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**SITUATION OF THE FIRST-GENERATION REFUGEES FROM BOSNIA AND
HERZEGOVINA IN SLOVENIA**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to present the social and cultural aspects of the lives of Bosnian refugees from after the war until 2004 in Slovenia; just before the country joined the EU. My paper consists of two parts which are easy to distinguish. The first is based on theoretical information, which presents the legal regulation of the refugees' status and how Europe and Slovenia failed to carry out the agenda which was intended to protect the refugees. I also address social aspects of the refugees' life. The second part includes the qualitative analysis of interviews with several refugees who fled from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Slovenia. The results show different kinds of discrimination of the refugees and link the discrimination with the failure of the society which accepted them to comply with international agreements and with the elements of discrimination.

Key words: refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Europe, Slovenia, discrimination, socio-cultural identity, integration.

POVZETEK

Namen magistrskega dela je raziskati pojav diskriminacije bosanskih beguncev v Sloveniji v času po vojni do leta 2004, tik pred vstopom Slovenije v Evropsko unijo. Teoretični del analizira pravne vidike problematike beguncev. Teza dela je, da Evropa in Slovenija ne izpolnjujeta sprejetih pravnih dogovorov. Ta del tudi prikazuje psihološke in socialne vidike begunstva. Drugi del je empiričen in obsega kvalitativno analizo intervjujev z manjšim vzorcem beguncev iz Bosne in Hercegovine v Sloveniji. Intervjuji obravnavajo življenjske izkušnje štirih beguncev, ki živijo v Sloveniji. Rezultati bodo pokazali na različne vrste diskriminatornih izkušenj teh oseb in bodo povezali njihovo diskriminacijo z neuresničevanjem mednarodnih dogovorov in z elementi izključevanja s strani družbe, ki jih je sprejela.

Ključne besede: begunci iz Bosne in Hercegovine, Evropa, Slovenija, diskriminacija, socio-kulturna identiteta, integracija.

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1- PREFACE

My own experience of life, which is gained not by many years' study on the faculty or by few academic conferences or a congress (although that too is a part of "the game"), but by my symbiotic relationship with the society, including all its aspects, such as culture, language, customs or habits, religion, gastronomy..., shows me that the human condition follows a more or less regular path throughout our lives. All the steps or intervals are in a way predetermined by the rules which normalize our existence; comfortable childhood with schoolmates, adolescence, which directs our education to the university until we find a job and start a family, of course with ample time for relaxation and our hobbies, with the help of the technological advancements. We consider this panoramic "painting" as a "normal life".

However, sometimes there are dreadful events in our world which disrupt people's lives. One of such events is war. Such a situation explodes instantaneously, the mass media turn its eyes to the information that will shape the informative programmes of all TV stations, radios and newspapers. The exclusive right to present suffering of men, women and children is for them of course of utmost importance. According to my experience, we are not much different. In the article which I read in the Spanish newspaper "El País" there was a metaphor – the first bomb explodes into our heart, the second into our head and the third in the television while we eat warm soup, ignoring the situation which we perceive as alien.

Exactly the same happened in Bosnia and Herzegovina, when it was devastated by the war between 1992 and 1995. A lot of human beings were murdered, a lot are still filed as disappeared, probably dead, and thousands of them fled from their country, leaving everything behind just to save their lives, to the few new countries that accepted them. One of those destinations was the Republic of Slovenia. A large number of refugees, including entire families, students, children... arrived to the country. In this paper I focus my research on these people from Bosnia and Herzegovina who belong to the first-generation refugees¹. In the empirical part are interviews I made with four of these refugees which will show how they live now – ten years from the beginning of the war. I haven't ever been so much interested in the political decisions which concern other

¹ As the first-generation refugees I mean those people who came directly to Slovenia when the war started.

societies or groups of people, maybe because I was in an egoist's position, understanding the world merely as "the geographical space", which I can touch and where I can fulfil all my wishes". Let me explain:

"In fact, the earth is one only world, where the empty spaces or uninhabited virtually don't exist" (Said, 1996).

I agree with this statement by Edward W. Said only if we understand it as a geographical determination within the framework of colonialism and imperialism. But, as he also explains, there is something else. We do not have just parallels and meridians, or simple maps, we must take into account that there are ideas, people, languages, different cultures, etc. And exactly here is where the society, at least a large part of the European society, has a vast void within itself, myself included. Until I came to Slovenia and I started to work on my thesis with immigrants and refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, I had not known the extent of suffering these people were going through and their real living conditions. We were told to worship our nation and to admire our tradition, to achieve our goals with violence if need be, and not care about other societies. We hardly dedicate any time to learning from other cultures. My experience with this research also tells me we cannot perceive a society like monolithic, separated or isolated. If we insist on radical ethnic purity, we are in for a bloodbath, as happened in the Bosnian war.

A lot of political decisions were made to manage the chaos which the war in Bosnia provoked. In my thesis I try to explain how the policy of the European Union and the Slovenian government influenced, and are still influencing, lives of thousands of people whose only sin was that they fled from suffering, misery, poverty, persecution, with just one thing on their mind: to save their lives. A lot of people were probably saved by official decisions, but many of those decisions were made in an incorrect manner, or simply those responsible ignored their role as peacekeepers. I want to make it clear that my intention is not to directly attack the Slovenian and the EU authorities, but I think it is not fair to sweep under the carpet all the mistakes Slovenia and EU made, and that is what I try to write them down here. The goal of my research is to find and show the despair and inhuman situation many people experience due to our ignorance and also due

to our consent. I know, as some friends and colleagues have already told me, that often we cannot do anything because the actual power is in the hands of the few, which is in my opinion really dangerous, and unfortunately that is what happens in all spheres of government. But at the moment we are watching the suffering of these people and perceive the situation as just another among many others, and by saying that we can do nothing about it we become accomplices.

The war in the former Yugoslavia caused the largest concentration of refugees and displaced persons in Europe since World War II. UNHCR² estimates 3.7 million people, of whom 2.7 million were from Bosnia and Herzegovina. UNHCR estimates 600.000 refugees were in other republics of the former Yugoslavia and 700.000 people are currently granted temporary protection in the West European countries. The refugees fled primarily to the adjacent countries. One of these is Slovenia. We can say this was the beginning of a long travel. Once people have to flee from war, they try to find protection in other countries. The question is how these people live once they arrive to a new country? An example of this can be the Bosnian refugees who came to Slovenia, and the same question applies here: How have the Bosnian refugees lived in Slovenia after they came fleeing from the war? That is what I will try to explain in another part of this paper.

It is not just the problem of war, it is also the question of how to start a new, totally different life. The refugees are experiencing psychological and sociological shocks. Once these persons arrived to a new country, they had to go through socialization processes, which are in many cases very difficult, we could even talk about exclusion. To address these questions, dilemmas or theoretical frameworks, I will deal with topics like self-image or self-esteem. Normally the refugee influenced by a traumatic situation does not have a positive opinion of him/herself. However, we must also be aware of our personal view of such situation, which in my opinion does not help to improve the new life of those people who need to cope with it. We have a personal conviction that Europe, where we live, is the centre of the world. Rarely do we admit that other peoples and their ideas should also be heard. I do not fail to notice good intentions and projects by the receiving countries to make the integration of these persons into a new society easier, but

² UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

I think that for us the foreign, the “alien”, is something exotic, strange. We see it from the position of superiority, interpreting it is something we jealously take for granted.

“The production of a rich, complex, highly particularistic culture is an integral part and inevitable outcome of the project of collective self-determination that lies at the heart of the ideal of a liberal democratic state, so that the protection and promotion of its own specific historical culture is a legitimate aspiration for such a state” (Walzer, 1983).

Of course, within this framework of exclusion, it is no wonder a person feels isolated and lonely. Such a negative experience in fact influences also others sociological aspects, even increasing the discrimination of the refugees living in a new country, in our case in Slovenia. These points, which I also include into my research, could be placed within a bigger picture, which could help normal socialization of these people. In this text we will address the values of equality, human and social rights and socialization, and we will also encounter social exclusion. We will study the integration, the situation in regard to the willingness of the Slovenian authorities to grant these people some legal status in the country. A country does not always make it easy for immigrants or refugees to integrate into social life. We will also discuss their social status. The language is one of the obstacles these people have to overcome. The relationships with native people will show the degree of integration or exclusion. It is a slow process, like finding a job. Not all of them have jobs, and if they do, most of them are examples of inequity, underpaid and without legal status, which means no health insurance, they are also unequal to other workers in regard to opportunities provided by the government.

“States are entitled to adopt whatever immigration policy they judge to be in their economic interest. If immigration proves economically advantageous, then that is generally taken to be a reason for accepting immigrants” (Carens, 1995. p. 6-7).

Our position, I think, does not differ so much from the official authorities of a country. Likely a lot of people try to help these persons to live as normal as it is possible but my personal feeling is that the society accepts them as long as they clearly and

substantially benefit the country. However, and supported by the media, in many cases we see them as persons which come to “steal” ours jobs becoming a threat for our identity and the sovereignty of our country. Then the restrictive immigration policy becomes for us a good enough treatment of the refugees and immigrants and we see as normal the policy of expulsion and strong police control on the borders, we believe it defends our culture and our territory from them. Thus this question appears:

“When is it justifiable to forbid the entrance of a person in a country? Who has the right to decide if a person is in condition to belong to our society or, instead of it, to be excluded from ours boundaries?”

In this respect we are promoting, as we already mentioned, a monolithic society overvaluing some persons over others, which take us to a position of misunderstanding of other cultures, with the risk of xenophobia and rejection of persons who belong to other cultures. A culture, a society develops and enriches itself with knowledge, respect and exchange of values, costumes, traditions, believes, etc. That is the only means to tell the world that we are different but equal. We are in constant relationships.

“Most modern states are culturally plural societies, and the endangered cultures are normally minority ones, and whatever steps are taken to preserve a particular culture must be in line with liberalism’s deep commitment to human equality” (Kymlicka, 1989).

In Slovenia we have a clear example. Most of refugees normally arrive first to neighbouring state or in our case, from my point of view, to a country which has some points in common among the countries. We cannot forget that just few years before the war started in Bosnia and Herzegovina; both countries were belonging to the same state, Yugoslavia. Thus many refugees came to Slovenia looking for friends, relatives or merely because many cultural factors, as the language, were quite similar. Many of them continue travelling through other countries, some of them went back to Bosnia and Herzegovina and others stayed in Slovenia, their lives differed considerably and to this is dedicated our study.

During my studying of theory at the Faculty of Education in Ljubljana in order to write this thesis, I encountered many brilliant professors to whom I am sincerely grateful for the knowledge they imparted, I have read many books and articles, I have written many seminar works. All of it in a way has enriched my education. However, I have also met a few refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina; these persons shared their experiences with me, and I used them for my thesis' practical part. These experiences showed me how vile and unjust the life sometimes is. But at the same time they have taught me how beautiful the life is and how important it is to strive for it, regardless of our situation; with their smiles, with their yearning for peace, striving to give their families the best possible life and future, etc. And that is the biggest treasure I got from my study, because it is an invaluable insight. I am proud to have met the first-generation refugees from Bosnia and Herzegovina living in Slovenia and to have written my thesis about them. I am also happy to have the opportunity to present this experience in the book.

2- THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

All of us have heard how the governments from Europe deal with immigration within our countries, whether in case of immigrants³ or refugees⁴. In most of cases to prevent *an invasion* of those persons, with severe decisions producing rigid boundaries and political walls, denying goods as employment, emergency services and socioeconomic resources, political participation, right to permanent access or immunity from expulsion; factors which would help to provide an opportunity for each individual to have access to the community (Coleman and Harding, 1995). All borders should remain open to political refugees. Only in few cases an individual politician takes a stand concerning the precarious situation of this deprived social group, especially when the image of our government is involved, whatever they do they do it as a PR stunt, frequently they do it to gain votes. For example: in April 1989 Janez Drnovšek was the Slovenian representative in the collective Presidency of the Yugoslavia. On the 15th of

³ Immigrant: Person who has come to live permanently in a country after living his/her home country.

⁴ Refugee: The Geneva Convention defines as »a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such a fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country«.

May 1989 he became the President of Yugoslavia. At this time Albanians from Kosovo were being isolated and arrested. In a clear position to protect the human rights he demanded the total respect of the law and the Constitution, taking risks to suspend those measures of isolation (Drnovšek, 1999). This was decisive political, moral and personal support of the community of Albanians in Kosovo, who were unjustly treated. During the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina thousands of people were fleeing from the endangered zones to other countries, including Slovenia, which got the independence from Yugoslavia, 26th of June of 1991. However one big different measure was taken by the Slovenian government in August of 1992 in view of such human suffering: to close the border to refugees (Doupona et al, 2001). At this day the president of the Republic of Slovenia, who was elected in April 2002, was Janez Drnovšek. The question is why.

Important question is on what basis a state either freely admits immigrants or refugees who share the identity of that state or excludes those who do not, when the preservation of national culture is the primary motivation for restrictive immigration policies and closing borders in the Europeans countries. The concept of nationality is intimately connected to the ethnicity or race and to claim that one can be a real member of a culture only if one has a certain genetic background is to assert something totally false about the role that a genetic background plays in a person.⁵ And as Hampton (1995, p. 84) says, even if we grant that maintaining a group's identity is of value to individual member's wellbeing, we have good reason to reject the idea that this identity can be maintained only for as long as the group is "ethnically pure" and thus good reason to reject citizenship policies in any society that restricts citizenship to those of a particular ethnic group. But why deny such identity to the population coming to our country? This question implies we may express the national identity in terms of the social circumstances, acquired in socialization. For that reason I do not believe it impossible to adopt a new national identity, thus it is absurd to me to deny this possibility to refugees or

⁵ We could explain many examples; one of them could be the huge number of persons from Arab countries living in Europe. Their parents were born in Algeria, for example, but they were born in France, they speak French, they go to French schools, they live within a French culture, and in most of the cases they neither speak Arabic language nor have visited the country of their origin. Thus, personally I do not think that the concept of nationality and the belonging, as a real member, to a culture is founded on the ethnicity or race of a group of persons and I reject this idea. As in the case of France, we could talk about the Turkish community living in Germany, the population of North Africa and South America who live in Spain, etc.

immigrants since they can perfectly adopt, take part and to participate in our identity, thus becoming also their identity. However, we cannot forget the protection of collective goals of cultural groups (Taylor, 1992), the political forum is the appropriate place to strive for such protection (Haller, 1997). The culture is not monolithic and the symbiosis of experiences enriches the experience of oneself. National identity and cultural interest need not separate minority and majority in opposite groups, without any relation, because the privileges of a minority are beneficial for the majority and vice versa. By this interrelation is how the culture may enrich itself.

A- The case of Europe.

In the world, and in Europe, no state should regard race, religion or language as essential to its identity, which should be grounded in different ideas sharing different ideals in a shared vision of the society. If it does, in many cases those minorities within a society will be in serious danger of discrimination, whether by the law of the state or by the people who belongs to the majority and dominant group which conforms the nation.

However, following the idea of self-determination we must bear in mind that when we speak about a nation, we are influenced by whether or not it has a territory of its own. A clear example in Europe was the situation in the former Yugoslavia. In my case I identified an inhabitant of Ljubljana as a Yugoslav, an inhabitant of Zagreb as a Yugoslav, an inhabitant of Sarajevo as a Yugoslav, etc. Today, after the break-up of Yugoslavia, we are used to identify the Slovenians as a nation, the Croatians as a nation, the Bosnians as a nation, etc.

Although at the present it is far away from reality and it seems as wishful thinking, in the name of self-determination every human being should live in a country where the group which he or she belongs to is discriminated and persecuted, and can fulfil his or her life in terms of religion, culture, language and race. An example: a recent debate in France about the disagreement between the government and the Muslim community. The state wanted to prohibit any kind of religious identification in schools, in line with the separation of state and church. While the representatives of different religions claimed that this principle cannot aim to create empty spaces contradicting religious beliefs, it must offer the possibility of dialogue between the people of these religions instead. However, we must be aware of the dangers brought about by the

extreme nationalism. In the name of independence, nationalism has provoked the same or even greater injustice than in the former political situation. Nationalism in many cases carries hostility to other groups, regarded as the nation's enemies. That must not be allowed. A person's sense derives from many circumstances including cultural aspects, such as the language and customs. An immigrant or refugee living in a host country belongs to a minority, like in the case of Bosnian refugees living in Slovenia, having their own culture, but they also belong to a new society. The harmonious sharing of their life is essential to reach a minimum understanding between the two groups and an acceptable level on coexistence. The extremist and excluding political views on both sides – a host country closing its borders and the newcomers faced with isolation and hostile nationalism – do not help in the formation of a society facilitating freedom and respect of human rights.

“Home is where the heart is: feeling at home is more than familiarity. One feels truly at home with some environment only if one is attached to it or feels loyalty towards it.”
Dummett, 2001.

Many parts and different countries are involved in the refugees or immigrants situation. Current problems can be dealt with only by international cooperation and by a positive will to cooperate in solving them. In this case, solutions will have to be practicable to be successful. Every human being has a right to refuge from persecution, to deny refuge is a manifest injustice. It is not against international law to find some other state which will accept a refugee and enable him/her a life without fear of persecution, but if no other state can be found, the state has under the Geneva Convention no other option than to admit this person. To refuse help to those suffering is to take a part of the responsibility for injustice. We must bear in mind that most refugees want to return to their own countries as soon as it becomes safe, at least until they have lived so long in the country of refuge that they consider it their home.

Normally developed countries complain when a thousand of refugees or so arrive. I would like to remind you how many doors were closed in Europe to the refugees from Kosovo which were fleeing from the persecution of the Serbian troops in 1999, while thousands of them went to Macedonia. Macedonia is one of the poorest countries in

Europe, if not the poorest. The number of refugees has greatly increased throughout the world, I think this is something that should be handled by international agreement under the UN High Commission for Refugees. Those countries who want to silent the voices of protest against inhumane treatment of refugees accept only a minimal number of them. Just solutions should not be concerned about borders, they should strive for equality, mutual aid, prevent people from starving or die for lack of shelter or basic medical care, as is happening today.

Such a barriers instead to relieves the situation have also provoked and created the degradation of many human beings in different forms, such as trafficking in illegal immigrants. A clear example is Gibraltar in the south of Spain where each year hundreds of them lose their lives trying to reach Europe from the North Africa in small boats after they have paid criminals to take them there. I should point out that the principal cause of this infamous trade is the attempt by the governments of Europe to prevent anyone from outside the EU to reach their territories, and those who are successful in their attempts normally remain illegal immigrants, heavily indebted for their passage, exploited and ill-treated. We only have to consider how many women come to Europe with the intention to work as cleaning ladies and end up in night clubs as prostitutes.

¹ »*My name is Betty and I am 21. I have been in Barcelona for four months. I work during the nights on the street. I do not speak Spanish. It does not matter. I am in transit: I want to go to London. Two years ago I left my country to come to Europe. I passed through Mali and waited to cross Sahara. I was a year and a half in Morocco. We crossed to Gibraltar by boat. It was terrible. Five of her friends died... And here I am trying to pay the debt I have with the madame, (the contact through whom she settles monthly the debt she got in her country, between 30,000 and 48,000 euros – a modern version of a proxeneta), to be free from it. They did not come to Europe for that. The promised land has become a hostile bleak plateau, where their only relation is with clients and the police. The “paradise” is thus surviving day by day: avoiding police patrols because she does not have any papers. (Piñol, 2004).*

We must not forget that the state has the final authority to decide who is entitled to reside within its territory or become a citizen and also to determine the grounds upon

which persons will be entitled to stay within its territory (Perry, 1995). This important point reminds us that every state has a duty to those who flee to it for refuge from intolerable conditions, such as political persecution or war. It also has a duty to help those whom it admits to settle in the country that has granted that refuge, with genuine reception centres where refugees can stay in pleasant conditions and help to adapt them to their new home. A nation cannot prohibit non-nationals from gaining citizenship when they have lived a long productive life within the country that they joined. But all of us are aware of the lack of such help in Europe. This situation is aggravated by high levels of unemployment, poor housing and health, limited access to welfare services, in turn provoking social isolation, discrimination and marginalisation. The aspects which a country must take into consideration, as Sykes (1995) points out, are:

- Variation in the earning capacity of migrants.
- Variation in other entitlement programs.
- Education.
- Public goods.
- Public facilities.
- Returns to net public assets.

They also have the duty to do nothing to prevent the arrival of refugees to their borders. This duty, which is currently violated by the imposition of heavy visa requirements and laws, and even poisoning the mind of the public against a group of people who ask our help with false and xenophobic arguments, such as the protection of domestic culture from outsiders, different cultural affinities of refugees or immigrants and local inhabitants or the protection of cultural, social and political stability from foreign influences. If a country believes that it is receiving more than its fair share of refugees, it is entitled to ask other states to help it by taking some of them. A state has extensive but not unlimited obligations to admit outsiders – obligations which are even more important in case of refugees. However, we know that states are not doing enough to fulfil their international obligations, permitting immigration or making transfers to other countries.

“The borders may nonetheless serve as a basis for exclusion because they help to define and protect the communities to which people have a right to belong” (Seidman, 1995).

What is the rationale for such duties? A common explanation would be that any human being should be regarded as a member of the human family, as a piece which integrates the puzzle of the universal society. However, many states are using the law to recognise its duties only toward its own citizens, fearing to lose its identity, not bearing in mind that a gradual influx of people of other countries with different cultures poses little threat to the native culture as immigrants tend to accept the culture of the host country and also enrich it with new elements – some elements are compatible with it, others will remain limited to the minority, which is no threat whatsoever for the native culture. Here I will show two short texts published in a Spanish magazine after the terrorist attack in Madrid 11/3/2004, clearly demarcating the extremists and the community of Muslims who live thoroughly integrated in Europe, in this case, in Spain.

¹“Some are Spanish. Others one day chose this country to live and work in. Here they got married. Here their children have been born. They are not extremists. Their religion is Islam. They are the Muslims of Madrid”. (Rodríguez, 2004).

“We came into a little bar with fast food from where we could smell a strong scent, so good. The owner is Palestinian, and the cooker is Iraqi. – How are you? – I ask. – She is so sorry, and I even more, try to imagine. - How many years have you lived here? - I ask him, - 38 – He said”. (Lindo, 2004).

When we express our fear of such “invasion”, we maybe act according to similar experience but with a very different result. We can not forget what we did to the countries from which the refugees and immigrants are now coming to our own home. Not by massive migration but by economic and military power, we colonize these lands and completely changed their culture or even erased it. We imposed ours rules of life by a devastating colonialism.

“...forty-eight hours ago I was already crossing the Channel to introduce myself to my bosses and to sign the contract. It was not so difficult to find the offices of the company.

They were the more important building of the city. They were going to manage an overseas empire and earn a lot of money with the commerce.

... The work! And that was the place where some of them had withdrawn to die. They were dying slowly. They were neither enemies nor criminals, now they were nothing from this world but black shadows of the famine and illness. They were attracted from all around the coast by the prospect to find temporary work, they were fed with unfamiliar food, they got sick and they were no longer useful.” (Conrad.2002).

Despite the fact that many states in Western Europe were formed according to liberal ideas, strong ethnic and cultural identifications have played a role in generating vicious discrimination and a devastating xenophobia and racism. When the predominant nation is only one of the groups residing in a territory, its insistence that the state controlling that territory become its nation-state will worry and anger members of the minority community who fear for their rights. For this reason they will struggle for their preservation against the majority by provoking dissension and even war, as happened in Yugoslavia. Even political decisions concerning political conflicts between communities of other countries in the world (as the conflict between Palestine and Israel) can have terrible results, as was the terrorist attack by Islamist extremist in Madrid on the 12th of March 2004 when 200 persons died. It is important to create other kinds of policies to protect the members of different cultural groups, and promote a network of social, political and economical interaction. This does not mean attacking the identity and culture of one country and that a society can determine who can become a citizen, with rights and obligations, it means striving toward multicultural cooperation. Such decisions enrich the society and the world we live in. Most nations are multinational, they consist of more than one culture, we live in multiethnic states. To deny such reality is to lie to ourselves. It is true, as happened in Yugoslavia, that in the case of multinational states the presence of many cultures had led to conflicts, but there is not reason to consider the argument that stability of a state derives from cultural homogeneity is generally true.

Today we exclude them from our countries in Europe. The principal motivation is without any doubt the racial prejudice against foreigners, which shows us that racism is

an important element in our consideration of immigration and also of the related policies, together with the economic considerations in determining such policies, as Tushnet (1995) points out. The following sentence is repeated so often – *Immigrants take jobs from native workers*. People say it even if they know that immigrants start off earning less on average and usually get those jobs no one else wants, as Trebilcock (1995) says, not even those from less skilled and minority subgroups. We talk about two focuses concerning the state's policy, one is social, which is concerned with the cultural effects of immigration, and the other is economic, which is related to the economic costs of immigration; however, we must not forget that immigration does not only cause economics cost to a state, it also provides benefits, both economic and social. We also cannot deny that a seriously overpopulated country has the right to keep immigration below the level that would cause overcrowding. However, in applying this principle we see many differences between European countries, which are sometimes really striking, as in the case of Germany, with as nearly as high population density as the UK but many more asylum seekers. It is important to note how the massive immigration into West Germany after 1945 contributed to the subsequent German economic boom. During the war in Bosnia many people who fled from the conflict went to Germany and are now contributing to its economy.

“To do welfare economics and social welfare resides not in abstract entities like a country but in individuals...” Hadfield (1995).

The low birth rates in many countries of Europe is causing serious problems in different economies because the proportion of people no longer of working age is rising, and the UN has estimated that Italy, for example, will need to take in about 300,000 foreign workers to replenish its aging labour force – nearly five times the number the government has announced to admit from outside the EU, (Dummett, 2001). We must point out that many refugees or immigrants have university education which could greatly benefit the economy of the country that admits them, and they frequently they take the jobs which the locals are reluctant to accept.

Among the European nations it is commonly accepted that to reduce the immigration pressure and the flow of refugees we must provide aid to poor countries or countries in war, however, the gap between countries is getting ever wider, producing an immense flow of immigration, legal and illegal. And in this context of injustice we still hear the exclamations: “Keep out! Starve if you have to, but do not threaten our prosperity”, or if they are already in our country: “Work if you have to, and live if you have to, but please do not do it in my neighbourhood”. This disgusting behaviour reflects the policy of our country. Our behaviour is always connected with the position our country has toward the problem. We are often reflecting the rules which our country has established and vice versa.

At this level it seems extremely important to change the attitudes of our society expressed in these policies. Suddenly and radically opening the borders is impracticable, yet we and also our government may start:

- Fighting the propaganda against refugees.
- Applying decent criteria for asylum claims, and exercising compassion in the process.
- Easing the limitations of ordinary immigration (visa requirements, punitive treatment...), etc.

But, as has been already said, such change requires more than just our good will – it requires also the improvement of immigration and asylum policies, which must be based on the effort to eradicate racism, discrimination and xenophobia. Unfortunately, we witness such discrimination every day throughout Europe, some of it is extremely violent, like in Germany in 1993 when in the city of Solingen an arson attack to a house where Turks lived caused many injuries and five people were burned to death; in Italy, which until 1989 recognised as refugees only east Europeans and where in Florence in 1990 two hundred people armed with iron bars and baseball bats beat up black people and Gypsies; or in El Ejido (Spain) where violent riots broke out against Moroccan workers in February 2000.

The flow of refugees is unpredictable, depending on wars, conflicts, repression and disasters, and a policy cannot regulate their arrival, but we must agree upon what constitutes a valid claim of admission and accommodate them as well as possible, as every human being in this world deserves. An immigration policy for the European Union as a whole should play an important role here, rather than leaving each member state to devise its own – this requires the adoption of a common Constitution founded on the respect of human rights and on cooperation between governments. Thus the chances for social inclusion differ between migrant groups and across EU member states. The patterns of exclusion and inclusion co-exist and differ between these states and migrant groups.

An important issue to be analyzed is how the population living in Europe reinforces the policy of a member state as an individual entity instead of believing in Europe as a whole, as a place where many people may have opportunities for better lives. An example of this is the low percentage of people who voted at the European elections in June 2004; only 45 %. Some statistical research showed that the situation would be repeated in 2005 when Europe in February decided about the European Constitution and many people stayed at home. Even political parties do not dedicate much time to promote and to discuss the text which will affect all Europeans, instead they prefer the text in whose elaboration and discussion many political families and governments have participated, keeping out the popular will. In this case we can talk about a clear lack of popular support to the process of European integration.

Lately we have heard how EU member states talk about free movement within the single market; however, this free movement framework largely excludes millions of nationals of other countries. **Is there a common place for the EU and its member states?** Yes. Why? The EU member states often claim they control immigration, but their ability to control movement of people has diminished because EU citizens can move freely within the territory of the Union. The effect is that the national and European levels intermingle. Discussions at the EU level cannot be separated from discussions of developments at national levels. Here we may talk, as Geddes (2000) does, about the fortress of Europe – a combination of restrictive immigration policies and the social and political exclusion of settled migrants and their descendants.

The free movement has been central to the policy and has become connected with immigration and asylum and elicited an EU policy with a strong border security measures. This response is connected with a more general salience of immigration issues in the late twentieth and in the beginning twenty-first century. Some tendencies have contributed to this (Castles and Miller, 1998). As first, the *globalisation* of migration increased the number of countries affected, with some particularities as the former countries of emigration became countries of immigration, such as Spain, Portugal, Italy or Greece; immigration from former colonies, for instance from Asia to the UK, or from South America to Spain, or the case of Germany which do not have any advantageous colonial connections; and the recruitment agreements for labour market were focused on Italy, Spain, Greece, Turkey, Morocco, Portugal, Tunisia and Yugoslavia, etc. As second, an *acceleration* of migration was supported by the advanced transport and communications – in case of catastrophe, such as a war, it enables rapid migration movements, as was the case with the war in Yugoslavia. As third, the *differentiation* of migration depends on many motives, such as family reunification, labour migration or asylum-seeking. As fourth, the *feminisation* of migration is directly associated with family reunification in contrast to the male-dominated labour migration, common in the past. As fifth, the *politicisation* of migration appeared. As we have said earlier, all these points are included in migration as it have substantially contributed the economic reconstruction of Europe and the spread of labour migration.

The result of this situation is a huge number of immigrants who decided not to return to their native countries but to stay and start anew in Europe, become Europeans. The European countries could again do nothing since the opposite decision forcing the immigrants to return to their native countries would infringe national laws and violate human rights. Anyway, the policy concerning immigration has changed and is now aimed at social integration of the migrants who has already settled, while the restrictions of labour immigration have enormously increased. However, in many cases such social integration is not a reality, the majority of immigrants are isolated and all interaction is carried out within homogeneous “ghettos”, provoking hostility and stigmatisation.

I think that restrictive policies will continue to co-exist alongside with movements of refugees and migrants because a modern and liberal country, as every European

country regards itself, may restrict migration but cannot totally control it. The external frontiers play an important role in this respect, as was the example of Spain who in 1985 approved the *ley de extranjería* (Law on Foreigners) after the external pressure related to entering the European Community (Cornelius, 1994). This law still remains a controversial issue between the different political groups in Spain.

However, such control and policy also have many constraints, namely:

- Enormous costs of the policy for external control.
- Extensive immigration control may increase illegal immigration. The number of undocumented or illegal immigrant increases every day, especially in the southern countries as Spain.
- In view of the previous point it is clear that such situation further adds to human misery.
- The lack of agreement about the objectives of policy. Some countries talk about the need for a zero immigration policy, while those responsible for immigration market in Spain, for example, point out the necessity to have immigrants for many jobs which Spaniards does not want; every year many thousands of Polish or immigrants from North Africa come to Spain for seasonal fruit-picking, etc.

Of course the politicisation of the issue is even more severe, when we talk about refugees or asylum seekers, due to the essential difference: they do not move voluntary but for fear of persecution, their rights are outlined in the 1951 UN Convention, commonly known as the Geneva Convention, amended by the 1967 New York Protocol, protecting the people fleeing from persecution on the grounds of race, religion, nationality or membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

Asylum was not considered a serious problem in the 1950s, the 1960s and the 1970s because the numbers were negligible. But in the 1980s the attitudes began to change, first because of the easier access to Europe from ex-colonial countries in Africa and Asia, and second because the end of the Cold War displaced thousands of people. An evident cause was also the civil war in Yugoslavia in the years 1991-92.⁶ In 1996 the

⁶Just in July 1992, 80,000 asylum applications were made. In 1999 the conflict in Kosovo displaced around one million people.

countries in the former Yugoslavia the largest number of immigrant applications, they were followed by Turkey and Romania. The European immigration cannot be consistently controlled for the entire EU because the process relies on the member states which are in the position to implement policies. The capacity of the EU to act in this area is limited, while immigration and asylum have been dealt with mainly through intergovernmental co-operation. It means that the supranational free movement policy and the intergovernmental immigration and asylum policy are disconnected. As den Boer (1996) says, they are linked because free movement for EU citizens has brought with it tighter control of movement of non-EU citizens. Thus the question is whether it is member states or supranational institutions that control the scope and direction of European integration. In this respect we can say that the EU context can play a role in shaping debates about immigration control, inclusion of immigrants and free movement of migrants because of specific policy competencies ceded by treaty between states. The theoreticians talk about supranationalism and intergovernmentalism arguing that “*the unique institutional structure of the European Community is acceptable to national governments*” (Moravcsik, 1993), and that “*each government views such community through the lens of its own policy preferences. The continuation of domestic politics by other means*” (Moravcsik, 1991). The first ones and its functionalists argued that many of the responsibilities of nation states should be ceded to international organisations. Many people hold the opinion that this helps to avoid many conflicts around the world, when relationships between states are volatile. However we know it does not happen frequently⁷. Into this supranationalisation one thing is clear: the immigrants from the nations which don't belong to EU are largely excluded from the right of free movement among many other rights, as could be non-discrimination of grounds of nationality, equal housing treatment, the possibility to join their families, the same social advantages, etc. Free movement that in the beginning was not to be given to all people but to workers who belonged to a member state of EU and moved for purposes of work. These provisions

⁷ The incompetence and permissivity of the International Community provoked a masacre in Srebrenica in July 1995 during the war in Bosnia, and the siege of Sarajevo during 1992-1995 by the serbian troops. Another examples are the masacre in Rwanda ten years ago, or the present palestinian-israeli conflict where the international community does not do anything to solve it. September 2004, a terrorist group from Chechenia sieged a school in a Russian village, hundreds of persons died, among them a lot of children: What has the international community done to solve the conflict between Russia and Chechenia untill now? Nothing.

were made in the Treaty of Rome, 1957. At this point we must keep in mind the connections between free movement, immigration and asylum and the ways in which the political components effect the rights of migrants in EU member states. Access to the EU-level social entitlements depended on having the citizenship of a member state; nationality became the basis for access to these entitlements. Access to entitlement at the EU level largely depends on first acquiring the citizenship of a member state. Without it the “freedoms” created by European integration are meaningless. Most of the non-members of the EU are largely excluded. Of course, no provisions were made for the prevention of discrimination because of race or ethnic origin until the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997, and even then, such forms of discrimination were not totally prohibited.

Concerning people from other countries we can mention some agreements between third countries and EU for free movement, determining a triangular relationship between individuals, member states and the EU. But does this relationship also apply to the non-members of EU? It would seem that it does not, because those individuals are excluded from EU provisions as they don't have citizenship of a member state. However, these agreements have direct effect and their provisions must be interpreted according to the Treaty of Rome. But it has been argued that if some agreements, as in the case of Turkey in 1964, give right just to some individuals, in this case Turks, then it is unfair that not all the people can benefit from such conditions.

Between 1957 and 1986, the European Community made agreements with some countries as Algeria, Morocco or Tunisia. With Yugoslavia an agreement was made in 1983, but was revoked because of the war and disintegration of the country.

When we talk about obligations we must not forget that there are two very important differences between UN legal standards and the EU law. First, UN agreements are more expansive in their scope because they don't distinguish between nationals and non-nationals when rights are granted, and second the UN carry just a little legal weight because they don't have direct effect in the way that EC laws do. The ECHR for example establishes the European Court of Human Rights in a scope of international law but depends on national ratification for its effect. The result is that international conventions and treaties have different effects in different EU member states, depending on national legal systems. In the Treaty of Rome and Single European Act the member states rejected

immigration and asylum policy and preferred intergovernmental co-operation outside the Treaty framework. A framework of co-operation is determined by external frontier controls and international security to restrict entry. Thus we have a picture of “*inequality and reinforcing pressures for immigration restriction*” (Bommes 2000) in front of us.

After the Madrid Council’s acceptance in 1989 of the Palma document, the immigration debates turned its attention to two pressing issues: asylum policy and external frontier control, within a period where asylum issues increased greatly due to the end of the Cold War and the conflict in Yugoslavia. Situation was considered as a European problem. Thus, the asylum efforts were treated at Dublin on 1990. The convention sought to exclude the possibility of asylum-seekers making applications in more than one state in frontier-free Europe, it rather aimed to ensure that only one member state would be responsible for deciding on asylum applications. The system introduced in the Convention began with the idea of providing security to asylum applicants, but it turned into moving of asylum-seekers from one country to another and out of the Union altogether. Even some agreement admissions were signed between EU and EU aspirants. During the pre-accession process these aspiring member states were obligated to participate in the restrictive asylum policies of the EU.

Some reports on immigration policy have been made by experts arguing for equal opportunities for the population from out of EU. These reports have been forgotten, even the political will did not exist to put it in practice. Un important pro-integrate attempt in immigration and asylum policy was made by five member states (Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and Netherlands), heading towards free movement for people and the abolition of internal border controls between their territories, improving co-operation and harmonisation of asylum laws. It was the Schengen arrangement. A convention to implement it was not signed till June 1990 due to lack of possibilities for its attainments, especially with no judicial body able to interpret the Convention⁸. The Amsterdam Treaty placed the Schengen into the EU, although once again with a strong intergovernmental basis. This arrangement is an important attempt of integration within an institutional

⁸ Two examples were the German reunification which meant that Schengen needed to be extended to ex-German Democratic Republic, and France, when in a meeting in April 1996 it decided to maintain control on the borders with Belgium and Luxembourg, because these were considered as transit countries for drugs from Netherlands.

environment, but again opposition of a small group of member states is enough to prevent the positive integration to go on.

The Maastrich Treaty negotiated in December 1991 and signed in Lisbon in February 1992, was completed in November 1993. It formalised co-operation in the field of immigration and asylum policy in an intergovernmental pillar of the newly created EU, which till then was outside of the Treaty. This was a real tentative of a move towards policy co-operation within the legal and political structures of the EU, although again some member states maintained their position as principal reference putting a break on plans for the development of immigration and asylum policy in the framework of Europe.

The role of citizenship of the EU was introduced, complementing not replacing national citizenship. Thus, the people from other countries without citizenship of a member state could not become EU citizens. Again they were excluded, because of divergent criteria for allocation of nationality (Weil, 2002)⁹.

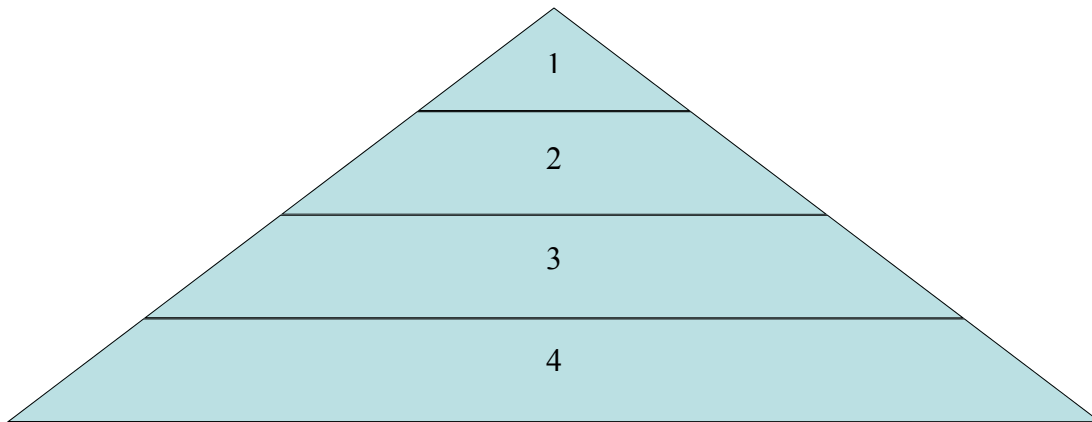


Figure1. A possible interpretation of the policy of EU concerning immigration and asylum where 1 are countries from EU, 2 aspirant countries to join the EU, 3 “transit countries” and 4 totally excluded countries.

⁹ In France access to citizenship was easier than in Germany. In France descendants of immigrants born in the country can at the age of eighteen acquire french citizenship, automatically becoming EU citizen. As a consequence they can move freely within the EU and exercise the rights of EU citizens. In Germany this was impossible because acquiring nationality is based on blood descent reasons, namely, an immigrant born in Germany and who had lived in the country all his/her life can not acquire such status.

We could say that at the top, the triangle 1 represents these countries that already belong to EU where the priority is a restrictive policy and they want to incorporate neighbouring states into this regime of control. The layer 2 represents the aspirant countries to join the EU where the policy priority heads towards the adoption of restrictive frameworks connected to potential agreements with EU. The layer 3 represents “transit countries” as the former Soviet states, or North African; the priority here is focused on action against illegal immigration and the incorporation in a temporary protection system for refugees. At the bottom, the layer 4 represents the totally excluded states, where the policy of the EU level is only vaguely observed.

We can also argue that if the restriction increases the migratory pressure, then the control and policy restriction, presented by the layers, only increase human misery among the states surrounding the EU and its scopes of action. As we can see the EU has increased responsibility about immigration and asylum policy through different treaties, but at the time of putting in practice the theory and the shaping of possibilities for inclusion of resident migrants and their descendants remain underdeveloped. The core of this developing is centred on control and security dimensions along with free movement for some EU citizens and tighter control of movement for others. The EU always appears determined to improve co-operation while at the same time shows little will for democratic or judicial transparency of their actions.

During the period after the Maastricht Treaty there was an evident necessity for a clearer definition of the connection between free movement, immigration and asylum. Within such framework and with these central components the Amsterdam Treaty was agreed in June 1997. The central issue of the treaty was the creation of an area of freedom, justice and security, covering the three aspects mentioned. But once more, the member states succumbed to the intergovernmentalism. Thus, Amsterdam does not constitute supranationalisation between different countries, and realisation of institutionalisation of immigration and asylum policy remains completely uncertain. The new Title IV was made to deal with immigration and asylum, but the intergovernmental control over the policy was so strong, it was namely communitarisation, but not supranationalisation. However, some states during the pre-Amsterdam conference

favoured supranationalisation, rapid integration and the creation of legal instruments at EU level to fight racism and xenophobia.

The Amsterdam Treaty was, as were other treaties before, the result of compromises rather than a regulation of immigration, asylum and free movement for this group of population, that could be put in practice.

As we already have said the important points or aspects of migration at the EU level is free movement, but it is not consistently dealt with. In some cases an association agreement was enough for it to be granted (agreement between Germany and Turkey, 1964), but generally a citizenship of a EU country is required. Other aspects are social entitlements, anti-discrimination and asylum procedures. Such debate about inclusion and exclusion in EU is always closely related to the EU's core market purposes, because in general this is the first intention of EU concerning immigration and asylum. The meaning of inclusion and participation at the EU level reveals itself on three levels:

- Conditions of entry at level of all items of social life.
- Development of a framework against racism, xenophobia and discrimination.
- Development of asylum policies, which unfortunately remains – as the shown examples prove – marginal and far away from being developed, although 4.7 million ECU were meant for several projects supporting the social integration as the best policy to fight discrimination and racism suffered by refugees and non-national immigrants living in the EU states.

At this level the European Council for Refugees and Exiles seeks to coordinate its activities with other groups as Caritas, UNHCR or Amnesty International, which argues that agreements between EU and other countries don't include guarantees to protect the rights of asylum seekers and refugees.

“The member states policies do not offer sufficient protection for those in need. More and more restrictive national measures on asylum have been adopted. This spiral appears to have no bottom,” Amnesty International (1996).

In many cases immigration and multiculturalism have even been seen as threat or challenge to the welfare state.

We have seen that at the EU level there were many proposals to expand rights of refugees and immigrants – by means of social policy – so that they could reach welfare of life, with access to free movement, social advantages, opportunities of job under the same conditions as locals, etc. Nevertheless, this population remains excluded from these benefits by strong national policies of the EU states, based on their social exclusion, while citizenship remains the main criterion for access to those rights. Citizenship is in most cases denied to those persons by – as we have already said – strict policy of restriction, control and security measures. Thus, EU instead of seeking for real integration, prefers to maintain its own *fortress of Europe*.

B- The case of Slovenia.

When we were talking about Europe, we addressed the duty of a state to help the refugees with genuine reception, but in fact we state the lack of such help. We also expressed the idea that the states should not prevent refugees from reaching their borders. This principle is currently being violated. And what is the Slovenia's position?

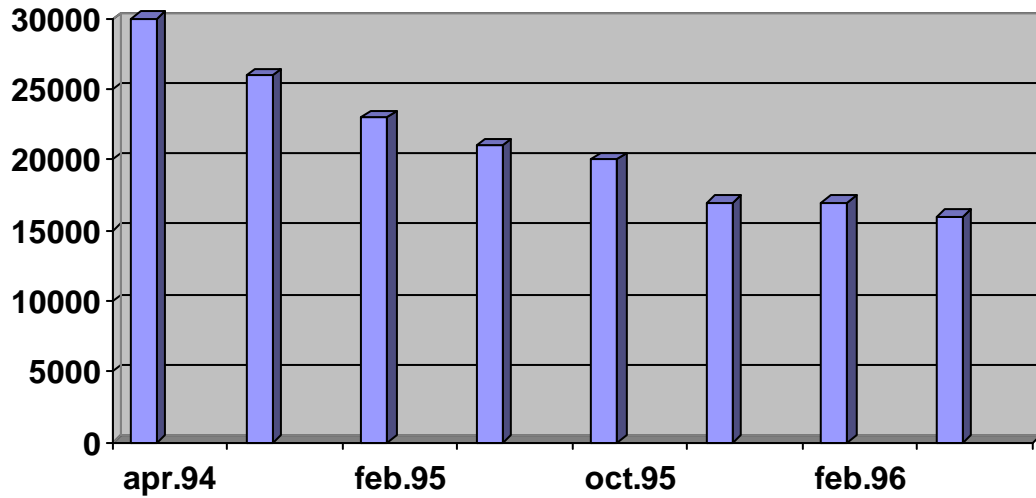
As Zavrtnik (1996) writes, UNHCR reports about 1 million displaced persons inside Bosnia and Herzegovina. When the war started in 1992, more than 530.000 refugees from former Yugoslavia were admitted to European countries. The majority, 220.000, were in Germany. It was a brutal war with armed clashes, terrorism, disrespecting, ignoring and violating the principles of international and humanitarian laws, confining people to camps and genocide (Grizold, 1994). Almost all European countries at this year introduced visa requirements for Bosnian refugees. Thus, the burden had to be shouldered in the first instance by neighbouring countries or located not so far away from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Slovenia was one of those adjacent countries. 70.000 were admitted in that territory in 1992. Many of them passed through the country, but many remained.

But why do we talk in terms of “burden”, as if the situation in fact bothers us and we don’t want to be concerned by it? We don’t want to be obligated to accept them¹⁰ (refugees), even if we shared the same country before, as is the case with Slovenians and refugees from Bosnia and other countries of former Yugoslavia. Again we may say we are using the possibility to decide who can enter our territory to preserve our “identity”. When we talk about foreigners a remarkable point to have in mind is how, if they come with passports and legal documents, we show our warm hospitality, but as soon as they try to reach our country just carrying their hope for a better life, we show the face of intolerance, namely, xenophobia. This happens in the countries which are supposedly social states governed by the law and that supposedly have signed international conventions on protection of human rights and refugees.

The war in Bosnia was over in 1995, at the end of this year and according to Slovenian Red Cross sources 20.000 refugees from Bosnia had a temporary home in Slovenia.

¹⁰ Let us not forget that Slovenia closed its borders in August 1992.

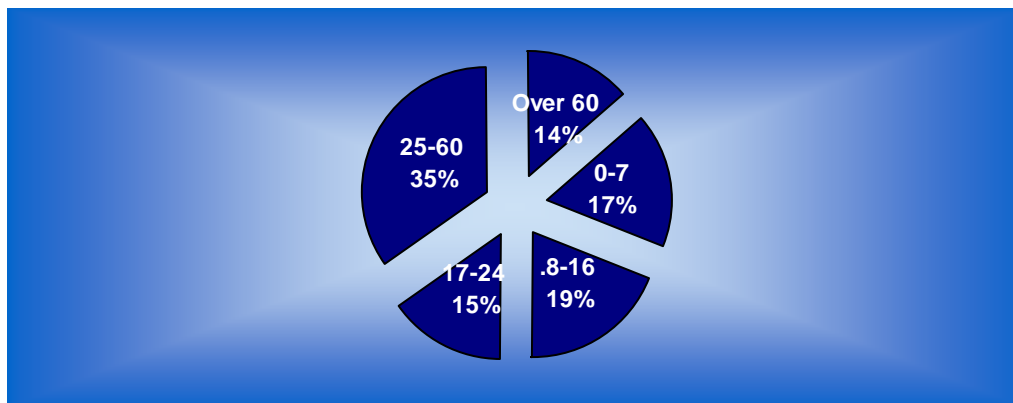
Graph 1. Number of temporary refugees in Slovenia. (Zavratnik, 1996)



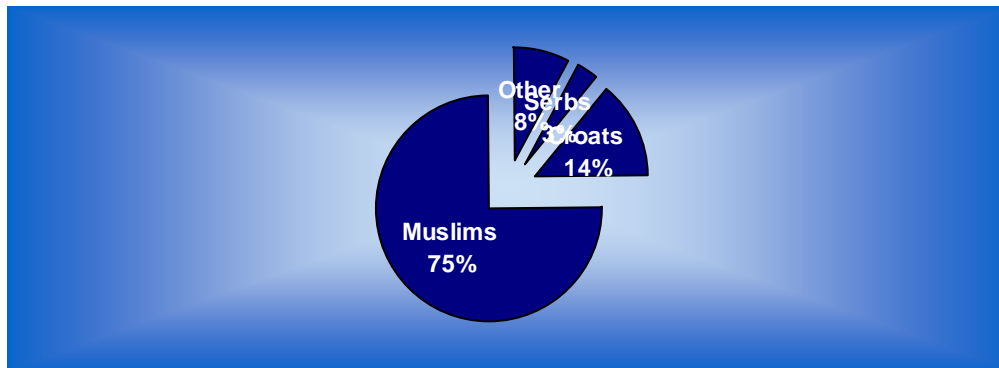
We see that in 1992 around 70000 refugees were admitted into Slovenia, many of them, as we already have mentioned, just crossed the country on their way to other states in Europe, because the figure shows that in April 1994 the number of temporary refugees already was 30.000. We also can see how the number goes proportionally decreasing.

The first incoming of refugees to Slovenia took place in 1991, most of them from Croatia, but more refugees came by the spring of 1992 from Bosnia. Here we may see some data about Bosnian refugees (Zavratnik, 1996):

Graphic 2: Bosnian refugees in Slovenia by age in year 1995 according to Red Cross Slovenia data. (Zavratnik, 1996)



Graphic 3: Bosnian refugees in Slovenia by nationality in year 1995 according to Red Cross Slovenia data. (Zavratnik, 1996)¹¹.



Graph 4. People with temporal asylum in centres from 1992 till 2002. Gole, (2003, personal communication).

Date	Persons with temporal asylum	In centres	Number of centres
03.09.92	???	15.406	58*
31.12.92	???	13.748	58
31.12.93	???	9.662	28
31.03.94	31.118	9.218	28**
31.02.94	24.156	7.854	26
31.12.95	20.667	6.066	25
31.12.96	10.349	3.762	17
31.12.97	4.609	2.263	12***
31.12.98	3.453	1.702	10
31.12.99	3.113	1.621	10
31.12.00	2.800	1.420	9
31.12.01	2.406	1.226	9
31.12.02	537	#809	7****
04.05.03	20	#733	7

¹¹ I would like to make clear some aspects of the diagram. It aims at distinguish different nationalities among the citizens from Bosnia. In its intention to explain such details I notice the elaboration of, not just geographical, but also political and cultural difference, with the main intention of maintaining, and in many cases manipulating with notions. Why should a group of citizens be stigmatized by religion which today has a negative connotation? There is no need to explain what it means today to be a Muslim in Europe. Why, identifying the Serbs living in Bosnia, do we not use the term orthodox, or catholic for the Croatians?

*The statistical data, according to the Institute for Immigration and Refugees, do not tell the number of people in the selected centres (a great number of refugees use Slovenia as a bridge country towards others. The Republic of Slovenia estimates there were around 70.000 of them).

** 31.03.94 the law about registration of temporal asylum for refugees expired.

*** In April 97 the law about temporal asylum came into force.

**** In August 02 the new law about temporal asylum came into force.

Number of people installed (persons with temporal asylum and foreigners with permission for permanent residence according the new law on temporal asylum).

Graph 5. Status of refugees in Slovenia at 4.05.2003. Gole, (2003 personal communication).

	Together	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Perm. Residence According to the new law.	1989	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1804	185
Residents BIH	9058	12	812	677	4275	2015	554	145	121	248	184	15
Residents Croatia	1056	12	503	187	177	158	15	4	0	0	0	0
Unknown *	11437	366	4168	2645	3621	420	144	57	15	0	1	0
Died in Slo	655	17	155	135	93	59	47	39	41	33	33	3
Abroad	5529	279	2934	1751	365	99	38	28	28	1	1	5
Citizens of Slo	383	7	89	113	55	25	41	12	11	11	19	0
Foreign	4458	22	436	831	1455	1011	307	150	132	66	48	0
Removed	260	21	67	47	50	40	13	2	4	4	10	2
Not	821	0	0	0	0	807	13	0	0	0	1	0

fulfilling the conditions to the law												
Together	35646	736	9164	6386	10091	4634	1172	437	352	363	2101	210

* Persons who have not been obligated to reject status. Many of them went back to their country or they got foreign status in Slovenia.

The Republic of Slovenia published on the 13th of June 2003 a conclusion about temporal asylum for citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to this law temporal asylum stopped on the 1st of August 2003. People whose temporal asylum expired had to leave Slovenia till the 15th of August 2003. Gole(2003a).

We must go further on to the level of the locals. Žagar (2001) explains how the refugees from Bosnia were, at the end of the conflict, reportedly causing disturbances to the local population and to their way of life. They were considered as potential criminals, though with their health seriously undermined. Their cultural level, behaviour and civilisation were quite different. Unfortunately we can observe the same aversion at the present. I don't think the situation has changed so much in the past years. These labels or categories referred to Bosnian refugees, and not to illegal immigrants, asylum seekers, or aliens, although the situation of those persons does not differ so much. Just one example:

I came to Slovenia in January 2001, because I wanted to study history and get acquainted with Slovene culture. In fact, I was ready to learn anything new, I was interested in everything. However, I had a problem with the stay permit so I had to extend the visa every month at the Russian embassy in Zagreb. When in May I went to Zagreb for the third time, I was sure that my visa would be extended again. There were enough reasons for that, or at least I thought so: I participated in the research study "Immigrants, who are you?" and cooperated with Radio Student, and on top of that, I intended to study at the Ljubljana University. Unfortunately, they sent me to Moscow with the explanation that the allowed three-month stay in Slovenia was over and after that I had to return to Moscow and get a new visa for Slovenia there. The world caved in on me. I didn't know how to get to Moscow. I had only seventy German marks with me. I was afraid that the Russians were going to send me to war in Chechnya and I did not want to defend the

militaristic country which Russian Federation is. Therefore I had no other choice but to try to return to Ljubljana, as it looked as the nearest town to me.

When I arrived at the Croatian-Slovene border I asked for asylum. However, police officers did not take this into account but sent me back to Croatia. It was hard for me. Police seized me in Bregana and took me to the police station. Within the next two hours I found myself at the court where I met a policeman, minutes-writer and a judge. They told me that they could secure a translator and a lawyer, but I had to pay for them. Of course, I could not afford it. The judge fined me 800 Croatian kunas, and as I only had 130 kunas, I “chose” prison instead. The eight days I spent in prison were really bad; I shared room with Albanians and Romanians who tried to enter Italy illegally. The circumstances in prison were really difficult – there was no radio, or television, or books. Even if I wanted to work, I was not allowed to. Twice a week you are taken out to get some fresh air, once a week you can take a shower and go to the prison shop. All I did was stare through the bars and sleep. There I recognized how important freedom was. Luckily, the food was good and we were not beaten. However, they treated us meanly, as if we were animals, and even worse, they looked through us or pretended we did not exist. Once I got out of the prison I didn’t have other choice but to go to Hungary. I had to leave Croatia within one day, therefore I walked 30 kilometres, partly travelled by bus and train, and hitched a ride the rest of the way. It took me two days to reach Budapest, and I spent all the money. All I had was a phone number of some student I didn’t know well at all. I borrowed a phone to call him, but he could not help me either – he was living at a campus and didn’t have any money himself. It was a total crisis. I went to a church to ask for help. I remembered that the Church was a powerful social institution in the middle Ages, so I thought they might have been able to help me now. I was grateful when it turned out that they could help me. They took me to a home inhabited by the Roma and Romanians. However, next day I ended up in the hospital because I hurt my legs and had blood infection. I was so weak that I could not even walk. I spent five days in the hospital and they took care of me. However, when I returned to the home where I stayed before, the good Christians chased me away with the words: “Go away; we don’t need you any more”. So I was left on my own in a big city. It was difficult because nobody spoke English and I did not know where to go to. Luckily, my mother sent me some money so I could buy some food, some clothes and a bus ticket.

Since I did not want to go to Russia, I could only try to enter Slovenia again. I wanted to visit my friend in Murska Sobota, but I got seized by the police in Lendava. I was imprisoned together with some Moldavians who were heading for Italy. They told me that in their closed-type communist country even those who had jobs earned just ten German marks a month. One of the Moldavian women was a teacher, another one, a mother of two children, had masters degree in law from the university in Chisinau. All of the Moldavians were very poor, without a job and without possibility to make a living. Luckily, the Slovene policemen did not beat us, but they sent us back to Hungary, while the judge just issued a warning because of offence. In Hungary I ended up in a home for asylum seekers. I was given a translator to help me, but even with his help I got none of the things I asked for. The centre was like a prison, the staff was very aggressive and they continually beat people. I was forced to sign a document that I did not understand, and when I tried to

throw it into the dustbin, the policeman struck me on the head. He told me that he had to keep the document. I had a number of documents in Hungarian so they were of no use at all. The prison food was utterly bad; I think it was long past the expiration date. The most I got there was a stale soup with bread. In the prison I met Ronald, a truck driver from Germany, who travelled across Hungary with an expired passport. He got a certificate that he was waiting for a new passport from the German consulate in Budapest. Later on he had to show that certificate to the policeman, who fined him five thousand marks, and they stole his watch. He was not allowed to call anybody, neither the German consulate nor his mother. After a few days I was taken to Ukraine, while Romanians and Moldavians were taken to Romania. They gave us money to buy some food, payed an overnight stay and we took a bus. I got a visa for Slovakia and within one month I was in Bratislava with an acquaintance who helped me find job. I worked for one month; I packed vodka in some Slovakian village, so I earned money to return home. The people were kind. Towards the end of June I returned to Russia and after two months I left again for Slovenia. I am now sorry that I wasted time striving in vain. It is senseless because of the iron bureaucracy typical of the EU candidate countries. I would like to study in Slovenia but I cannot enrol at the faculty because I have no proof that my mother will send me the high sum of money required monthly to support me. (Pajnik, 2002).

I do not wish to forget an important aspect of the issue; we were previously talking of the refugees from Bosnia and asylum seekers or illegal immigrants, and the aversion of the local population of a country, in our case Slovenia, but I would name one more category, the group of immigrants, because in fact they are also immigrants, coming from western Europe's countries or other economically developed states. Here the the aversion becomes desire. They come from states that serve as an example to Slovenia. We consider them, if not better than we are, at least similar. They are *different*, they are of "correct behaviour, civilised, with a high cultural level and healthy". In fact they belong to a world which we desire to be a part of. The others, asylum seekers, illegal immigrant and refugees come from an inferior world, a world we do not want to belong to.

Here an important point should be clarified. The definition of the Convention system 1951-1967 about refugees has limitations, at least two, directly connected with the Bosnian refugees. The first is that victims of armed conflicts are excluded from the definition of a refugee, and the second is that the concept of group persecution is also not recognised. This is the problem of people who seek and need international protection and

are not considered refugees. Where and how to find a solution? As the UNHCR request to governments about the conflict in former Yugoslavia, the pragmatic solution was group protection on a temporary basis - namely, giving temporary protection to people fleeing from the war, providing immediate security, recognizing the needs connected with protection, simplifying the procedures, generosity, and facilitating repatriation or resolution of the conflict.

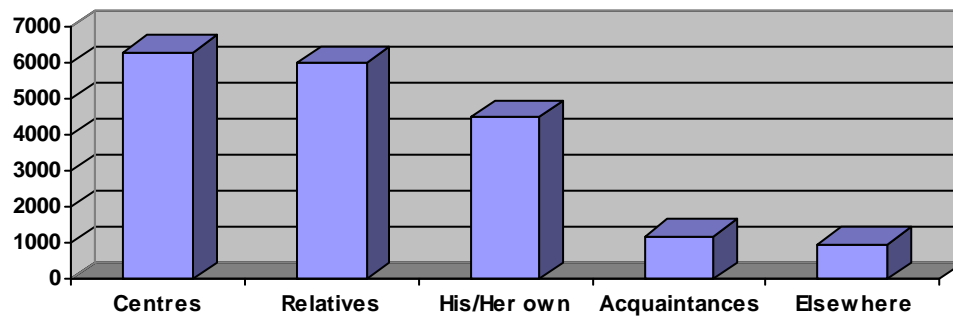
At the beginning the temporary protection seemed an acceptable solution, however the situation slowly changed because some homeless refugees decided to stay in the host country, in our case in Slovenia. A crucial point here is integration into the host society by participation in social life, and into all its spheres, such as economy, politics and culture, all this sanctioned by a policy which by definition shows "*a field of study which entails the economic, political, sociologic and sociological examinations of the ways in which central and local governmental policies affect the lives of individuals and communities*" (Collins Dictionary of Sociology, 1991), within a welfare system that each state must provide for its citizens. For the refugees' population two aspects of such policy appear as very important: to promote equality in terms of life opportunities and to guarantee autonomy and control over their own lives. If this and a legislated policy against exclusion and providing social rights, welfare, assistance and social security are not in place, then the refugees are at risk of being excluded, as stated by Bhala and Lapeyre (1995). The practical part of my thesis is an in-depth study of what has happened to the refugees from Bosnia living in Slovenia.

We believe the government is the major actor in regard to a policy against exclusion of the refugees; however, we must not forget NGOs as a factor playing an important role in helping refugees to integrate and participate in the social life of the society.

At the beginning the care for temporary refugees was financed by the Slovenian budget, as well as facilitated by humanitarian aid and foreign support. Three institutions – the Slovenian Office for Immigration and Refugees, UNHCR and IOM (International Organization for Migration), were working together to raise the funds necessary to contain the situation. One of the more urgent tasks was to accommodate the refugees; the Office for Immigration and Refugees was responsible for the centres of accommodation

as well as for providing assistance to the temporary refugees to find host families. The chart below from Zavratnik (1996) shows the situation concerning the accommodation of Bosnian refugees in Slovenia.

Graph 6. (Zavratnik, 1996)



Slovenia is a relatively a young state. When it achieved independence in 1991, there was a general sense of becoming a democracy which fully respected human rights. Many people understood the independence as building of a democracy which abides the international rules of fundamental freedom and human rights, as is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Thus the Slovenian treatment of refugees may imply double standards in regard to human rights. This understanding is far from reality, as it will be seen soon.

Already in a newly independent country, the responsibility toward its citizens is valued higher than its responsibility towards “others”. The discourse of Mirko Jelenič, general secretary of the Red Cross of Slovenia, clears this point:

“I think that we have already exceeded this limit and it is high time somebody helps us. At any rate, I think that it would not be a catastrophe if Slovenia closed its borders. We are a sovereign country and every government makes use of this measure to protect its own citizens. (Doupuna et al, 2001).

Instead of a hierarchy of values according to the needs of refugees, we encounter here the right of a sovereign state to close its borders to them, and here the Red Cross assumes a role quite close to the position of the government. At this stage we may quote the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights...” Article 1.

“Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.” Article 3.

“Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.” Article 13.

“Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.” Article 14.

Such attitude and arguments were accepted by most media, politicians and intellectuals, preferring the duty and responsibility to its own country to humanitarian values. The media together with the politicians also presented the situation as a risk and disaster for Slovenia. So we could extend this appreciation to the citizens of Slovenia whose standard of living was considered threatened by the outsiders or refugees, which were viewed as persons who caused disorder and disturbed the habits of the nation, and also provoked conflicts related to nationality. In short, the presence of refugees was by definition problematic. They were described as potential criminals.

“... everyone has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial ...” (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 11, 2002).

Even some journalist from the Slovenian newspaper Delo presented the refugees as deserters, with lower social standard, with the health seriously undermined, arguing that many of them escaped for no real reason, believing mere rumours, when in reality the extremist Serbs were exterminating thousands of people across Bosnia. What right does this journalists have to give his opinion on whether these people had enough reason to flee from a terrible war? Maybe he does not know the rights that all human beings have or he ignores them.

What did the Slovenian government do at this point? It closed the borders. They even tried to legitimate such action by arguing that Slovenia did not have capacities to admit more refugees and that the possibilities for accommodation and caring for temporary refugees were exhausted, thus closing the border was considered as the best solution for the refugees themselves¹². Similarly some centres for refugees ere closed, as

¹² We must bear in mind, again at this point, the articles 13 and 14 from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, already quoted.

the one located in Hrušica near the border with Austria. The reason to close the centre was that the refugees were not supposed to be seen, as the director of the Office for Immigration and Refugees said for the Slovenian magazine “*Mladina*” on the 17th November 1992:

“In a way that is our main gateway to the West and I really do not think it quite appropriate”. (Doupona et al, 2001).

However, some principles were incorporated into the law on temporary refugees, as the Office for Immigration and Refugees reported in 1995, like family reunification, health care and financial support in case they were living with families outside the detention centres. Two years later, on the 10th April 1997, the government issued the “*Zakon o začasnem zatočišču*”¹³ (Law on Temporary Asylum); the paragraph IV defines the rights and responsibilities of the refugees, including health insurance, education or work; in the same official document in June 2002 also a document was published which dealt with the same issue for those who were seeking asylum and for those foreigners who had been already granted asylum in Slovenia; the paragraph II contains many articles about their rights concerning basic needs, the paragraph III some articles about financial support, the paragraph IV articles about health security, the paragraph V articles about legal assistance, the paragraph VI articles about humanitarian help and the paragraph VII articles about primary school education¹⁴. These are principles whose goal in theory would be to protect the rights and freedoms of the refugees. Of course this protection included everyone who had status of a temporary refugee, but many of them had no legal papers and they had absolutely no freedom, rights and social and institutional help, except for personal initiatives and support from non-governmental organisations. Bosnian refugees were permitted to stay on a temporary basis; in general, temporary protection is less advantageous than the conventional protection of refugees.

¹³ Uradni list RS, št. 20-1139/1997.

¹⁴ This law was signed by the minister of Internal Affairs at that time, Rado Bohinc, with the approval of the minister of Health, Dušan Keber, the minister of Work, Family and Social Affairs, Vlado Dimovski, the minister of Education, Sciences and Sport, Lucija Čok, and by the minister of Justice, Ivan Bizjak.

The refugees could also not work¹⁵, while the authorities made declarations that the temporary refugees were not allowed to work according to the international conventions. Such arguments are totally unjustifiable; as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the Article 23 states:

“Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment”.

The government of Slovenia, denying the right to work, clearly disregarded the Universal Declaration and violated a universal human right. Even the official institutions tried to argue there was no possibility for jobs because the status was temporary and that the refugees had no intention of integrating into the Slovenian society. Another reason was the unemployment in Slovenia. The Office for Immigration and Refugees said:

“The refugees should never get jobs instead of our unemployed people” (Doupona et al, 2001).

This does not mean that there is no connection between the work in Slovenia and the refugees. I would like to define two different frameworks. On one side there is the government, whose position against the right to work for refugees we already know, on the other side is the population of Slovenia. Many of them deny the jobs to refugees because of their illegal status or argue that they just carry out what the government has suggested on this matter. The most important thing is to avoid guilt, or at least not to feel guilty. Others offer jobs but less paid than in case of other citizens, with not medical insurance and working longer hours than the law stipulates¹⁶, as we will be able to prove in the empirical part of the thesis. The refugees contribute to our economy and standard of living; yet our excuse for exploiting them is that we do it to help those without jobs and that they should be glad to be able to live in our country.

¹⁵ According to the law on temporary asylum, the right to a part-time work in the organization of the Office for Immigration and Refugees was proposed (Office for Immigration and Refugees.).

¹⁶ On this matter the Universal Declaration of Human Rights says: » Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.« Article 23.2. »Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services.« Article 25.1. »Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay«.

We have already explicated how the government of Slovenia, closing its borders to refugees from Bosnia, was, in a way, denying the right to freedom of movement that every human being has according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We could talk about an “external task” and focus on the proposal by the Slovenian authorities to prevent the refugees’ entrance into Slovenia as a sovereign state. But they were also deprived of free movement inside Slovenia – those who were already living in the country. Thus we can see how the Slovenian state took the right to limit this freedom by a decree, as we can see in the article 22 of the Slovenian law on foreigners:

“The Executive Council of the National Assembly of Slovenia may issue a decree to restrict or prohibit movement of refugees in a specific area, or it may prohibit permanent or temporary stay in certain places for reasons related to public order”. (Doupona et al, 2001).

Another clear segregation took place in education. Many Bosnian children were not allowed to attend regular classes of the educational system. The reason was that these children would alter the structure of a class, as one could read in the newspaper *Primorske Novice* on the 22nd October 1993 as express Doupona et al (2001). The simple fact based on numbers was enough to deny the right¹⁷ to these children. For this purpose another educational programme was made and new school buildings were constructed inside the centres for refugees to avoid the need for transportation. Again we observe the violation of basic rights, such as the right to education, by the policy, supported by the population, as we can see in the next paragraph, quoted by Doupona et al (2001), who resumes a letter written by parents of school children to the Ministry of Education and Sport:

“Therefore you are aware that their level of civilization and culture and behavioural patterns are different. We do not allow our children to be under the same roof as refugee children if they can be separated like in other places”.

¹⁷ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 26: »Everyone has the right to education...«. Declaración de los derechos del niño, artículo 7:«Derecho a recibir educación gratuita y a disfrutar de los juegos» (Declaration of the children rights, article 7: »Right to receive free education and to play«).

The idea of separation was abandoned in 1995/96. The Office for Immigration and Refugees reported that the children were integrated into the Slovenian educational system, where the secondary and higher levels were available according to the capacities in schools and with foreign financial assistance. The reason was that there were not enough refugee children to warrant the expense.

In short, the refugees did not get any help, they were denied many rights, such as freedom of movement, work. They were isolated and separated from the society as much as it was possible.

In clarifying these points the table by Zavratnik (1996) may prove helpful, it makes a simple resume of the issue and briefly defines the situation of Bosnian refugees in Slovenia until 1996:

Graph 7. Bosnian refugees situation according to legal, social, educational, family and employment factors till 1996 in Slovenia.

Admission	Key actors	Legal instruments	Employment	Education	Social assistance	Family reunion
Mass influx	Office for Immigration and Refugees	Law on temporary asylum (in parliamentary procedure)	No right to work; proposal for part-time work in the draft law	Primary school, less successful in case of further education	Material, psychological, health care	Core family members and humanitarian grounds

C- Psychological and sociological aspects of the refugees' situation

The previous chapters explain the situation of refugees and immigrants in Europe, with special emphasis on Slovenia, in regard to legal status, human rights and the pertaining policies. To understand the level of integration or discrimination of these people, it is extremely important to analyse many psychological and sociological aspects which affect the refugees when they have to face a new life at the moment they are forced to leave their country and live in a new society.

Despite all these points I wonder at which level the inhabitants of a country, and their acceptance of the refugees, play an important and decisive role in the integration of these people into the local community. *To what extent do the locals influence the life of refugees and immigrants in our society? :*

We will start with the following idea:

“A central part of how people understand their worlds and structure their behaviour has to do with how they experience the self” (Rule and Bennet, 1995).

A self-concept formation, as Michel Claes postulates, can be structured in the following way (Kobal-Palcic, 1996):

Graph 8. Self-concept formation.

CHILDHOOD ADOLESCENCE ADULTHOOD

9___10___11___12___13___14___15___16___17___18___19___20___21

 PUBERTY DEVELOPMENT

 COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

 MODIFICATIONS OF SOCIALISATION

 FORMATION OF SELF- CONCEPT

body - thinking process - social relations - me

In this self-concept formation many areas exert influence, such as verbal, academic, physical appearance, relations with peers, with parents, with the same or different culture, etc. Once we have formed our self-concept, it is a continual product of social interaction, dealing with relationship between oneself and the society. The concept is moving, dynamic, depending on different situations across time, cultures, moods and relations (Triandis, 1995). The self-concept can differ from one culture to another and there are also differences which are supposed to be related to national characteristics. In this social interaction, confrontation between cultures and understanding of our self-concept, we can locate the debate about identity and the rejection of a group of people or ethnic group – in our case the rejection of refugees and immigrants in Europe, and especially of refugees from Bosnia in Slovenia. Negative or positive self-identity is clearly connected with the group identification, (Nobles, 1995).

We have already discuss the rejection of refugees and immigrants by a local population in Europe and in Slovenia. Barker (1981) talks about the “new racism”, which has nothing to do with notions of inferiority (either biological or cultural). The basis is rather the instinctive need of a nation to protect itself against any perceived threat to its continued existence, in terms of culture, it’s own identity, customs, etc. This idea is always associated to the statement that it is in human nature to create bounded social groups and in the nature of such groups to separate themselves from those they perceive as different. A national culture is viewed not only as the source of individual identity, but also as the guarantor of social and political cohesion. However, I would like to deal with the idea of rejection or “racism” as the issue of ethnic or cultural superiority, which also blames the refugees or immigrants for economic or social problems in the country. Both forms of “racism” are currently present in our society. To fight such conceptions it is crucial to inform, collective actions and to identify the importance of pedagogy in the promotion of antiracism, to avoid misunderstanding other cultures and to overcome prejudices about minority life styles, as in the case of the Bosnian community in Slovenia (Troyna,1987).

Jalušič (2001) says: “*Towards the end of 2000 and in the beginning of 2001 an explicitly stigmatizing and discriminatory media discourse on illegal immigrants gained ground in Slovenia*”; this was related to certain initiatives against the settling of

immigrants. The framework was a xenophobic and racist discourse together with the construction of a public consensus about the need for immigration policies of closing the borders, restrictions on the movement of illegal immigrants and deportation even before they apply for asylum. Some elements of this discourse were for example culpabilization of immigrants, victimization of the locals and legitimising of xenophobia as “normal, understandable deviations”, etc. Of course the answer was the denial of intolerance and racism, those acts were presented as a sacrifice arising from the need for self-defence and in many cases xenophobia was provoked by the state, which did not do anything to separate their citizens from “outsiders”. Of course this changed when the state was in the service of its people and their interests, thus this “tense” dialogue between citizens and state made way for restrictive immigration policies aligned with the European norms. The media were divided into two groups, one opposing the thesis about xenophobia or considering it exaggerated, and the other agreeing with this thesis and trying to analyze it.

At this time graffiti in Ljubljana referred to refugees and immigrants as:

*Banda, banditi, golazen, hudiči, jebivetri,
jugoviči, južni, kriminalci, kurbe, kurci,
lenuhi, muslimani, paraziti, cigani,
čefurji, pizde, fucking refugees, tujci, vzhodnjaki.*

There were and there are many prejudices and stereotypes about them, and those who are afraid of gays, lesbians, that is to say of others, are as a rule afraid of members of other cultures (Hrženjak, 2001).

What is domestic to us is constantly glorified inside our social framework. In many cases we are discriminating and pushing aside everything and everybody that endangers “our domesticity”. Such position is justified by our right to fight for “our” values and nation. *We are using the mechanism of xenophobia that serves the larger idea of protection* (Pajnik 2002, p. 8). Another characteristic is the victimization – as soon as we feel our identity or domesticity threatened there will be someone to blame. Again the idea of racism appears as a process of transition from nature (based on biological, neurological, physiological thesis) to culture (based on cultural differences), which is becoming the very basis from which everything in this racist discourse and practice starts

and **against which it resists as well**. First we will focus our discourse on the differences in the language, religion, lifestyle and so on, instead on the differences concerning bones, blood and genes.

“In order to produce racist difference today, it is no longer necessary to be of different colour. Mostly it is enough to practice another way of life.” (Kuzmanić, 2002, p. 22.)

The hate speech first forms negative images of others and those different, and then denies their human existence and tends toward the destruction of the “other”. Media reports have paid considerable attention to crime and incidents. Thus refugees and immigrants were criminalised and dehumanized, with many cases of the local population protesting against any kind of settling of immigrants. The local residents were presented as victims of the refugee and immigrant policies of the state, the element considered “guilty” of xenophobia, the society’s attitude toward the refugees was considered a “normal” behaviour and response. Unfortunately these populist movements constitute a part of the European political scene. Here the national values have a great importance, together with the sense of national identity and the adoption of a hostile attitude toward the refugees and immigrants. That position toward the “other” has been adopted by all nationalistic, authoritarian and totalitarian regimes of our epoch.

We can clearly see the lack of acceptance of other culture, other ways of living and thinking. At this point I consider it important and necessary to understand multiculturalism, as Shaughnessy et al. (1998) say, in terms of willingness to recognize differences between one’s own culture and other cultures, to recognize the identity of our own culture while we try to understand and accept the differences in other cultures. It requires a conscious effort to overcome the established prejudices or fixed ideas about refugees, immigrants and “others”, it is an effort to overcome the phobia of foreign cultures. Multiculturalism requires a change in thinking, an open mind. We are used to consider a culture according to the political power, economic abundance, race and sex, while multiculturalism evaluates cultures in an unprejudiced way and is horizontal in nature, it links all races and cultures into one, admitting the uniqueness and variety of all cultures. To succeed in this, the cooperation between cultures it is extremely important.

We may seem to be concerned with other races, nations or cultures, but we also have to recognize that it is crucial to be concerned with other individuals, people and histories. Only through repeated contacts can we turn something unfamiliar and strange into something familiar and good. At this moment, something familiar is something easily accepted, and multiculturalism appears essential to expand human rights for everyone¹⁸.

So far we have been reflecting on how the position of local population may influence possible psychological and psychopathological problems of immigrants and refugees. Now I will try to clarify some aspects in connection with these psychological problems and refugees. Distress caused by migration is a common denominator of refugees and immigrants: everything is different, new habits and knowledge must be acquired, while old habits are forgotten, at least partly. Obviously, the trauma of being uprooted is a trauma for anyone, however, it is a graded phenomenon, depending on the loss of previous life and the different traumatic experiences, such as the impossibility to return to one's native country, war, concentration camps and all kinds of persecution. As Zalokar (1994) says, an important aspect of the problems experienced by refugees and immigrants is the language barrier. Learning a language means better integration. Within different groups there are also differences in regard to age, family position, etc¹⁹. The language and its acquisition can represent an obstacle for integrating into a new community. In many cases an immigrant or a refugee is presented as a disabled person, even considered stupid and thus despised. I think that in order to remove this barrier refugees and immigrants must be allowed to adapt their previous identity and encouraged to institutionalize tradition within the structure of a multicultural society. However, the acceptance of those refugees or immigrants does not happen always at the same level. If an immigrant from United Kingdom addresses a Slovenian in English, he or she will probably respond in English, in this case an immigrant is not perceived as an intruder who should have by now learnt the language of the new society. I'm not saying that to

¹⁸ At this point it is very important to emphasise the importance of dialogue. Dialogues will open cultures, with dialogues we can transcend the static, ethnocentric and stereotypical categories and engage in more meaningful relationships between societies, cultures and people.

¹⁹ The acquisition of a new language will be much more difficult for an old refugee than for a young person who attends school, the same holds true for a woman who looks after her children at home all day – they will not undergo the same process of integration as a person who is in permanent contacts with the new society.

learn and to try to speak the language of the new country in which a refugee is living now is something inappropriate. Far from that, I think it is an excellent step forward to reach a global integration. The discrimination appears when one of them is accepted as he is, and the other is forced to learn a new language if he wants to be integrated. We could talk about positive and negative discrimination.

Another two important aspects are the influence of cultural gap and prejudices. The immigrants and refugees are considered as persons without education, the unemployed who want to take jobs from the local population, as dirty, with no papers, illegal, criminal, and so on. All these prejudices cause humiliating behaviour towards the immigrants. It is obviously difficult to find and keep a job, this, together with fear of family disintegration, contributes to the stress.

Refugees or immigrants react in different ways, for example by tension, anxiety, insecurity, isolation or avoidance of involvement in a new environment, not only in the alien surroundings but also in a family and in deeper aspects of their personalities, which may become narrower, elementary egocentric, instinctual. We can also find a refugee who may exhibit anger, hostility or aggressiveness for no apparent external reason. Sometimes some of them can fall into fanaticism, which is understood as a form of compensatory behaviour to make up for defects, inferiorities and loss of values, however, as Billig (1978) documents, the immigrants or refugees are more often the victims and not the instigators of totalitarian reactions, which are propagated in most of cases by the dominant society.

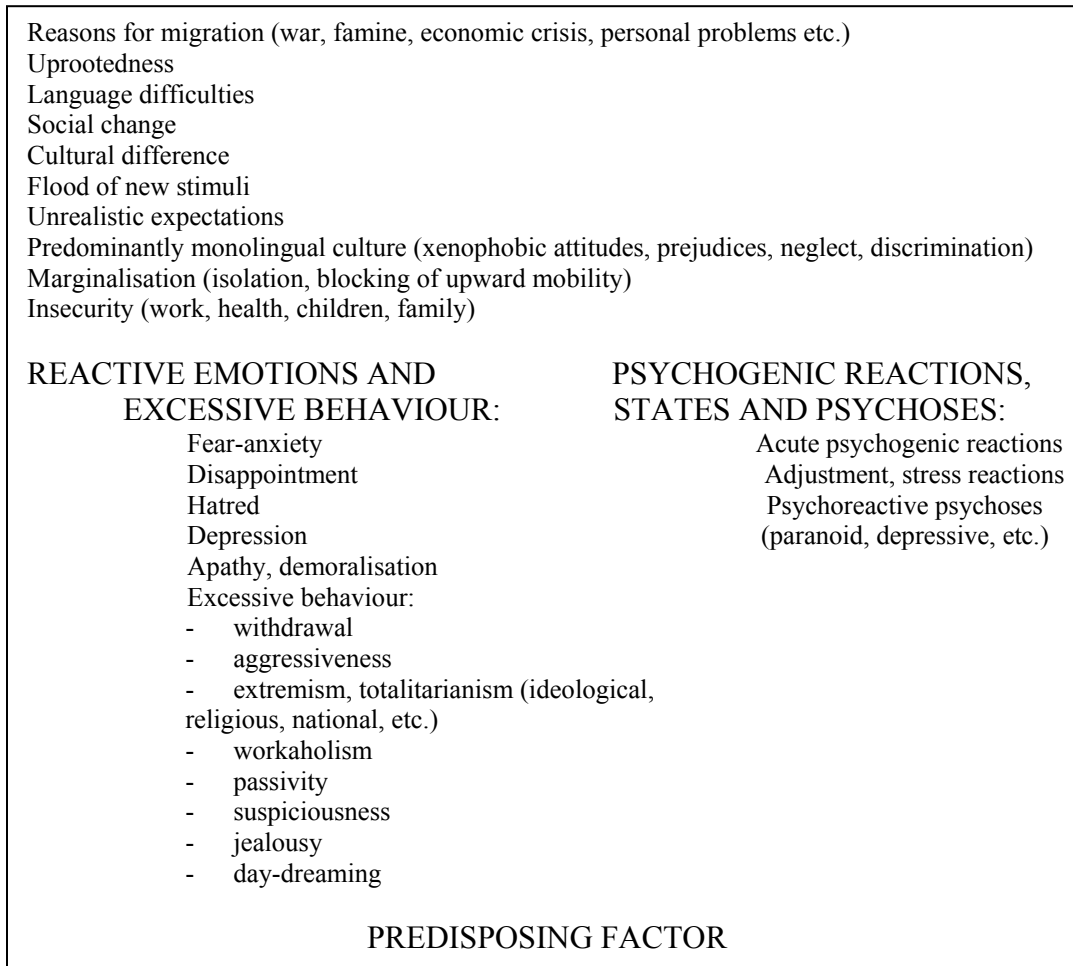
Suspiciousness from lack of trust, jealousy, anxiety and reactive depressive states are widespread among immigrants. I would like to remark that these reactions should be viewed as disturbances and not as a disease, because we are talking of healthy people who are only victims of intense stress. This is unfortunately often forgotten.

Despite all that, many have perceived that the experience of immigration can provide an opportunity for positive character development when positively motivated, and refugees who intend to live in the new country adjust. This develops tolerance and facilitates settling down. Other factors which add to positive reactions are assiduous activity at work, the maintaining of ethnic identity in order to attain positive affect and the learning the new language.

In regard to psychogenic disorders we may say that prolonged tension and anxiety accompanying the adjustment may cause behavioural disturbances. This situation becomes worse if external influences, such as alcohol or drugs, are involved. Because of traumatic experiences during their flight to safety or their stay in refugee camps, many of them develop a post-traumatic stress disorder. They suffer nightmares or other sleep disturbances. They can lose their appetite and become anxious, depressed or tense. The symptoms tend to gradually diminish only in the right emotional atmosphere. One important idea is to keep refugees busy. Unfortunately, they were often forbidden to work. Because of this it is crucial that the involved organizations provide the refugees with opportunities to become active in workshops, language courses, sports games, etc. An organisational framework for occupational therapy is very important. The factors and conditions causing psycho-reactive states and attitudes are mutually related. A person who is less likely to cope well with the situation will seek substitute solutions, which are in many cases counterproductive, like drugs or alcohol. I do not agree with the use of medicaments like sedatives or tranquillisers to solve the problem, but I think a person in trouble needs a proper explanation, communication, assessment, and advice. Sympathy, communication, emotional support, dialogue with elements of empathy and suggestion are also very important. I would say that it is more education than therapy.

A question arises here: what are the possible sources of such disturbances? To answer the question, the graph below may help us (Zalokar 1994, p.44):

Graphic 9. MAIN STRESSORS OF REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS:



3- EMPIRICAL PART OF THE RESEARCH

1. Objectives:

- To describe the theory and rules in Europe in regard to the status of refugees.
- To describe the theory and rules in Slovenia in regard to the status of refugees.
- To prove if these rules discriminate the group of population in question.
- To show how Europe and Slovenia are responding to such status and whether they respect the international agreements about refugees.
- To study the sociological aspects of the refugees.

- To show at which level those aspects influence the relations between refugees and the host society.
- To show how those aspects may shape the new life of these people.
- To establish whether this relation contributes to the integration of refugees or provokes discrimination.
- To show how the failure to comply with the international laws, which are regulating the field of refugees, by the government and its policies is closely related to the discrimination of refugees.
- To show how also the position of local population from a country contributes to such discrimination.

2. Methodology:

Having the opportunity to witness the situation of Bosnian refugees living in Slovenia, I consider the use of a quantitative element for my research too far from the reality and not sufficient to penetrate their experience. I will thus verify the connection between refugees' situation, Europe, Slovenia and its society by using the interview as a qualitative research method. I try not to forget that the interview is always conducted in a certain society and at a certain point in history, because we have our anxieties which cannot be left behind, we are determined by hopes, prejudices, class, gender or race, etc. I think the interview must be sufficiently prepared before it is carried out, with discipline, creativity and enough time for analysis and interpretation. I also decided not to close the questions but to leave the interviewee tell his experience. Thus I have used a semi-structured interviews which *“are designed to have a number of questions prepared in advance but such prepared questions are designed to be sufficiently open that the subsequent questions cannot be planned in advance but must be improvised in a careful and theorized way”*, (Wengraf, 2001, p.5).

I have tried to get detailed knowledge, to get the sense of how “surface appearances” may be quite misleading about in-depth realities. I consider it necessary to take into account the spontaneously chosen mode of talk and the things that are referred to in the exchange, as well as the subjectivity, because it must be understood not just as a predisposition but also the interplay between the interviewer and the interviewee. This

interaction is a matter of research. It is a game between knowledge and subjectivity within a conceptual framework for interviews. Of course we must bear in mind that at some points either the interviewer or the informant decides not to ask or answer further questions or points on a given topic.

In the questions which constitute my research I had to include some points as **purposes** which helped me to keep in mind the goals of my study during the interview. **Conceptual context** of the components and factors of the design are location, day and time of day. For temporary and physical arrangements I have respected the wishes of the interviewees, choosing “neutral spaces” to avoid possible interruptions and distractions which are frequent within a private space, such as family houses, or in public space, such as bars. I also informed the respondents that the interview had educational purposes and was going to be published; I maintained confidentiality of the interviewees by changing details so that the reader cannot identify them, yet paying attention not to annul the social-scientific research value of the final report. Some have negotiated possible changes within the interview interaction, according to its development.

It is also important to note that the interviewer does not just take on the single social role of a “researcher interviewer”. We in fact all carry around a bundle of roles. Feared, desired and expected “futures” may affect the interview interaction. I tried to maintain a pleasant and comfortable atmosphere during the interview, and I decided to introduce myself and to get to know the candidates before the interview – we, the interviewees and me, met to establish the first contact, to talk a little bit, to exchange opinions, with the intention to come closer together so that they see me as a friend or someone whom they can trust, not just as a “researcher interviewer”.

Another point within the conceptual context to take into account is choosing the channel to gather the messages. It is not just about analysing the words. It would be a great mistake to do so. Thus I also paid attention to paralinguistic elements and other channels involved in the interview, such as the perception of the body language, the non-verbal communication, because the interviews are not merely speech-events. Most communication is non-verbal, one has to observe the posture, eye-contact and non-verbal sounds. I tried to allow the interviewee long pauses, silence.

The interaction will normally take place in one language. However, for certain interviews we may use a translator if for example the interviewee does not speak the same language. This was my situation, because in many cases the interaction during the interviews took place in the Bosnian language, so I was helped by a translator, first during the interview and then during the analysis. Together with the translator, we tried to design and to maintain questions and dialogue in the style and the language that the interviewee felt comfortable with.

Interview questions must be planned and posed within a logical sequence. *“An adequate understanding of interviews depends on recognizing how interviewers reformulate questions and respondents frame answers in terms of their reciprocal understandings as meanings emerge during the course of the interview”*, Mishler (1986:52-3).

My intention was to elaborate questions and concepts as clearly and coherently as possible, within the framework in which the interview took place. Closed conceptual framework can block creativity. The questions vary between minimal intervention, interrogational style, and relaxed and conversational mode by precise short questions or open question. It depended on the point where the interview was at any moment. If some strong emotions arose during the interview, it was very important to give the interviewees the feeling of being accepted. I try to avoid anything which could cut the flow of narration. It is very important not to console, not to advice, not to interpret, not to intrude. If there was not enough time and the number of topics initially raised was large, some selection was inevitable.

To approach and collect data I chose four people, two males and two females. At the beginning it was difficult to find candidates because I did not know any Bosnian refugee living in Slovenia; that was the reason why I was looking for some organizations in Slovenia which help refugees with counselling. Those organizations, like Slovenian Philanthropy, and also some personal contacts helped me to contact and to meet the refugees. I conducted the same interview with all of them. I also decided to have two of the interviewees with higher education while the other two had only primary or secondary education. It was important to select persons who really could represent in practice the issues that were interesting for us (Mesec, 1998). My goal was to have a wide

range of different realities, expectations, experiences, circumstances. To select samples, I also considered the need to have access to the persons and the probability they were honest, the experience they had with the subject in question and their capacity to express that experience in words. However, with the last element I had some problems because of their refusal to answer or to talk about traumatic and negative aspects of their life. It is a situation and decision which I must respect. I tried not just to research what was interesting for me, but also to take into account the point of view of the interviewee (Mesec, 1998). I tried to make them feel that they were being trusted and that they could tell the truth. They did not need to be too analytic, just good story-tellers. In this way I designed my purpose and strategy.

The samples were chosen taking into account several aspects, such as gender – two of the interviewees are men and another two women; age – two of the interviewees up to 40 years old and another two over 40 years old; level of education – two of them have only primary school while another two have university education. All of them came to Slovenia as refugees because of the war and all of them had, due to different reasons, troubles with integrating in Slovenia, difficulties with personal, social, cultural or administrative integration.

Several viewpoints on the same event are more likely to produce an objective understanding than a single viewpoint; however, this does not mean that the study of single cases, or four cases in case of research, is not important for science. *The intensive study of single cases can produce insight which the superficial study of many cases can in no way equal*, (Scheff, 1997).

I used a tape recorder to gather the information and to analyze it afterwards. However, I also wrote down immediately after the interview everything I remembered about it, not trying to order, organize, or censor anything, but to complete it with the information I got from the debriefing notes and with what happened as recorded on the tape. Here the memos²⁰ helped me to build the process of my own reflection, making explicit my momentary concepts about the material. The memos provided me with the material for final writing, which I would organize in the transcription by physical lines, and also with notes about the voice (e.g.: *I do not think my father would have approved of*

²⁰ Memos are the theorizing ideas as they come to the analyst while coding.

either (laugh). The first step was to code the information into “open coding” ideas. After that I selected those ideas which were relevant for the goal of my research, entering these information into table and diagrams as “axial coding” (Mescic, 1998).

As to the **validity** – I suppose the interview about real experiences is the best way to support, demonstrate and make credible the ideas and results of the research. To obtain the “axial coding” at the beginning of the interview, I have used several questions for warming up, about life before the arrival to Slovenia; after that I guided the interview focusing on the information about life in Slovenia in four different categories: personal data, economical aspects, family and social aspects. Into these categories I entered relevant and concrete aspects of refugees’ life which help us to understand how and in what conditions they have been living in Slovenia. All information was recorded with a tape recorder and everything was written down to analyze the interviews directly from papers format.

It is also very important to build some particular knowledge-base about the subject we are going to study. It is wrong to think you can start on a quite new issue for which you do not have some general concepts. Thus, before I did my research and the interviews I did several researches gathering information either from books, articles, or through personal experiences.

About technical management up to the session – beside the tape recorder, I have used a notebook and a question schedule that I could read without difficulty, during the session I was paying attention to the responses and at the same time bearing in mind the need to ensure that all my questions are likely to get answered, to the non-verbal communication coming through body-movement, and to providing reinforcement and feedback to my informant about how the interview was going.

Why life’s history?

The wave of immigrants is not a novelty. There are several reasons for this. It is a mistake to study and to link such phenomena only to economic reasons. The process is

influenced also by other factors, such as dictatorships, political persecution, etc. On the other hand, its multifaceted character demands interdisciplinary treatment from demographic, social, political, cultural, psychological, anthropological, sociological and other points of view. Within this framework, qualitative techniques, and among them the interview about life's history, have become important, as a means of scientific research supported by qualitative elements.

“Understanding migration – immigrants’ or refugees’ code – is a sine qua non of processing so many numbers and statistics, which treat persons like objects” (Arjona and Checa, 1998).

Many researchers are approaching the issue of refugees and immigrants displacement from a quantitative perspective, “counting refugees”, pressured by the public administrations, “how many are there?”, “how many can arrive in short or long term”, with an economical vision, “where are they going to work?”, “how much may they bother us?”, education, health, housing, etc. Considering this situation, the life's histories are gaining importance. It is the knowledge of perspectives of persons who travel that enables us to accept and appreciate the decisions (economical, political, social, regarding family life...) which refugees have made. I think that qualitative methods, as the interview focused on life's experience, are adequate to get to know such social reality and also beneficial for future applications in other research frameworks. It is much better to listen to the feelings, thinking, fears, hopes, frustrations... from those who have experienced it than to see numbers, unnecessary statistics, etc. This does not mean excluding other research methods, but searching methodological complements. Life's histories and interviews also help us to find out the topics and stereotypes concerning migration, immigrants and refugees...

3.Results:

In the next few pages I present the analysis of four interviews, which show the situation of the selected refugees from Bosnia living in Slovenia. We are going to analyse the situation through several experiences of the persons, focusing the research on two women and two men of different age and education.

A-The 1st person: a forty-seven year old woman with primary education

The table below sums up different aspects shared in the four thematic groups, personal data, economy, family and social elements, of the first selected refugee, which will help us to understand in outline what was her life like in Bosnia before the war broke out and before her arrival to Slovenia.

Table 1- Social and demographic basic characteristics of refugees' life before the war – person 1

Concepts. II order.	Concepts. I order.
Personal data	Name, date and place of birth. She lives in Bosnia. Married.
Economic aspects	Husband working as a manual worker. She does not have a job.
Family	Husband is a principal supporter. She has several children. She has a sister and brothers.
Social aspects	She has just finished primary school. She is a Muslim. She spends free time with the family.

a- Social and demographic basic characteristics of the refugee's life before the war:

The person does not have any problems when introducing herself by **personal data**. Although she knows that we have to compromise to keep the confidentiality, she does not show any reluctance to reveal personal information, such as name, place and date of birth or address. She also conveys her marital status but without saying anything about her husband. She just wants to say that she was married; and it was while she was still in teens.

“My name is Umka. I am forty-seven; I was born on the 7th October 1955 in Sanski Most, Bosnia; I lived there all the time, my husband was {...}, I married him when I was eighteen. It was in 1973.”

The **economy** of the family depended on the husband’s job in Slovenia, where he worked as a construction worker, while she was at home in Bosnia without a job, she was a housewife. Her family was similarly underprivileged.

“My husband worked in Slovenia. I was farming a little, and I was taking care of our children. My parents were also poor.”

Most of the time, when speaking about her **family**, she brings attention to her husband. This person is a decisive factor in her decision to come to Slovenia and also later in her life there, as will be made clear in the explanation. At this time he was working in Slovenia, which directly determined the time they spent together. He was the principal economic support of the family.

“He worked here²¹ and he used to come to Bosnia, sometimes once a week or every fifteen days. Sometimes once a month.”

She belongs to a large family whose members were somehow quite close to each other. The war provoked the rupture of the family life; this is a common occurrence in Bosnia today, now thousands of families are scattered all over the world.

“We were four brothers and four sisters. When the war broke out one of my brothers died, he just disappeared and we do not know what happened to him, another went to Germany and another two went to Slovenia. My sisters, one went to Norway and two to Slovenia. My father died before the war and my mother stayed in Bosnia.”

She has a large family; and unfortunately the situation is similar: the war divided them. All the children, except the youngest, were born in Bosnia.

“I have five children. They were born in Bosnia, except the youngest daughter.”

She has many **social** characteristics which, in combination with other elements, such as economic or those related to family, represent a common portrait of a poor and large family, e.g. she did not have the opportunity to study.

²¹ In Slovenia.

“I finished primary school but my parents were poor and I could not continue my education.”

Happy with her life before the war, she presents the situation as positive and agreeable, with no serious troubles; integrated into social life and with a role very specifically delimited according to the position of a woman in a patriarchal family where the wife is often at home and the husband is the one who works and shoulders the responsibility to provide for the family. She believes such position is her duty.

“Life was great, I had everything, vacations, time together with my friends...”

“I was at home taking care of the children while my husband was working in Slovenia. I was eighteen when I married him. At this time my husband was working; I was not.”

In these cases women normally got married quite early and they always shared their life with the same person, whatever the life brought them afterwards.

“I get married in Bosnia, I was all the time there; I have had only one husband in my life, I have only known one man in my life. I was eighteen when I got married.”

The other social element which appears during the interview is the religion to which she belongs.

“I am a Muslim. I used to go to mosque when I was in Bosnia”.

The table below sums up different aspects shared in four thematic groups – economic, administrative, family and social elements – for the first refugee, which will help us to understand in outline what her life was like once she arrived in Slovenia.

Table 2- Characteristics of the refugee's life in Slovenia - person 1

Concepts. II order.	Concepts. I order.
Economic aspects	<p>She had some money. Some organizations helped her and her family in Slovenia. No job at the beginning. Illegal work. Not enough money to pay the bills.</p>
Administrative aspects	<p>Illegal immigrant on the arrival to Slovenia. Refugee status at the time of the interview. No free movement – lacking legal status. She does not find a job with illegal status, does not meet the requirements to get citizenship.</p>
Social aspects	<p>She lives with the family in a derelict flat. She does not speak Slovenian. No contacts with her religion. She respects Slovenian society. Her friends and acquaintances are from Bosnia; almost no contacts with the locals.</p>
Family aspects	<p>Domestic troubles with her husband. Her husband is an alcoholic, aggressive to his family. Husband's expulsion from Slovenia. She works and looks after her daughter. No relations with her husband now. Daughter integrated in school. Not much contact with other members of the family in Slovenia.</p>

b- Characteristics of the refugee's life in Slovenia:

Throughout the history of many wars across the world we can see several reasons directly connected with forced migration movements. To reach final settlement refugees use

different ways, in most cases not voluntary but imposed by other people. Some examples could be attributed to reasons connected with the family, to political decisions or even to arbitrary destiny nothing can be done against. In the interview we can see how the nightmare starts with decisions caused by war and completely beyond person's control.

“The ones who brought us here were those, how shall I say this... those that ruled in Bosnia? They started beating and killing people. They transported us to Vlašić in trucks forcing us to leave ours homes. Then we walked 18 km to Travnik where I stayed ten days; then we went to Zagreb by bus.”

Another important reason in connection with refugees' migration is related with **economic aspects**. Many of them do not have the opportunity to choose it, but in the case of the interviewed person it appears as the main element that brought her to Slovenia.

“After ten days in Croatia, we went to Slovenia. My husband was registered in the job centre and he had some money here; about 1500-2000 BAM²². If he had not had this money here I would not have come and would have gone to another country further away.”

The financial situation became a real problem and some external support helped the person in her new life in Slovenia. The supports came from the family and from some organizations.

“In 1993 we started receiving humanitarian aid once a month. We went to the Red Cross once a month. {...} Now²³ my son and my daughter help me a little bit.”

The only way for the person to obtain by herself financial resources is working. The labour status is directly connected with obtaining papers proving to have a regular job; this is not the case of the interviewed, she has to work with no papers and always facing uncertain future. A consequence is that a number of refugees work illegally, with no contract and health insurance.

“I work but it is difficult when you do not have the papers. It's difficult. I would stay where I am working now if I got the papers, but the employer cannot keep me without the papers because of the inspection. Now I am just filling in for somebody.” “I also clean some block of flats twice a week, but they still have not paid me.”

²² BAM: Currency in Bosnia.

²³ The interview was made at the end of 2003 and at the beginning of 2004.

Obviously, what I have previously explained also causes a difficult financial situation and consequently serious troubles.

“With the money I earn I can hardly pay the postal orders, which add up to 40000 SIT²⁴. I cannot earn enough money with my work,²⁵ for that reason I buy food where it is the cheapest and my daughter also brings me something from the market.”

If the economic elements are important to guarantee a normal life, the aspects in connection with an **administration** status are no less important. To have a legal status in the state where you are currently living is the first step toward gaining access to many social benefits that may and must guarantee a welfare state. It becomes indispensable for the person. When you are fleeing from war you probably do not have much time to think what the situation will be in the place where you are going, you even do not know where you are going. To get papers maybe at the beginning is not the priority, but after it becomes essential. On the arrival to Slovenia our interviewee did not have any legal status that could help her get a decent life.

“At first I was here as an illegal immigrant. Then, in 1993, they informed us that we should report. So we went to Vič, to those sheds, and everybody who did not have the refugee status got it there”

A clear indicator of how cruel life can sometimes be is the necessity to be granted a status from the government to receive humanitarian help. Something must be wrong in this world if we need an official document to get humanitarian aid.

“We got the refugees status, and then we started receiving humanitarian aid.”

Ten years later the status did not change for better and the situation is quite uncertain. We can imagine that the administrative procedure takes its time but the interview made clear that there is certain lack of interest and engagement from the government to solve the situation of the refugees; and once more the initiative of humanitarian organizations appears as the only solution for many of them.

²⁴ 40,000 SIT: 166 euros.

²⁵ 50,000 SIT: 208 euros; it means she must live with 10.000 SIT (41 euros) a month.

“What kind of experience do you have with our government offices? Does anybody help you?” *“You²⁶ help me.”*

According to law, legal status is directly related to free movement for the people who are illegally living in a country. Our case is not an exception and the interview revealed the impossibility of free movement for her. The difficulties preventing normal life may be manifold, e.g. no contact with family members.

“My sister would like me to come to Norway but it is not possible. I do not have the papers.”

Another is the connection between an ID and legal status of refugees in the state to which they have been admitted, and the consequences it has for free movement.

“I have a valid passport from Bosnia but I cannot go to Norway, not even as a tourist. With your citizenship²⁷ I could go, but I do not have it. I cannot even go to Bosnia. I cannot go anywhere. I cannot leave Slovenia.”

Legal status and citizenship do not affect a person but also those persons who are directly connected with him or her, namely family members.

“With your citizenship I could go to Norway {...} the little girl²⁸ does not have status, does not have the papers. She was born here but she does not have it because her parents do not have it...”

Another difficulty in obtaining the citizenship is related to certain obligations that every refugee must carry out.

“I need a certificate of the Slovenian language knowledge. I need to pass the exam to get the citizenship.”

And the last element of the administrative aspects is the relation between legal status and employment, which will confirm how closely connected the welfare of a refugee and his/her administrative status are. Without documents a refugee cannot have access to the labour market and is thus without the economic support to lead a normal life; of course, this situation makes many refugees and immigrants work illegally, without any rights.

²⁶ *You* refers to the person who works in the office for people without health insurance that helped me to make the interview.

²⁷ *Your citizenship* refers to the citizenship of the person who works in the office for people without health insurance and helped me to make the interview; in this case the Slovenian citizenship.

²⁸ Daughter.

“I work but when you do not have the papers it is difficult. I will stay in the enterprise where I am now but the employer cannot keep a worker without the papers because of the inspection. I am just filling in for somebody.”

The example above shows how some companies use immigrants with no legal status to temporarily replace their workers. Refugees or immigrants thus do not earn enough for living while waiting to be employed once they get the legal status provided by the local authority; for that reason most of them are forced, with not alternative, to take illegal jobs. In this case they never know when they are going to work and even when they carry out the task assigned to them they do not always get paid regularly. Without legal status there is no possibility to complain; rights do not exist for this social stratum.

“I did not quit cleaning flats twice a week. They did not pay me. I do not know what will happen. I should get the money but I did not agree about anything with them. I do not know.”

To live in a new society means that you share with that society many elements. The integration of these elements determines the relation between you and the new environment. The relation between these two elements differs from one person to another; it depends of the level of integration. A local, for example, will not have many problems because he or she lives in the same society where he or she was born, but a refugees come from another society and went through different process of adaptation; it will depend on how they will combine the elements they bring with them and the new social elements they find in the new “world”. Thus, the next point to analyze is connected with **social aspects and refugees.**

When you must start anew, a place where you live is a crucial element; a decent accommodation must be provided. If you have relatives who already live in the new country, the problem we are talking about seems to be solved.

“{...} First I went to Velenje to my brother. I spent there twenty days. Then I went to Kranj to my sister. I stayed at her place also twenty days, and then I came to Ljubljana.”

However, to find an adequate accommodation becomes an illusion when you have no legal status and no regular job and when you no longer have a family which cannot

support you, because their situation is similar. Many times the living conditions are not the best that a family could desire.

“We heat the room by burning wood because we do not have central heating. We²⁹ have a room of twelve squares metres approximately and we share the bathroom and the hall.”

Very important in establishing relations with the new society is to communicate with people who constitute it; at this point the knowledge of local language is essential. Most of the cases show that on many occasions it is the greatest problem.

“The language is the most difficult thing for me. I still do not speak Slovenian. I have not learnt it.”

Sometimes, if two languages belong to the same group the adaptation processes are easier; this is the case with the Bosnian and the Slovenian language. Sometimes, due to this proximity, many people understand almost everything, although they need an official certificate that proves they speak Slovenian to get the citizenship and other official documents.

“I understand all. There is no big difference between the Bosnian and the Slovenian language; {...} I have not had the residence permit for two years now. I hope that it will be arranged. You³⁰ should make me an appointment by phone so that I can go to Slovenian classes... I need the certificate.”

Another element that may sometimes cause certain obstacles to the adaptation is the religion, particularly if the country where a refugee is living is of different religion, as in this case when we have a Muslim in a catholic state; however, it seems relevant how a person is influenced by a religious doctrine. How you follow the rules of a religion, at which level, may influence your integration into a new society from which you also receive other cultural elements.

“I am a Muslim, I used to go to mosque when I was in Bosnia. To some extent I obey the rules of my religion, but I respect all religions, I even bought my daughter a Christmas tree. I do not know anything about that, I just bought some decorations.”

²⁹ We: daughter and mother.

³⁰ The assistant at the office for people without health insurance who helped me during the interview.

The person presents clearly some elements which do not belong to her original environment but represent an aspect from local environment that she has adopted and that to a certain extent change her behaviour according to and in connexion with a new context. Sometimes it also provokes a personal attitude to the new society.

“I like Slovenians. I live here and I would also like to learn the Slovenian language. I also try to accustom the little one; I would like her³¹ to behave as the people in Slovenia behave.”

The person is trying to be integrated into the new environment and does not want to look back to her past. She focuses all her efforts on the future of her daughter because when we asked about friends or acquaintances we discovered that everything is determined by her origin and that social contact with locals does not exist or is just minimal. The disposition of the society towards the refugee or how the refugee wants to be integrated determines the integration.

“My friends have Slovenian citizenship but they are from Bosnia, I have no Slovenian friends here in Ljubljana. Only from Bosnia. I do not live with Slovenians³². They are all Bosnians.”

When your life undergoes drastic changes as is the case of a refugee who has escaped from war, the elements close to you also suffer such changes. There is nothing closer to a person than his or her family, and this is the next element to analyze: **family aspects**.

Taking into account that the interviewee was once living in Slovenia with her husband and daughter, we will begin by analysing the relation and coexistence with the husband. When you change your way of living, there are sometimes many elements which can determine your future; one of these elements that influenced the person's life and also provoked family destabilization is connected with the husband's drinking problem.

“He used to drink a little but lately he became crazy. When he got drunk he did not work, he could not work. He was aggressive. He was in hospital because of drinking but not on detoxification because he did not have health insurance. If he had had health insurance they would have treated him. He did not beat us. I do not know, I would rather not talk about that; you are asking too much.”

³¹ Daughter.

³² Here we can also see that the refugees who are not at refugee centres are living in the same neighbourhood with almost no contact with locals.

Some important conclusions from that information are that with no papers and health insurance you can not overcome some problems; because of alcohol addition two consequences appear: one is the impossibility to work and another is aggression and violence. She did not want to talk about it.

It is not necessary that all problems are interrelated, but it is also true that some problems, aggravated by social disintegration, culminate in serious situation for people who experience them. The person suffered similar consequences because her husband did not get legal status and was expelled from the country.

“He was caught by the police in the street with no visa and forced to go to the court. They took him off to Bosnia. I was working and I could not leave my work; when I came home he was not there anymore.”

Owing to the disintegration of family caused by her husband’s drinking problem and violence, the person is somehow happy that this happened and happy with her life after that.

“Now he is living with his mother and with no job. Maybe everything would have been different if he had not been drinking; he drank so much. In fact, I am glad he has gone.”

The other person directly involved in the person’s life is her daughter.

“My daughter, who lives with me, is eight; she goes to school regularly but she does not have the status. She is in the second grade and works hard. The teachers are nice.”

Although she lives only with her daughter, she has other family members living in Slovenia.

“I have two brothers here and we visit each other. When I celebrate my daughter’s birthday, my other children who are living in Slovenia come to visit me. I also have grandchildren.”

c- Grounded theory:

During the interview I did not want to focus on the life of the person during the war in Bosnia but on her life once she left her country and came to Slovenia. My intention was to show different personal, social, economic and cultural elements which define the relation between her and the local society where she was forced to live.

At the beginning of the interview I gathered information about her life before the war; she is from a poor family where she was taking care of her children and her husband was a construction worker; they were a large family with lesser education and with low standard of living.

The core of our interview is her life once she came to Slovenia, living as a refugee. Most of refugees have no idea where they will end up once they are forced to leave their homes. In our case the economic aspect is very important because the person came to Slovenia looking for some money that her husband had here, although she received also some help from her family and some organizations.

Without legal status it is very difficult to find a job – refugees can only work illegally, with no contract and no health insurance. The lack of legal status also entails the lack of free movement, they cannot even visit their home country or their own family living in other states.

The social aspect is also crucial to the welfare of the person because people have to acquire several social elements in order to be integrated into a society. The accommodation of a family becomes essential. Refugees usually live in squalor as they are in a critical economic situation and with no legal status to find a decent place to live, although they may be helped by their families at the beginning.

In the process of integration it is very important to know and to speak the language of the country where refugees are living; persons who do not speak it have many problems – they cannot get the citizenship and establish relations with locals. All the person's friends and acquaintances are from the same place, which does not help integrating into a new environment, although she, despite all this, wishes to adopt the behaviour of her new environment and to be integrated.

Wherever you live, the family is a very important aspect and probably the closest element to a person, which influences directly his or her life. In our case it is the most important factor determining the life of the person. The way of life, before, during and after the arrival in Slovenia, is always determined by changes in the family.

The arrival to Slovenia was determined by the fact that her husband had the job in Slovenia and some money. The destabilization came due to her husband and his drinking problem; to survive in a new society where you are a refugee, two elements become

crucial: legal status and financial resources; a job. Because of her husband's drinking problem he did not go to work and he could not receive adequate treatment in the hospital, because he did not have legal status and health insurance. And he also displayed aggressiveness and mistreatment towards daughter and wife. Family disintegration thus caused social exclusion; she was finally forced to work to solve her economic troubles.

The family unit disintegrated when the police arrested the husband in the street and immediately deported him to Bosnia; she does not regret this because he caused nothing but troubles. Thus she found herself living with her daughter, who does not have status although she regularly goes to school, and with some members of her family.

The table below will help us to see several aspects of the selected refugee which influenced positively or negatively her life and integration into the society in Slovenia.

Table 3 - Positive and negative aspects which influenced social integration of the refugee.

<i>Positive aspects</i>	<i>Negative aspects</i>
<p>Economic aspects</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>She could use some money that her husband had in Slovenia. In Slovenia she received help from her family. In Slovenia she received help from some organizations.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p>
<p>Legal status</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>She did not have legal status. Lack of legal status – she could not find a regular job. Lack of legal status – she worked illegally. Lack of legal status – she did not have health insurance. Lack of legal status – she could not move from Slovenia.</p>
<p>Social aspects</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>At the beginning she found accommodation with her family.</p> <p>She showed the desire to be integrated into the local society.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>The accommodation she found after was not appropriate. She did not speak the language. She did not have access to the citizenship. She did not have much contact with locals, which did not help to her integration.</p>
<p>Family aspects</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>Because of the deportation of her husband she started to work and she no longer suffered aggressiveness and mistreatment from her husband.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>Destabilization because of the alcoholism of her husband. Aggressiveness and mistreatment because of her husband.</p>

She had contacts with her family living in Slovenia.	
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B- The 2nd person: a young woman with university education

The table below sums up different aspects shared in four thematic groups, personal data, economic, family and social elements, of the second selected refugee, which will help us to understand in outline her life in Bosnia before the war broke out and before her arrival in Slovenia.

Table 4 - Social and demographic basic characteristic of the refugee's life before the war - person 2

Concepts II order	Concepts I order
Personal details	She is 26. Born in 1979. City of origin: Mostar (Bosnia).
Family aspects	Family members (two sisters, one brother and mother). Death of her father. She decided to run away from Bosnia.
Economic aspects	Father supported the family. He worked abroad.
Social aspects	Came from Austria. Arrived to Slovenia in 1994 because her father had an acquaintance in the country, intended to stay in Slovenia temporarily.

a- Social and demographic basic characteristic of the refugee's life before the war:

At the beginning of the interview the person was a bit surprised when I told her that it was not necessary to introduce herself, to convey her **personal details** such as name or surname. The anonymity seemed not to worry her; she explained from where she came and how old she was.

“I am 26 years old; I was born in 1979. My city of origin is Mostar.³³”

She describes her **family** with not many details, saying just how many members there were; she said her father died three years ago. The mother appears as an important element for the decision to leave Bosnia when the war came.

“I have two sisters, one is older and the other is younger than me; I also have a younger brother. My father died three years ago {...} there were several attacks with grenades, not in Mostar but in the surrounding area; we heard that Serbs were attacking and then my mother said – this is not going to be OK; we packed and we ran away. My father was at this time not in Bosnia, he was working quite a lot abroad; my mother was the one who decided to run away.”

Many men from Bosnia were working abroad to support their families.

She remembers the moment when she, together with the family but without the father, ran away from Mostar; she was twelve; the travel to Slovenia was long.

“First we went to Croatia because it was close and safe, we intended to stay there a few days or weeks till the situation calmed down; we left with just few clothes. When we realized that the situation was not getting better, we decided to go to Vienna, in Austria, because my father had been working there; and in 1994 we arrived to Slovenia; I do not remember why but I remember that one the reason was that my father had a friend in Slovenia and that we could not go back to Bosnia because the situation was even worse due to the fighting between Bosnian and Croats.”

We can see how the economic element becomes crucial in deciding where to go when you do not have anything and when you do not know where to go; the **social** aspect, acquaintances, also may influence the decision concerning the final destination.

³³ City located at the south of Bosnia and Herzegovina, close to the border between Bosnia and Croatia.

During the first part of the interview we established that life of a refugee, while she or he does not have any legal and stable status, is uncertain; all the time she is saying that running away from the war was just a temporary solution.

“We went to Croatia to stay there a few days or weeks till the situation calmed down {...} we went to Vienna, in Austria, and finally in 1994 we arrived to Slovenia; we did not plan to stay here for a long time...”

The table below sums up different aspects shared in four thematic groups, economic, administrative, family and social elements, of the first refugee, which will help us to understand in outline her life once she arrived in Slovenia.

Table 5 - Characteristics of the refugee's life in Slovenia - person 2

Concepts. II order.	Concepts. I order.
<p>Economic aspects</p> <p>Administrative aspects</p> <p>Social aspects</p> <p>Family aspects</p>	<p>Father's job in Austria, sending money to family. Mother's job as a cleaning lady in Slovenia. Help from organizations. Proposition from the government: they would get some money if they left Slovenia.</p> <p>Temporary asylum on the arrival. Temporary asylum till 2003. Ambiguity and uncertainty: possibility of expulsion from Slovenia. Proposition to leave Slovenia in exchange of money. Mother without legal status (no right to work). They got residence permit; it facilitated the access to another social services. They did not have health insurance at the beginning.</p> <p>Problems with the language (she did not speak it fluently). Troubles at school (she had problems with the Slovenian language). No friends from Slovenia. Personal initiatives to help. Accommodation in a flat because the centre for refugees was not suitable.</p> <p>Separation of its members: father went to work in Austria. At the moment they are living in Slovenia; father is dead.</p>

b- Characteristics of the refugee's life in Slovenia

Despite the help from the government to develop a normal life in a new country, and in connection with the **economy**, a family needs to have the possibility for regular and legal work; at this point most of the governments violate international resolutions and declarations because they admit people to their countries but they do not facilitate the right of refugees to work, they even do not allow this by political and internal regulations; in view of such situation refugees consider all possibilities to find financial resources; help from some organization or private initiatives are also very important for the economy of a refugee family.

“My father was in Austria because he was working there, sending some money, and my mother at this time started cleaning some flats, illegally, of course, because you have not the right to work; now she has a regular job {...}; at the beginning there was no help, but later some organizations, like the Red Cross, started to help us and we had the right to some food like oil, flour, although it was not enough for us.”

It is degrading behaviour from a sovereign state to offer refugees, taking advantage of their poor financial situation, some money in exchange for leaving the country; that was what Slovenia did.

“They were offering to us some money and material help, but on the condition that we leave Slovenia and go back to Bosnia.”

In regard to the **administrative aspects** and legal status, and in connection with the stay in Slovenia, at the beginning everything was planned to be temporary.

“At the beginning we had some kind of cards; we were meant to stay temporarily, till the war ended.”

The idea of temporary stay changed completely and even once the war was over they were with the same status in the same city. At this point the uncertainty about their life caused insecurity because their status did not change and they did not know how it would end. The passiveness of the government creates a legal vacuum in regard to the status of refugees.

“Till 2002 or 2003 we had the same uncertain temporary status; it was not status that would enable us to stay, but we knew that we could not go anywhere; at this moment we had problems because we felt like we came just two days ago, we were afraid the government would expel us from Slovenia.”

The legal status influences directly the economy of the family because the lack of legal status does not provide the possibility to work legally.

“My mother was working illegally because she did not have the right to work {...} Many people went back because the country did not offer anything to them for a long time.”

At this point I would like to remark how the government of Slovenia was “inviting” people to go back to Bosnia (I use quotation marks because I could use the word “blackmailing” instead); Slovenia was offering help but under antisocial conditions; someone offers you help if you do not bother him or her anymore: that was the position of Slovenia.

“Slovenia was offering money and material help to rebuild our house in Bosnia; the condition was to go back to Bosnia and leave Slovenia.”

The person and her family could stay here and at the end they got legal status with residence permit. At this point the situation changed completely because with the residence permit other “doors” started to open.

“Now we have residence permit which is for us a step forward; this status allowed me to acquire the driving licence, for example.”

Another problem caused by the lack of legal status is connected with health insurance, because temporary status means no health insurance or social benefits.

“I could go to the doctor with my student status but my mother could not; we had the right only to emergency assistance; if I needed something more specific I went to the doctor when I had money, otherwise not.”

The government did not organize medical assistance for the refugees; the coordination between official organizations was not adequate.

“Sometimes we went to the clinic and they asked for our medical cards but we did not have them; we explained them that we were refugees and we showed our passports or refugees accreditations but they did not know what to do; they were not prepared to deal

with such situations; it was not pleasant for us at the beginning because we did not know if they would help us or not, later it was all right.”

In regard to the **social aspects**, the integration of the children in the Slovenian school system appears as an important element in connection with the integration in the new society; to achieve that it was crucial to learn Slovenian. Again we have to emphasize how important it is to know the language of the country where you are living now if you want to be integrated into the society; it is one of the biggest problems the refugees have to overcome.

“We started to go to the school, we learned the Slovenian language. I was in a secondary school in the programme of education for adults at Poljane³⁴ because I missed the beginning of the school year; the classes were in the afternoon and I had difficulties with the language.”

Sometimes the problem does not lie in the integration in the school life, in the acquisition of a new language or in the assimilation of new rules but in the misinformation about how a student can be registered in one centre or whom they have to address; in these cases the help of social organizations is extremely important. Once you are enrolled into an organization it is sometimes very important to have help of several people who support you; in our case, however, we cannot forget that sometimes there are elements inside an organization which can interfere with the integration of a refugee – once she was accepted into the secondary school, she had problems with the teacher of chemistry, again because of the language.

“It was too late to be enrolled in the school at the beginning of the school year; in fact, we did not know what to do and a woman from the Center za Socialno Pomoč³⁵ helped me a lot {...} a woman from the secondary school Poljane also helped me; she was very kind.”

“I did not have any problems with the most of the teachers; they made a lot of efforts to help me; if I did not understand something they spoke to me slowly. Anyway, with the professor of chemistry I had problems because of the language.”

³⁴ Poljane is a secondary school in Ljubljana.

³⁵ Centre for Social Help.

In the school life we can find other elements which may influence the adaptation to the new situation, such as interest of the professor for new pupils, in this case a refugee with no knowledge of Slovenian, acceptance by the classmates, interests of the class, the difference in age.

“The students, ten, more or less, were older than me and we did not talk so much, I also could not talk fluently the Slovenian language.”

As we can see, most of the times the elements do not influence a person individually but they are connected and in a situation of integration some of them may appear together. A possible solution for the refugees could be to attend language courses for foreigners; for the person this possibility did not exist.

“I did not attend any language course for Slovenian then³⁶, they were not available and nobody organized one.”

The contact with locals is another way to improve the language or at least to start to have contact with it. It is clear that if you have difficulties with Slovenian and your social environment does not facilitate the acquisition, the situation worsen.

“We were all the time at home; I did not have any contact with locals, I did not have Slovenian friends, I was a bit lost. They came to the classes and then went home; they did not communicate at all with me {...} in our family the majority of acquaintances in Slovenia were from Bosnia.”

Different people from different countries have different social, personal and cultural elements which shape a person; those aspects sometimes contribute to the integration, but sometimes they cause tensions and misunderstandings.

“The group in the class was strange, they were strange people, very set in their ways; they had a strange life, not social but more individualistic; they did not have interest to mix with others.”

Another social element of integration could be the relationships with locals out of the school; to have friends from Slovenia; in this aspect the lack of communication is also obvious. People talk all the time about how a local society does not accept new elements with new values and characteristics, however, we must have in mind that those new elements, like refugees, migrants or immigrants, have to assimilate also some elements

³⁶ When she was at secondary school in 1994.

that belong to the local society and that they are crucial; sometimes the reluctance of the local environment makes the integration almost impossible; integration is a game where the symbiotic effort by the locals and by the new inhabitants is the more important factor. All these elements together influence the opinion of locals about refugees and vice versa.

“When I was in secondary school I did not have friends from Slovenia, in fact I did not have local friends even later. We look at Slovenians as something different, something apart from us {...} Slovenians normally do not mix with others {...}; at the beginning I was also introverted {...} cultural events in connection with religion were not so influential because at home we were not believers although we celebrate with the family some holidays {...} I do not think that Slovenian people did not want to accept us but they did not have any experience about that; we were the first wave of foreigners who came to Slovenia; I do not think that they, as a country, did not want to help but they did not expect it {...} they feel to be superior from people from the south, maybe because till the war in Bosnia everyone who came to Slovenia was poor and without university education.”

While talking with the interviewee, one thing became clear to her: the help in integrating was not coming from the government or public organizations but from personal initiatives. To integrate people you must organize events in which both sides, Slovenians and Bosnians, must take part, otherwise new inhabitants mix just with people of the same origin.

“The system, as far as school and language are concerned, was not organized so as to make you feel integrated, yet several persons were helping me on their own {...} some people organized for us cultural events, music workshops or excursions where I met some girls from Sarajevo.”

With this idea the sense of identity became so important; at the moment the states of Europe feel threatened by foreigners who come looking for better life; Slovenia is not an exception.

“Maybe Slovenians feel their identity threatened by foreigners and that is the reason why they do not agree with the construction of a mosque in Ljubljana.”

In regard to the accommodation of the family, the initiative of the family became decisive; the solution given by the government did not satisfy the basic needs to lead a

normal life. Many times refugees find several centres to live in a country; these centres ensure the temporary stay of refugees according to the international resolutions, although the deficiencies are caused by irregular conditions of life in such centres. To have a private accommodation could be a solution if the economy of those people could allow it; in most of the cases it is not possible.

“The government opened centres for refugees but we did not want to go there because there were a lot of people and we did not find the adequate conditions to have a normal life; we went to live in a flat.”

How the **family** situation develops after coming into a new society and country is very important for the stability of its members; reunification of the family and conditions of life of its members are crucial elements to be integrated in a new environment. Normally the economy is a factor that decides the status of living; if due to governmental regulations some people must leave the country to find jobs in another state, the reunification of a family looks impossible.

“My father went back to Austria to work.”

Your age upon the arrival to a new country determines how well you can assimilate new elements; the older people probably miss more elements from their fatherland than a young boy or a girl growing up in a new environment from childhood.

“I do not miss so much from Bosnia because when we came to Slovenia I was a little girl; probably my mother suffers more because of that and certainly has more problems with integration in Slovenia, although she is working at the moment; the all family is here. My father died three years ago.”

c- Grounded theory:

An important difference in comparison with the first interview is that now the person, owing to her youth, is at the beginning not so much influenced by the decisions concerning to the family; here naturally the position of the parents is more decisive for her life; she came twelve years ago.

In this regard the position of her mother became crucial because she was the one who decided to run away from Bosnian when the conflict broke out in the surroundings of

Mostar, the city of origin of our interviewee and her family; the father was at that time working abroad; that element also shows us the situation in Bosnia before the war, where a lot of families were not together because some of their members needed to work abroad to help the weak local economy.

She came to Slovenia from Austria; two elements became important here, one is that her father was working in Austria and for that reason the first destination when fleeing from Bosnia was that country; the second is that she came to Slovenia because her father had a friend in the country.

To survive one needs the possibility to have a job; the government of Slovenia accepts refugees from Bosnia but they, by national resolutions, did not facilitate possibilities for jobs. The solution was thus to work illegally and to rely on some organizations or private initiatives for help; the government offered financial support on the condition that refugees leave Slovenia.

The ambiguity and uncertainty are two elements which reflect the situation of the refugee in regard to her legal status, because she arrived to Slovenia with temporary status and till 2003 she and her family were with the same status which caused fear of expulsion from Slovenia; it was a case of total passiveness of the government. This situation is connected with the possibility to find a job because with no legal status they could not find a job; after 2003 and with residence permit the situation changed to better. The temporary refugee status also entails a vacuum in regard to medical assistance because they only had the right to emergency assistance; even when they needed such assistance, the hospital did not know what to do in legal terms which denotes a vacuum in organizational structure between public institutions in Slovenia in regard to the assistance for refugees at that moment.

To speak Slovenian became a real problem for the person; the problem that she needed to overcome to reach the integration into the society. At the beginning she had some problems, especially when she was at the secondary school, which could have been solved if the government had organized language courses to learn Slovenian.

Sometimes, even if people belong to an organization, taking part in it, some elements may interfere in the development of their life; something similar happened to our interviewee – when she was accepted and integrated into the secondary school, a single

teacher caused obstacles for her; these obstacles were connected with the acquisition of Slovenian. Personal initiatives became crucial during the process of the refugee's integration, both positive and negative.

Lack of contacts with locals did not help learning the language; the refugee had difficulties because people she met were of a different cultural background. The different characters and different cultural elements caused troubles for the integration of the refugee, both at the secondary school and in her relationships with the local society. Those differences had negative effects for the refugee and her reluctance to accept some elements of the local environment also did not help her to integrate.

To her, the Slovenian society is probably afraid to lose its identity because of the arrival of many refugees or immigrants; again by personal initiatives some cultural events from the state of origin of refugees were organized; that could have facilitated integration if in such activities both Slovenians and Bosnian refugees had participated.

Accommodation centres for refugees were organized by the government; the family of our interviewee chose private accommodation because the conditions in those centres were not adequate to lead a normal life.

Some family members of the family are forced to go work abroad; so reunification of a family which run away from war becomes in this case impossible; young members of the family thus easier assimilate new elements from the new society than the older ones.

The table below will help us to see several aspects of the selected refugee which influenced positively or negatively her life and integration into the society in Slovenia.

Table 6 - Positive and negative aspects which influenced social integration of the refugee.

<i>Positive aspects</i>	<i>Negative aspects</i>
<p>Economic aspects</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>The father had the possibility to work in Austria. The mother could earn some money</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>The local government offers some money but under the condition of leaving the country.</p>

<p>cleaning flats.</p>	<p>Government did not facilitate the possibility to get a job. Working as a cleaning lady illegally. She got help from some organizations and personal initiatives.</p>
<p>Legal status</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>She and her family got residence permit in 2003. Residence permit provided the access to social services.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>Temporary status till 2003. Temporary status provides right to work. Temporary status provides no right to health insurance, just emergency assistance.</p>
<p>Social aspects</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>The accommodation in a private flat.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>She did not speak Slovenian. The government did not organize for them courses to learn the Slovenian language. Without the knowledge of the language she had problems at school. Lack of contact with locals interrupted the possible integration in the local community. They organized cultural events just for Bosnians without participation of the locals. Life conditions in the centre for refugees were not adequate for her family.</p>
<p>Family aspects</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>The family live in Slovenia.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>Separation of some members: father went to work in Austria. Father died some years after the arrival in Slovenia.</p>

C- 3rd person: a young man, 36 years old; graduated at the university

The table below sums up different aspects shared in four thematic groups, personal data, economic, family and social elements, of the second selected refugee, which will help us to understand in outline what was his life in Bosnia before the war broke out and before his arrival to Slovenia.

Table 7 – Social and demographic basic characteristic of the refugee’s life before the war – person 3

Concepts II order	Concepts I order
Personal details	Date of birth: 1971. He is from Mostar. Age when the conflict broke out: 20.
Family aspects	Family members: mother, father and brother. Parents’ occupation: father is a director of an enterprise and mother had a shop.
Economic aspects	
Social aspects	Good standard of living. Studies: at the university. Military service: he was enrolled in the Croatian army. The travel to Slovenia: using Croatian identity card, paying it and running away from the army.

a- Social and demographic basic characteristic of the refugee's life before the war:

At the beginning of the interview he introduces himself; then we know where he is coming from and when he was born and how old he was when the war broke out in Bosnia. He does not care so much about **personal details**; he is not concerned about anonymity.

“I am from Mostar and I was born in 1971. When the first grenades exploded and when the first reservists from Serbia came in 1991, I was 20. I stayed in Bosnia till 26.05.1993.”

All members of the **family** were living in Bosnia at this time. The **economic** situation was quite good; both father and mother were working, while he and his brother were studying.

“I have father, mother and brother; my father was a director of an important company and my mother had her own shop, my brother was in secondary school and I was studying Slavic languages and literature.”

Till now we have been analyzing situations of refugees' families from Bosnia with different economic status because some of the members had to work abroad. In this case the whole family was in the country of origin and the financial situation allowed them a higher standard of living than in other cases.

The **social** situation was also quite stable, his parents had good jobs, his brother was in secondary school and he was at the university. At the beginning I think they did not even imagine what was going on when the conflict broke out; after that everything got complicated.

“At the beginning everything was a little confused because Serbs and Croats were fighting each other. After, in 1993, we started to have problems, we did not have water or food or electricity.”

An important element to analyze in this case is that the person was involved directly in the conflict.

“I was a Croatian soldier; every Muslim who stayed in the city was mobilized by force to serve in the Croatian army against the Serbs. We could not say anything; they came to your home and if you did not go they would kill you or someone from you family.”

The travel to Slovenia was long and running away from Bosnia was made possible through personal contacts and not official organizations. To obtain documents and flee you had to pay, not anyone could afford that.

“We could not leave the city, we needed a special permit; we had good luck because we got Croatian identity card even if we were not from Croatia; my family was well-known, you know. A doctor gave me a permission to go to Split; then I came to Zagreb, where we had friends; in the same way my mother and brother came in august 2004. I was some time in Zagreb because I did not know that with a Croatian identity card I could go to Slovenia, when I realised I could, I came to Slovenia {...} The only way to leave the country was to be in the army; you say you are ill and you need a doctor and go to the hospital and also that you need to cross the border. Of course you need certificates for all that; certificates which you must pay. Then you need some documents to leave the country, an identity card or passport; I had to do all this to come to Slovenia.”

The table below sums up different aspects shared in four thematic groups, economic, administrative, family and social elements, of the third selected refugee, which will help us to understand in outline what his life was like after the arrival to Slovenia.

Table 8 – Characteristics of the refugee’s life in Slovenia - person 3

Concepts. II order.	Concepts. I order.
Economic aspects	<p>Working as a teacher (voluntary). Lack of help from the government. Temporary job picking fruits. Father could not work due to illness. No job with refugee status. A job through the Student service in Ljubljana. Mother’s job (cleaning lady and odd jobs).</p>
Administrative aspects	<p>Croatian identity card and other documents needed to come to Slovenia. Refugee status and identity card. Health insurance only for emergencies. Student status to stay in Slovenia. Residence permit in 2002 and Slovenian citizenship.</p>
Social aspects	<p>Accommodation with relatives. Working as a teacher. Enrolment at the university. Accommodation in the centre for refugees and the student home in Ljubljana. Organizations and help (personal initiatives). International volunteers help. Speaking Slovenian, integration and friends in Slovenia. Staying in Slovenia: possibility of work. Identification with Slovenian society</p>
Family aspects	<p>Separation of its members at the beginning. Arrival to Slovenia to the relatives’ home. Family reunification some years later. Father was in a concentration camp. Lack of information about family members. Separation from other family members.</p>

b- Characteristics of the refugee's life in Slovenia

When you begin a new life in a new state with the refugee status and without income, it is essential to find any financial source.

“I was working as a teacher in the centre for refugees in Tolmin. It was a voluntary service; the government just gave me some pocket money, but we did not have any financial support from the government of Slovenia.”

When you have no governmental support any possibility of earning some money is gratefully accepted.

“We had some money with us, when it was spent, we were picking up grapes to earn some money to survive.”

In most cases the position of the father as a bread-winner is crucial, but not in this case.

“When my father came to Slovenia from the concentration camp he was very sick, he could not work.”

The legal status is directly connected with the economic position of the family because with a refugee identity card they did not have the right to work; despite this situation people find different ways to cope and to overcome certain legal and illegal bureaucratic vacuums.

“Once we were living together in Ljubljana, I was working at nights while I was studying at the university. I had different kinds of jobs “legal and illegal”; I say that because with my status of a refugee I could not work but with my status of a student I got jobs at the Student service in Ljubljana.”

Due to the health problems of father, mother, to some extent, he was forced to find a job.

“At the beginning the offers to work for my mother were principally in rural areas in the countryside; she was not able to do it because she never worked manually before; then she started to work as a cleaning lady and she did some temporary work.”

An important aspect, when you must leave your home because of the war, is that the entire family stays together, this is difficult to achieve; in the present case the situation is the same; decisions of refugees sometimes depend on whether or not they have friends in Slovenia, or acquaintances and family members.

“I came alone to Ljubljana, using my Croatian identity card, to my cousin, and I went to my aunt in Nova Gorica; they had been living in Slovenia for 25 years.”

For the arrival they had to have some documents to cross the border and enter Slovenia; unfortunately, to obtain those permissions the people needed money and some acquaintance that could help them. This is another example of how among those who were brutally treated in the war the ones who have more power, economical or social, are in better position to reach whatever they want.

“The only way to leave the country was to be in the army; you say you are ill and you need a doctor and go to the hospital and also that you need to cross the border. Of course you need certificates for all that; certificates which you must pay. Then you need some documents to leave the country, identity card or passport; I did all those steps to arrive to Slovenia.”

Once in Slovenia the status is very simple and at the same time very cruel: refugee status means no rights in regard to many basic needs.

“When we were already living in Ljubljana, we had refugee identity cards and with this status we did not have the possibility to work {...} I also could not open a bank account with a refugee status; we had the right to go to the doctor only in emergency cases.”

The possibilities for normal life are thus limited, however, this document allows you at least to stay in a country far away from the conflict; the problem comes up when this status may be over and you cannot stay legally in the place where you live.

“When I finished my studies in 2001 I had to go back to Bosnia according to government rules and I could not because we still did not have our house. Then I enrolled at another university to extend student status and to be able to stay in Slovenia with refugee status; it was the only possibility to stay here. I did not have any place to go.”

With no papers and no legal status the situation seems hopeless; once you have some legal document, everything changes.

“In 2002 I got residence permit, I think I was among the first refugees to get such permit, and I also immediately found a job; I applied for Slovenian citizenship; now I have it.”

To be integrated in the new society, two important **social elements** are the accommodation and the possibility of work. This is not just about earning money but also about feeling useful.

“I came alone to Ljubljana to my cousin and I went to my aunt in Nova Gorica; they had been living in Slovenia for 25 years. Then my mother and brother came to Nova Gorica,

it was a problem because the flat was too small; we moved to the refugees centre located in Tolmin.”

To have a family can solve the problem of accommodation for some time but when the coexistence seems too difficult due to lack of space, each one takes his or her decisions.

“I finished my studies in Bosnia at the Faculty of Education; when I was registered in the Red Cross, I said that I was a teacher of Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian Language and Literature; they came from Tolmin to ask me if I would teach in the school there. I was working there for three years teaching Bosnian and English.”

This information gives us some ideas about how there were some attempts to help the refugees in regard to some basic needs, such as the education of children and the integration.

“A primary school was organized in the refugees centre Tolmin where children had English, Bosnian and Slovenians lessons.

His accommodation in the centre for refugees changed with the decision to continue studying; also for his family.

“In 1995 we, my brother and me, moved to Ljubljana to study at the university {...} one year later my father and my mother came to Ljubljana. The centre in Tolmin was closed and at this time we were all together living in the centre for refugees in Ljubljana until 1998 {...} then I was living in the student home and my parents in a flat.”

The personal views about what the local government does with the people coming to its territory, in this case refugees, vary from one person to another. The cases which we have already analyzed show how they have felt about the help by the government or some institution; now the person perceives it differently. However, he received some help to study, for example:

“I did not feel that some organization was helping us; in Tolmin Italians, for example, brought with them a lot of things but the problem was that there was no organised structure, we did not receive anything, we were hungry in Tolmin. {...} Help was coming mostly from personal initiatives {...} there were also international volunteers, from Spain for example, temporarily providing some kind of workshop {...} When I was in the student home I got a very, very small scholarship; I got also student vouchers to eat and a monthly ticket for the public transport and other scholarships.”

I have pointed out the importance of speaking and understanding Slovenian in order to integrate into the local society; with our interviewee we can prove this.

“We had to do the Slovenian language exam to receive the citizenship; at the beginning my friends from the university helped me with the language, now I do not have any problems and I have a lot of Slovenians friends. My parents have more problems with the language, they live in a block of flats where many people are from ex-Yugoslavia. I had no problems with the integration except in Tolmin, there we really had a lot of troubles and it was very difficult to mix with the locals. In Ljubljana it was different; most of my friends are from the university and they are Slovenians, although I also have Bosnian friends.”

The person does not have significant problems with the integration in the society; now the question is how long can one live in a country if one does not have a job, even if one does not wish to leave the place where one lives at the moment. The integration and assimilation can also vary due to a place where one stays at the moment.

“I am already tired of moving; I have changed my residence three times in different countries and also several times in different cities in the same country. Now I am living in Slovenia and I am finishing my master’s degree in social pedagogy; once I finish it, if I do not find any regular job in Slovenia, I will probably have to move again to another country {...} When I am in Slovenia I feel at home; Slovenia is now my country, it is my home.”

The arrival of the person to Slovenia meant the separation from his **family**; the social situation of the refugees means that some of the family members must stay in other places, which could be other cities or countries, so it is impossible for them to live together or in the same conditions as before.

“When I arrived to Slovenia my family stayed in Bosnia.”

The family becomes a decisive reason for our interviewee to come to Slovenia although the situation of its members changed constantly till the reunification was completed.

“I came alone to Ljubljana to my cousin and I went to my aunt in Nova Gorica; they have been living in Slovenia for 25 years {...} At the beginning I was registered in the Red

Cross of Nova Gorica; later, it was in August, my brother and mother came to Nova Gorica, my father could not because at this time he was in the concentration camp.”

In regard to family reunification the war and the refugee status brought about uncertainty and a lack of information also in this case.

“My father stayed in Bosnia in a concentration camp; we did not know what was happening to him and to other members of our family who were also in a concentration camp. We did not have any news {...} my father came to Slovenia in January or February 2004; he was in a very bad health condition and underwent three surgeries {...} now he is OK and he is living with my mother in an apartment.”

Once the danger is over and you know what happened to your family and where they are, worries diminish because at least you know something about them, but it does not mean that family reunification is completed.

“We do not have our family in Mostar anymore; I have family members in Berlin, Belgium, Austria, United States; we have contacts.”

c- Grounded theory:

The social element from which we start in this case is different from those already analyzed. In this case the life before the war was quite comfortable; the whole family was living together, the parents were working and the person was studying. They did not have any welfare problems. Maybe for that reason the social rupture provoked by the war was so intense; the war and the refugee status put everyone at the same level of degradation with no social difference. We have also an additional element which did not appear in the other interviews: in this case the person was directly involved in the conflict as a soldier.

At the beginning he came alone to Slovenia; he had some relatives in the country and he could use a Croatian identity card to come here without any problems at the border.

Once in Slovenia, the economy became a problem because he did not have any money and he was working as a teacher in a primary school, but he was not paid and received just some pocket money from the government; the most important source of income was a temporary job as a fruit-picker. His mother also was working, taking some temporary jobs; she still keeps doing it.

His father, once he was in Slovenia, could not contribute anything because of his health problems. When we talk about their jobs we must bear in mind that it was illegal work because with refugee status they did not have the right to work. Despite this situation we noted how the law was not consistent because as a refugee he was not allowed to work, yet with his student status he was working “legally”.

We can see how some elements are similar among refugees: refugee status means no right to work; most of them were working temporary, they got no help in finding jobs from the public administration.

In connection with legal status in Slovenia it is quite notable how he knew to use his status of a soldier in the army to leave Bosnia. Once he had a Croatian identity card, a valid document to cross the border, to leave the army and the country, he had to ask for medical care; to obtain it he used two things: some personal contacts with people who could help him and money to pay the documents required for this purpose. He managed everything; unfortunately, not all people from Bosnia were in the same position. Once he was in Slovenia, he got refugee status, which means he had no access to many basic things (job, health insurance...) His refugee status allowed him to stay in the country and with his student status he could work to earn some money.

Everything changed when in 2001 he got residence permit and immediately he also got a job and he applied for Slovenian citizenship; today he is a Slovenian.

He solved the accommodation problem at the beginning by living with his relatives. Once the whole family was in Slovenia, the accommodation went through different stages, living in the centre for refugees in Tolmin and Ljubljana, in the student residence and a flat in Ljubljana; it depended on the financial sources of the family because at the beginning he got a job as a teacher but it was not paid. His father could not contribute anything because he was not in good health; he and his mother were temporarily working in the countryside. Once in Slovenia, mother took some temporary jobs and he got jobs at the student service.

At the beginning, in Tolmin, he did not have the feeling that government was doing anything for them; only personal initiatives helped refugees, such as international volunteers. Once in Ljubljana, as a student, he received some scholarship or student vouchers for cheaper meals at restaurants.

With Slovenian he did not have any problems. At the beginning he got help from his friends when he could not understand something. The knowledge of the language made the integration of the person easier; he feels completely integrated into the local society and most of his friends are from Slovenia. The biggest problem in Slovenia is getting a job.

Concerning the family, the biggest problem was the separation and lack of information, our interviewee arrived alone to Slovenia and some years later other family members came here. The rest is similar to the other cases, all family members worked temporarily and illegally, although in this case the father could not do it due to his bad health, and relatives living in different countries far away from each other.

In this case I would like to point out the level of integration. Many elements have affected the process, he was young, which facilitated the assimilation of external aspects, and probably the key to reach such level of integration, including the citizenship and the feeling of belonging to Slovenia, was the acquisition of the language and the relation with locals and their culture; those aspects are relevant for integrating in a new country, society or environment.

The table below will help us to see several aspects of the selected refugee which had positive or negative influences in his life and integration into the society in Slovenia.

Table 9 - Positive and negative aspects which influenced the social integration of the refugee.

<i>Positive aspects</i>	<i>Negative aspects</i>
<p>Economical aspects</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>Job as a teacher with just a little economic support. Temporary jobs; like his mother. With student status he was working</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>Job as a teacher was not well paid. With refugee status he did not have the right to work.</p>

through the student organization.	Father could not work because of illness.
<p>Legal status</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>Refugees status and students status allowed him to stay in Slovenia and to get some temporary jobs. In 2001 he got residence permit; it allowed him to find a job. Today he has Slovenian citizenship.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>At the arrival to Slovenia refugee status did not allow him access many basics things (job, health insurance...).</p>
<p>Social aspects</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>He found accommodation with relatives.</p> <p>Accommodation in the student home and in a private flat. Help from personal initiatives and international volunteers. With student status he had access to scholarship and vouchers for lunch. The knowledge of the local language helped his integration. Help from friends. Integration in the local society.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>He was forced to leave the accommodation with relatives. Accommodation in refugee centres was unbearable.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No help from the government.</p> <p>His stay depends on having a regular job, at the moment he does not have it.</p>
<p>Family aspects</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>Separation of members when the war broke out. Lack of information from his father and other family members.</p>

<p>Better health of his father.</p>	<p>Father's health problems.</p> <p>Separation of family members, they are scattered around the world.</p>
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D- 4th person: a fifty year old man without university education

The table below sums up different aspects shared in four thematic groups, personal data, economic, family and social elements, of the fourth selected refugee, which will help us to understand in outline his life in Bosnia before the war broke out and before his arrival to Slovenia.

Table 10 - Social and demographic basic characteristic of the refugee's life before the war - person 4

Concepts II order.	Concepts I order.
Personal details	Place of origin: he is from Srebrenica.
Family aspects	Family members: four sisters. His wife was a housewife.
Economic aspects	Working in a construction company. He was working and wife was working at home.
Social aspects	Positive assessment of life: for him the most important was that family was together and that he had a job.

a- Social and demographic basic characteristic of the refugee's life before the war:

The place from which the last person came was already familiar to me due to the massacre that happened there. I was in this village some years ago because I wanted to see its results. Thousand of people were massacred in Srebrenica in just three days of July 2005.

“I am from Bosnia, from Srebrenica. I do not have any brother; I have four sisters, two in Bosnia and another two abroad.”

He does not have any problems presenting some **personal details** and talking about his **family**. They are, like in most other cases, poor; normally it is a large family, the man works and the woman is a housewife; this **economic** structure was common in Bosnia.

“In Bosnia I was working in a construction company. I met my wife there. We got married in Bosnia, she did not go to work, she was a housewife.”

Coinciding with other cases of my research, the assessment of life before the war is positive and **social** conditions are well considered independently. The standard of living: there is a kind of satisfaction with living in peace, with the whole family together and a job to earn money.

“Life before the war was beautiful, I had a job and the family was together”.

The table below sums up different aspects shared in four thematic groups, economic, administrative, family and social elements, of the fourth selected refugee, which will help us to understand in outline his life was once he arrived to Slovenia

Table 11 - Characteristics of the refugee's life in Slovenia - person 4

Concepts. II order.	Concepts. I order.
Economic aspects	<p>Wife's role: take care of the family, working temporarily. Husband working in a construction company. Working illegally. No help from government to find a job. No job and no social support to get the salary from the previous job.</p>
Administrative aspects	<p>Government did not carry out some international rules of reunification of the family. Refugee status till he got residence permit. No possibility of free movement with refugee status.</p>
Social aspects	<p>Accommodation in centres for refugees. No acquaintances on the arrival. Thanks to the school, his children could integrate adequately. His children had the possibility to study. Problems with Slovenian (he does not speak Slovenian). The government was not well organized to help refugees; help from locals was important.</p>
Family aspects	<p>Help from official institutions concerning health insurance, accommodation... International support from several countries.</p> <p>Separation of its members. First destination Maribor. Lack of information about the husband. Illness of one of the children.</p>

b- Characteristics of the refugee's life in Slovenia

Like in other cases, the war and the new status as refugees in a new country provoked the separation of the family; at this point the role of the wife, while our interviewee stayed in Bosnia, became crucial for the **economic** support of the whole family.

“My family was in the centre for refugees in Maribor; she was working picking fruits, apples and something like that {...} during the stay in the centre in Maribor (wife's voice) when someone was looking for people to clean flats they called me; that helped me; at the moment in Ljubljana I continue to work like this.”

Once again we can see how the family's economy was supported by the wife, bearing in mind that the contribution from her husband, the interviewed person in this case, was lacking due to the war and unemployment until he arrived to Slovenia.

“While my family was in Slovenia, I stayed in Bosnia; I did not have any job. When I came to Slovenia I was working in a construction company.”

When he arrived to Slovenia, he could not find a regular job.

“When I arrived to Slovenia I started to work, but illegally. At the beginning Slovenia did not facilitate our access to jobs; it is truth that they did not control it too much, they knew that illegal work was going on but none controlled it. Now it is too late, who is going to hire me with my age? It is very difficult and unlikely.”

Once the person got residence permit, the possibility to find a job with social insurance was a reality; despite all that, troubles did not disappear.

“When I got residence permit I could find a job but now for example I am on a sick leave and the problem is that I did not receive my social support because of the company's problems; it is bankrupt.”

The status of his family and the **administrative** situation of its members were similar to that of other refugees from Bosnia, that is temporary refugee status; some of the reasons to allow the entrance of refugees in a country were related to regrouping of family members. When this cannot be done, you have to break the law.

“In 1995 I tried to go to Slovenia where my family was, but I could not come because they³⁷ did not comply with some European document which safeguarded the right for a family to be together; that was not carried out and for that reason at this time I could not go to Maribor to my family who were there as refugees; after that I came crossing the border on foot or by car.”

The legalization process is similar to other cases, from refugee status to residence permit.

“We had refuge status till 2003 when we got residence permit.”

During the interview I have also proved, like in other case, how the lack of documents interferes with the freedom of movement.

“I have mother in Bosnia, but for four years I could not even visit her because with refugee status I could not get a visa to travel.”

In relation to **social** status, the accommodation was a priority at the beginning; his destiny was similar to those of other refugees who did not have families in Slovenia.

“My family arrived directly from Bosnia to the refugees centre in Maribor {...} then we moved to the refugees centre in Ljubljana.”

Those who have some acquaintances in the place they arrived at had an advantage in starting a new life.

“We did not know any person from Slovenia; in the centre we met some people from Bosnia, also from our village.”

An important element of integration is the possibility of education and attending school. The integration of children is to a great extent dependant upon the assimilation in school and learning the language.

“The children were going to school and they were well integrated, they did not have any problem, one of my daughter went to Zagreb because the integration was more difficult for her. At the beginning they had some problems with the language but then they got used to it. Today my daughter xxx is for example at the university studying law.”

The integration of the family, apart from the youngest members, was more difficult due to language barriers.

³⁷ He is referring to the public institutions of Slovenia.

“The youngest daughter did not have any problem with the language, not like us who could not communicate fluently with locals; to understand the Slovenian language is not difficult, but speaking it is more difficult.”

The situation of refugees depends to a large extent on the help from the government of the country where they are living or from personal initiatives.

“The situation of my family... {voice of his wife}... when we arrived to Slovenia nothing was organized, but I’m grateful to Slovenia because at least they accepted us... I have to say that in eleven years as refugees we never had dinner; from the locals we really received a lot of help.”

To some extent, despite all the troubles, it is necessary to say that they found some help from official institutions.

“When we got the residence permit we received a flat and some money until we could find the way to survive by ourselves; they also helped us with medical assistance and health insurance; (wife’s voice) I needed an operation and I did not pay for it, after I learnt that it was paid by the office for foreigners.”

In other cases the troubles with health insurance and social help in connection with the accommodation were evident, while in this the government was more helpful. There was also some international help.

“Other countries, Spain, France and especially Italy, were helping us with food and clothes while we were in the centre for refugees.”

One of the problems which directly concerned the **family** was the situation of its members separated because of the war.

“I have four sisters living abroad, two in Bosnia and another two in Sweden and the United States of America. They went away after the war.”

The separation of its members commenced when the armed conflict broke out.

“My family came directly from Bosnia to Maribor {...} I came three years later by car.”
In this case the new element appears – Slovenia breaking some international rules like the right to family reunion.

“I could not to gain access to Slovenia because a European document which concerns reunification of family members was neglected.”

At this point the family was here alone, far away from the person and troubled by problems in Slovenia.

“I was alone in Slovenia with four children (wife’s voice); for two years we did not have any news from my husband and one of my children was at the hospital with meningitis.”

Once the family was together in Slovenia their situation made them again look for better living conditions and the separation was accepted as a fact.

“One of my daughters is at the moment living and working in Norway...”

c- Grounded theory:

The life of the person whom I have interviewed is similar to the lives of other refugees from Bosnia. Before the war broke out the picture of his family coincides with other families’ life; a large family where the man goes to work, and at the same time he is the principal and the only economical support, and the wife is at home doing the housework. Regardless of the salary the common element with other cases is that the most appreciated aspect is the possibility to work, satisfying the family’s needs, and the joy of having all the family members living together.

According to the economical situation we must say that again we have a similar picture; the crucial role in the family is that of a woman. The separation of its members because of the war made the mother head of the family.

The financial sources are connected with illegal temporary jobs, such as picking fruit and cleaning flats. The family was living in Slovenia without the support from the father who was at this time in Bosnia and unemployed.

Once he could arrive to Slovenia he also started to work illegally; the wife did not quit working. The person believes that the government knew it and allowed it. He disagrees with the position of the government which did not help them get work; now he complains because no company wants to hire someone of his age.

The family came to Slovenia as refugees like others, the difference is that in this case Slovenia did not respect the right to family reunification because the person tried to reach Slovenia but he was rejected and not allowed to enter the country; this is the reason why he arrived illegally with the help of a friend. Once in Slovenia he got refugee status till he got also the residence permit. The status of a refugee for some time did not allow him

to visit his family in Bosnia; so the lack of free movement and the possibility to leave the country was obvious.

The arrival to Slovenia was difficult because the person and his family did not have any help from family or friends; they arrived directly, with no help, to the refugee centre in Maribor until they moved to the refugee centre in Ljubljana and later to a flat. The government provided some help in finding this apartment and contributed some donations till they could survive by themselves. Once he got a regular job troubles with health did not allow him to get a proper job; the consequence was that he did not receive social support because the company was bankrupt.

The help did not come only from the government; it came, like in other cases, from individuals' initiatives and international support from different European countries.

The language again appears as a crucial element of integration; at this point the assimilation of the children was adequate; while he and his wife had problems since they understood Slovenian but they did not speak it. The school played an important role in the integration of their children in Slovenia.

Unfortunately, the family was separated; at the beginning he was in Bosnia while his family was in Slovenia because of the war, after it was over he was living in Slovenia because of refugees status and looking for better living conditions in other states around the world, because he had some family members living abroad. During the war the family did not know where he was nor if he was alive.

The table below will help us to see several aspects of the selected refugee which influenced positively or negatively his life and integration into the society in Slovenia.

Table 12 - Positive and negative aspects which influenced social integration of the refugee.

<i>Positive aspects</i>	<i>Negative aspects</i>
<p>Economic aspects</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>His wife could find temporary jobs.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>His wife was working illegally which</p>

<p>Once in Slovenia, father had temporary jobs.</p>	<p>means she did not have any rights. He was in Bosnia, unemployed. He, once in Slovenia, was working illegally which means he did not have any rights. The government did not help him to find a job. At the moment, in his age, it is difficult for him to find a job. He still has not received pay from his previous jobs.</p>
<p>Legal status</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>He got refugees status. He go residence permit.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>He was not allowed to come to Slovenia and reunification of the family was not possible. He arrived afterwards as an illegal immigrant. Refugee status did not allow him to visit his family in Bosnia.</p>
<p>Social aspects</p> <p style="text-align: center;">+</p> <p>He and his family found a flat with the help of the government. The government also helps them with the health insurance (for example with an operation of his wife). His children went regularly to school and learned the Slovenian language; it helped them to be integrated in Slovenia. Some people helped him and his family. International organizations also helped him and his family.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">-</p> <p>He did not know anyone who could help him find an accommodation. The first destination were centres for refuges in bad living conditions. Bad health did not allow him to work normally and regularly. He does not speak Slovenian which hinders integration.</p>
<p>Family aspects</p>	

+	- Separation of the family members before and after the war. While he stayed in Bosnia his family in Slovenia did not have any news about him. One of his children got ill with meningitis.
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4:Discussion and interpretation:

Here I analyze and describe the elements which played a crucial role in the lives of the selected refugees, in their integration into the new society. Those elements are connected with the economical aspects, the refugees' legal status – administrative aspects – family and society – social elements. I combine different situations of four refugees and their personal opinions – personal interpretations of refugees' life according to the selected descriptors.

Economic aspects: Crucial for starting new life in a new country. Sometimes the money becomes the key aspect which decides where to go, even more clearly in cases when you do not know where and how to go because you are a refugee. Knowing someone or having some money because of relatives working in Slovenia means that the country is a possible destination.

Once the refugees are in the place of destination, it is very important to have the support of some family members, if they live in the host country; they thus get temporary accommodation and other essentials. The experience has showed me that at the beginning such situation is accepted with resignation but after some time refugees try to find their own way and to organize their lives by themselves. Other elements of help have been provided by some NGSs which offered food to refugees. Here we can see how, even when a person is in deep despair, he or she tries to be independent within his or her possibilities.

The only way to overcome the lack of financial resources was to find a job; the legislation in Slovenia did not allow the refugees to have work. Thus the solution was to work illegally, with no insurance and working temporarily. The government did not permit illegal work but it was at the same time “promoting” it with that regulation. Of course, those temporary sources of income were not enough, neither to solve the financial problems of the refugees nor to guarantee social welfare.

In some cases we have said that the government offered financial support to those refugees who wanted to leave Slovenia and go back to Bosnia; I have often talked with Slovenians about this. The problem was that most of them did not have home to return to because their houses were destroyed or occupied by other families and the institutional chaos prevented the possibility, for most of the refugees, to reclaim them; not even the government could guarantee the security of these people once they leave the country. The most important for the government was obviously to reduce the number of refugees in the country in exchange for a littler “tip”.

Another financial source was voluntary social services, as one of our persons experienced; for such services some “pocket money” was provided by the local authorities.

Two of the interviewees are students and the Student Service³⁸ in Slovenia played an important role in providing them with financial support; thanks to this service one of our interviewees could find jobs which provided some income. This is one of the indicators of the lack of organization in Slovenia which directly affected the refugees; this example shows how on one hand the government did not allow refugees to work, if they did it was illegal, and on the other hand the Student Service enabled one of the refugees whom I interviewed to work legally.

The general trend in regard to the situation of refugees and their troubles with financial status is that they did not have the right to work; for that reason the only solution for them was to work temporarily and illegally. Some of them could not arrive together to Slovenia and this forced women to support their families. The deprivation in which they lived was obvious despite the income from illegal jobs.

Administrative aspects: we can say that the first indicator of legal status is uncertainty. The arrival of refugees to Slovenia was for all of them a priority, but once they were in the country the situation was changed by administrative decisions in connection with them. All the refugees got temporary asylum and some of them thought about their life in Slovenia as a parenthesis; this status supposed, of course, that refugees were living close to a “precipice”, wondering what would the next day would bring, wondering if the government could expel them from Slovenia.

Characteristic is the situation of one of the refugees who came to Slovenia with a Croatian identity card; once in Slovenia everyone was equalised by refugee status, temporary and with no rights to do many things which could contribute to their integration. The way the refugees came to Slovenia is not of central importance for our research, but it is significant – they came with no legal status or as refugees with temporary permission to stay in the country; however, as it is the case with one of our persons, some needed many documents and permissions for which they had to pay or they managed to come because they knew some well-connected people.

³⁸ The Student Service is an institution in Slovenia which helps students and offers them, among other activities, the possibility of work while they are studying.

The life in Slovenia was difficult because refugees did not have access to many basic things; they experienced uncertainty and fear to be deported back to Bosnia as they overstayed their official welcome; one of the persons solved this problem by extending his student status.

Another aspect is the obligation to allow entrance to Slovenia to any refugee in accordance to the regulation of family reunification; the authorities in Slovenia did not respect this regulation, so refugees did not have any other choice but to cross the border illegally.

The difficulty to enter Slovenia due to the illegal status of refugees is hindering free movement of every single person. This did not stop them once they managed to reach their destination; a lot of them could not even leave the country for a few days to visit their families because they would be automatically refused upon their return. The situation appeared as a biased freedom. We could say that refugees were living in a prison with the doors opened.

Social aspects: once the refugees crossed the border they had find a place to live. Slovenia provided some centres for refugees. In my interviews I discovered that the refugees at the beginning stayed with their family members or friends who were already living in Slovenia. Those without such possibility went to the centres. The accommodation differed between families but there was a common denominator with all refugees – the intention to find one's own place to live as soon as possible. For some it was the only solution to go to a centre; it is interesting that some refugees who were living with relatives decided to go to a centre because they wanted to live independently or because of the overcrowded apartments; in the end the centres did not guarantee appropriate personal and social welfare, consequently all of our interviewees who were in this situation decided to live in private apartments. The case of refugees with student status shows us that the accommodation in the student home was possible. Others tried the expensive accommodation in private flats.

The integration in the new society requires the knowledge of Slovenian; at this point we can say that young refugees who came to Slovenia as students and continued their studies in the country did not have any problems with the acquiring the Slovenian language although we must say that at the beginning they had to overcome some problems; sometimes they were given help from institutions and people, sometimes they encountered troubles and barriers; the oldest refugees had more problems with this and many still do not speak Slovenian, they do not interact much with locals, only with fellow Bosnians, despite the fact they are required to learn the language in order to get Slovenian citizenship, which many of refugees have.

The interaction with local society and with its social and cultural aspects seems crucial for the integration of any foreigner that comes to this new environment. Those who had some

contacts and were assimilated into the local culture did not have many problems in integrating; the lack of such contacts makes the integration more difficult; an indicator is for example how most of them, particularly the youngest generation, are not observant of the rules of their religion (Islam) and some of them celebrate holydays of the local culture, such as Christmas.

In regard to the contact with locals and help which they, as refugees, got in the country, I can say that such help in many cases did not exist although refugees do not hold it against Slovenia as they believe this was due to the fact that Slovenia was a new state with no experience with immigration and the pertaining policies. We have also found some examples of help by NGOs providing food and administrative support and examples of help provided by personal initiatives of Slovenians.

Family aspects: the arrival of the refugees to Slovenia is closely related to the separation of families because of the war; all the cases I have studied show how some family members could not come to Slovenia. We have seen during the research that in most cases it was the husband who could not leave Bosnia at the beginning and the wife became the principal supporter of the family.

Once the families were together in Slovenia, we could see how the lack of integration, the temporary status and the unstable labour status provoked the disintegration of families, as it happened in one of our cases when one of the members was deported because of his illegal status in the country, the situation was aggravated by his addiction to alcohol and aggressiveness toward his wife and daughter.

The lack of news about family members who stayed in Bosnia was common to all refugees. The reunification of the family was to some extent carried out, although accompanied by many troubles and achieved by breaking some laws; that does not mean that the reunification of families was complete; most of refugees have relatives living in different states around the world who had to find them better jobs and better living conditions.

Table 13 – Table describing influences and problems with integrating for the four people.

<p>Economic aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• lack of income: the help from organisation and individuals became crucial for refugees;• refugees were not allowed to work;• illegal jobs with no insurance;• most of the jobs were temporary;• they nevertheless found some jobs, the income was not sufficient for welfare. <p>Administrative aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• temporary status as refugees;• uncertainty about the future;• refugees with temporary status had no rights concerning many basic needs – health insurance, regular job...;• lack of free movement. <p>Social aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• overcrowding of families in small flats;• bad conditions in the centres for refugees;• difficulties concerning expensive private accommodation;• troubles with Slovenian;• lack of interaction with locals, their culture, especially among the older;• lack of help from official institutions. <p>Family aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• disintegration of families because of personal or social problems (alcohol addiction, aggressiveness...);• separation of family members.

I would now like to show a short version of the previously analyzed elements selected to connect the lives of the four interviewees, taking into account age or gender similarities and differences between them.

Economic aspects: The refugees in Slovenia did not have many financial sources; despite the difficulties most of them, regardless of gender, could find temporary jobs. The problems here were connected with the lack of proper legal status so most of them worked illegally. Their status did not allow them to have access to regular jobs and earn enough money.

Some refugees could work abroad, thus families were not living together in Slovenia. The youngest refugees had the possibility to work through the student service; with the oldest refugees the situation was different because they had problems in finding jobs due to their age.

We must not forget that most of them received help from social institutions and also from individuals.

Administrative aspects: these were directly connected with the status of the refugees; all of them arrived to Slovenia as refugees or illegal immigrants. This means they did not enjoy social benefits and could not find a job. Eventually they got residence permit or even citizenship; it enabled them to have access to health insurance, to regular jobs, etc.

Social aspects: the most relevant element concerns the accommodation. Some of them could stay with family members who were already living in the country, although after some time all of them ended up in centres for refugees. The conditions in these centres were bad, so they tried to move in private flats.

The contact with the new society is crucial for the integration in the new environment; it also requires the knowledge of the language and contacts with locals. In this regard the youngest refugees had certain advantages and integrated better than the oldest refugees who did not speak Slovenian and did not have contacts with the local inhabitants. For the youngest refugees the assimilation into the new society was easier because they had access to the school system, they learnt Slovenian and they had contacts with locals.

In some cases they received help from Slovenians and also from international organizations; that kind of help from the government in some cases did not exist, while it was quite important in other cases.

Family aspects: the common denominator is the separation of the family members and the lack of information about some of them upon the arrival to Slovenia. Because some of them did not have proper legal status they could not move freely.

4- CONCLUSIONS

The intention of my research is not to blame Slovenia as a sovereign country or to blame its citizens for the situation of refugees although many official decisions strongly influenced either their integration or their discrimination. My goal was to write about the situation provoked by the war – about people fleeing from their homes, country and roots just to be safe, to avoid misery and poverty, from places where social rules and human life had no value; about the wave of people that in a new country becomes a new group living as refugees, about what it means to live in a new society with its own social order.

I have tried to show the life of refugees in Slovenia; there are maybe three elements which are crucial to understand it. These elements are: how Slovenia and local population have guaranteed, to some extent, the rights of refugees and enabled them to lead normal lives and have their elementary needs satisfied, how the refugees with their own cultural, personal, and social backgrounds have tried to assimilate into their new environment, which was different, and how these two aspects are strongly interconnected.

I would like to say, following the ideas of Sami Naïr, guest teacher at the University of Carlos III in Madrid, in the article published in the Spanish newspaper El País on the 4th of January 2005, that the world is experiencing a “mixed race challenge” accentuated by globalization. Thousands of people are looking for better life in places which are not their places of birth. There are several reasons for that, among them we may find refugees due to wars, as in our case. Those new situations provoked accepting new social, personal, and cultural elements on both sides, in locals and in foreigners; the level of integration is connected with the way it is secured.

In view of this new situation the place where we lead our life has changed, is not the place where we were born, it is the place where we may or may not emigrate, the place of unity between the citizens and the community. What constitutes the unity of citizens is precisely the status of being a citizen, and no more; it is like a contract between citizens and society where everyone should have the same opportunities to live normal life. I think currently the “trend” which rules the society is unfortunately postmodernism that provokes the opposite reaction induced by similar movements; the relation exists but it is now conditioned by the interest in person’s origin, this supposes that people are tied by colour of skin, social and economic status, religion... That is what happened in Slovenia where most refugees were treated as second-class citizens not having the same rights as others. The result may be the disruption of the social identity provoking destabilization in the society where locals and refugees live together. That is what I have found during my research; refugees in most cases did not

identify with the society where they lived because they did not have the same status and lacked what every human being needs to be well integrated.

I would like to point out that there were also some refugees who decided not to integrate; we have already said that we are talking about a contract between two autonomous sides capable of decisions.

These two diverging positions bring about a new form of membership; in our case by the distance between the local community and the refugees, most of them had contacts with fellow Bosnians, on the other side we find the indifference about refugees in public institutions and society in Slovenia. Unfortunately, the membership to one group in some cases excludes the interest, relation and even respect from the other one; we could say that the multicultural ideology is often used to hide a predominant culture within the same society. During the interview many refugees expressed no resentment to public institutions, arguing that Slovenia was a small and new country when the wave of refugees came, with no experience in such matters; for me that is no excuse because there was not just a lack of good organizing and planning but also the social and ethnic exclusion (jobs without health insurance, bad living conditions in centres for refugees, concentration of refugees in the same district with no contact with locals, lack of regular and legal employment...). Even today the community of Bosnian refugees, many of whom already have Slovenian citizenship or residence permit, does not have access to a mosque because local communities do not allow it.

Due to the management of immigrant issues the image of a modern European city acquires similar traits almost everywhere; concentration of people from the same country and with similar language and cultural backgrounds in the same areas of the city, separated from the rest of the inhabitants, means that locals do not have the possibility to consider the other point of view, learn about other culture, refugees or immigrants lack contacts with local communities which prevents the integration in a new state; all that is happening along with the belief that locals are superior to newcomers who are inferior, generally identified as delinquents and thus jeopardising the local identity. We could talk about a powerful trend of dissociation which affects not just people as individuals but also groups.

All this makes the society racist and xenophobic, strengthening the usual mechanism of domination and marginalization. That is what I saw during the interviews with the refugees: they were marginalized because they could not access basic means of living, provide for their families, get decent jobs, legal status, health insurance, administrative support from official institutions, free movement...

To conclude I would like to say that integration will be difficult if we continue reaffirming our identity, our “I” excluding the “other”; that brings about two opposing forces and a trivial case of discrimination will be used by extremists on both sides to reaffirm their position in the new society.

Only the shared identity, as professor Naïr points out, allows the construction of common values. It is our duty to build the common identity, this seems a prolonged and difficult task involving a clear view of rights and duties in the city, including all its citizens, with no exclusion. The universality of the human is and will be the condition sine qua non to “build” the mixed city; the present Ljubljana, the present Slovenia, the present Europe, the present world.

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6- SUPPLEMENT: RAZŠIRJENI POVZETEK

POLOŽAJ PRVE GENERACIJE BEGUNCEV IZ BOSNE IN HERCEGOVINE

Magistrska naloga. Avtor: Francisco Javier Tardío Gastón

1. Uvod

V Evropi so v zadnjih letih zaradi vojne natančno opazovali probleme vala beguncev iz Bosne in Hercegovine. Na tisoče so jih sprejeli v Evropi (Zavratnik, 1996). Slovenija ni bila izjema. Njihove pravice so zapisane v številnih dokumentih kot so »Deklaracija o človekovih pravicah« ali v memorandumu Amnesty International (Amnesty International, 1996). Ne glede na to njihove pravice niso spoštovane.

Moje delo se osredotoča na položaj bosanskih in hercegovskih beguncev, ki so prišli v Slovenijo zaradi vojne v nekdanji Jugoslaviji. Menim, da je potrebno poudariti, v kakšnih razmerah so živeli ti ljudje do današnjega dne. Slovenija, kot samostojna država, se je na pojav begunstva odzvala. V tem delu želim še posebej analizirati, na kakšnem nivoju so bile sprejete odločitve v zvezi z begunci, kakšen je dejanski položaj beguncev v Sloveniji in kakšna je vloga Slovenije pri oblikovanju politike do beguncev.

Problem pa se ne osredotoča le na vojno kot na glavni vzrok za beg iz matične države, temveč tudi na to, kako si begunci v novi državi uredijo vsakdanje življenje. Glede na novo nastali položaj se pojavi obvezen proces socializacije novih prišlekov. Če ne želijo biti izključeni, je bistveno, da presežejo ta proces. Zelo pomembno vlogo pri tem igra pripravljenost beguncev, še bolj ključni pa so lokalni družbeni elementi, s katerimi se srečajo in ki določajo stopnjo sprejemanja, ki jo do njih izraža družba. Razpravljali bomo o družbenem položaju in stopnji integracije, kajti, kot bomo videli v nalogi, država, v tem primeru Slovenija, si mnogokrat ne prizadeva dovolj, da bi se begunci lažje vključevali v skupnost. Pogledali si bomo vidike povezane s pridobivanjem materinega jezika, težave pri iskanju službe, stopnjo povezanosti z lokalno skupnostjo, itd.

Takšen proces vzpodbuja politiko priseljevanja, ki je skoraj vedno izključitvena in zato dobro sprejeta s strani lokalnega prebivalstva. Kajti ko tujci prenehajo biti uporabni za državo, se spremenijo v osebe, katerih namen je »krasti« delovna mesta lokalnemu prebivalstvu. To pa je tudi glavni razlog, da poostritev razmer na mejah postane dober izgovor za varnost.

Takšno ravnanje je gibalo monolitne družbe, v kateri so nekatere osebe bolj cenjene kot druge.

2. Teoretična izhodišča

Evropa se priseljevanja zaveda in se z njim ukvarja, saj si ljudje zaslužijo priložnost, da bi se vključili v skupnost (Coleman in Harding, 1995). V skupnost, ki ni monolitna; kjer ne smemo pozabiti na zaščito ciljev posameznih kulturnih skupin (Taylor, 1992); in kjer bo politika mesto zavzemanja za to zaščito (Haller, 1997). Ni res, da bi identiteta skupnosti lahko obstajala samo toliko časa, dokler bi bila skupina »etnično čista« (Hampton, 1995). »Dom je

tam, kjer je srce: čustvo do doma je nekaj več kot občutenje družine. Nekdo se počuti zares doma samo, če je povezan z domom ali če čuti do njega zvestobo» (Dummett, 2001).

Danes zadržujemo begunce izven naših meja zaradi rasnih predsodkov do tujcev. Rasizem je pomemben element v našem pojmovanju priseljevanja (Tushnet, 1995). Tako lahko govorimo o »trdnjavi Evrope« v povezavi z restriktivnimi politikami priseljevanja in s političnim in socialnim izločevanjem priseljencev in njihovih potomcev (Geddes, 2000). Različne države izvajajo različne politike v skladu s svojimi sistemi varnosti, vendar pa vse bolj ali manj vzdržujejo 'neenakost' in utrjujejo držo restriktivne politike priseljevanja» (Bommes, 1998).

Veliko teorij, pogodb in sporazumov je bilo napisanih, da bi izboljšali položaj priseljencev in beguncev, ne glede na to pa se mnogo držav ne strinja z njihovo vsebino. Zaradi močnih političnih povezav med vladaми je zelo težko doseči pravo in popolno integracijo, tako se na osnovi državljanstva izključi predvsem državljane, ki niso člani Evropske Unije (Weil, 1996). Vedno pogosteje sprejemajo nacionalne ukrepe z vedno več omejitvami in begunci so vedno bolj izključeni zaradi teh ukrepov.

V Sloveniji so begunce obravnavali kot potencialne kriminalce, slabega zdravja, s preveč drugačnim obnašanjem in kulturo, kar bi lahko povzročilo nemir med slovenskim prebivalstvom (Žagar, 2001). V Sloveniji je bila najbolj praktična rešitev začasna zaščita. Sprva se je zdela sprejemljiva. Če pa se begunci odločijo ostati, je ključna integracija in sodelovanje v družbi, ki jih je sprejela. Če ti elementi niso zagotovljeni, so begunci v nevarnosti, da jih bodo izključili. V Sloveniji so kršili mnogo pravic, kar je večina medijev, politikov in intelektualcev sprejemala (Doupona et al, 2001), čeprav so bile mnoge kršene pravice zapisane v zakonih.

Upoštevati moramo pomembne dejavnike, ki so povezani z begunci, kot so npr. občutek tesnobe zaradi preseljevanja, možne psihogene in reaktivne motnje (anksioznost, paranoja, itd.). V tej novi družbi igra lastna identiteta zelo pomembno vlogo. Zaščita specifične kulturne zgodovine je legitimna želja vsake države (Walzer, 1993). Glede na to lahko rečemo, da je potreba vsake države, da se zaščiti pred vsemi elementi, ki ogrožajo njeno eksistenco, temelj novih oblik rasizma.

V Evropi se je razvilo sovraštvo, ki označuje pripadnost eni rasi ali narodu kot osnovni temelj za ohranjanje lastne identitete. Takšna ideja nas vodi v napačno miselnost, da se nacionalna identiteta ne spreminja, pa čeprav vemo, da jo ravno skupine, ki družbo tvorijo, tudi oblikujejo zaradi svoje sposobnosti prilagajanja novim situacijam, novim izzivom. Zanikati možnost spreminjanja družbe pomeni zanikati družbeni razvoj in zagovarjati obstoj »čiste rase«.

Takšne pobude najdemo, kot sem že prej omenil, v državah Evropske Unije in tudi v Sloveniji kot posebnem primeru, s katerim se ukvarja naša raziskava. Potrebno je le pogledati restriktivnost politik, ki jih izvajajo evropske vlade.

Zadnjo besedo pri odločanju, kdo ostane na ozemlju države, ima vlada. Ključ do reševanja problemov beguncev, ki bežijo iz dramatičnega položaja, je meddržavno sodelovanje, ki jim

zagotavlja zadovoljevanje osnovnih človeških potreb. V večini primerov pa takšnega sodelovanja ni. Bolj jasno in resnično pa je meddržavno sodelovanje, ko gre za izključitev »manjvrednih« državljanov.

Živimo v multietničnih skupnostih in zanikanje tega bi pomenilo zanikanje resničnosti in možnosti za kulturno bogatitev, kajti sprejemanje drugih miselnosti, kultur, vedenja ne uničuje, pač pa bogati tvojo kulturo. Resničnost pa je daleč od tega in kot pravi Geddes (2000), živimo v »evropski utrdbi«.

Ko je na Balkanu izbruhnila vojna, so tisoči Bosancev zbežali v sosednje dežele, tudi v Slovenijo. Njihov položaj se ne razlikuje mnogo od položaja tistih, ki so razkropljeni po Evropi in se prav tako soočajo z restriktivno politiko.

3. Empirični del raziskave

V praktičnem delu raziskave izhajamo iz sledečih vprašanj, ki se nanašajo na temo:

Politični in administrativni elementi:

- Kako se je val ljudi iz Bosne in Hercegovine, ki je bežal pred vojno, povezal s humanitarno krizo v Sloveniji?
- Kakšna so stališča in normativi v Evropi glede položaja beguncev, s posebno pozornostjo do Slovenije (glavna tema moje raziskave)?
- V kakšni meri Slovenija spoštuje mednarodne normative in pogodbe, ki opredeljujejo položaj beguncev?

Socialni in psihološki elementi, povezani z begunci:

- Kateri so socialni in psihološki elementi opredeljevanja položaja beguncev v novi družbi?
- Kakšno vlogo ti elementi igrajo pri integraciji ali izključevanju beguncev?

V nalogi sem predstavil primere štirih oseb. Izbral sem jih glede na njihovo starost, akademsko izobrazbo in spol: dve ženski in dva moška izmenjaje v vsakem paru predstavljajo eno osebo v starosti med 40 in 60 let, eno mlajšo osebo, eno osebo z visokošolsko izobrazbo in drugo z osnovnošolsko izobrazbo.

Navezava stika in izbor kandidatov sta bila možna ob posredovanju različnih slovenskih človekoljubnih organizacij, ki se zavzemajo za pomoč in svetovanje beguncem in priseljencem. Na razgovorih sem uporabil diktafon za snemanje zvočnega zapisa, ki mi je služil za analizo in kodifikacijo najpomembnejših in najboljših idej. Osnovne teme razgovora so:

- osnovne socialne in demografske značilnosti življenja beguncev pred vojno,
- značilnosti življenja v Sloveniji:
 - Ekonomski vidiki (ekonomski položaj, načini služenja denarja, zaposlitev),

- Administrativni vidiki (pravni položaj, dovoljenje za bivanje, uradni dokumenti),
- Družbeni vidiki (vera, navade, prijatelji, kako so sprejeti s strani lokalnega prebivalstva),
- Družinski vidiki (stiki med člani, spremembe zaradi vojne).

Iz rezultatov analize ekonomskega vidika je razvidno, da ima večina beguncev, ki so prišli v Slovenijo, enega zaposlenega člana družine v omenjeni državi ali pa ima kakršenkoli vir dohodka, ki omogoča začetek novega življenja. Ne gre pa pozabiti, da poleg obstoja sorodnika, zaposlenega v državi gostiteljici, svojo vlogo pri tem, kako se begunec znajde, odigra tudi golo naključje.

V začetku je sprejem vezan predvsem na begunske centre, kasneje pa si vsi počasi poskušajo najti bivališče in zaposlitev z določenim dohodkom in se na kakršenkoli način osamosvojiti. Vse to pa trči na resnične razmere, ki beguncem ob prihodu v državo gostiteljico prepoveduje zaposlovanje, kar seveda vodi v opravljanje slabo plačanih in celo nezakonitih poslov. Begunci se tako znajdejo ujeti med nezmožnostjo vrniti se v Bosno, kjer so izgubili popolnoma vse, ter med položajem v deželi gostiteljici, kjer edini izhod predstavlja delo na črno. Slovenija vzpodbuja vračanje v Bosno. Mlajšim izpraševancem, zaradi statusa študenta, en vir dohodka predstavlja opravljanje del preko študentskih servisov.

Na administrativnem področju položaj beguncev najbolje opredeli beseda negotovost. Begunci so dobili začasni status, njihovo bivanje pa so v vsakem trenutku pogojevali z možnostjo izključitve iz Slovenije. Ta začasni status je pomenil, da niso imeli dostopa do mnogih osnovnih potreb.

Begunci so se nastanili v begunskih centrih. Čeprav vsaka izkušnja kaže na popolnoma različne situacije, je kljub vsemu skupni imenovalec želja najti samostojno bivališče.

Za vključevanje v lokalno skupnost je bistveno poznavanje lokalnega jezika in pri tem so imeli še najmanj težav mlajši kandidati. Vse to pa vpliva na stik z lokalno kulturo in posledično se vanjo težje vključujejo starejši begunci, ki imajo več težav z učenjem slovenščine, zato je njihov stik z lokalnimi družbenimi in kulturnimi elementi minimalen.

Kar pa se tiče družine, je treba reči, da bistveno vlogo igrajo ženske, saj v mnogih primerih prav one ekonomsko vzdržujejo jedro družine. Kot posledica vojne, statusa beguncev, težav pri vključevanju v novo skupnost so mnoge družine razpadle.

4.Zaključek

V nalogi sem želel ponazoriti življensko situacijo bosanskih beguncev, ki so v Slovenijo prišli zaradi izbruha vojne. Izhajajoč iz teoretičnih stališč lahko opazimo, kako države Evropske Unije, in tudi Slovenija, ne izpolnjujejo norm, ki neposredno vplivajo na vključevanje beguncev v novo skupnost. Te skupnosti zaznamuje strah pred izgubo lastne identitete, zato je nezaupanje do družbenih skupin z drugačno kulturo tako očitno. Skrb, da bodo osebe, ki pridejo v naše države deležne vsaj minimalnega ugodja, poleg tega da je to naša naloga, je hkrati tudi osnovna pravica, ki si jo zasluži vsako živo bitje. Vsestranskost družb in skupna identiteta sta pomemben korak, da vse to postane resničnost.

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