most influential parties in RS are the ruling SDS and SPRS, followed by the Serbian Radical Party, which in all surveys has obtained about 6 percent of the potential votes. Remaining parties have practically no influence among the voters. The only exception might be the Democratic Patriotic Block of Predrag Radić, whom local experts consider to be a very popular politician. His party was formed during the very preparations of the data collection, which means that the voters were not sufficiently informed about its goals. It will probably slightly increase its present support of 2,3 percent of the votes, while it is difficult to foresee any radical changes in the position of other parties.

The influence of SDS and its leader is to a large extent a function of the position of the international community towards the Bosnian Serb leadership: as the pressure increases, the standing of SDS improves, while at the same time the support for SPRS decreases.

The Serbian Democratic Party has a comparatively distinct social profile. The present investigation, like those conducted earlier, shows that SDS is the main choice of elderly people, poorly educated<sup>25</sup>, farmers (66 percent)<sup>26</sup>, housewives (53 percent), and retired persons (56 percent).

SPRS is the most influential party among the highly educated (45 percent)<sup>27</sup>, intellectuals, members of the army and police (43 percent), and the unemployed (39 percent). It is interesting that this pattern of political influence in various social categories has been confirmed in all other surveys made by Medium. It is also very interesting that the Socialist Party in Serbia proper enjoys outstanding support among the very social groups which in Republika Srpska are followers of the SDS. Having in mind the difference, referred to earlier, between the perception of Milošević in Serbia and the Republika Srpska, it might be concluded that the social groups which in Republika Srpska are supporting SDS, and in Serbia SPS, to much larger extent than others are pro-government oriented and susceptible to radical politics and ideologies.

In the case of political parties, as in the case of their leaders, the extremely important influence of source of information on political orientation is again confirmed. In other words, among those who watch SRT (Pale), SDS is supported by 66 percent of the voters, and SPRS by only 10 percent. On the other hand, among those who watch RTS (Belgrade), SDS is supported by only 10 percent, while 82 percent are in favor of SPRS. This only shows to what degree the state-controlled television in Serbia and Republika Srpska is partial.

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<sup>25</sup>The findings are very consistent. With increasing age the proportion of SDS supporters is growing significantly, with increasing education it decreases. For example, among the youngest respondents (18-25) 35 percent are in favor of SDS, while the proportion among the oldest (55 and above) is 55 percent; among respondents with primary school or less 66 percent are in favor of SDS, while among those with a university education, only 32 percent are supporting this party.

<sup>26</sup>Percentages in this part of the report (which studies the social characteristics of followers of political parties) should be interpreted not as proportions of the population as a whole, but as the proportion of potential voters, since those who do not plan to vote are excluded from the tables.

<sup>27</sup>The rule that the proportion of sympathizers grows with increasing level of education, is, however, not valid for this party.

**Graph 16. Influence of major political parties**

