



**Claim!**  
CITIZEN'S NETWORK  
FOR PEACE,  
RECONCILIATION AND  
HUMAN SECURITY

## Bosnia & Herzegovina Chronicle 1 - Human Security in BiH

by Helsinki Citizens' Assembly (hCa) Tuzla - Youth Resource Center Tuzla

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What is Human Security in Bosnia and Herzegovina? What to do in order to feel protected and secured in B&H society? OSCE – Organization for Security and co-operation in Europe, Mission to B&H try to answer to those questions by short animated film "Security begins" exploring what 'security' can mean, published on 22 Jan 2013. <sup>1</sup>

According to them Security is not just about peaceful relations between states but issues that affect our daily lives. The OSCE works on all these aspects of security, from arms control, anti-terrorism and good governance to environment, combating trafficking in people, weapons and drugs, democratization, media freedom and minority rights.

Peace and Security are more than absence of war and conflicts. For people, communities and states security is build by working together. Security begins at home. Women, and men, families, young and old able to live free from violence; to express they opinions and beliefs. Security begins in all communities where everyone has the same opportunities and rights to live in society where the law and law enforcement equally for each one is.

And after almost 18 years since the signing of the Peace Dayton agreement<sup>2</sup> which resulted in ending of war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and forming of the future legal and constitutional organization of the state, according to different polls conducted among the population most of the population in Bosnia and Herzegovina don't feel safe today.

Because of this project we have devoted ourselves to the topic Safety in B&H, we were astounded to find that there is a great deal of fear in our country as well insecurity in all areas of society and among citizens. We even have found a research named (taken from the web page of Balkan Times – Second hand news) **"It is better to be aborted than to be born in B&H"** were it is said: According to the last research of the magazine "Economist" regarding the subject "Were is it best place to be born", a clear conclusion was reached that it is better to be aborted than born in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Research took most interest in countries health system, life security and prosperity.

Economy experts couldn't find a single reason, why somebody should be born in B&H, wheatear it was in Republic of Srpska or Federation B&H.

"If you are not a case of an abortion, you will be born with a debt you will not be able to pay despite a great deal of effort. In your pursuit to make some money you will endanger your health and health system is not good at all, so forget about treatments", these represents some of the reasons for the outcome of the research. Some politicians in B&H do not agree with this fact, and they expect that by the year 2032 will start recuperation of our economy, and life conditions will improve.

And although Bosnia and Herzegovina has signed Declaration on Human Rights, and has human rights institution on all levels of authority, and every day there are many laws adopted concerning safety of the citizens, we have never felt more insecure. Percentage increase in the criminal activities has never been higher.

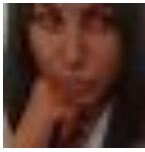
As a Youth Resource center, organization focusing its activities mostly on young people, with the help of our volunteers in March we have conducted a questionnaire via face book with only two questions for young people: If you had a chance would you leave B&H? And what is the reason? We have reached unbelievable information were only two young people answered that they would stay here in order to fight for better tomorrow. All others have declared that they would leave the country. Reasons are mostly the same; abroad they have better educating system, better jobs and life conditions. Here are some comments:

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6JGT6bcfs0&feature=player>

<sup>2</sup> Dayton peace agreement is an legal act of consensual character initialed in an army air base Right-Paterson near Daytona, in US state Ohio, to officially end war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which lasted from 1992-to 1995



## If you had a chance would you go abroad to work and live there?



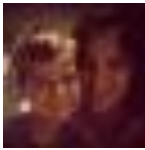
Student from Bijeljina:

“Possibility for success, profit, and better way of life”



Student from Banja Luka:

“Hahaha, I don't have time. Mostly, leaving these dead communities is one of the reasons. Then, any other country has better conditions than B&H, better conditions for young people, education, employment etc.



Student from Tuzla:

“My work to be appreciated, here with a university degree I can sit in employment biro or to have some position for high school diploma, or to receive my salary every third month. All because our country system is not good (is a good answer)”.



Student from Sarajevo:

“I prefer to be among my own people, then to be a foreigner, write down I love Balkan”.



Student from Tuzla:

“Do you have any offers? Hahahaha, it is mostly desire to advance and possibilities to advance, here we don't have that and I don't believe it can happen”.



Student:

“Because there is a small chance I will find a job in B&H, and if I had opportunity to leave I would use it”.

Another disturbing information of the research conducted by the Institute for the development of young people KULT from Sarajevo as a part of research for local strategies for young people: 67% of young people from Sarajevo municipalities would leave B&H, and according to global report on competitiveness from the Global economic forum 2010, B&H was occupying 131<sup>st</sup> place from 133 countries in category brain drain.

As more than 50% able young people is unemployed, or due to increasing economy crisis and negligence of government institutions toward B&H population, young people are mostly using their free time either in front of computer or on the street, often using large quantities of alcohol or other intoxicating substances.

The geographical position of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a fruitful ground for all sorts of criminal activity and all citizens are endangered by it. Transparency of B&H borders is affecting on all sorts of trafficking (guns, drugs, human trafficking etc.), and all of these things are more and more available to the young people in B&H. All these things are leading to drastic increase of adolescence criminal and peer violence. Here are some of the headlines from newspapers and web portals:

***“Every fifth citizen in B&H has and illegal gun”***

***“Weapons from B&H are being traded for drugs and cigarettes”***

***“Officially confirmed: Bus driver transporting football fans of Velez had a rifle and a gun”***

***“Two young men vehicle rampage and shooting at the police radar apprehended by police officers”***

***“Horror in Tuzla: Got fired and shoot his boos, burned his house and took his own life”***

***“Seventeen year old boy from Vojkovic, municipality East Ilidza, committed suicide, confirmed by police station East Sarajevo”***

Example from the news (source: Al Jazeera), in the text named: B&H citizens armed to the teeth” was published:

Statistic of illegally owned fire arms in Bosnia and Herzegovina is devastating. Police agencies monthly confiscate dozens of rifles, guns and bombs. But, many households still are hiding illegal fire arms, which is resulting in heavy accidents. Even a folks saying is appropriate for this situation: “It is better to have a weapon and don’t need it, rather than need one and don’t have it”.

**Boris Gagic**, Al Jazeera reporter visited a site in Doboj where recently an accident occurred, when a teenager activated “zolja” and RPG and suffered severe injuries. This hidden weapon he found in the attic of his house. It is unreasonable for citizens to keep their weapons in the reach of children. Children and weapons simply don’t go together.

### **Weapons arsenal**

But, after the accident in Doboj, there was an even shock. While frisking two objects in the region where incident occurred found a weapons arsenal: six grenade guns and regular grenades, one automatic rifle, hand gun and a box of ammunition different caliber. Experts, who have in the past conducted analysis, say that B&H citizens are armed to the teeth. “700000 B&H citizens own illegal gun, 350000 is legal, every fifth citizen or 20% of population owns a gun”, according to Denis Hadzovic from the center for security while giving an interview for Al Jazeera

### **Devastating statistics**

In the first six months of 2012, according to official police data, in Federation B&H there was a substantial amount of illegal fire arms which was confiscated along with explosive materials. In Republic of Srpska statistic is also devastating. There are some positive exceptions, “Citizens have handed over 75 rifles, 107 hand guns, 55 mines and 1350 pieces of ammunition”, according to Goga Davidovic from the ministry of internal affairs in Republic of Srpska.

Denis Hadzovic says that this is an indicator that citizens are afraid and that they don’t trust police.

### **Different Cantons, different laws**

There is no state law on guns; Republic of Srpska has its regulations.

In Federation B&H there is no unified law regarding guns. For it you need to have permission from Canton, in some Cantons illegal fire arm is a felony, in some it is just a minor offence. Carrying and owning an unlicensed gun in Sarajevo is a felony for which law has predicted a sentence of imprisonment from six months to three years. But, all those who have illegal gun, don’t have to go to jail.

“If a citizen hands over weapon to a police station, EUROFOR or Civil protection, he will not be submitted to a prosecution process” according to Irfan Nefic. This way more than 100000 pieces of fire arms has been collected. But, there is still seven times more illegal fire arms hidden.

Illegal weapons in possession of the B&H citizens is representing a big problem, in proof of this statement there is information that since the ending of the war more than 10000 people has suffered from the use of illegal fire arms, and from mine fields around 1600 (It is estimated that there is more than 10000 registered mine field in B&H occupying 2145 square kilometers of land) according to Denis Hadzovic<sup>3</sup>, general secretary of the center for security studies in B&H.

Also, according to Hadzovic after traffic accidents most common cause of death in B&H is illegal fire arms, he added that 90% of criminal offenses in B&H is been carried out with illegal fire arms, in some area even 100%.

“It is estimated that in B&H 20% of citizens own illegal fire arm, citizens own around 750000 pieces of fire arms”, reminded Hadzovic on the results of last year analysis conducted by UNDP. He added that B&H citizens beside illegal, own around 350000 pieces of legal weapons, which means that every third person in B&H owns a weapon

Belgrade, Sarajevo – Illegal organized weapons trade from the Western Balkans countries largely is for the Western Europe, to a limited number of buyers, in this trade diaspora is often involved and they are trading weapons for drugs and

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<sup>3</sup> Source: Centre for security studies “Every third person in B&H owns a weapon”, published 29<sup>th</sup> November 2011

cigarettes, according to attaché for internal security in the France embassy B&H Erik Emero and coordinator of regional office for fighting organized crime French embassy Belgrade Siril Bomgartner in their interview for "Glas Srpske"<sup>4</sup>. Erik Emero states that in several researches on criminal groups in B&H which are trading with illegal weapons following:

"B&H is without a doubt one of the countries most affected with the problem of residual weapons from the war. There are different gun routes in B&H and it could be said that is a classic trade. Groups are exchanging weapons for narcotics or some other products, like cigarettes".

Na prostorima bivše Jugoslavije nalaze se i pojedinci i kriminalne grupe koje se bave međunarodnom trgovinom oružja, ali mnogo je i pojedinaca koji dolaze u BiH kako bi se snabdjeli oružjem.

"This kind of purchase is a relatively new phenomena, it is developing really fast and all agencies consider it a very serious problem" according to Emero.

"This trade falls under transnational trade, which means that in these networks you have citizens from at least two countries from Slavic speaking region Serbs and Croats, Monte Negro and Croats, Serbs and citizens of B&H" said Bomgartner. He says that in the weapons trade is involved Turkey as well but just as a supplier country for trophy weapons.

Heavy war weapons is meant for smuggling, small percentage is confiscated at customs, and it is mostly ending up in the hands of criminals. According to information of French authorities, in that country there were 46 court cases related to weapons trade, 14 of those cases originated from Balkan. Among the suspects were citizens from Serbia, Croatia, Monte Negro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia. Guns from B&H however, it's not ending in European countries, but in all other countries around the world.

Since 2006 "Amnesty International" has published a report with data on who and what quantities of weapons have been exported from B&H to Iraq and Afghanistan. Selling and destroying of weapons in B&H are being investigated by state agency for investigation and research (SIPA), beside members of the defense ministry and B&H armed forces, several domestic and foreign companies and mediators involved in guns smuggling are being investigated.

***Miralem Tursinovic***

***Mirjana Stamenkovic - Tursinovic***

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<sup>4</sup> Information taken from the portal „Glas Srpske“