

# Attitudes and Values of Citizens in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

**A SOCIOLOGICAL SURVEY ON THE EVE OF THE  
ELECTIONS 1996**

**PULS / CEIFO**

Split, August 1996.

[internal publication]

# 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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## Preface

This is a preliminary report of a sociological survey undertaken in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Puls - Public Opinion, Market and Media Research (Split, Croatia), and the Centre for Research in International Migration and Ethnic Relations (CEIFO), University of Stockholm. The investigation was financed by the Swedish International Development Agency in Stockholm.

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# Methodological Report

## Sampling Methodology

For the purpose of this survey, a design of stratified random sampling was applied. First, the territory of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was divided into a predominantly Croatian and a predominantly Muslim part, according to Census data from 1991, taking into account recent political developments, and, as much as possible, changes in nationality structure. Finally, we considered the fact that the two areas are ultimately divided by criteria of military power (Bosnian Army and HVO).

The Croat-dominated part was divided into 4 distinct geographical regions, or sets of regions, and the Muslim part into five regions.

In the predominantly Croat part those regions were:

1. Mostar and surrounding (Rodoč, Jasenice etc.)
2. West Herzegovina (includes Kupres, Livno, Duvno)
3. Middle Bosnia (Gornji Vakuf, Novi Travnik, Vitez)
4. East Herzegovina (Čapljina, Čitluk, Grude, Ljubuški, Posušje, Široki Brijeg)

In the predominantly Muslim part the five regions were:

1. Sarajevo and surrounding (Ilijaš, Vogošća, Ilidža etc.)
2. Travnik region (incl. Donji Vakuf etc.)
3. Tuzla region (Kalesija, Živinice etc.)
4. Zenica region (incl. Gradišće, Kakanj)
5. Bihać region (Bosanska Krupa, Sanski Most etc.)

Each of the regions covers a number of small, medium, and large cities/settlements, and every region was divided into "Urban" and "Non urban areas". Urban areas were defined as those settlements which are municipality centers, or those with more than 2000 citizens. Thus, a two-way stratification: "by region", and "by size of cities/settlements", was used in both parts of the Federation.

The planned size of the entire stratified sample was  $n=1000$  adults in each part, for which a proportionate allocation of units, according to Census data, was constructed. The cities and villages were sampled at random, using a random digit generator with probabilities proportionate to size (the measure of size being "the number of inhabitants") to ensure that in the further stage of the sampling procedure every person would have the same probability of selection.

The total number of starting points used in both samples was 40.

Addresses of households in the "large cities" were chosen, first, by sampling one or several "Census areas" in a particular place, and then by a systematic sampling of households included in each enumeration area. Pollsters sampled every sixth address on the same side of the street, turning on each

corner to the right ("Right hand rule").The choice of respondent in a particular household was made using special tables according to the rules of the Trol Dahl-Carter-Bryant (TCB) method.

## Field Work

The fieldwork was performed between June 19 and July 4, in both the predominantly Muslim and predominantly Croat part. The number of respondents was almost identical in the two areas: In the Croatian part 956 randomly selected adult respondents were interviewed, while in the Muslim area 959 respondents participated in the survey.

Two different language versions of the questionnaire (Croatian and Bosnian) were applied, in order to avoid any unpleasant situation in the field.

Four regional coordinators (in Mostar, Tuzla, Bihać and Sarajevo) cooperated with the staff of PULS in preparing the training sessions and supervision of the fieldwork.

The interviewers were mostly students and unemployed persons with a degree in some field of the social sciences. Almost all of them had earlier experience from data collection, having participated in three previous surveys in Bosnia and Herzegovina, performed by PULS for different clients. It has to be stressed that all the interviewers collected data in their places of residence and local surroundings.

According to detailed reports of the interviewers, the refusal rate in both parts was at an acceptable level in view of conditions in Bosnia, and was even a little lower than in previous surveys.

## Refusal Rates

### Predominantly Croat part

No. of persons contacted:	1246
No. of refusals:	290
Refusal rate:	23,3%

### Predominantly Muslim part

No. of persons contacted:	1372
No. of refusals:	413
Refusal rate	30,1%

The interviews were conducted by a team of 75 pollsters.

Pollsters in the Croatian part were instructed in Split and Mostar, and the interviewers in the predominantly Muslim part (mainly Central Bosnia) were instructed in Sarajevo, Zenica and Tuzla.

During the supervisory work, special attention was paid to newly hired pollsters in the Muslim part of Bosnia where more than 10% of the addresses of each pollster were checked.

The verification procedure was organized by the end of the second week of the field work, and finished a week after the field work. In the Muslim part the verification was organized by the staff in Sarajevo, and in the Croatian part field control was organized from Mostar. After the field work at least one pollster in each sampling-plan-region was contacted by telephone, in order to get a direct impression of the polling. Our opinion after these conversations, and after reviewing their reports is that almost all interviewers were very conscientious.

According to the reports of interviewers and coordinators, the content of the questionnaire was acceptable and made sense to most of the respondents who agreed to be interviewed. Only a few claimed that the questionnaire was a little bit longer than it should be, which is a usual objection in this kind of research surveys.

### Demographic Data

NATIONALITY	CROATS	MUSLIMS
<b>GENDER</b>		
Male	53,6%	51,9%
Female	46,4%	48,1%
<b>EDUCATION</b>		
Primary and less	25,5%	20,6%
Professional	11,5%	18,5%
Secondary	48,0%	45,6%
Higher	6,9%	7,6%
University	8,1%	7,8%
<b>SETTLEMENT</b>		
Village	60,1%	36,9%
Town	39,9%	63,1%
<b>AGE</b>		
18-34	29,0%	35,1%
35-49	35,3%	36,2%
50-65	26,2%	21,6%
66 and more	9,5%	7,1%

As there are no official demographic data even from the Census of 1991 (except ethnic structure by settlements), it is impossible to make any precise comparison between demographic characteristics of the population and those of the sample. However, according to previous Census data it could be estimated that there are certain (not very significant) differences concerning the variables of age (less people older than 65) and gender, which might be explained by recent demographic changes caused by war and exile. Educational level seems to be more different from the true structure of the population, but this is a usual tendency in survey research, especially under these conditions. Analysis

of the refusal rate showed a high degree of refusal (both Croats and Muslims) among old and less educated persons, who were often not able to participate in the interview and generally do not vote in the elections.

Some demographic differences regarding the nationality of the respondent appeared as a consequence of the fact that the Muslims now constitute a significant majority in the biggest cities of the Federation (Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zenica, Bihać) except for the city of Mostar, where neither Croats nor Muslims form a dominant majority. Also, in the Croat population there were less respondents belonging to the category "younger than 35" than in the Muslim sample, which is probably a consequence of extensive migration to Croatian cities across the border.

With these comments in mind, it is estimated that the demographic structure of the sample is on a satisfactory level and provides a valid basis for scientific analysis.

## Final Comment

Our impression is that fear, ethnic animosity and tensions, as well as war damages are still a very important factor which might affect the data collection, especially in settlements on the border of the Croat and Muslim areas and where conflicts between Muslims and Croats were very bitter. Fortunately, these problems were not encountered in other areas (Tuzla, Zenica region etc.) which passed through the war relatively intact.

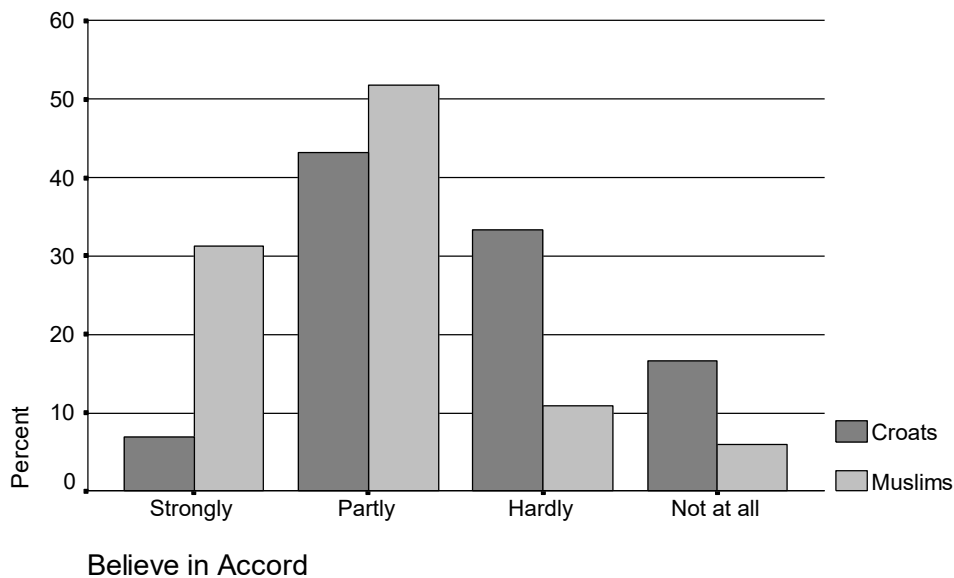
During previous surveys, in many settlements the pollsters could not adhere strictly to the rules of household sampling, because it was simply impossible to do so. For example, in Sarajevo and some smaller places it was impossible to sample a starting point without the opinion of a pollster who judged the meaningfulness of polling in certain parts of the city, where whole blocks are ruined, or in areas which according to the opinion of the pollster would be too dangerous. In some houses refugees are living illegally and are not willing to participate in surveys. Learning from earlier experience, the sampling plan was adjusted in the very beginning, to reflect areas where polling was possible at all, still respecting the main criteria of stratification.

Finally, it has to be stressed that, (although the sampling procedure had to be adjusted to regional division) all interpretations and data analyses were done on two groups defined by ethnic origin and not by territorial (regional) criteria.

# Dayton and the Future of Bosnia

## The Prospect of Peace

To what extent do the inhabitants of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina expect the Dayton Peace Agreement to have enduring effects? To begin with, the Muslims are far more optimistic about the prospects for peace than are the Croats. Altogether, more than 80 percent of the Muslims, compared to 50 percent of the Croats, believe, with some qualifications, that the Dayton Accord in the end might bring a lasting peace. This tendency is further accentuated as 31 percent of the Muslims strongly believe in such an outcome, which only 7 percent of the Croats do.

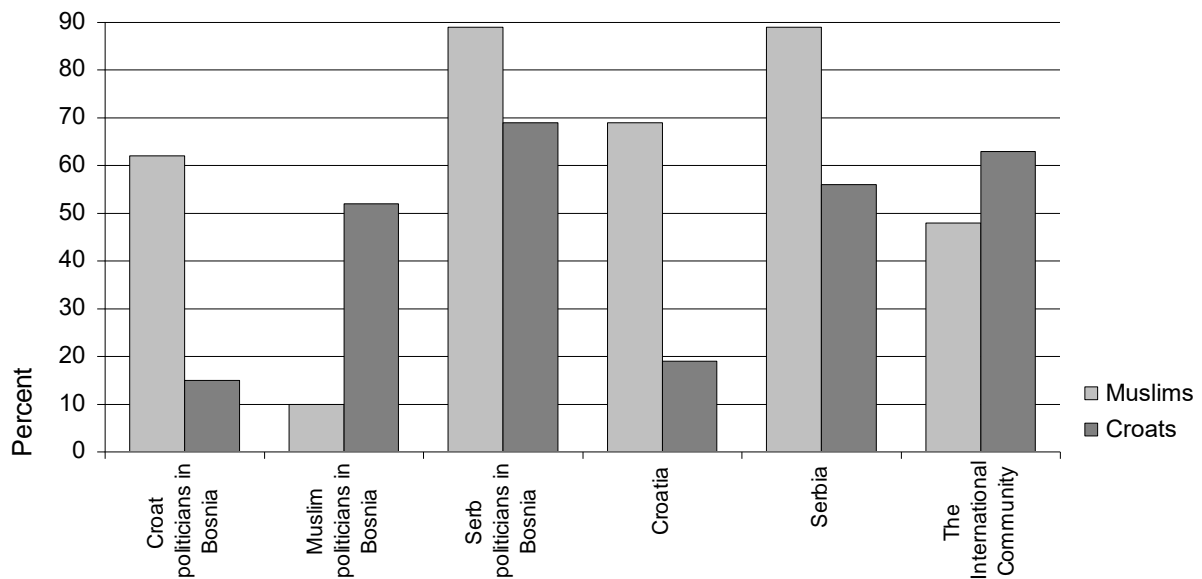


As far as the current problems related to the implementation of the peace agreement are concerned, Muslims and Croats differ from each other in several respects. 89 percent of the Muslims believe that Serb politicians in Bosnia are highly responsible, a view which is shared by 61 percent of the Croats. Similarly, while 90 percent of the Muslim respondents feel that Serbia proper is highly responsible, only 56 percent of the Croats think so.

As might be expected, the attitudes on the role of Croatia, or of Croat and Muslim politicians in Bosnia, are quite opposite. To more than 60 percent of the Muslims, Croat politicians are highly responsible for the (lack of) progress of the normalization process, a standpoint with which only 15 percent of the Croats agree. On the other hand, more than half of the Croats feel that Muslim politicians are highly responsible, compared to 10 percent of the Muslims. Likewise, Croatia is considered to be highly responsible for the current situation by almost 70 percent of the Muslims, but only 19 percent of the Croats.

Thus, whereas both Muslims and Croats agree that the Serbs are the main culprit (“highly responsible”), the intensity of this view is much stronger among the Muslims. Moreover, there is obviously a high degree of distrust, or polarization, between Muslims and Croats, reflected in the blame they put on each other. In fact, if the options highly and partly responsible are added, it turns out that the Croats are slightly more critical of Muslim than of Serb politicians (91 versus 88 percent).

It is, finally, indicative that almost half of the Muslims and more than sixty percent of the Croats are of the opinion that the International Community is highly responsible for the outcome of the peace process.



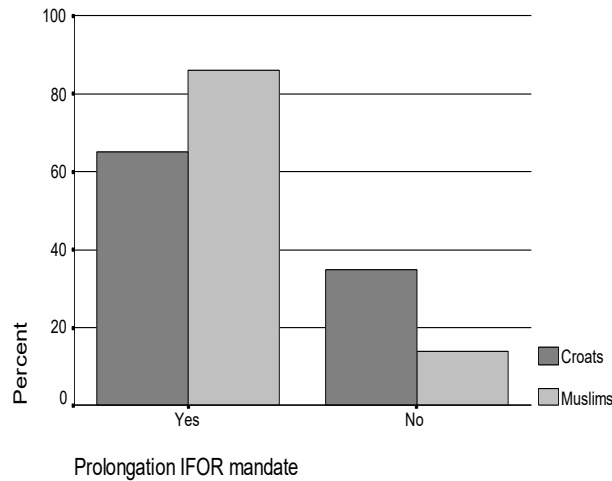
High responsibility for implementation of Dayton agreement

### The International Involvement

In fact, both Muslims and Croats are highly ambivalent in their attitudes towards the role of the outside world. A majority of the respondents think that Europe is engaged in Bosnia solely out of self-interest, or has not done all it could to improve the situation. In addition, a substantial number of Muslims (72 percent) and Croats (63 percent) feel that the Europeans treat them as a backward people.

While there are certainly reasons to be critical of the foreign involvement in Bosnia, it is also true that these assertions correspond to traditional values and (auto)stereotypes, as well as to widespread attitudes in dominant media among both Croats and Muslims.

In spite of their criticism of the foreign involvement, it is noteworthy that most respondents do want the international presence to continue. Thus, 86 percent of the Muslims and 65 percent of the Croats would like IFOR to remain after 1996, and only a minority (28 percent Croats and 16 percent Muslims) would prefer that the civilian advisers and observers leave Bosnia. Actually, 60 percent of the Muslims and 45 percent of the Croats think they would be worse off without them, and about a quarter of the respondents in both ethnic groups are even prepared to accept a more active foreign role, i.e. an international protectorate in Bosnia!



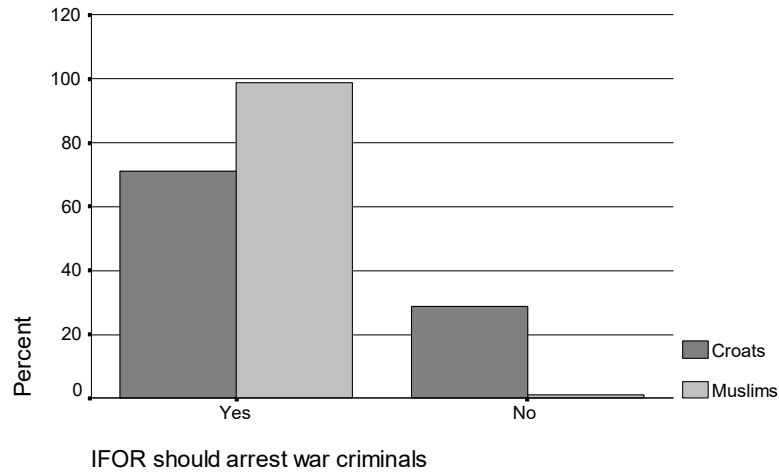
On the controversial issue of armament, the views are, naturally, divided. 86 percent of the Muslims agree with the idea that the Bosnian army should be strengthened by the USA, which only 7 percent of the Croats do. What is highly interesting about the Croat response, however, is that less than a fifth (19 percent) feel that all parties should arm themselves, which might have been a natural reaction in a conflict-situation. Instead, three quarters of the Croats (74 percent) are in favor of a general disarmament in the region as a whole.

## The War Crimes Tribunal

While a majority of both Croats and Muslims think that war criminals should be arrested by IFOR and that the Tribunal in the Hague is a precondition for peace, the percentage of positive answers is higher among the Muslims. A substantial proportion of the Croats, in fact, oppose the arrest of war criminals (29 percent) or think it is better to forget and go on living (26 percent). The Croats are also more suspicious about the impartiality of the Tribunal. Whereas more than 80 percent of the Muslims believe that trials in the Hague will be fair, only about 40 percent of the Croats are of the same opinion.<sup>1</sup>

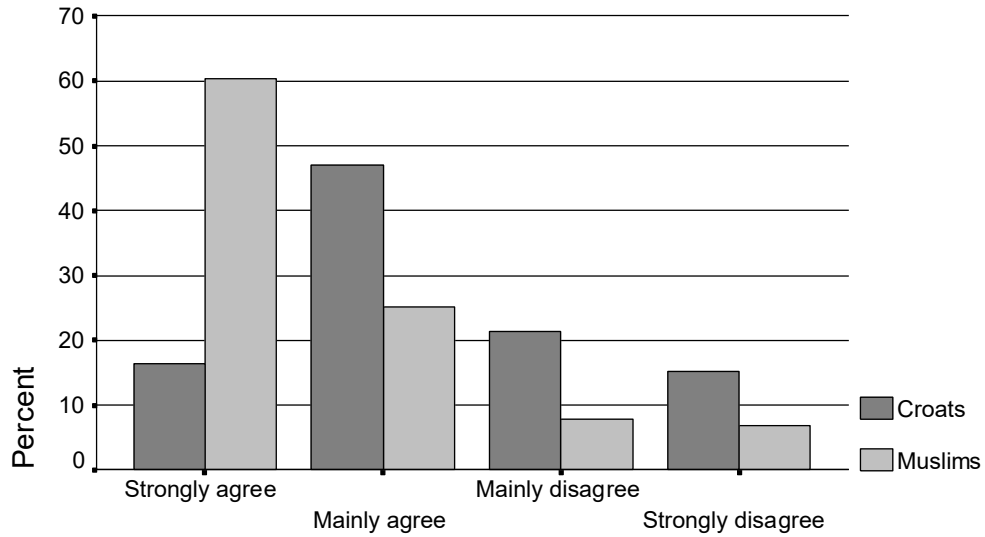
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<sup>1</sup> The Croat reaction is understandable, as well-known political and military leaders in Herceg-Bosna are being accused of war crimes.

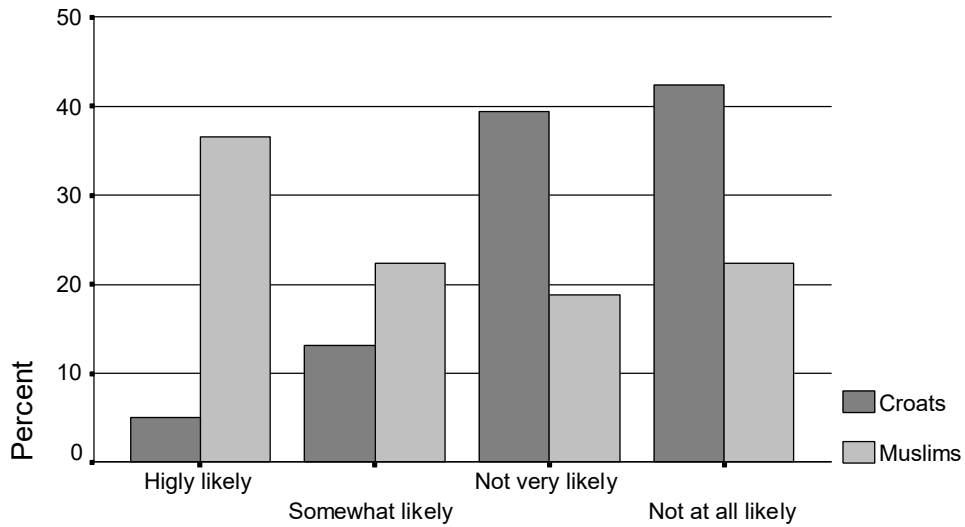


## The Return of Refugees

There are clear differences between Croats and Muslims on the refugee issue. 60 percent of the Muslims, but only 16 percent of the Croats, strongly agree with the stipulation of the Dayton Accord that refugees should return to their homes. Similarly, the Muslims are in general more confident that this particular provision of the Accord will be implemented. More than sixty percent of the Muslims believe that most or more than half of the refugees will return, compared to less than twenty percent of the Croats. In fact, a majority of the Croats (55 percent) think that only some or almost nobody will return. Consequently, while more than a third of the Muslim refugees (36 percent) believe it is highly likely that they will return themselves, only 5 percent of the Croats share this expectation, and more than forty percent think a return is not at all likely. This is one of several indications that the Croats perceive status quo as more or less final.



Accord guarantees/refugees return



Personal return

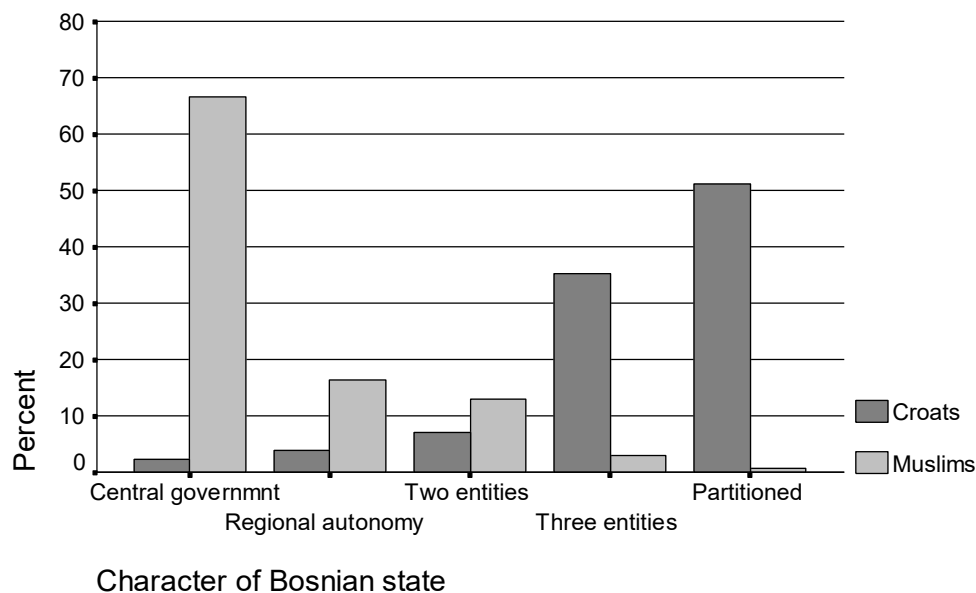
The general picture emerging from the data is that Croats and Muslims alike do accept the Dayton Accord in the sense that it has brought an end to war. However, as we shall see below, it is quite clear that the respondents in important respects have a view of the peace process which differs radically from the interpretation of the International Community.

Moreover, the differences between Croats and Muslims in a significant manner seem to mirror the positions of their leaders and dominant media. This tendency will become even more obvious later on.

# The Character of Bosnia and Herzegovina

On the issue of whether Bosnia and Herzegovina should be a unified state, the positions of Croats and Muslims are diametrically opposite. While an overwhelming majority of Muslim respondents strongly (91 percent) or mainly (8 percent) agree with this idea, a clear majority of Croats strongly (38 percent) or mainly (36) disagree.

Furthermore, when asked about the ideal constitutional arrangement of Bosnia, two thirds of the Muslims (67 percent) opt for a centralized state, which only a negligible part (2 percent) of the Croats do. The alternative corresponding to the Dayton agreement, i.e. a unified state consisting of two entities, is chosen by only 13 percent of the Muslims and 7 percent of the Croats. In fact, a large proportion of the Croats either wants a solution with three entities (35 percent), which might be referred to as the post-Dayton reality, or a partition of Bosnia (51 percent).



This means that a majority of the Croats are not interested in the preservation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a political entity, but also that those who, in principle, do accept a unified Bosnian state or, identify closely with Bosnia, demand a degree of decentralization which seems to be inconceivable for the Muslims.

Confronted with the direct question of whether Herceg-Bosna should be a part of Croatia this tendency becomes even more apparent. A majority of the Croats (53 percent) strongly agree with this proposition, and a substantial part (26 percent) mainly agree.<sup>2</sup> It is, moreover, symptomatic,

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to compare the response pattern on this issue with the answers to the question concerning constitutional arrangements in Bosnia. Of those who mainly agree with the unification of Herceg-Bosna with Croatia, a

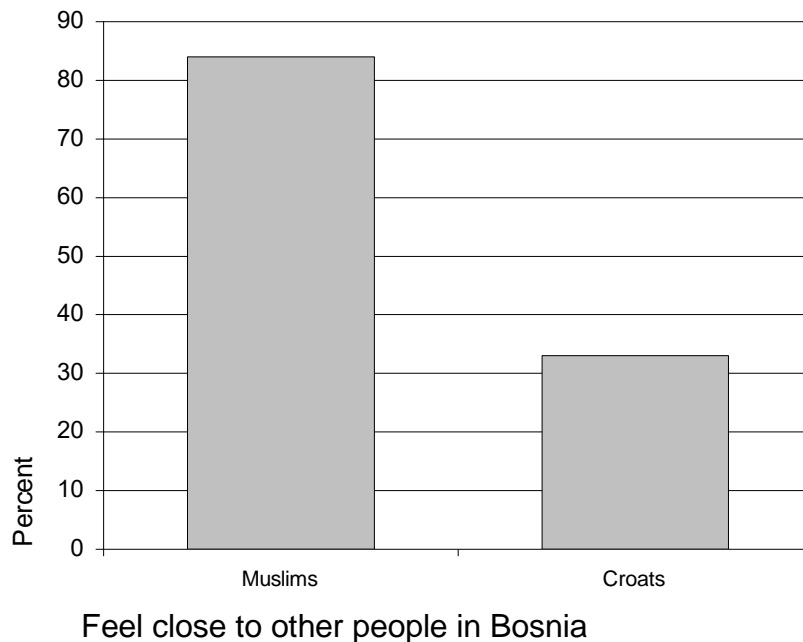
and, as it were, logical, that about fifty percent of the Croats would welcome a unification of Republika Srpska with Serbia. Needless to say, practically no Muslim (1 percent) would accept that solution.

In contrast, a majority of the Muslims are actually in favor of a unification of Bosnia using military force. 25 percent strongly agree and another 32 percent mainly agree with this proposition.

The overall picture is further illustrated by the degree to which the respondents feel that Bosnian unity is very important. 92 percent of the Muslims and 12 percent of the Croats think it is.

## Identification with Bosnia

The same pattern is repeated in several items measuring the affinity or identification with Bosnia and Bosnian culture. While the Muslims in general are proud of being citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina (85 percent strongly agree), or feel close to other ethnic groups in Bosnia (42 percent strongly agree), the Croats do not. Less than ten percent strongly agree with these statements.



Similarly, a large majority of the Muslims believe in the well-known dictum that Bosnia has a unique spirit that should be preserved (86 percent strongly agree), whereas the Croats do not think

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minority (44 percent) is in favor of partition, while 47 percent prefer a three-entity solution, and 7 percent the Dayton-model (two entities).

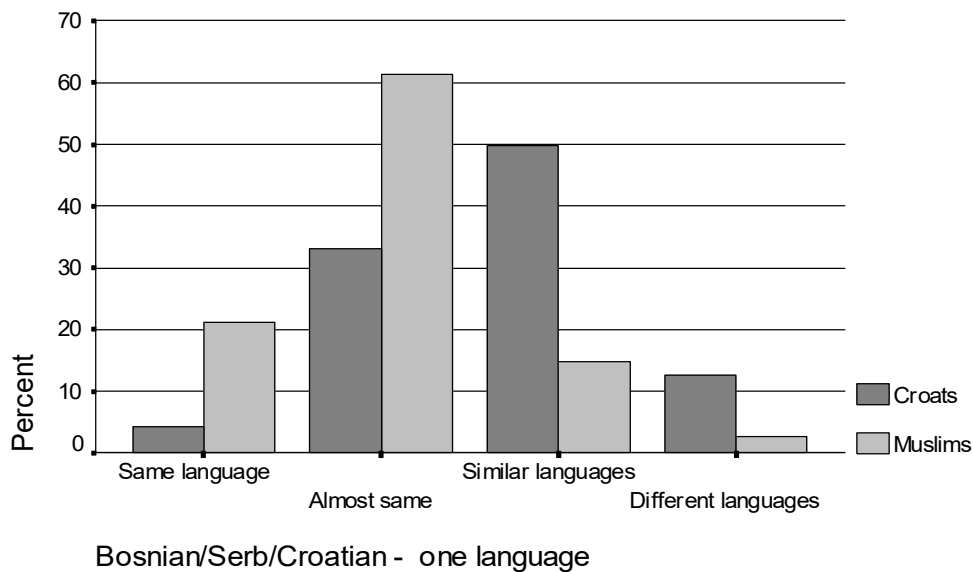
so (9 percent strongly agree). Or, again, almost seventy percent of the Muslims, compared to only ten percent of the Croats, feel that they could not live anywhere else but in Bosnia.

These preferences are further illustrated by an item which asked the respondents to indicate their primary identification in a geographical and socio-cultural sense. It is highly significant that Muslims in the first place identify with Bosnia and Herzegovina (76 percent), while the primary identity of Croats is either regional<sup>3</sup> (26 percent) or local (45 percent).

In other words, it is, again, obvious that the Muslims have a much stronger emotional attachment to Bosnia, and recognize it as their home to an extent which the Croats do not.

## Language

These differences are also reflected in the views on language and language policy.



Most Muslims tend to perceive the language spoken by Serbs, Croats and Muslims as more or less the same, albeit with some differences (83 percent). To the Croats it is the other way round. They perceive Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian as different, but similar, languages (63 percent), a position which for a long time has been dominant in Croatian public opinion and political life. Now, the interesting point is that the Muslims, in spite of their view, insist that the official language in Bosnia and Herzegovina should be called Bosnian (85 percent agree strongly), something which the Croats cannot accept (73 percent strongly disagree). That is, even those Croats who do think it is the same language are not willing to use a name with possible ethnic implications.<sup>4</sup> Instead, the Croats

<sup>3</sup> One explanation for the comparatively weak regional identification is probably that Croat respondents have associated the concept of region with "entity", i.e. the Federation.

<sup>4</sup> It should be pointed out that since 1993 the language in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina has officially been referred to as Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian.

are in favor of the idea that Serbs and Croats in Bosnia should have the right to use the standard languages of Serbia and Croatia (89 percent), which the Muslims oppose (73 percent). Similarly, while the Croats largely agree to separate schools or classes for Croat and Muslim children (67 percent), the Muslims do not (3 percent are for and 96 percent against).

## Multiethnic Bosnia

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

When asked to give their own views of the character of a multiethnic society, slightly less than 40 percent of the Muslims and about 48 percent of the Croats 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 of the Muslims and 32 percent of the Croats chose the second alternative, a society where ethnic groups also preserve their culture, but where individuals are mixing freely, and intermarriage is fairly common. Finally, about a fifth of both Muslims and Croats define multiculturalism as a society where ethnicity is unimportant, intermarriage very common, and ethnic differences will disappear.

Now, the Western European understanding of the concept tends to be equivalent with the third option, which only a minority of Muslims and Croats subscribe to. Between 30-40 percent 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, a relative majority of both peoples has chosen the first alternative, which might be labeled the *millet* option, since it largely corresponds to the social relations characterizing Bosnia during more than four hundred years of Ottoman rule.<sup>5</sup>

This attitude is illustrated by views on intermarriage. More than 70 percent of the Croat respondents strongly or partly agree that intermarriage is, in principle, a bad idea. This is also reflected in items concerning social distance (see below), where 10 percent declare that they would be prepared to marry a Serb, and 9 percent a Muslim.

The Muslims are more open in this respect. 28 percent would accept a Croat and 16 percent a Serb as husband or wife, but almost half are against mixed marriages in principle. 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. In our sample 96 percent of the Muslims and 95 percent of the Croats are living in homogeneous marriages.<sup>6</sup> However, 15 percent

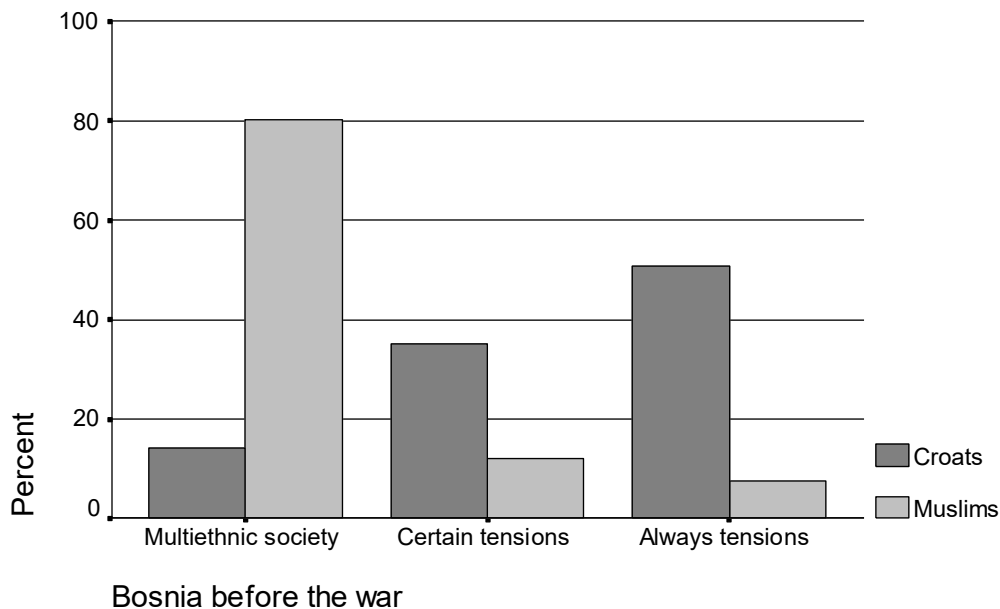
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<sup>5</sup>Incidentally, this model has been actively promoted in *Ljiljan* by its former editor in chief, Džemaludin Latiaë, the Muslim writer and politician.

<sup>6</sup> This rate of intermarriage is obviously lower than in pre-war Bosnia. A probable explanation, which seems to be supported by the character of the Bosnian refugee population in Western Europe, is that those living in mixed marriages were among the first to leave.

of the Croats and 20 percent of the Muslims have relatives who have married outside their own group.

Turning to the views of Bosnia as a multiethnic society, Croat and Muslim respondents have very different ideas about ethnic relations in prewar Bosnia and Herzegovina. Eighty percent of the Muslims state that this was an example of a true multiethnic society, whereas only 14 percent of the Croats agree. A third of the Croats (35 percent) are of the opinion that Bosnian society functioned reasonably well, in spite of certain tensions, while more than a half (51 percent) argue that there were always tensions in Bosnia. Only a minority of the Muslims (12 percent, respectively 7 percent) share these views.



However, at the same time a relatively small proportion of the Croats report that they have personally experienced conflicts or tensions before the war: 4 percent rather often, and 10 percent very often. On this matter, as well, there is a clear difference between the two groups. Almost 40 percent of the Croats have never experienced inter-ethnic tensions, while 70 percent of the Muslims give the same answer.

It should be emphasized that while the Muslim respondents are more attached to Bosnia, it does not follow that they are a-national. For example, when asked whether it would be better that the inhabitants of Bosnia forget about ethnic affiliation, and simply identify as Bosnians, a large proportion (47 percent) of the Muslims disagree.

Perhaps it could be formulated like this. Items indicating a close affinity with Bosnia are highly endorsed by the Muslims. They also largely support propositions about Bosnia as a multiethnic country. But, this does not necessarily mean that they perceive Bosnia as a society where ethnic identity would be unimportant. Rather, like the Croats, they identify primarily with their own nation, and the concept of Bosnian, therefore, tends to become synonymous with the concept of Bosnjak/Muslim.

In other words, to a large part of the Muslims Bosnia is a unified country with its own specific culture, expressed in the adjective Bosnian, which to the Croats does not have a neutral geographical or political connotation, but constitutes an ethnic symbol. While parts of the Muslims do subscribe to an a-national Bosnia, a substantial proportion in fact seems to perceive Bosnia and Herzegovina as a Muslim national state.

This is revealed by cross-tables on national identification, the subjective importance of national identity, and the views on multiethnic society, as well as nationalism, authoritarianism and patriarchalism.<sup>7</sup>

Whereas most Croats (83 percent) without hesitation answer that national identity is more important than identification with Bosnia, the position of the Muslims is more complex. They are divided into three categories, those who primarily identify as citizens of Bosnia (43 percent), those who identify as Muslims/Bosnjaks (11 percent) , and those for whom the Bosnian and Muslim identities are equally important (43 percent). This is a reflection both of the ambiguity of the concept of Bosnian, and of the specific characteristics of the nation-building process among Bosnian Muslims.

On closer inspection, in terms of association with other variables, the third category is more related to the second, than to the first. For example, on items such as the subjective importance of national identity, the views on the character of multiethnic society, or language issues, it is clear that for those whose primary identification is Bosnian and Bosnjak various dimensions of nationality are more salient than for those who simply identify as Bosnians.

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<sup>7</sup> Factor analysis were used to construct summary variables of nationalism (ethnocentrism), authoritarianism and patriarchalism.

## The Social Space of Ethnicity

There are no statistically significant relationships between views on the character of multicultural society and usual demographic variables (such as age, sex, or occupation), with the notable exception of level of education. People with higher education (especially those with a university degree) are more inclined to understand multicultural society as one where ethnicity is unimportant, in contrast to those with professional school or primary education (and lower), who tend to be in favor of a segregated model.

In this case, a situation of general ethnic mobilization, "ideological" variables related to ethnic identity, political attitudes and religious orientation, have greater influence.

It turns out that attitudes towards the SDA, the Islamic Community, or the Bosnian leader Alija Izetbegović, as well as religious practice, are associated with the view of multiethnic society referred to earlier as the *millet* option, i.e. a situation where different ethnic groups live side by side, but generally do not mix.

For example, almost half of those who have high confidence in the SDA or the Islamic community, are in favor of this particular model of segregation, whereas only a small proportion of respondents who have little or no confidence in these institutions identify with the same alternative.

In a similar manner, a substantial proportion (47 percent) of those with a very positive opinion of president Izetbegović are in favor of segregation. It is striking that people who express some degree of reserve towards the president ("mainly positive") to a much lesser degree (17 percent) adopt this position.

The same pattern reappears among those who are satisfied with the present government.

In other words, the followers of the ruling party, and those who are more integrated in the Islamic tradition, have a view of multiethnic society which is similar to the ideas put forward by the weekly *Ljiljan* (close to the SDA), while those with a "western" understanding of multiculturalism, tend to be more skeptical of the SDA and its leader.

In view of recent political developments, it is interesting to note that respondents who display a positive attitude towards the former Prime Minister Haris Silajdžić are somewhat less inclined to chose the segregated model. However, the difference is not dramatic, which is due to the fact that the sympathies for Izetbegović and Silajdžić to a large extent are overlapping (see below).

In addition to these relationships, there are a few crucial factors of a distinct social character which are influential in this context.

One such variable is refugee status. People who in 1990 lived on the territory of what is now Republika Srpska, are more inclined towards the segregated option, which might be expected.

Second, among those who before the war lived in a place with few or no members of other nationalities, there is a strong tendency to be in favor of the *millet*-model, while the dominant

alternative among those with first-hand experience of a multiethnic setting is a society of the third type. Thus, earlier exposure to other ethnic groups, in this case, makes people more inclined to imagine a society where nationality is unimportant.

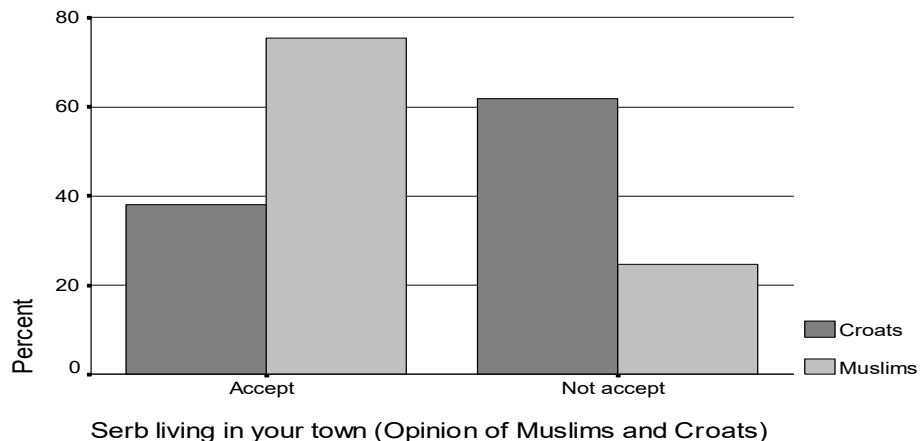
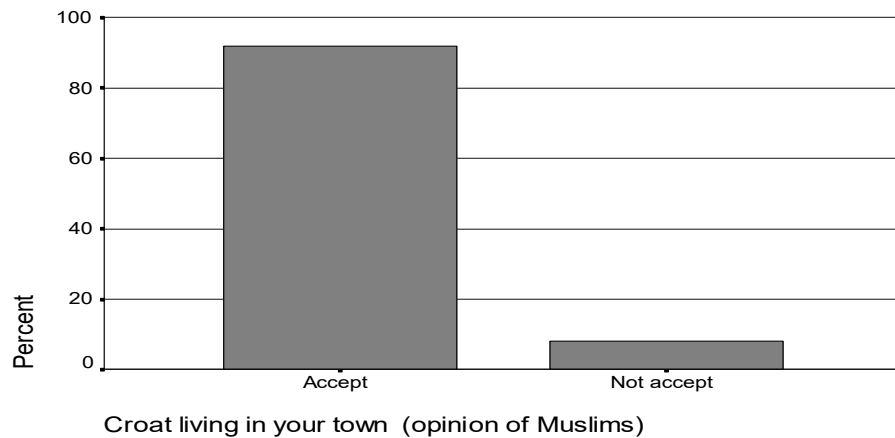
This is further exemplified by the attitudes of those who have relatives belonging to other ethnic groups, or who live in mixed marriages. In these categories only a minority opt for a segregated society.

These findings are interesting, since they support central theoretical propositions in sociology and social psychology to the effect that identity, world view and value orientations are dependent on social interaction, especially with significant others.

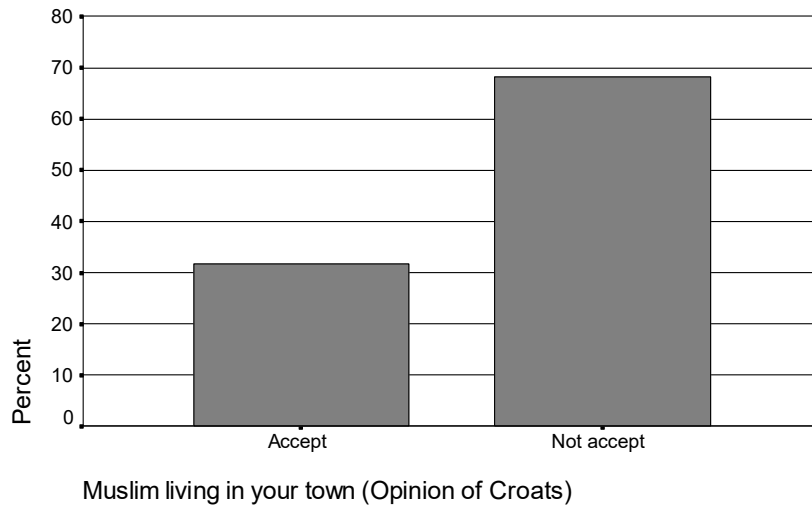
## Social and Ethnic Distance

Measuring the degree of social distance towards members of different ethnic groups might be an appropriate instrument for the diagnosis of the present situation, although it is necessary to stress that in extraordinary circumstances such as war, with human casualties and destruction, such measures, in principle, have less predictive value. In other words, they reflect an image of existing reality, or rather, the consequences of conflicts and (imposed) political solutions, It would, therefore, be unwise to draw firm conclusions about the long-term prospects of inter-ethnic relations.

Croat and Muslim respondents in the area of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina have indicated their views on internal relations, as well as their disposition towards the Serbs on two scales of ethnic distance. The results show that Muslims to a considerably lesser extent than Croats express distance towards other peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, the distance towards Serbs is considerably higher than towards Croats (92 percent would accept a Croat as fellow-citizen, and only 75 percent a Serb).



The Croats in Bosnia show an extremely high inclination towards ethnic exclusion. Only about a third of the respondents are prepared to accept a minimal form of common life, i.e. living in the same city as members of the two other nations. In contrast to the Muslims, the Serbs are more acceptable as fellow citizens (38 percent) to the Croats than are their partners in the Federation, the Bosnjaks/Muslims (32 percent).

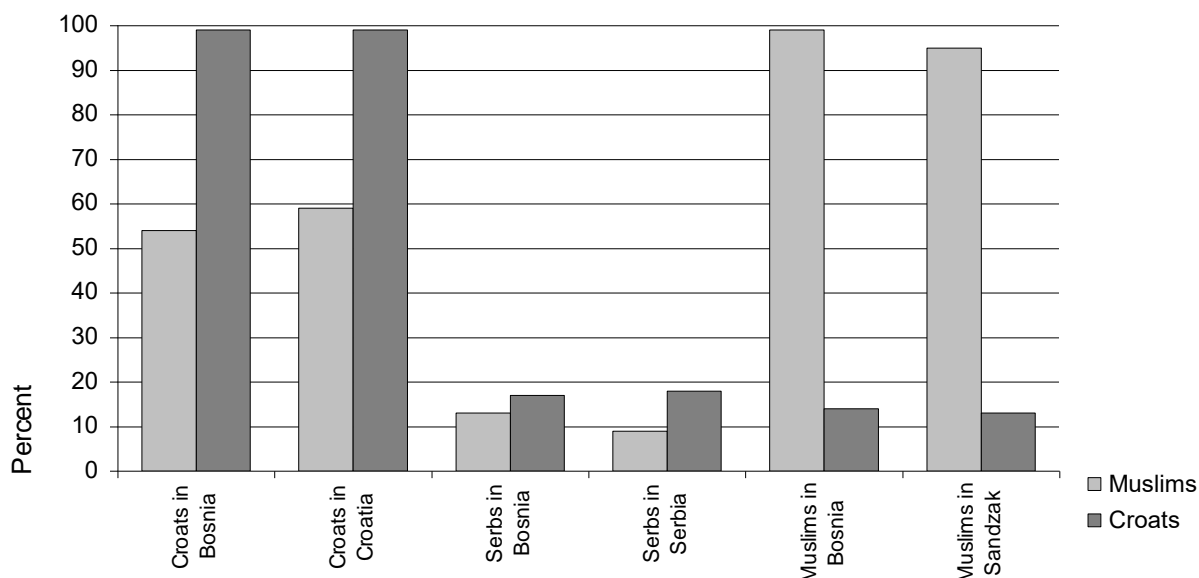


Using the acceptance of a member of the other constituent nation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as fellow-citizen as a point of departure, additional analyses were made in order to investigate in what way those who accept this relationship differ from those who do not. Statistically significant differences among Croats and Muslims were found according to the following characteristics:

Higher degree of acceptance of member of other nation as fellow citizen	Lower degree of acceptance of member of other nation as fellow citizen
<b>Towards Muslims/Croats/Serbs</b>	
highly educated	less educated
unreligious/atheists	religious/believers
national identity less salient	national identity more salient
living in a multiethnic setting prewar	living in a monoethnic setting prewar
<b>Towards Croats</b>	
No casualties/losses in family	casualties/losses in family
<b>Towards Muslims/Serbs</b>	
urban background	rural background
non-participation in war	participation in war
ethnically heterogeneous domicile	ethnically homogeneous domicile

The second criteria of ethnic distance, acceptance of marital relations with members of the other two groups, is on a very low level. Among the Croats about a tenth of all respondents, among the Muslims between 16 percent (Serbs) and 28 percent (Croats).

Croats and Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina generalize their views about other nations to such an extent that they hardly make a distinction between those members of an ethnic group who live in Bosnia and those who live in the Mother Country. In other words, Muslim attitudes towards Croats in Bosnia are identical to their views of Croats in Croatia. (The same is valid for Serbs in Bosnia and Serbia). Croat perceptions are constituted in the same manner. The only exception is found in the attitudes of Bosnian Muslims towards Muslims from the Sandžak, where a mild inter-ethnic distance is displayed, which is not paralleled in the Croatian attitudes towards their countrymen in Croatia.



Percentages of very favorable opinions of nations in ex-Yugoslavia

Some of the results give rise to reflections on the how the distribution of political power is perceived after the Dayton Agreement. It is often asserted that one of the strong causes of ethnic prejudice and social distance are perceptions of "realistic group conflicts", which essentially means that there is a conviction (established in various ways) that the allocation of resources and power is not fair, and does not provide guarantees for the defense and promotion of ethnic interests in a multi-national community. The dissemination of a climate where expectations of threats and arbitrary behavior are predominant, is a convenient ideological and political instrument for isolation of ethnic groups and promotion of national homogenization. From this follows that contacts with "others" are inappropriate, and lead to further escalation of ethnic distance, which before the war was highly apparent among Croats, especially in relation to Muslims.

The most reasonable explanation for the high level of distance is given by another finding of the investigation, according to which 89 percent of the Croats who live in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina agree with the statement that "people can feel secure only if they live in a country where their own people is a majority". (Only 29 percent of the Muslims agree with this statement, which is natural in view of their majority position within the Federation).

We are faced, then, with the paradoxical situation that the Muslims, who were most affected by the war in terms of human and material losses (as many as 65 percent of the Muslim respondents have dead or wounded members of their family), and now have the possibility to preserve, or create, a modified state structure in which they would have a satisfactory share in decision-making, express a considerably lower degree of distance towards members of the other two ethnic groups, while the frustrations of the Croat political elite and the people itself is reflected in distrust and aversion towards other peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina. If that is so, then it might be concluded that the expectations of a political solution at the end of the war (suggested by political manipulations and promises) - which in the Croat case would amount to absolute power in Herceg-Bosna and/or unification of Croat majority areas with the Republic of Croatia - represent a greater cause of dissatisfaction and negative stereotypes, than the experience of devastation and cruelty of war affecting all nations of Bosnia.

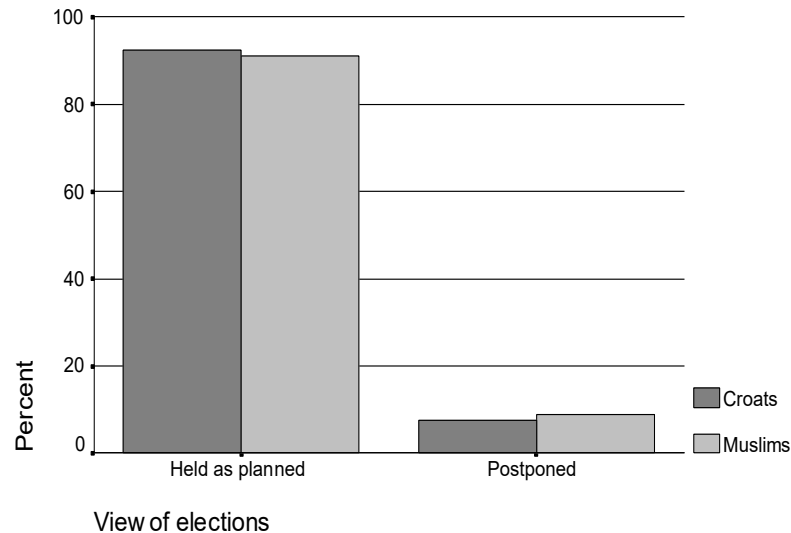
# Politics

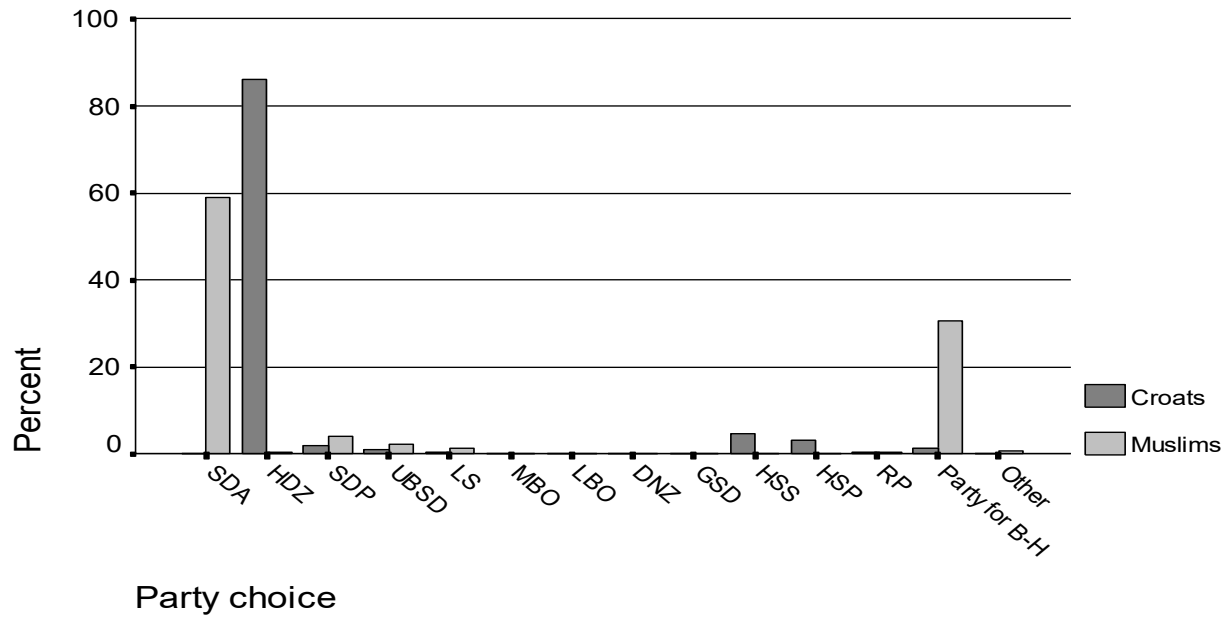
## Elections

Concerning political parties and elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina it is possible to identify certain key findings:

According to the results of the investigation, there is no doubt whatsoever that the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina almost plebiscitarily will vote for the HDZ (this is the choice of almost three quarters of the respondents - 71 percent). In addition to 18 percent undecided, other parties have very little support: HSS 4 percent, HSP 3 percent, and SDP 2 percent.

On the Muslim side, where even 27 percent are undecided, SDA has a convincing first position (43 percent), but the party of the former Prime Minister Haris Silajdžić (the Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina, SBiH) is supported by a solid 22 percent of the respondents. As the coalition of five parties (United list for Bosnia and Herzegovina) was not yet announced during the period of data collection, it is not possible to make any reliable judgments about its prospects. However, the relatively weak following of parties belonging to the coalition, in which the former communists are the dominant partners - SDP (3 percent), UBSD, the Reformists, 2 percent - indicates a modest election result.





The followers of the ruling parties show a high degree of satisfaction with the present government: 90 percent of the potential voters of SDA are very or somewhat satisfied, compared to 82 percent of the followers of the HDZ. Among the potential voters of the leading parties of the opposition (SDP, UBSD, HSS) the proportion of satisfied respondents is below one third, with the exception of those who sympathize with the Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina, of whom almost half (47 percent) give the present government a passable credit.

As to the structure of party sympathizers, there are some characteristic findings:

a) followers of HDZ and HSP to a high degree claim that national identity is important; above average on this dimension is also SDA (73 percent). A second category consists of parties where the voters are divided on this issue (HSS and the Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina), whereas the proportion of voters with high national consciousness is quite small in SDP and UBSD. If this classification is treated as a ranking list, it corresponds more or less to the present degree of support among potential voters.

b) an almost identical situation exists as far as religion is concerned. Of those who would vote for the HDZ, 98 percent state that they are religious; in the SDA the proportion is 94 percent, in HSS 89 percent. SBiH has as many as 38 percent non-religious and atheist respondents among its potential voters, which is perhaps unexpected, in contrast to the socialist parties SDP (77 percent non-religious and atheists) and UBSD (79 percent).

c) examining educational structure and type of domicile (rural-urban) it might be concluded that the voters of SDA primarily belong to the lower spectrum of the urban and rural population, with primary, or professional school. HDZ has about the same educational structure. Of particular interest is that voters with higher education to a greater extent support SBiH (+ 7 percent) than the ruling SDA. The handicap of Silajdžić's party is the much lower degree of support among lower social groups and voters in the villages.

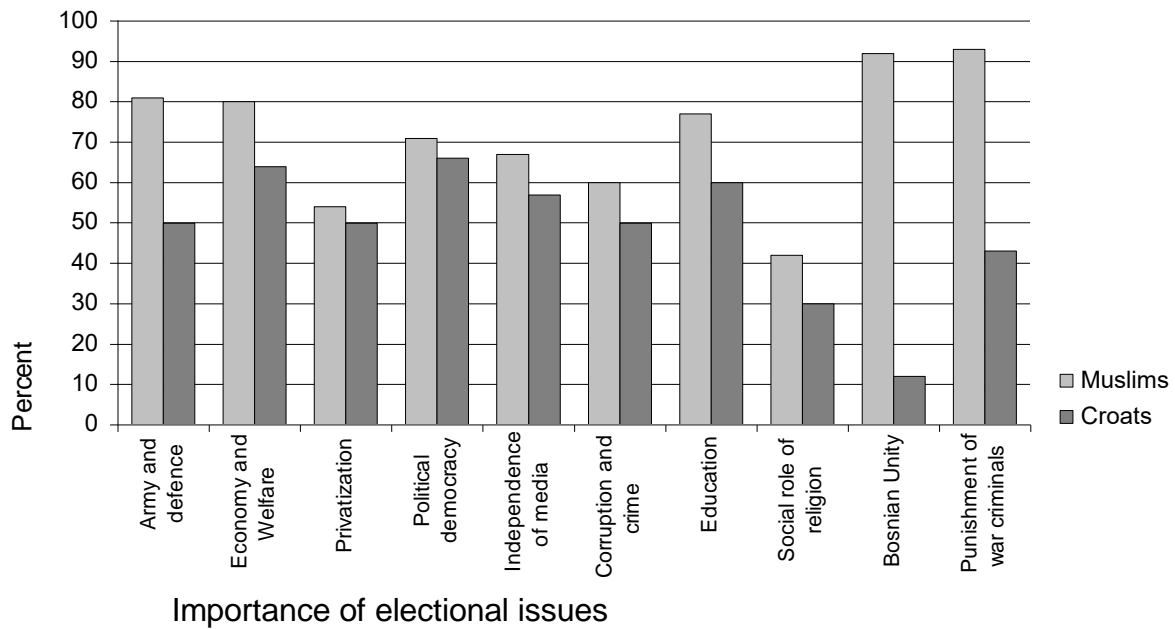
Whereas among the Croats as many as 85 percent believe in the victory of the present government, among Muslims this proportion is somewhat lower - 70 percent. In any case, very few of the respondents believe in a victory of the opposition: only 3 percent of the Croats and 10 percent of the Muslims.

On the issue of voters registration, Croats and Muslims have different views. A majority of the Muslims are of the opinion that one should vote in the place where one lived before the war (58 percent), while considerably fewer think that, while respecting the general provision of the Dayton Accord, one should allow for individual choice (34 percent). Among the Croats a relative majority opts for this alternative (42 percent), followed by those who believe that people should vote in the place where they are living now (37 percent), while only 20 percent are of the opinion that the rule of prewar domicile should be strictly observed.

Whereas a majority of the Muslims believe that the electoral campaign will be fair (58 percent), and that media will report in an objective manner about the campaign (63 percent), the Croats are much less convinced about fair play in these respects (45 and 47 percent). It is noteworthy that the Muslims are, in fact, less convinced than the Croats about the correct organization of the elections (33 percent against 42 percent), which is probably related to the fact that an overwhelming majority of Croats have already made their choice, and, therefore are less troubled by this aspect.

The importance of single political issues during the elections are differently evaluated by Croats and Muslims. To the Muslims, the most important issues are those related to the war and the character of the state, such as "punishment of war criminals" (92 percent), the "unity of Bosnia" (91 percent), or "army and defense" (80 percent), while "economy and welfare" is only fourth on the ranking list (78 percent).

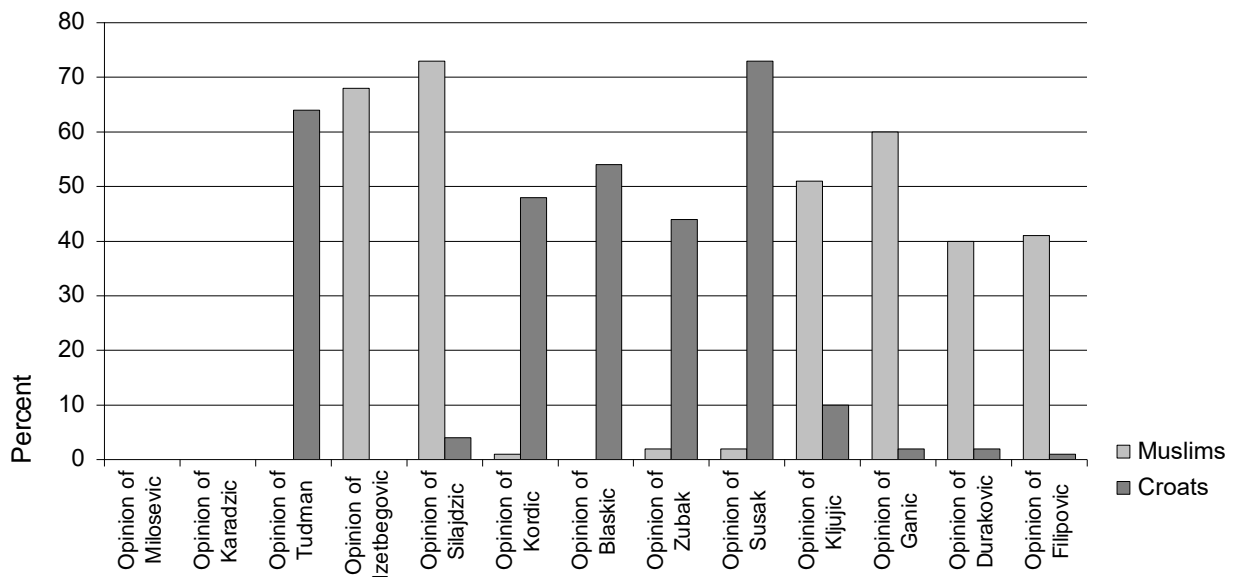
Among the Croats, most respondents consider political democracy (65 percent), economy and welfare (63 percent), and education (59 percent) to be important. It is very characteristic that "unity of Bosnia" is given the very last place in terms of priority (only 12 Croat respondents think this issue is important).



A factor analysis was performed, showing that among Muslim respondents election issues are not clearly differentiated. The unity of Bosnia, the punishment of war criminals, and army and defence, represent one factor, whereas all other issues are "drowned" in another. Among the Croats, however, there are four factors, clearly structured according to different dimensions. The first factor was labeled "democracy and rule of law" (media, democracy, corruption and criminality), the second "societal issues" (education, religion, privatization), the third deals with "existential and physical security" (economy and welfare, army and defence), while the fourth factor, related to punishment of war criminals and the unity of Bosnia, hypothetically might be identified as "political problems".

## Views on Politicians

Although the evaluations of leading politicians in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia, to a large extent are related to their ethnic affiliation, it is possible to isolate a few interesting findings which are exceptions to the rule.



Percentages of very favorable opinions of political persons

Serb politicians are almost exclusively negatively perceived. However, while 100 percent of the Muslims have a very negative view of Karadžić, and 97 percent of Milošević, a minority of the Croats (15 percent) exhibit a somewhat milder, "mainly negative", attitude towards these politicians.

To the Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatian Minister of Defense, Gojko Šušak, is the most popular political personality (71 percent have a very positive view), he is even rated higher than president Tuđman (63 percent very positive). Other members of the HDZ, like Tihomil Blaškić and Dario Kordić (accused of war crimes at the Tribunal in the Hague) enjoy about the same popularity as the president of the Federation, Krešimir Zubak (87-89 percent "very" and "mainly" positive), although Blaškić is leading in terms of "very positive" evaluations (52 percent). It is symptomatic that the two indicted politicians receive a considerable part of their support from respondents who are against the arrests of people suspected of war crimes, and who do not believe in the impartiality of the Hague Tribunal. As to the former member of the Presidency of BiH, now opposition politician Stjepan Ključić, almost two thirds of the Croat respondents have a mainly or very negative view.

The attitudes of Croats towards Muslim politicians, regardless of their political orientation, is almost unison. From Izetbegović and Ganić (of the ruling SDA) to representatives of the opposition

like Silajdžić, Duraković and Filipović, the proportion of positive views oscillates around very modest 7 to 12 percent.

Among Bosnian Muslims there are two politicians who are more highly evaluated than others. 73 percent of the respondents have a very positive, and another 22 percent a mainly positive view of Haris Silajdžić, while the rating of Alija Izetbegović is slightly lower, 68 percent very positive and 26 percent mainly positive. It is important to remember, though, when interpreting the results, that it is not possible, on the basis of these findings to draw any firm conclusions about which of these positively evaluated politicians would be accepted by the voters in a situation where they would have to choose only one of them. It is interesting that Alija Izetbegović have extensive support among the sympathizers of the SDA (90 percent very positive and 9 percent mainly positive), which clearly illustrates the degree of identification between the party and its leader. Haris Silajdžić's position among those who would vote for SBiH is similar (86 percent very positive and 14 percent mainly positive).

There are obvious indications that there has not yet been a thorough differentiation or intensive political confrontation between these two politicians and their parties. This is, for example, illustrated by the evaluation of the leaders among followers of the rival party. Almost half of the voters of SBiH have a very positive view of Alija Izetbegović (44 percent), and the followers of SDA are even more positive towards Haris Silajdžić (71 percent!).

As far as the voters for the United Opposition are concerned, their preferences are quite clear: four fifths of their followers do not have a positive view of Izetbegović, while more than half do accept Silajdžić.

The third leading politician associated with the SDA, Ejup Ganić, has a similar, but still a somewhat weaker position in the Muslim sample (60 + 31 percent). Ranked second among the Muslim respondents, are Muslim opposition politicians such as Nijaz Duraković and Muhamed Filipović (but also the Croat Stjepan Kljujić) about whom a large majority (about 90 percent) of the respondents have a positive view, although Kljujić is more popular than the Muslim politicians, with 51 percent of very positive views.

As far as all other Croatian politicians (belonging to HDZ) are concerned, there are no big differences, their positive rating is between 2-7 percent, except for Krešimir Zubak, towards whom more than a fifth of the Muslim respondents have a positive view.

Factor analysis showed a consistent grouping of dimensions according to ethnic affiliation (a "Serb", "Muslims", and "Croat" factor), with the notable exception of the Croat Stjepan Kljujić, who in the Croat sample belongs to the group of Muslim politicians (!), and in the Muslim sample besides the three "national" factors is represented by an independent fourth factor which might be labeled Croat civic opposition.

## Political involvement

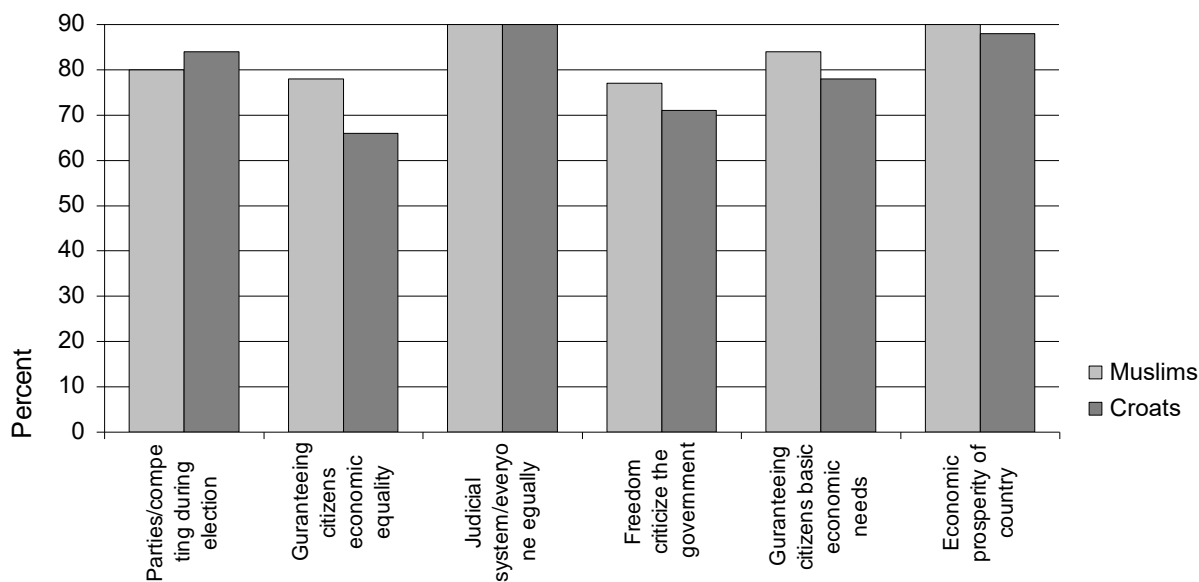
In general, political interest is on a fairly modest level - about 3 percent of both Croats and Muslims are very interested, and another 28, respectively 19 percent, rather interested in politics - but a comparatively large proportion of respondents (about 25 percent in both groups) are members of a political party, which is probably a consequence of the social characteristics of the sample, but also of the specific character of the dominant parties.

The political landscape is in both cases dominated by a single political party, or rather movement. Thus, of those who belong to a political party, 91 percent of the Croats are members of HDZ, and 80 percent of the Muslims of SDA, followed by SDP (11 percent). This means that, in the sample as a whole, 23 percent of the Croats are members of the HDZ, whereas 18 percent of the Muslims are enrolled in the SDA.

It might be added that 12 percent of the Croats, and 19 percent of the Muslims are former members of the League of Communists. The ex-communists are to a greater extent than others enrolled in political parties, and there is an interesting difference between Muslims and Croats in terms of party affiliation. While a large majority of former communists of Croat origin are members of HDZ (79 percent), a substantial part of their Muslim comrades (33 percent) have chosen socialist alternatives, instead of SDA (55 percent). One reason might be the strong religious dimension in the general outlook and public appearance of the SDA.

## Political Orientations

Several items were used to measure political orientations, in particular the understanding of democracy. When asked to choose between two alternatives characterizing a democratic society, 48 percent of the Croats and 56 percent of the Muslims identified democracy with economic equality, whereas 53 percent of the Croats and 44 percent of the Muslims believe that political rights constitute the most important aspect of democracy. Similarly, 38 percent of the Croats and 54 percent of the Muslims are of the opinion that the primary role of government is to satisfy basic economic needs of the population, while 63 percent Croats and 46 percent Muslims stress the importance of promoting individual initiative.



Views on democracy - importance of issues

There is a slight (but statistically not very strong) tendency, then, for Muslims to emphasize the economic aspects. This is only to some extent reflected in responses to a series of items concerning the subjective importance of various aspects of democracy. Economic progress is rated high (90 percent of Muslims and 88 percent of Croats think it is essential), like the guarantee of basic needs (78 percent of Muslims and 67 percent of Croats) .

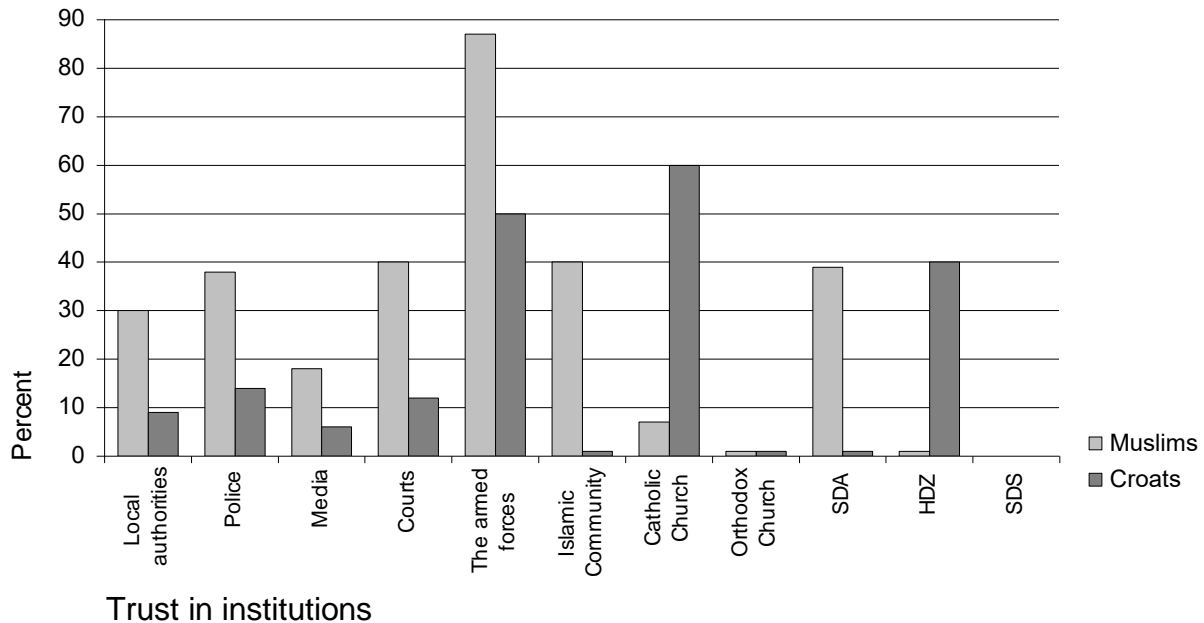
This pattern would be natural in the situation in which the Federation finds itself at the moment, and it should be emphasized that a large majority both among Croats (89 percent) and Muslims (90 percent) stress the importance of a fair judicial system or political pluralism (84 percent Croats and 80 percent Muslims). The respondents also believe that free criticism of the government is a necessary condition for a democracy (Croats 70 percent and Muslims 77 percent).

### Confidence in institutions and organizations

The respondents were asked to declare their confidence in a number of institutions and organizations: local authorities, police, media, courts, the armed forces, the Islamic Community, the Catholic and Orthodox Churches, as well as the three major political parties, SDA, HDZ and SDS.

In general, Muslims tend to have greater confidence in media, governmental institutions and, notably, the army, than Croats. When it comes to religious institutions and political parties, the answers are clearly related to the ethnic origin of the respondents. About forty percent of the Muslims have much confidence in the Islamic Community and the Party of Democratic Action (SDA), while more than seventy percent have little or no confidence in the Catholic church and almost ninety percent have a negative perception of the Croat Democratic Community (HDZ).

The Croats, on the other hand, manifest a high degree of support for the Catholic Church (60 percent have much confidence) while showing very little sympathy with the Islamic Community or the SDA (96, respectively, 97 percent have little or no confidence).



Common to both Croats and Muslims is the general distrust of Serbian institutions. About 98 percent in each group have little or no confidence in the Serbian Democratic Party and about 95 percent have a similar attitude towards the Orthodox Church.

## Politics, nationalism and authoritarianism

In sociological literature nationalism is often understood as a construct related to ethnocentric and authoritarian attitudes. On the other hand, in the Bosnian and (post-)Yugoslav context, it has frequently been argued that while one's adversaries represent paradigmatic cases of nationalism in this sense, there is another type of benign nationalism, characteristic of one's own group. This orientation is presumably only an expression of legitimate national interests and rights.

In this context we will not address the theoretical problem whether a benign nationalism is possible or not, but in view of the character of the issue, it is nevertheless worth a few comments.

On the one hand, it is obvious from the sections above that both Muslims and Croats exhibit a clear tendency to perceive their own nation in a positive light. This is, for example, illustrated by the fact that Muslims and Croats alike are convinced that their own nation has only conducted wars of defense, and suffered more than others.

On the other hand, it seems difficult to find, in the data collected by the present investigation, an attitude which might be described as benign or positive nationalism. The problem is that items like the subjective importance of nationality, or the idea that every nation should have its own state, as well as the variables which have been discussed above, are, in effect, related to the earlier mentioned constructs of nationalism, authoritarianism, and sometimes patriarchalism.

In other words, a strong identification with Croatia, or a deep commitment to Bosnia, are, indeed, related to a substantial degree of ethnocentrism and authoritarianism.

So are some of the political variables, in particular those measuring confidence in institutions and personalities. A strong affinity with SDA, the Islamic community, or president Izetbegović, or a similar identification with HDZ, the Catholic Church or president Tuđman, is associated with a fairly high degree of nationalism and authoritarian values. Moreover, there is a characteristic polarization, where a positive evaluation of one ethnic category is related to a negative assessment of the other.

It might be argued, that a typical case of benign nationalism would be a Croat, who has a strong identification with Bosnia, and does not exhibit authoritarian attitudes or ethnic distance, but nevertheless opts for a three-entity solution or a unification with Croatia. A parallel case would be a Muslim, for whom a strong attachment to a unified Bosnia is without any overtones of ethnic exclusiveness.

However, an immediate objection would be that it is questionable to understand such cases as nationalism, since the concept of nation is not important to these people.

It should be emphasized that the present investigation, due to practical restrictions, has not been able to use all the measurements needed to study these issues in detail. What can be stated, however, is that it is not possible, on the basis of available data, to define one nationalism as benevolent, and the other as malign, or classify one people as predominantly nationalist, and the other as not.

## Tentative Conclusions

Although this is a preliminary report, there are, nevertheless, some conclusions that could already be drawn.

### Elections

It is obvious that a great majority of Croats and Muslims do want the elections to be held in September, and intend to vote, which is, in effect, contrary to some official statements published at the time of the data collection.

They are skeptical, though, about the fairness of the forthcoming elections. A substantial number of the respondents expect that there will be manipulations during the voting procedure, that the campaign itself will not be honest, and that the media coverage will be partial.

### Media

Media exposure is selective in several ways. In the first place, it is evident that there is no newspaper or TV-channel which is accessible in all areas of Bosnia, or which might be perceived as supra-ethnic. The results clearly illustrate that members of different groups read "their" papers and watch "their" TV-station.

Second, the media people encounter, especially TV, are closely affiliated with the ruling parties. Very few have access to independent news media.

Third, newspapers play an insignificant role. Only 19 percent of the Croats and 10 percent of the Muslims regularly read a daily newspaper. TV is, therefore, the major, and very often the only, source of information for two thirds of the respondents.

### Party Structure

At international conferences, as well as in policy documents of International bodies, it has often been stated that it would be desirable to promote political structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina that are not organized along ethnic lines. Obviously, this is not yet the case. On the one hand, the dominant political parties have a clear ethnic orientation, acting as the genuine representatives of vital national interests. On the other hand, opposition parties as well, are mostly ethnically oriented and/or territorially concentrated.

Our data clearly show that in the Croat-dominated areas, there exists, for every practical purpose, a one-party system (HDZ), while among the Muslims the situation is somewhat more complex, though similar. Besides the major party (SDA) and a relatively small opposition (socialists, liberals), there is the new Party for Bosnia and Herzegovina, which, in view of the political preferences of the respondents, might cooperate with either block. The United List of Bosnian opposition parties, including HSS, is the only multiethnic political organization so far. Its chances

in the forthcoming elections do not seem overly great, however, and, as a political project, the initiative has probably come too early - or too late.

## Political Values

In Western Europe, it has, at least implicitly, been taken for granted that there is a need for "teaching the Bosnians democracy". Do they need this education? If we look at the support for general democratic values, this does not seem to be the case, as a vast majority of the respondents are in favor of key elements of political democracy. However, at the same time, a fairly large part of those who participated in the survey, exhibit values which reveal that the situation is not normal: Lack of confidence in public institutions, general distrust, social distance between ethnic groups, and belief in a strong leader. Above all, there is a very high degree of "ethnification" of politics.

This means that the problem of Bosnia is perhaps not so much a matter of informing people about the workings of a democratic system, but in making them believe that such a system might really work, both in general terms, and, particularly, in regard to the ethnic dimension.

## The Peace Process

We have seen that a large part of the respondents believe that the Dayton Agreement finally might bring peace. However, when it comes to details, it is quite clear that the views of many respondents are contrary both to the wording and spirit of the Peace Accord.

A majority of the Croats obviously do not expect the refugees to return, and neither do they think it is the right solution. Further, most Croats are of the opinion that people should vote in the place where they live now, not where they lived in 1990. Also, and most important, many really do not believe in a unified Bosnia and Herzegovina, but would prefer a three-entity solution, or a unification of Herceg-Bosna with Croatia.

Relations between Croats and Muslims are very complex, in the sense that the interests of the Croat political elite, disseminated among ordinary citizens, are closer to the Serb than to the Muslim solution of the Bosnian problem. This is, no doubt, the most critical point of the Federation project.

The Muslims at first seem to be closer to the general principles of the agreement. They want the refugees to return, and to a great extent believe they will. Similarly, on the issue of voters' registration their views largely conform to the general provisions of the Accord. They are also more positive towards the War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague.

In general, the Muslims also express a stronger attachment to Bosnia, and have a more positive view of pre-war Bosnia. In contrast to the Croats, they seem to want a restoration of the Bosnian state.

On the other hand, there are views among the Muslims which differ substantially from both the content and the spirit of the Peace Accord. In fact, only a minority subscribe to a political solution which corresponds to the Dayton Agreement, i.e. a federal/confederate structure with two entities. Instead, a majority of the Muslims are in favor of a rather strong central government, and it is indicative that only a minority is prepared to accept regional autonomy within the framework of a

centralized state. A substantial number of Muslims actually seem to regard Bosnia as a Bosnjak national state, where the Muslims, although they do not form a majority of the population would be the dominant nation. A considerable proportion is even prepared to use military means to achieve a unification of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

### Ethnic Relations and Cultural Identity

This is the crux of the matter. Our survey illustrates that an important aspect of the conflict in Bosnia, regardless of the origins or the character of the war, has to do with the complex and ambiguous process of nation-building among the South Slavs, a fact that is often overlooked in the outside world. In this respect, what happened during the dissolution of Yugoslavia was the final (?) stage in a process of national consolidation and state formation in the Balkans, which started in the 19th century.

The unfortunate fate of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina is, that, for various reasons, there never developed a common Bosnian identity. To make the situation more complicated, neither of the three major ethnic groups constitutes a majority of the population.

Our data undoubtedly reveal that there is, at present, no common identity which would be more important than ethnic affiliation. This is valid even for the Muslims. Moreover, the degree of tolerance among the ethnic groups, a precondition for a life together, is not on a satisfactory level. There is a clear ethnic polarization and a fundamental lack of trust. Even though the Muslims show a higher degree of tolerance, the dominant views on the character of the Bosnian state are unacceptable to most Croats.

### The Future

What are the prospects then, of a normalization of inter ethnic relations? It has already been pointed out that the present survey was made in an extraordinary situation, and that the degree of social distance which does exist today is not necessarily a lasting feature of Bosnian society.

In this context the question arises whether the elections are premature. On one level it seems obvious, and this is confirmed by our survey as well, that important provisions of the Dayton Accord, regarded as prerequisites of free and fair elections are not at hand. Moreover, if the goal was to promote a political structure, which would replace the existing ethnically oriented political parties, the time was too short. The current political organizations, the character of media, in addition to the level of social distance and degree of ethnic mobilization would rather tend to fortify existing political structures.

It should, finally, be emphasized, that some of the statistical associations that have been found, for example between religion and nationalism, are not necessarily of a causal nature. Before making any precise statements on possible causal relationships, or, indeed, on issues like the dimensions of ethnic identity, further analyses have to be made.

What is striking, though, so far, are the relatively weak relationships between demographic variables and attitudes, which, again, is an indication of the very high degree of ethnic mobilization characterizing Bosnian society. On the other hand, the investigation has also shown that attitudes

and values are influenced by social interaction. Those who have closer relations with members of other ethnic groups, both on a collective-anonymous and personal-intimate level, do manifest a higher degree of tolerance and a greater acceptance of a minimum level of coexistence.