

# Reversing the Bosnian “Brain Drain”: Opportunities and Challenges

Nermin Oruc, CEDAR

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# Outline

- Main migration trends from BiH
- Brain drain vs. Brain gain?
  - “incentive effect”
  - Remittances
  - **Return migration**
- Potential of highly skilled BiH diaspora?
  - Skills available
  - Return intentions
- Obstacles for return

# Migration from BiH

1. Mass forced emigration during the war
2. Post-war return
3. Voluntary migration in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

More than 75% of PhD holders emigrated from BiH during the war  
(Uvalic, 2005)

Selection rate of migrants from BiH to the OECD countries 28.6%  
(Docquier and Marfouk , 2004)

Emigration rate of physicians from BiH 12.7% (IOM, 2007)

# Return migration

- Additional education, different quality
- Transfer of soft skills
- New skills for new jobs
- Entrepreneurship (and savings)

# About the survey

- Completed in Dec 2010 - Jan 2011
- Online survey, 874 responses
- Included both returnees and emigrants
- Age 18-45, majority highly educated
- Neighbouring countries underrepresented

# Demographic characteristics of the sample

- Average age: 32.14 years
- Time since they emigrated: 15 years
- Average age at the time of migration : 18
- Born abroad: 7%
- Women: 42%
- Married : 36%
- Average household size: 2.86
- Average net monthly household income: EUR 2,556.02.
- Have children: 58.4%
- 43% university degree, 37% postgraduate degree

# Return intentions

Interest in return	Number	Percentage
Returnees	113	12.9
Migrants interested to return temporarily	161	18.4
Migrants interested to return permanently	288	33.0
Migrants who once returned, but emigrated again	41	4.7
Migrants not interested to return at the moment	229	26.2
Migrants not interested to return ever	42	4.8
Total	874	100

# Links with BiH

- BiH citizenship: 48%
- Dual citizenship: 43%
- Average frequency of visits: 2.5 years



# Field of study

	Returnees	Interested	Re-migrants	Not interested
Accounting & Finance	11	33	4	16
Advertising & Marketing	7	34	4	10
Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry	2	6	2	1
Art and Design	5	23	1	8
Sales	1	14	2	11
Research	12	43	1	16
Banking, Financial Services, Insurance	13	36	7	14
Construction	4	22	0	9
Education & Childcare	7	24	5	8
Engineering	5	23	2	8
General Management	23	67	6	27
Healthcare	6	24	3	11
HR/Recruitment	7	27	3	11
IT	16	56	4	29
Legal	8	15	5	7
Manufacturing & Production	1	13	0	10
Armed Forces and Emergency Services	3	5	1	2
Property & Real Estate	1	5	1	4
Public Sector & Government	6	24	5	16
Publishing & Media	7	14	1	6
Retail	3	9	0	6
Science & Pharmaceutical	14	33	5	13
Secretarial & Administrative	6	30	5	19
Security	3	11	1	2
Social work/Non-profit	11	22	4	12
Sports & Leisure	2	5	0	4
Telecommunications	3	23	2	13
Tourism & Hospitality	8	16	0	4
Transport and Logistics	2	14	4	3
Utilities & Services	1	7	1	4

# Main fields of study

1. Management
2. IT
3. Research
4. Banking, finance, accounting

# Field of work experience

	Returnees	Interested	Re-migrants	Not interested
Accounting & Finance	17	26	6	15
Advertising & Marketing	12	<b>46</b>	4	7
Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry	4	4	1	3
Art and Design	7	25	3	17
Sales	<b>18</b>	<b>44</b>	5	13
Research	<b>18</b>	<b>53</b>	4	5
Banking, Financial Services, Insurance	<b>18</b>	33	6	6
Construction	3	<b>39</b>	1	10
Education & Childcare	15	26	3	7
Engineering	3	23	1	22
General Management	<b>34</b>	<b>78</b>	11	21
Healthcare	4	22	3	8
HR/Recruitment	15	32	5	28
IT	<b>22</b>	<b>61</b>	7	14
Legal	6	13	3	7
Manufacturing & Production	7	23	1	2
Armed Forces and Emergency Services	0	6	1	4
Property & Real Estate	10	12	2	9
Public Sector & Government	10	28	4	11
Publishing & Media	7	26	6	13
Retail	10	18	1	9
Science & Pharmaceutical	13	32	3	16
Secretarial & Administrative	<b>27</b>	<b>51</b>	9	6
Security	3	16	3	5
Social work/Non-profit	<b>18</b>	<b>39</b>	7	6
Sports & Leisure	5	9	0	12
Telecommunications	4	30	4	4
Tourism & Hospitality	11	27	4	6
Transport and Logistics	8	15	3	3
Utilities & Services	0	12	0	1

# Main fields of work experience

1. Management
2. IT
3. Advertizing
4. Research
5. Construction

# Obstacles to return

Response	Number of responses	Answers as percentage of total interviewees in this group
Finding employment in my profession	54	13.60
Finding employment	38	9.57
Level of salary	66	16.62
My friends and family live outside BiH	10	2.52
<b>Difference in the living standard between my current country of residence and BiH</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>15.87</b>
Been outside BiH for too long	28	7.05
A lack of knowledge of the local languages (both written and spoken)	0	0.00
<b>Unsatisfactory economic and business environment in the country</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>18.14</b>
Lack of housing	7	1.76
<b>Unsatisfactory political situation in the country</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>21.41</b>
Other (please specify)	12	3.02

# Success in validating degree from abroad

Type of diploma	Succeeded	Failed	Did not try
High school diploma	35% (19)	9% (5)	56% (31)
University diploma	38% (28)	14% (10)	48% (35)
Other diplomas	20% (12)	16%(10)	64% (39)
All	31% (59)	13% (25)	56% (105)

# Conclusions

- Detailed mapping of Bosnian diaspora necessary
- There is still a considerable level in interest in returning to BiH
- Specific skills acquired abroad potentially very useful for the BiH labour market
- Obstacles need to be identified and removed
- Incentives for return should be provided