

Meaningful and Satisfactory Work as a Pathway to Integration; Bosnian Refugees in the West

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This article traces the pathways of Bosnian refugee-immigrants from the war-torn former Yugoslavia of the early 1990s to the Western welfare-states in which they came to reside and settle. The study was undertaken in an effort to evaluate degree to which the transition - away from refugee status and toward meaningful participation in host societies - has taken place among differently situated immigrant groups. Empirical questionnaire and interview research was conducted to assess perceived levels of job opportunity and job satisfaction within host societies, and analysis was then undertaken in order to situate this data within the theoretical framework of the welfare-state itself.

The authors' primary concern is the relationship between labor market access and participation, on the one hand, and the overall processes of integration undertaken by refugee-immigrants within three different welfare-state regimes - the USA, Sweden, and the Netherlands - on the other. The authors conclude with a description of the position of the Bosnian immigrant group within each society and suggestions for the improvement of global acceptance and integration policies for refugees.

Key words: WELFARE-STATE, REFUGEE, INTEGRATION, LABOR MARKET

1. Contemporary Trends in European Migration

After four years of armed conflict and ethnic cleansing, there were around 4.5 million refugees and displaced persons within the former Yugoslavia - a number representing about one-fifth of the Federation's 1991 population (UNHCR 1997-8). About one million persons found themselves in the West. Beyond Europe, the main target countries were Canada, the United States, and Australia, while within Europe established migration paths were largely followed, with Germany, Austria, Sweden, and the Netherlands among the main trajectories.

The principal migratory paths to Europe - paths that refugees would largely follow - had been established by guestworkers during the period of postwar economic expansion, from the 1950s through the 1970s. Though they were initially expected to return home, it became apparent in the early 1970s that these workers would not repatriate. In the 1980s migration flows again expanded, bringing an increased number from farther afield as well as representatives of a comparatively new breed of immigrant, the "welfare tourist". Within this climate of increasing immigration to western Europe, a number of anti-immigrant parties arose whose ideological programs portrayed contemporary social ills within the framework of a one-dimensional and xenophobic nationalism. Members of such parties often called for the suspension of all new immigration and, in some cases, even the forced repatriation of long-established immigrants.

Given the social, political, and economic climate within Europe at the time, it may be ventured that the early 1990s was perhaps not the best time to immigrate. In the case of refu-

gees from the former Yugoslavia, however, the exigencies of the situation apparently overrode any social and political constraints that might have affected the reception of so many individuals. The sheer number of refugees that arrived daily and the irregularity with which they came largely thwarted efforts in receiving countries to establish quotas and, in general, prepare for their arrival. Because the crisis erupted so suddenly, a common policy for acceptance was not able to take shape, and individual countries instead relied on *ad hoc* tactics for acceptance. Within this disorganized situation - in which large numbers of refugees arrived with neither documentation, identification, nor currency - illegal and lucrative trafficking networks flourished.

Approaches employed in Europe were apparently motivated by humanitarian concerns, since none of these countries had a practical need for more residents. The overseas nations, in contrast, based their somewhat similar policies of acceptance on a platform of both humanitarianism and pragmatism that was heavily influenced by labor market demands. With the exception of Germany, all of these countries offered refugees three options: to apply for residence, repatriate at the war's end, or to continue onward to another country of their choice.

Any effort to comparatively assess the various policies of refugee acceptance would be frustrated not only by the level of complexity but also by differing normative conceptions of effectiveness and desirability. It was more feasible for the researchers to isolate one especially salient aspect of acceptance policy and examine it more closely. From this examination, in turn, then flows a general view of that acceptance policy as a whole.

We see that, though these policies differ on many counts, certain aspects are nonetheless common to the policies in all countries, such as the provision of housing and welfare allowances during an initial settlement phase. When this phase is completed, then the processes of integration "proper" - processes that are often quite different in their relationship to the labor market and in their encouraging or discouraging of the retention of original cultural patterns - are to begin for the refugee-immigrants in question.

2. The Concept of Integration

In the broadest sense, integration can be viewed as a process of active adjustment on the part of the migrant to their new society which takes place contemporaneously and reflexively with a process of accommodation on the part of the receiving society itself. In this sense, integration is a dialogical process whereby mutual adjustment and communication make the migrant and their new society more amenable to one another. Integration is therefore only possible if there are efforts on the part of the receiving society to tolerate, as well as to accept, newcomers. More specifically, integration involves establishing new social status within a given environment. It entails an attitude, expressed in social action, that is oriented toward meeting personal needs and taking initiatives in reorganizing attitudes and behaviors to make them more congruent with those of the new society. Integration can be described as a "state of being within which immigrants hold a position which is similar to natives with comparable and relevant characteristics; notably in terms of age, education, and gender" (Doomernik, 1998, 5).

The establishment of such status and social position requires a comparable level of access between refugee immigrant and indigenous citizen to the central resources of society. In this connection, Harrell-Bond (1986, 7) characterizes integration as "a situation in which host and refugee communities are able to co-exist, sharing the same resources - both economic and social - with no greater mutual conflict than that which exists within the host society".

These various designations of the concept suggest that integration is a complex and multidimensional process, difficult to operationalize and even somewhat vague unless it is

further specified. Božić (1998, 64) separates four aspects, or facets, of integration that we have employed, with an important modification, for the purposes of observation:

* **Socioeconomic (or economic)** integration, related to the position of the immigrant in the labor market as well as their job type and material achievements.

* **Political** integration, concerning the rights, presentation, and participation of the new immigrant within the political institutions of the host society.

* **Social** integration, involving the intensity and mode of social relationship between new immigrant groups and the majority of the receiving society.

* **Cultural** integration, being a question of the participation of new immigrants in the symbolic spheres of the host society, as arbiters of cultural value.

This division of integration into four facets does not constitute a separate designation for the concept than that offered above by ourselves, Doornik, and Harrell-Bond. It merely complements the above, more general definitions as it orients more specific investigation into the constituent subtypes of integration. While Božić presents these types as discrete and not necessarily related processes, our presentation here envisions them more as markers on a continuum, with cultural integration representing integration in its most complete form.

This paper will emphasize the role played by the economic type of integration in the development and unfolding of the other three types of integration. In order to demonstrate the dependence of social and cultural integration upon economic integration, then, it is necessary to first examine the economic stage itself, followed by the further stages, with the goal of establishing an interdependent or even causal relationship. We will attempt to prove that, in the absence of meaningful and satisfactory participation in the labor market, the more advanced types of integration are seriously compromised if not altogether impeded.

From the particular perspective of immigrants originating from the former Yugoslavia, integration into host societies in the West could be additionally described as the cultivation and maintenance of an agreeable and satisfactory feeling with present circumstances and affairs within the host society, from the positions of individual and family life, personal and material safety, and the possibility of achieving realistic social and economic goals. On the cultural level, this necessarily entails mutual understanding and respect between the immigrant and their new society. From this cultural perspective, then, integration is both a process of broadening one's personal horizons to the extent that the local culture can be accommodated to one's own benefit and function, as well as a retention of a proportion of one's original cultural pattern. Both should optimally be achieved in a balanced and harmonious way.

In order to examine the process of integration, as we have outlined it here, it is necessary that the methodology used incorporate the following elements:

* A comparative analysis of the integration process across different countries that harbored significant numbers of immigrants, to identify the factors enabling or constraining integration;

* An observation and commentary on the particular immigrant society of Bosnian refugees from the perspective of a cultural "insider", and also;

* An assessment of the levels of economic, social, and cultural integration, to ascertain the degree to which the economic type integration impacts the other types.

3. Theoretical Framework: Three Welfare-State Types

In his book "The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism", (1990) Gøsta Esping-Andersen presents a broad analysis of the three main types of welfare state regimes and the ways in which they articulate their constituent interests within a range of social and economic contexts.

The welfare state is an important agent in both social stability and social change. Within the dynamic convergence of the welfare state regime and its constituent citizenry or “clients”, take place the processes of de commodification, stratification, distribution, and accommodation within the institutionalized labor market. Important here is the author’s assertion that the welfare state is itself a system of stratification, or “an active agent in the ordering of social relations” (ibid, 23).

Welfare states are separated into three ideal types - the liberal, social-democratic, and corporatist - that have emerged within the variegated landscape of western European history, roughly corresponding to the socio-political regions of the former British Empire, Scandinavia, and the Continent, respectively. This analysis will focus primarily on the structural aspects of contemporary welfare-state regimes, of which the primary characteristics will be summarized alongside the presentation of the relevant data.

4. Methodology

Bosnian refugees in the West found themselves placed within different welfare-state structures that differentially affected their level of accessibility to the labor market. Our concern here was the degree to which, specifically by means of the mediating mechanism of the labor market, welfare-state structure influenced integration.

4.1. Sample

The sample consisted of 25 individuals each in the USA, Sweden, and the Netherlands, our representatives of the liberal, social-democratic, and corporatist welfare-states. This sample represents only those who had work experience in the former Yugoslavia before immigrating and who had been living in their host countries for at least three years. We assumed that only those individuals with both prior work experience and substantial experience within the labor market of the host country would be in a position to realistically evaluate the job market. Each individual within the sample group completed a set of questionnaires and granted a series of interviews.

4.2. Questionnaires

Two types of questionnaires were employed in order to measure two variables: first, perceived accessibility to the labor market or **job opportunities**, and second, the level of satisfaction with the jobs offered there, or **job satisfaction**.

Job opportunities can be loosely defined as those possibilities *vis-à-vis* the job market as a whole into which refugee immigrants can be fit. For the measurement of job opportunities, informants were asked to agree or disagree with the following statement: “Jobs are available in the country in which I was accepted”.

For measurement of job satisfaction, informants were asked the question: “To what degree are you satisfied, or dissatisfied, with the quality of the job which you currently hold?”

4.3. Interviews

Individuals were interviewed in depth in order to gain more intimate knowledge of their life situations. A series of open-ended interviews with each individual addressed increasingly deeper and more personal issues throughout the nine-month research period. Interviewees were encouraged to link past experience, processes of adjustment, labor market interaction, and the perceived present level of integration into the host society. Establishing mutual trust

with interviewees was a gradual process that unfolded over a series of interviews, and a great deal of the most useful data emerged only at the end of the interview series.

5. A Comparative Approach

A background concern throughout the research was the question of whether the same or similar types of immigrants, characterized by different levels and strategies of integration, could be observed across a range of different host societies. Because the specific situation of Bosnians is little-known in the West, establishing a basis for comparison was more difficult here than it might have been in dealing with immigrants from other areas. Silva Mežnarić's (1986) study of Bosnian guestworkers in Slovenia, however, provides a useful comparative framework as it, too, is concerned primarily with integration through the mechanisms of the labor market. Mežnarić describes six ideal types of immigrants, grouped according to the degree and kind of their integration within the host society:

- * Marginal and apathetic individuals who are isolated both from the host society and other immigrants;
- * Stable individuals who are isolated from the host society but remain instrumentally oriented;
- * Active immigrants who are isolated from immigrant groups and whose participation in the field is instrumentalized;
- * The cohesive "traditional immigrant group", ethnically oriented with a strategically shifted position *vis-à-vis* the host society;
- * An open group, oriented toward the values, norms, and symbols of the host society, and lastly;
- * A cohesive, instrumental group of immigrants.

This schema served as a backdrop for the research in order to see if, in quite different circumstances, the outlines of similar types could be discerned. Mežnarić's typology is helpful because it helps to disentangle and individualize the sample group. Far from being the homogeneous community that it is perceived to be by receiving societies, the Bosnian refugee group demonstrates many variations along the axes of age, education, and professional experience. Correspondingly, we anticipated a great deal of variation in the particular levels and strategies of integration among the sample group.

By comparison with Mežnarić's data on Bosnian guestworkers in Slovenia and aspects of their integration, it became also possible to generally evaluate the significance of the trauma of the civil war and the degree to which this particular psychological variable - an experience common to our sample group and unknown among that of Mežnarić - impacts and influences the integration levels and strategies of Bosnian refugee-immigrants.

5.1. The Liberal Welfare-State Regime

In the liberal welfare-state, where ideals of the free market and *laissez-faire* social policy typically dominate, only modest social assistance is available to state clients. Entitlement rules for welfare assistance are strict and benefits are often linked with a social stigma. The state tends to interfere only minimally in economic affairs and instead cedes power to the market in many areas. In this way, the "cash nexus" (Esping-Andersen, 1990, 35) serves as the dominant organizational principle of social relations. The prevalent social atmosphere within the liberal welfare-state is one of competitive individualism, in which class antagonism within a two or three-tiered class structure is commonplace.

The American Approach

In the case of refugees from the former Yugoslavia, an exception to the normal system of annual quotas was made. Those refugees who chose to immigrate to the United States - around 20,000 in number - were placed in a decentralized administrative system under which each state was responsible for its own policies. Programs typically provided centralized housing, language training, and social welfare subsidies. During these two years, immigrants were given resident alien (green card) status and thus had the option to work. After this initial period, residents were expected to find places within the labor market and the possibility of applying for citizenship was made available to them.

Hunting for Jobs

The competitiveness and individualism of the liberal welfare-state means that finding a job is largely a matter of survival.

T. M. is 39-year-old, married former journalist and mother of one who lives in Pennsylvania. She sought a job within her abilities as a trained journalist with adequate command of English, but found the competition too "sharp" and was very disappointed that her certification was not recognized in the USA:

I am working a few part-time jobs, mostly baby-sitting and looking after elderly people. There are always some jobs available, but is still very difficult to find a good, permanent job. I believe the USA has the most educated cleaning personnel in the world. I do not know anyone whose abilities and skills are fully respected here. Under such circumstances it is difficult for me to continue my education.

H. T. is a 36-year-old, single female who was formerly employed as a chemical engineer. She has changed jobs five times within the past year, since most of these were only temporary contracts. She thinks that there are enough jobs, but that their quality is low and that their demands do not take her skills realistically into account:

My job as a shop assistant is quite exhausting, but over one year I was able to move to a different part of the city and rent an apartment with my boyfriend. For everyone who is ready to work hard, there are plenty of possibilities to earn money, but I cannot realistically say that there is a chance for a better life. Working every day at least 10 hours, plus commuting for over an hour each day, makes us feel like machines sometimes. We cannot find the stability that we would need to start a family.

N. O. is a 41-year-old divorced female and former doctor. She lives in Illinois and has been working as a nurse for the past four years:

My job as a nurse is well-paid. I found it rather easily and this is still the only job that I need. Over time, my position has improved to ward supervisor and so I am trying to forget that I was a doctor before. I find it difficult to start from the beginning again. In order to complete my M.D. degree here I will need at least two years at the University plus practicum. I will be trying to find a job in a private hospital or sanitarium where I can still earn money but at the same time gain hours that I can apply to my practicum for medical school. I can use state loans to finance the education, but I find it is too late.

G. M. is a 29-year-old male, married and the father of one child who lives in Illinois. A former automobile mechanic, he was able to find the same job in the USA, but:

Due to my language aptitude I am mostly helping others and I am not encouraged to go for a better position. I have been dreaming of opening my own garage, but this will take time. My wife is working at McDonald's and my mother is taking care of our child. It was not difficult to find jobs for all of us, but in the light of the information we received before coming here, we were hoping to have a better life than this. In a way, we wanted to come here to realize our "American

Dream". [We have found that] the competition is too strong and everything is related to money. We find ourselves unhappy and we are considering moving somewhere else.

On the other hand, private initiative and the willingness to make sacrifices in the name of achievement spelled, in some cases, positive results.

D. O. is a 35-year-old single male who formerly worked in mental health services. Living now in Omaha, he is one of the few living in the USA who is satisfied:

I found a job as a truck driver. I could not get any support from the state for additional training so I paid for my own examination to get a driving license. I am now quite satisfied with my work. I found another company and started working hard. I met a lot of new people, I know basic English, and in my new company, I think I have nice prospects.

The level of satisfaction, not only with jobs themselves but also with broader circumstances, seems to be closely related to educational levels. Obviously, less educated people found jobs within their skill levels much more easily, and are thus much more satisfied. On the other hand, educated individuals cannot compete within the demands of the market and are at a comparative disadvantage. However, individual initiative and acquisitiveness bring satisfying results.

G. D., a 38-year-old single male, first settled in Nevada but moved to San Francisco one year later where he continued his studies:

I was always working hard, sometimes several jobs at the same time. I was forced to do so since my studies are very expensive. I was able to get a state loan for this purpose and I hope to finish all of my education and get a job that matches my level of education by the end of this century. I do think that I have achieved a lot compared to the others. People are simply forced to get a job in order to survive.

Maybe they do not understand that the same rules apply to the Americans as well - they also have a right to complain that the reality and feasibility of a job are often different from their ideals and wishes.

From the foregoing it can be concluded that a significant change in attitude is first needed in order to engage the labor market in the first place, and only then can the market begin to function as an agent in the integration process. For most individuals, especially the highly educated or the middle-class, the adjustment to lower social and economic status proved to be too psychologically difficult to overcome. For one working-class individual, the process seemed to be somewhat easier as educational certification and language ability came less into play. The comments of the last informant, in particular, indicate that these conditions constitute the general condition of the liberal state itself, as it is experienced by all of its citizens, and are not characteristic of its particular treatment of refugees.

5.2 The Social-Democratic Welfare-State

In the social-democratic welfare-state, where universalistic and egalitarian values typically dominate, state clients are offered a high level of services and benefits as well as social rights. Entitlement to social welfare is founded on a broad range of options and there is no stigma attached to welfare-clientism as such. The social-democratic welfare-state is the result of a deliberate structural reaction against the individualistic, capitalistic, and paternalistic tendencies that characterize other post-industrial forms of social and economic organization. For Esping-Andersen, the social-democratic regime demonstrates social innovation and reproduces unique forms of both individual and society.

The Swedish Approach

The main mechanism of Swedish immigration policy since 1974 has been the granting of the widest range of rights possible, in the shortest possible time, to new immigrants. In addi-

tion to the expedient extension of citizenship offers, a number of specifically tailored programs have been implemented for the integration of refugees into Swedish society. A noteworthy feature of Swedish policy is the almost immediate access to the labor market that is given to refugees upon their acceptance as such. Sweden granted permanent residence to approximately 57,000 refugees holding passports from Bosnia-Herzegovina within the framework of this system.

Between Welfare and the Need for a Job

Within the Swedish welfare-state regime, the provision of welfare services and the relative ease of access to the labor market provide immigrants with a range of options. Still, this arrangement does not always spell meaningful and satisfactory participation, nor does it seem necessarily beneficial for the long-term integrity of the social-democratic state.

L. C. is a forty-year old divorced mother of one who previously worked in the pulp and paper industry. She first came to Sweden as a "humanitarian case" and was first offered language courses:

I was offered a position in a shop but my language skills were insufficient for this job. I was working as a domestic cleaner but this part-time job was not officially registered, so at the same time I was able to receive socijala. Many people were doing the same. After I finished additional courses in language and job training, I got [my present] job and am now quite satisfied.

M. P. is a single female and former journalist, 33 years of age. Finding her way relatively easily, she was from the outset intimately involved in the affairs of other Bosnian refugees:

I was lucky to complete more than the basic language courses and I started free-lancing for the independent former Yugoslavian media and then I was employed by the Swedish Radio Broadcasting Network to prepare special programs for refugees. It gave me the possibility to develop professional links to other European radio stations that offered programs in Serbo-Croatian and also gave me an opportunity to assist some government agencies specializing in refugee problems. I do not have a single, stable source of income but I find it more stimulating to have several different jobs. I am not satisfied with my pay, but at least I am doing the work I like and that is similar to my pre-war job.

D. V. is 28, and a married father of one. Living in Gøteborg and working as a metal-smith, he is satisfied with a position for which he did not struggle a lot:

A lot of Yugoslavs were employed at Volvo and I was quite aware of their human resource needs. I completed basic language courses a few years ago and I was not working, but I found it opportune to work in my field again. I do not know who paid for my additional training - the state or the corporation - but I found myself satisfied with my work and income. After a few months I also found a job for my wife within the company, in the day-care center.

M. L. is a 34-year-old married father of two living in Stockholm. A prior mathematics teacher, he did not find a job in a Swedish school, but was offered work in a school for refugees at which he still works part-time:

This is not enough to have a nice income, but I hold an additional job in a copying and printing shop for four hours a day. My wife did not find a job, and in fact she did not even learn the language. She is working twice a week in private arrangements, cleaning of course. Plenty of Bosnian women are in the same position. This work is well paid and is not subject to taxation; and since we still receive some socijala, we can survive.

Involvement in marginally legal jobs has been, and still is, quite common in Sweden. These jobs mostly involve domestic cleaning, house-sitting, care of the elderly, and temporary assignments in other areas of the service industry. This "gray economy" tends to be more developed when refugees are not permitted to work at all, but it exists in Sweden in high proportions because people without jobs, even with generous welfare provisions, nevertheless attempt to increase their budget.

P. D. is a 42-year old, divorced father of three. He lives in Stockholm:

With only one language course, I found a job in a Yugoslav restaurant. This job is quite good since I have accommodation and food within the restaurant itself, so with some tips I can survive. I am taking care of my children and I have to pay a lot for this, so I also am forced to work "under the table" on weekends. I am trying to save the money for a down payment on my own restaurant.

Private initiatives seem to be thriving in Sweden, notably in the services sector. M. H., 46, and Z. H., 44, are both tailors and have two children, of whom one is still in Bosnia:

We were in the camp for a few months and did not learn enough Swedish. Since we once had a decent tailor's shop in Bosnia, we sought to have the same here. We got the state loan and opened the shop. It wasn't very successful in the beginning, since people here tend to prefer pre-fabricated garments, but we managed to attract a lot of Bosnians and other former Yugoslavs and the shop is doing quite well now. Our son works for us and we would really like to cultivate a nice family business and attract our other son and his family.

It seems that the Swedish welfare state provides a stable platform of welfare benefits, on top of which a great deal of dynamic and creative entrepreneurship can thrive. Relatively easy access to the labor market, coupled with economic security, seems to be an excellent combination in promoting economic integration, and therefore overall social satisfaction. The data for Sweden may, however, be biased.

Because the initial sample was selected on the criteria of long-term residence and employment, the personal perspectives of Sweden's unemployed refugees - three times greater in number than native Swedes - are not taken into account. Sweden still accepts refugees and asylum seekers on a large scale under various governmental programs, and this continually contributes to the mass of unemployed individuals.

5.3 The Corporatist Welfare-State

In the corporatist welfare-state, traditional status relations form "the organizational nexus for society and economy" (Esping-Andersen, 1990, 60). Such status relationships are maintained for the sake of social integrity itself. Therefore, the redistributive impact of this regime is minimal. This type of welfare-state thus requires a social mentality among its clients that is heavily influenced by patrimonialism, and as a result, social rights rarely become seriously contested. Corporatist welfare-states strongly encourage exit from the labor market and reduced labor supply. Affected as it is by the sometimes divergent pulls of social equality, full employment, and efficiency (ibid, 186), the corporatist welfare-state often expresses insider-outsider tensions.

The Dutch Approach

Despite the increasing restrictiveness that has characterized Dutch policy in the last two decades, a large number of Bosnian refugees were accepted into the Netherlands and were offered a generous range of integration resources including centralized housing, language lessons, and vocational training. Most of the 22,563 refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina who entered the Netherlands were granted status that made them effectively equal to Dutch citizens with regard to labor market access. Within such status was also included the option to apply for citizenship after five uninterrupted years of residence.

Overcoming Passivity

Most of the persons who received the above mentioned status are still looking for jobs. No official statistics on unemployment are available regarding Bosnian refugees, but is

known that in general the unemployment rate of immigrants is three times higher than that of the native Dutch (House of Lords, 1992-3, 107). Most emphasize the difficulty of finding a job, and many never work at all.

E. M. is a 34-year-old widow and mother of one. A former chemical technician, she lives with her mother in Wageningen. Her efforts to find employment were not serious:

Even in Bosnia, I had been working different jobs within my field and here, I think I did not learn enough Dutch to find something appropriate for my abilities. I think that socijala covers basic needs for all of us, and there are always some possibilities to earn extra money, though not very often. I would like to work but all my attempts to find a decent position have failed. I am not inclined to return to school and I am not sure of my future.

S. M., 37, is married and the father of one child. A former economist now living in Rotterdam, he expresses disappointment:

I took all of the available language courses [three stages] and I really wanted to achieve a better position. I think that the Dutch people do not like to allow us to show what we know and do what we are capable of doing. I had a few applications rejected. I am still on socijala and I do not think that it is enough. I am working for a small salary, processing people's tax documents and administrative procedures, and for some private shopkeepers I handle the accountancy work. My wife cares for a few children in the neighborhood. So, we can earn some extra money even though, officially, we are not employed.

It would be problematic to claim that many are "cheating the state" by accepting social benefits and working unofficially at the same time. In a way, though, exclusion from the formal labor market has contributed to the growth of a parallel economy that provided the opportunity for additional income without jeopardizing basic welfare benefits.

K. P. is 32 and a married father of two. A former bank clerk, he now lives in Capelle aan den IJssel and has found a way to support his family without searching for a job:

I came here with my wife and children and found this country quite acceptable for refugees from Bosnia. I never looked for a job since I have a good bit of money from socijala. My parents had been living in Bosnia but originally came from Serbia. Before the war broke out, they built a large house in Serbia where we found our first shelter after fleeing Bosnia. Once we settled in the Netherlands, I brought my parents here and they were also granted A-status and Dutch retirement allowances. Since then, they spend a great deal of time in their house in Serbia with my children, able to have a good life of their own for a half of one pension. They come here only when it is needed, so I rented their subsidized apartment in order to make some money from it. Things will be changed, though, since both children have to start school soon.

A labor market atmosphere that is not conducive to work, the frustration of attempts to find jobs that match individual skills, and partially, a different work ethic, either stimulate participation in the parallel economy or keep people excluded from the labor market altogether. This forces the acceptance of only modest economic and social goals.

R. P. is 25, and a single male living in Amsterdam. He did not finish high school in Bosnia, nor did he opt to continue his education in the Netherlands. He initially worked illegally, but then came to an emotional impasse:

I was working in the coffee shops as a cleaner, almost every night, but I spent all of my money on sport and fun. I have a Dutch girlfriend and we live together. She works as a cosmetic technician, but we keep our monies separate. I am a bit disappointed that I am not motivated to struggle so much. I know that if I wanted to go to school, there would be no problem. I would like one day to open a gymnasium or something similar.

Some single people tend toward social isolation. N. P., 37 and single, was formerly a clerk in an electricity company. Now living in Gouda, he did not learn Dutch and he spent

several years in self-imposed isolation, even though he did not suffer any psychological traumas from the war.

I denied contacts with people because I needed time for myself. I like my solitude and can survive on socijala. There were several opportunities to work, and I used to work seasonally in the "glass gardens" but I found this job very exhausting. Painting is my hobby horse and I was hired several times to paint murals in rooms for which I was well paid. I would like to start a gallery, but this goal seems to be impossible to achieve. So, I prefer a quiet life with my paintings and I am not really interested in social interactions. I appreciate the fact that Dutch society had understanding and respect for people's individual wishes and preferences.

V. M. is a 34-year-old father of three. A former butcher, he now lives in Den Oever:

Here, in a very small town, I cannot see what a job for me might be. We came here only three years ago and this house was quickly found for us. I think I needed some time to situate myself in the new environment and to learn some Dutch. I do not know what has passed in these years: I have always been with my family and we tended to live modestly. I think about finding a job, but I really do not know what to do and how to do it. I cannot get any help from anyone.

S. S. is 37 and a father of one. A former economist, he now lives in Rotterdam:

Even though I completed not only the obligatory but also additional language courses, and was really interested in finding a suitable position for myself in the job market, I did not find a satisfactory job. I was working in a restaurant as a waiter, and doing shop deliveries. I quite accepted the fact that I could not find a job according to my abilities. The problem arose regarding my salary - which I considered to be insufficient - and I became convinced that it was better to rely on socijala and try to get some informal jobs.

The lives of refugees living in the Netherlands tends to be largely colored by isolation from the surrounding society. For most, this isolation results not only in the failure to meet economic goals, but also in apathy and fatalism regarding the possibilities to integrate socially into Dutch society. For a few, such isolation opens up opportunities for different lifestyles and can be turned to positive effect, but for most, a feeling of helplessness is present. Most, after thwarted efforts to find a satisfactory job, fall back on *socijala* and/or unofficial jobs.

6. Social and Cultural Integration: Emphasis on the Netherlands

After first examining the both job opportunities and job satisfaction, we then focused more specifically on the variable of job satisfaction, testing the ways in which it influences the social and cultural types of integration. We found that job opportunities alone contribute very little to a dynamic of integration: it is rather job satisfaction that is more relevant and even critical in such long-term processes. Because job satisfaction did not significantly vary among all three countries examined - being almost uniformly low - we narrowed the empirical focus as well, to only those informants living in the Netherlands. This also enabled a clearer picture of this particular immigrant group to emerge within a limited research period.

Our assessment of the level of social and cultural integration of these immigrants involved three areas of inquiry. First, we made an investigation into informants' strength of ties to, and degree of personal interest in, the affairs of the former Yugoslavia, as expressed through media usage. Second, we looked at the ways in which informants spent their free time, especially the degree to which their leisure activities are demarcated along insider-outsider (that is, Bosnian vs. Dutch or other non-Bosnian) lines. Third, we asked informants about their broader and more long-term ideas and expectations regarding their lives in Dutch society, so that we might assess informants' potential and willingness to change their social and cultural patterns in an effort to achieve a more satisfactory position.

6.1. Media Usage

It became apparent that the greater the informants' interest in the events of their former country, the less they tended to be interested in "local affairs", i.e. events taking place within the Netherlands.

Z. K. is a married mother of one and former shop-assistant:

I am well-informed about events in the former Yugoslavia. I would like to see what is going on since I am afraid for the fates and prospects of my relatives. I am watching satellite television every day [programs from the former Yugoslavia] and my husband and I read weekly news magazines. I do not know a lot about events in the Netherlands because I do not know the language well.

M. B. is a 20-year-old single male. Living with his parents, he is unemployed:

I was quite young when I came to the Netherlands but I remember the war well even though I was not able to fully understand what was going on. Nevertheless, I like to watch television, not only Bosnian but also Serbian and Croatian satellite channels. I became accustomed to it because my parents and their friends like to discuss current events and quite often gather at our home to watch television programs together. I do not know a lot about the Netherlands. While I was in school here, I learned enough. It's more exciting to be informed about such dramatic events in my former country.

In the Netherlands 20 of 25 informants have access to satellite television. These figures represent the response to the query: "Do you watch, regularly or often, programs from the former Yugoslavia?"

Such tendencies should be understood within the context of normal interest in these events. However, state television programs transmitted via satellite are directly controlled by respective governments and therefore cannot be considered to be independent media. Even though an "open-war" vocabulary was transformed into a more sophisticated idiom by means of propaganda, the content of these programs nevertheless reveals a great deal of bias. It seems promising that the influence of electronic media seems to decrease over time.

A. K. is 37, and a father of two children, who lives in Rotterdam. He is a former court clerk:

It is amazing to see how Belgrade, Zagreb, and Sarajevo have the same programs and are using the same information, but directed against the other side. I like to jump from program to program just to see how the same event is interpreted differently. I do not subscribe to any of them!

P. T. is a 33-year-old driver living in Utrecht:

I like to be well-informed, but I do not rely on television programs. Plenty of times, I have been in a position to discover that they were lying and have thus been making fun of the news. For me, a satellite system is interesting because of "leisure" programs that it can provide.

Nevertheless, the power of propaganda can still affect those living abroad.

A. B. is 46, the father of two, and a former "keramiker":

I like to see the end of the Yugoslav affair, and I feel like a supporter, sitting in my television chair. I do not believe that everything said on television is true, but I feel anxious about the future of my country. I think that the television media from my country presented a good overview of the events... I think that the other programs [on Dutch and cable television] are boring.

Most are not believers in what is presented, but they nevertheless rely on these sources to a large degree and thus formulate their perspectives of relevant events in a way that is heavily influenced by them. Most, too, are not interested in current affairs within the Netherlands. The generation already mature at the outbreak of the war expresses the most interest

in contemporary events in the former Yugoslavia, while younger generations do not, scarcely able to grasp the complexity of the issues.

Finally, it has been demonstrated that most informants spend a considerable amount of time watching television, which in this analysis serves to place television as the first and most prominent medium of cultural communication. However, the fragmentation that satellite television effects within immediate and micro-social realities (as any other global media) results in an asymmetrical pattern of information distribution, as a result of which immigrants, well-informed about the "realities" of their home countries, are scarcely aware of what is happening much more proximately in the Netherlands. This kind of behavior, then, is not equal to integration in the present sense.

Other media, while exhibiting much the same pattern, at the least offers individuals a choice between different types of information. The International Organization for the Freedom of Media asserts that only a handful of newspapers in the former Yugoslavia are independent. Most are "regime media", under government control, fewer are fundamentally nationalistic, and fewer still are independent. All of these are available at press shops within the Netherlands. It was not possible to obtain sales or circulation statistics from publishers themselves, but from informants a few general trends were made visible:

- * People are more interested in daily newspapers than magazines;
- * The educated prefer independent and more profound, analytical media;
- * The less-educated prefer a range of media, from the "regime", through the ultra-nationalist and sensational, to the "yellow";
- * Only two informants in the Netherlands have a subscription to or regularly buy foreign newspapers;
- * Only one informant regularly reads the Dutch newspaper.

E. M. indicates in this connection:

From the outset of our stay in the Netherlands, my friends and I bought different papers and exchange them. I am a bit tired of politics and I am tending toward leisure-oriented magazines; but when something really great happens, I like to know a bit about the political background.

S. M. expresses a bit more universal enthusiasm:

I am very interested in events, and I spend a lot of time watching television and reading newspapers. I like to check all of them: different programs on television, and different newspapers, called "state", "opposition", and "independent". At the beginning, I was more inclined to read "official" publications, but I have good experience with independent magazines since they are writing the same things in all three states [Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia].

K. P. also adds:

I am reading different newspapers because they provide a great deal of useful information. I am not interested in politics, but I think that the drama in Yugoslavia is more like a movie, and that the way things are developing is [realistically] impossible. I like "hot stories from hot spots" and also like to read about great affairs and scandals when they are discovered. Of course, I am sorry for the people who are suffering, but on the other hand, what is going on in the whole of the Balkans is amazing.

N. V., a 44-year-old former teacher, says:

For me, it is most important to have one independent magazine from each republic each week. They are very similar in expressing the same ideas and all are very anti-war oriented. Over the years, I have been influenced by these media and I think that they provide realistic pictures of the events and actualities in the former Yugoslavia. I am also trying to be open to information from different sources, mostly through Western television channels.

As has been indicated before, most individuals are well informed but their interest often does not extend beyond the distant realities of the former Yugoslavia. This maintenance of regional identities within a geographically separated space is symptomatic of the persistence of ethnic nationalisms within the ostensibly "globalized" landscape of contemporary mass media. Deep immersion in such an abstract, distantiated space of identity, though it may prove satisfactory in allaying short-term feelings of alienation, does little to provoke or encourage the steps necessary for long-term integration into the host culture.

6.2. Leisure and Social Activity

Informants were asked about events and activities during their free time. A range of probable answers were provided to describe the social orientation of leisure activities: within the family; among friends; going out; cultural events; bars and public spots; sporting events; and other.

Social activity involving foreigners was given special analytical attention. Only three informants indicated that their circles of friends include Dutch people, and one respondent claims that he spends most of his time with foreigners. Many of these relationships were established in the new cultural environments. Only a very few individuals - two - maintain the same circle of friends and acquaintances as they had in their previous lives. The same ulterior fate, it seemed, forced these individuals to develop a great deal of solidarity that was not corrupted by ethnic tensions.

Most social circles are established within the Netherlands itself: some as early as the stage of collective accommodation, others being developed later through neighbors or friends. Marriages, concerts and parties, for example - as in any cultural milieu - have a strong role to play in social cohesion and the maintenance of allegiances and ties.

Again, the obvious impression is that groups structured more tightly around family, nationality and religion reinforce a greater deal of separation, and by consequence, loneliness and isolation. Generally, Bosnian immigrants find Dutch people unapproachable and Dutch society somewhat inscrutable.

E. M. remarks:

I think that the Dutch are very polite and friendly people. A few times, I got a great deal of help from the people, but I was never able to establish closer ties or promote friendship. They seem to be very reserved and conservative. I never felt that they do not like us, but I feel that they are not very keen on establishing deeper relationships with us.

S. S. attributes the distance to different conceptions of recreation:

A few times, I invited my Dutch acquaintance to a café or to my home and we had a nice time. But, quite often the atmosphere was formal and we were not able to develop a less restrained feeling between ourselves. I think we are quite different in our ways of spending time together.

K. P. reflects on this separation from a different angle:

Living in a village and being alone with my family resulted over time in more ties with Dutch people. We exchange visits, our children are in the same kindergarten and playing the same games. These people were always there for me for any help - not only when they were asked, but they would also offer it. However, we are a bit different, and have different interests... and language difficulties are great. I prefer to meet "my people".

Individuals who are younger and/or more educated do not share this pattern.

N. V., for example, opines:

I have few real Dutch friends. I established a very close relationship with the teacher of my daughter and we are very much in contact. Children make a lot of social contacts possible and I

am very proud that I was accepted by some people who respected my own situation. It was enough to live a few years with these people to realize how beautiful it is to exchange "humanity" with our hosts.

And R. P., also privileged to have close contact with the Dutch, adds:

Living in Amsterdam and having a Dutch girlfriend made me both tied to the Bosnians and the foreigners. I enjoy both, even though I think I am better understood by the Bosnians, and somehow having more fun with them. Recently I met a few international students and things are developing, even though I think they are strange in a way.

6.3. Life Goals and Future Plans

Given the fact that the Bosnian immigrants to a large extent did not alter their former habits and lifestyles, but instead surrounded themselves mostly with other Bosnians, the group can be seen as isolated to a large degree. A long period of inactivity, despite the existence of a small number of economic and social initiatives, has resulted in a great deal of exclusive social solidarity that reinforces a sense of safety.

This loneliness is not a consequence of a dissonance between the two societies - Bosnian and Dutch - but emerges mostly from past conditions. Among the 25 informants, 22 claimed that they enjoyed a better life and standard of living before they fled from the former Yugoslavia. This is largely because, once in possession of their own homes but now having lost them more or less forever, a different level of disappointment is visible. The feeling seems to be that there is little reason to struggle again for the same achievements, since a situation like the past civil war could happen again. Even with the passage of many years and accommodation within a new social and cultural environment, the psychological "shadows" of past events continue to be cast over present-day thoughts and actions.

F. M., 61, mother of E. M. (cited above):

Before the war, our family used to live in a large, modern house in a very fashionable city in the West of Bosnia. We had a pretty nice life and a good standard of living. It is impossible to have it again, not only for me, but also for my daughter and granddaughter. Maybe one day, we will have a formal right to possess our house again, but by the time this day arrives, I will probably not be alive.

S. M. also says:

What is the point in starting again? To achieve the same goals in different and unfavorable circumstances? Maybe in a few years I will be able to find a good job, and favorable bank loans to buy or build my own house. I would always be scared that someone would come and say "This house is not yours anymore!" like happened eight years ago in Bosnia. I spent my youth building my house over years for my family, and it is then given to someone else. How can I believe that something like this would not happen again?

V. M. adds:

After losing all of my properties, I am not keen on investing here anymore. I will be satisfied with a modest life, and will do my best to provide my three children with a good education. I do not see my successful future here, and only hold hopes for my children.

However, such disappointments cannot be detected in all cases. For someone like N. P., life became better in the Netherlands:

I think I have a better life here than I ever had in the former Yugoslavia. I was not able, there, to gain a very satisfactory level of independence, attuned only to my own goals. I didn't like living in a small city where everyone is deeply involved, even in my private affairs. Gouda is not a big city either, but I am left alone. I do not have many expectations about building my future: I have chosen art as a more challenging goal, and that is what keeps me going.

The impression given is that most of these individuals are driven by their unfortunate circumstances into collective psychological involution within which the initiative and courage to struggle for a better life and greater social achievements has been impeded to a great extent.

Time and again, inactivity creates such attitudes of despondency and self-pity. It is true that people suffered a great deal, but after many years, it might be reasonably expected that they eventually be able to confront their past more realistically and thereby shift their concerns and emphases toward the future.

Conclusions

What we have outlined broadly as integration - a process of adjustment involving the acquisition of social position and a reasonable level of access to central social resources - has been compromised in most of the cases that we have examined. This much was perhaps evident even before our analysis was undertaken. By addressing the more specific conceptual designations of socioeconomic, social, and cultural integration, we were able to orient a more specific line of inquiry. We isolated and investigated more closely the dynamics of socioeconomic integration as an independent variable, in order that its relationship to the social and cultural types of integration could be assessed.

We found that limited and/or qualified access to that central social resource - the labor market - was a major obstacle to the attainment of social position by refugee-immigrants within their host societies. Such partial access to the labor market endangered and even impeded broader processes of integration. Job opportunity as such was found to be much less critical than job satisfaction in contributing to an agreeable and satisfactory feeling toward life in the host society on the part of the new immigrant.

The low level of job satisfaction common to all three countries, in dynamic convergence with the structure of the welfare-state itself, manifests differently in the USA, Sweden, and the Netherlands and, in so doing, produces slightly different social pathologies among immigrant groups within each welfare-state regime:

* In the USA, refugee-immigrants' interaction with the liberal welfare-state results in **alienation** - the removal of the individual from the peer community of other Bosnian refugee-immigrants - in the sense that those employed full-time, or hunting for jobs, find that these activities have priority over social activities of various kinds. The preoccupation with work and earning money so characteristic of the liberal regime tends toward the dissolution of group solidarity as emphasis shifts toward the needs and priorities of the individual.

* In Sweden, the establishment of a "gray economy" and illegal work as a strategy for increased income alongside the continuation of welfare benefits contributes to an overall state of **separation** - removal from other Bosnian refugee-immigrants as well as from the host society.

While the social-democratic state is relied upon as a source of welfare, additional economic and social activities take place within the corporate group comprising other similar immigrants.

* In the corporatist regime of the Netherlands, in which they are unable to penetrate the labor market easily, immigrants tend to develop and participate in underground economies and to cut themselves off from their host society in all aspects except the continued subscription to social benefits. The corporatist regime therefore produces **isolation** - removal of the Bosnian immigrant group from the host society - because basic integration processes are not assisted through participation in the labor market.

When compared with the results of Mežnarić's Slovenian study, we see a similar positioning of Bosnian immigrants within host societies. Cohesion and stability among the Bosnian immigrants tend to be high and the range of participation in the new society is substantially reduced, at least with respect to the initial immigrant group. Groups tend to be instrumentally oriented and even somewhat competitive, but their fields of activity tend to diversify more widely into the host society in subsequent generations.

According to Mežnarić, in this type of immigrant transformation the family is the basic unit of social solidarity. Immigrants are typically eager to accept and learn their new social roles in order to achieve their goals, and thus their aspirations quickly come to be framed within the dominant norms of the host society. It can be said, therefore, that the willingness to achieve integration - in the sense of the agreeable and satisfactory feeling *vis-à-vis* a range of factors - is in many cases strong with the immigrant. Whether or not the necessary avenues to this plurality of ends will be made accessible by the host society is, however, an altogether different question.

Recommendations

Given the findings presented here, we recommend that future policies concerning the integration of refugee-immigrants incorporate two interrelated dimensions - one psychological, one practical.

The trauma of war and displacement, as well as the low social status that typically accompanies the refugee, complicate processes of adjustment at the individual level. A longer period of adjustment, combined with professional counseling and other social programs intended to ameliorate negative psychological effects, should be considered as part of a more comprehensive policy framework.

In addition, the loss of social and professional status further complicates processes of adjustment and integration for the more educated and/or specialized individuals within the population of refugee-immigrants. Such professional status is often a crucial component of identity itself, serving as a platform for orienting social relationships. When vocational or professional designation is annulled by immigration, then, a serious crisis of identity is often the result. A comprehensive policy should therefore include the provision of a much more efficient and accessible program of education and vocational training, by means of which the refugee-immigrant has the option of re-establishing former educational and professional levels within the host society. These activities of education and training should be enacted as the logical next step in the integration process itself, to be offered immediately after the provision of accommodation, language training, and welfare subsidies during the initial period of adjustment.

A sympathetic policy for the acceptance and integration of refugees should recognize the importance of both the psychological and the practical in contributing to the state of satisfaction and well-being that we equate here with integration. Social policy should therefore be drawn in light of the observation that stable and well-adjusted individuals who have a realistic sense of both themselves and their social identity are not only more contented themselves, but - through their increased and more harmonized participation in society - contribute at the same time to society's very stability and integrity.

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**ZADOVOLJSTVO I SMISLENOST RADA
KAO PUT U INTEGRACIJU:
BOSANSKE IZBJEGLICE NA ZAPADU**

**KAMENKO BULIĆ
HENRI DONGIEUX**

Sveučilište u Amsterdamu

Članak slijedi bosanske izbjeglice na putu iz ratom razorene bivše Jugoslavije početkom devedesetih godina, u zapadne države blagostanja. Studija je imala za cilj ocijeniti do kojeg je stupnja prisutna tranzicija od statusa izbjeglice prema participiranju u društvima prijema, među bosanskim izbjeglicama različita društvena porijekla. Primijenjen je upitnik i intervjui o percipiranim prigodama za zaposlenje i zadovoljstvo u radu. Teorijski su autori nastojali odrediti odnos između dostupnosti i participiranja na tržištu rada te procesa integracije izbjeglica u različite tipove država blagostanja. Cilj studije bio je istražiti i utvrditi optimalne politike, po tipovima država blagostanja, integracije za izbjeglice iz Bosne.