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# Beyond Ethnicity? Exploring Cleavages at the 2022 Election in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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## Introduction

The 2022 general election in Bosnia and Herzegovina was marked by fierce competition for the Bosniak member of the collective presidency, pitting Party of Democratic Action (SDA) leader Bakir Izetbegović against Denis Bećirović (Social Democratic Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina, SDP B&H), whose candidacy was supported by a range of opposition political parties.[1] Bećirović's victory dealt a heavy blow to long-established SDA dominance among Bosniak voters. In addition, the election was overshadowed by numerous reports of irregularities at polling stations, especially in the Serb-dominated entity, where Jelena Trivić, the presidential candidate of the Party of Democratic Progress (PDP) accused Milorad Dodik (Party of Independent Social Democrats, SNSD) of stealing the election. Finally, the legal intervention of the High Representative Christian Schmitt on election night, which established new rules of selecting delegates in the House of Peoples in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (upper house designed to provide ethnically based power-sharing mechanisms) and nominating the President and Vice-Presidents of that entity, caused much uproar among Bosniak and non-ethnic unitarist political elites and among commentators on social media.

In this paper, I shall try to offer a brief analysis of cleavages that affect territorial electoral patterns in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As no party or candidate ever competes in all parts of this complex federal state, the paper shall deal with the larger entity, i.e., the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina only. Also, since the aim of the paper is to explore territorial electoral patterns, aggregate data, instead of survey data, shall be

1 He was a joint candidate of SDP B&H, Our Party (NS) and People and Justice (NiP), with additional support by the Union for a Better Future of B&H (SBB, party of Fahrudin Radončić, a media mogul) and People's European Union (NES).

used. Therefore, in this paper, I shall test whether structural characteristics of population at municipality level can serve as a predictor of electoral outcomes. A similar paper on the 2021 German election was published in last year's volume of this journal (see Raos, 2021) and this article follows the same approach used in that paper. Also, territorial data was used by Marko Grdešić to model patterns of electoral support and uncover a left-right territorial divide in Croatia (see Grdešić, 2013, 2021).

## Cleavages in Bosnia and Herzegovina

There are two basic premises that can be made about cleavage voting in Bosnia and Herzegovina. First, the ethnic identity cleavage is by far the most important factor regarding voter behavior. Second, non-ethnic factors can be expected to play a larger role in those parts of the country which are more ethnically homogenous and where the so-called "national question" does not dominate the policy agenda. A recent analysis of electoral geography in Bosnia and Herzegovina has shown that, in addition to the ethnic divide, an urban-rural cleavage also plays a role in shaping voter patterns (Reményi, Gekić, Bidžan-Gekić, and Sümeghy, 2022). The same paper also found out that ethnic voting is more prevalent in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina than in the Republic of Srpska, where other factors (such as the East-West and the urban-rural divides) may influence voter behavior.

The focus of this paper shall be on the main self-proclaimed non-ethnic or civic parties that favor a unitarist form of state. This includes SDP B&H, the joint list of the Democratic Front and the Civic Alliance (DF-GS) and the liberal Our Party (*Naša stranka*, NS), as well as their (winning) candidates for the presidency, the Bosniak member Denis Bećirović and the Croat member Željko Komšić. Previous studies of self-proclaimed non-ethnic or civic political parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina have also focused on these three parties, calling them "non-nationalist parties" (Hulsey and Keil, 2019) and "multi-ethnic parties" (Touquet, 2011), respectively.

## Data and Methods

This paper uses 2022 municipality-level results according to party list and presidential candidate votes (Central Electoral Commission, 2022) and municipality-level structural data derived from the 2013 census (Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2013). Unfortunately, the availability of data on municipality level means that the total number of cases is only 80, since the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided in 79 municipalities, while citizens of the Brčko District can choose in which entity to cast their votes.

Apart from the municipality-level percentage of Bosniaks and Croats, derived from 2013 census data, and the percentage of Others (citizens that belong to ethnic minorities, do not identify with any ethnic group or identify with the country as a whole, i.e., declared their ethnicity as Bosnian or Bosnian-Herzegovinian), we shall also test an additional predictor connected to the ethnic cleavage, the level of ethnic heterogeneity, measured with the Ethnic Fractionalization Index (originally devised by Alesina et al., 2003).

*Table 1. Descriptive Statistics: Party List and Presidential Candidate Votes*

| Party/Candidate (%) | N | Min | Max | Mean | Median | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SDP B&H | 80 | 0.00 | 34.29 | 11.19 | 10.48 | 8.75 |
| DF-GS | 80 | 0.00 | 24.76 | 8.91 | 9.02 | 5.87 |
| NS | 80 | 0.00 | 24.50 | 2.81 | 1.10 | 4.62 |
| Denis Bećirović | 80 | 0.18 | 48.93 | 27.35 | 33.59 | 15.90 |
| Željko Komšić | 80 | 0.30 | 37.19 | 18.86 | 21.49 | 10.75 |

Source: Author, according to Central Electoral Commission, 2022.

*Table 2. Descriptive Statistics: Predictors*

| Predictor (%) | N | Min | Max | Mean | Median | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bosniaks | 80 | 0.00 | 99.60 | 61.60 | 82.30 | 36.55 |
| Croats | 80 | 0.00 | 99.80 | 29.70 | 7.35 | 36.38 |
| Others | 80 | 0.10 | 17.50 | 3.04 | 2.10 | 3.22 |
| Ethnic Fractionalization Index | 80 | 0.00 | 0.66 | 0.24 | 0.18 | 0.18 |
| Non-believers | 80 | 0.00 | 8.59 | 0.74 | 0.35 | 1.34 |
| Urban population | 80 | 0.00 | 99.40 | 31.20 | 26.30 | 24.73 |
| Highly educated | 80 | 3.05 | 32.70 | 9.22 | 7.50 | 5.19 |

Source: Author, according to Central Electoral Commission, 2022.

Although ethnicity and religious affiliation largely overlap in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is still worth exploring whether there is, in fact, a religious/non-religious cleavage, particularly considering self-proclaimed non-ethnic or civic political parties which largely have a secular outlook.

According to a 2017 Pew Research Center survey conducted on religiosity in Central and Eastern Europe, Bosnia and Herzegovina was one of the most religious countries in the region, with 24 percent of respondents claiming that they attend weekly religious services (compared to 41 percent in Poland and 24 percent in Croatia) (Pew Research Center, 2017a: 70). However, the reported levels of practical religiosity greatly differed between the three major religious groups in the country. More than half of Bosnian Catholics (54 percent) attended church weekly (as opposed to 27 percent of Catholics in Croatia and the regional Catholic median of 25 percent), while only 10 percent of Bosnian Orthodox Christians went to Sunday mass (which is higher than the 6 percent figure for Orthodox Christians in Serbia and equal to the regional Orthodox median) (Pew Research Center, 2017a: 11). Among Bosnian Muslims, 31 percent of respondents reported going to weekly Friday prayer (compared to 21 percent of Bulgarian Muslims and 23 percent of Russian Muslims) (Pew Research Center, 2017b: 118).

For the purpose of this study, we created a predictor called "Non-believers" which is the

sum of percentages of those that declared themselves agnostics and atheists at the 2013 census. Further, the percentage of urban population per municipality was included to test the urban-rural divide, as well as the percentage of highly educated inhabitants.

First, we shall look at the spatial distribution of the vote of the three lists and two candidates considered in this paper. A calculation of z-scores will enable a comparison of municipalities where SDP, DF-GS, NS, Bećirović, and Komšić achieved their best results with those local government units where they were the least successful. After that, we shall examine correlations of all predictors and dependent variables. This will flag potential cases of multicollinearity among predictors and point to those predictors that are particularly highly correlated with our analyzed outcomes. Finally, we shall test several regression models for each of the five dependent variables of interest.

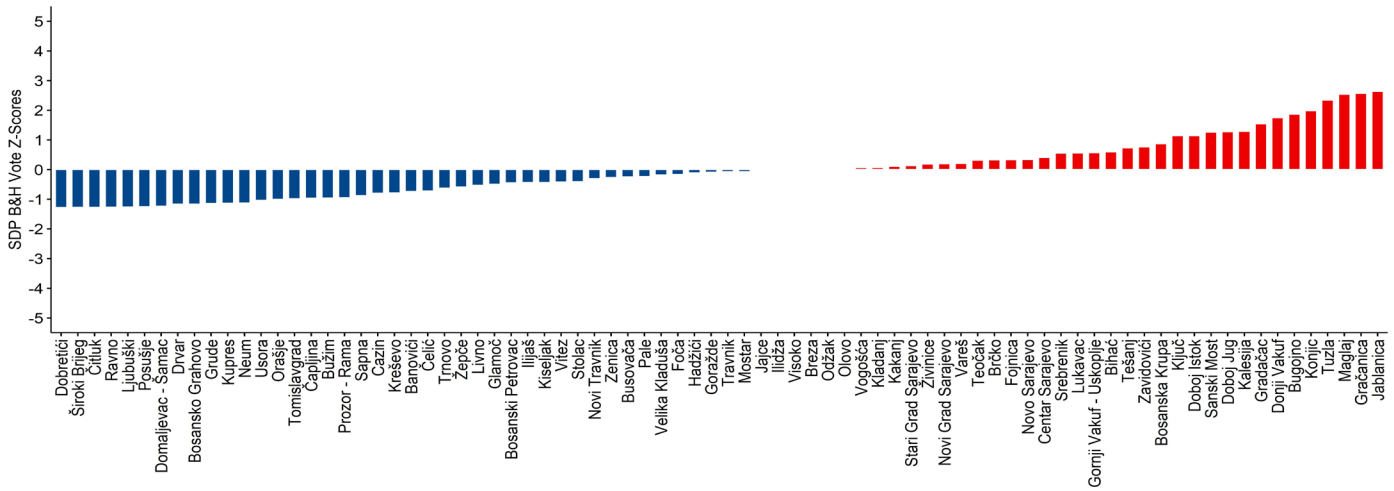
## Hypotheses

In this brief analysis, we test the idea that the electoral results of self-proclaimed non-ethnic parties and candidates in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be explained by looking at the distribution of Others and non-believers, i.e., we examine the notion that these parties will be more successful in more secular areas, areas with more ethnic minorities and/or non-affiliated inhabitants and in those areas that are ethnically more heterogenous. Further, we test the idea that these parties will gain more support in urban areas and in areas with more citizens who are highly educated. Such findings would, indeed, support the picture these parties and candidates paint about themselves, i.e., that they represent a secular, non-ethnic, urban, and more educated Bosnia and Herzegovina. In order to provide a counterargument to this proposition, I also tested whether the percentage of Bosniaks (for SDP B&H, DF-GS, NS, and Bećirović) or Croats (Komšić) could serve as a predictor of the variance in electoral outcomes.

## Results and Discussion

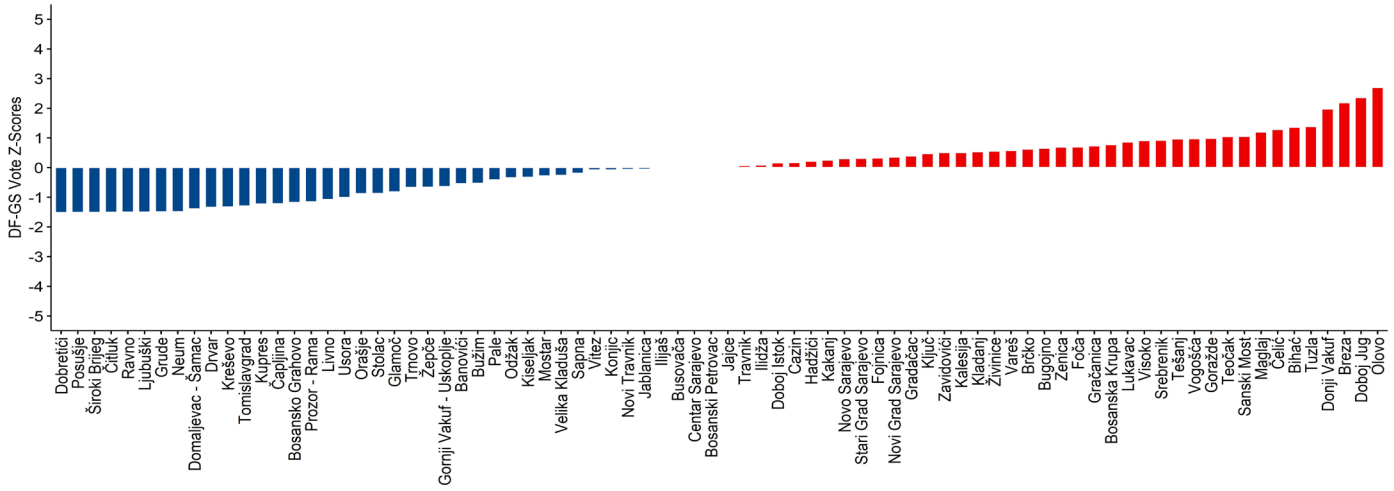
An analysis of SDP B&H vote z-scores has revealed typical Social Democratic strongholds in the northeastern part of the Federation of B&H, i.e., the Tuzla area (the home town of Denis Bećirović). On the contrary, Social Democrats had their worst results in Western Herzegovina, a predominantly ethnic Croat area and a stronghold of the Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina (HDZ B&H). The Democratic Front-Civic Alliance joint list reached highest scores in similar parts of the country and the Social Democrats. All these communities have a clear Bosniak ethnic majority. These include places like Tuzla and the environs, but also Bihać in the northwestern part of the country. Just like the Social Democrats, DF-GS had their poorest results in Western Herzegovina.

*Figure 1. SDP B&H Vote by Municipality*




Source: Author.

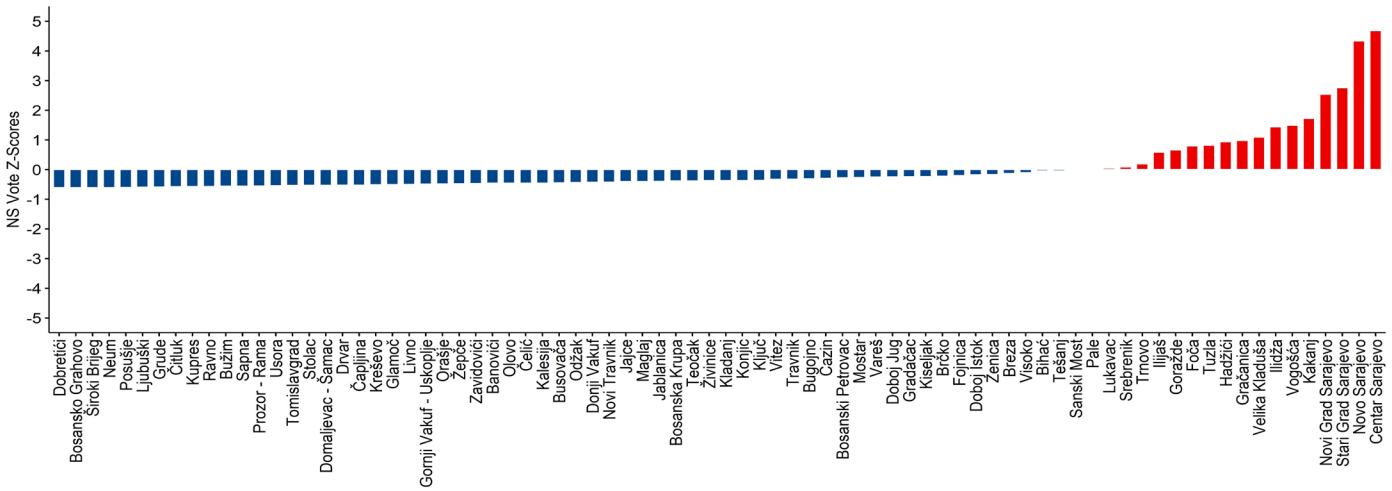
*Figure 2. DF-GS B&H Vote by Municipality*




Source: Author.

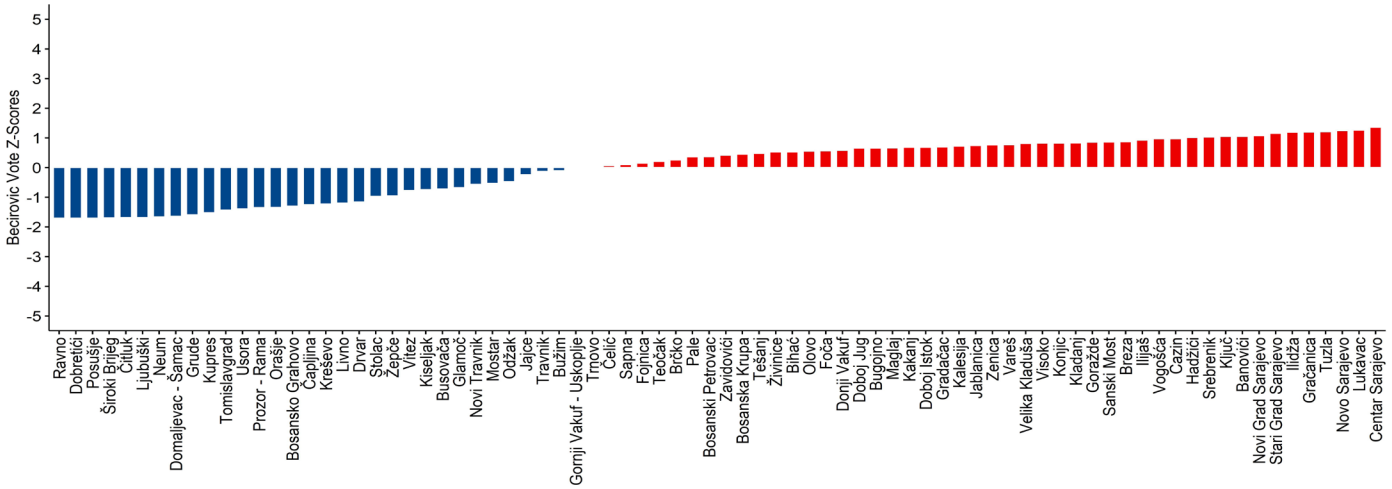
Our Party is strongest in the capital city and the Sarajevo Canton. According to z-scores analysis of its 2022 results, it was definitely strongest in the city of Sarajevo and its suburban areas, while, just like in the case of the Social Democrats and the Democratic Front, its weakest performance was in places like Široki Brijeg and Posušje, in Western Herzegovina.

*Figure 3. NS B&H Vote by Municipality*




Source: Author.

*Figure 4. Bećirović Vote by Municipality*




Source: Author.

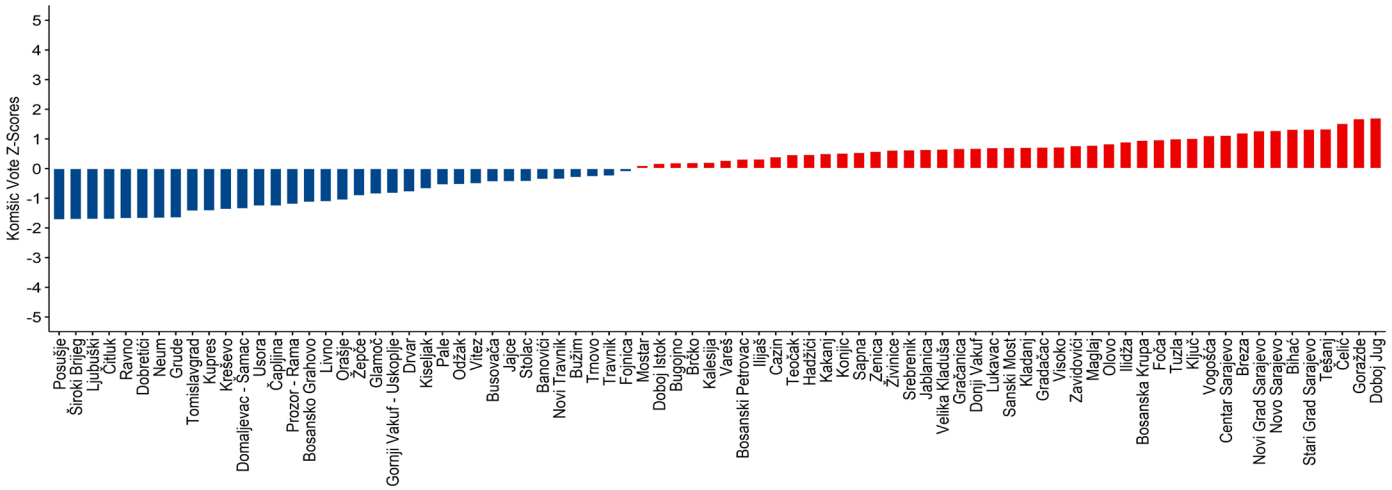
Since Bećirović ran as a joint opposition candidate against Bakir Izetbegović, he received above-average vote percentages in both SDP B&H strongholds (Tuzla, Gračanica), but also in Sarajevo, which is a bastion for both Our Party and the People and Justice party.[2] Komšić ran for the fourth time for the Croat member of the state presidency,[3] again campaigning in

2 A secular Bosniak party, an off-shoot of SDA.

3 Indeed, it is worth noting that there are no time limits for this highly important office within the Bosnian-Herzegovinian political system.

areas with a Bosniak ethnic majority and almost exclusively appealing to voters from this ethnic group, although he is nominally supposed to represent Croats as one of the three constitutionally enshrined peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina and work together with the Croat caucus in the federal-level House of Peoples to ensure safeguarding of collective rights pertaining to language, education, public broadcasting, culture, etc.

*Figure 5. Komšić Vote by Municipality*



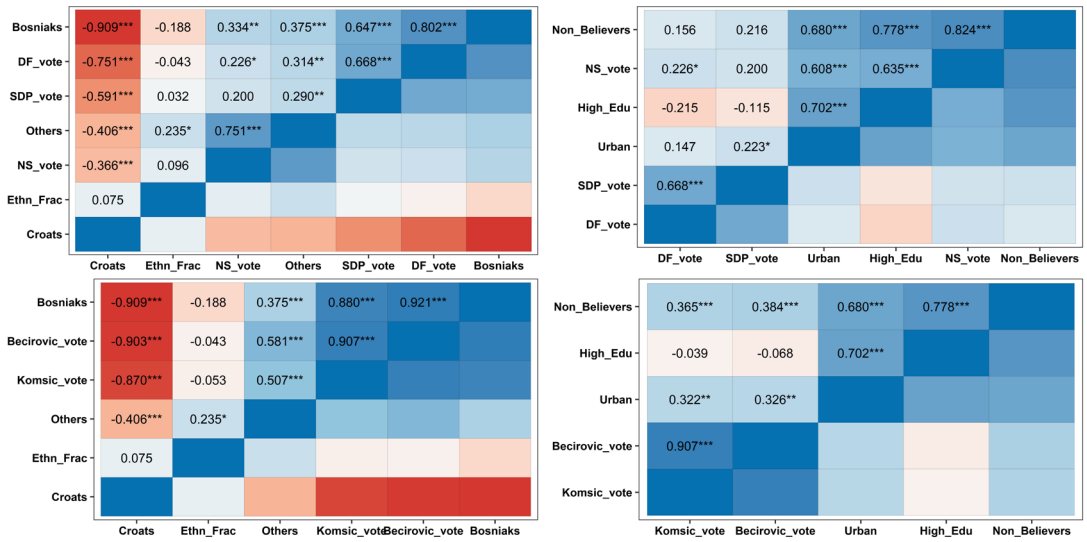

Source: Author.

The distribution of z-scores for the 2022 Komšić vote reveals a situation already analyzed by papers which have raised concerns over implementation of consociational democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly regarding the presidential election (see Kasapović, 2016). All of the above-average electoral scores for Komšić were in Bosniak majority areas (including places like Goražde and Doboj Jug), while almost all of his below-average scores were in Croat majority areas, most notably Široki Brijeg and Posušje.

The correlation matrix points to several interesting findings about contemporary Bosnia and Herzegovina in general and the Federation of B&H in particular. There is an extremely high negative correlation between the percentage of Bosniaks and Croats on municipality level, which confirms that post-war B&H features largely ethnically homogenous areas. While, as expected, the percentage of highly educated citizens is highly positively correlated with urban population (and the percentage of non-believers), the ethnic connection is rather interesting. Namely, the percentage of Bosniaks is negatively correlated ($r = -0.278$, $p < 0.05$) with the share of people with tertiary education, while the percentage of Croats is positively correlated ($r = 0.227$, $p < 0.05$) with the share of highly educated citizens. One should take any far-reaching conclusions from this finding with a grain of salt, due to low Pearson's coefficients and significance only at the 0.05 level. However, it is rather surprising to see such results, since Croats, on average, tend to live in smaller (less urban) settlements throughout the country, while larger towns and cities usually have higher shares of people with university-level education. Also, as already noted in the assessment

of z-scores, Komšić, a (winning) candidate for the Croat member of the presidency, could be expected to garner few votes in Croat majority areas, as the percentage of Croats was highly negatively correlated (r=-0.278, $p < 0.05$) with his electoral results. Such findings further strengthen the argument that Željko Komšić wins elections without the support of the particular electorate he is officially supposed to represent.

*Figure 6. Correlation Matrix*




Note: Correlation coefficients are sorted according to size. *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

Source: Author.

*Table 3. Predictors of SDP B&H Vote*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Constant** | 11.194*** (0.981) | 11.194*** (0.911) | 11.194*** (0.748) | 11.194*** (0.970) | 11.194*** (0.976) |
| **Urban** | 1.242 (1.239) | 5.239*** (1.208) | 1.494 (0.773) | 0.920 (1.262) | 2.062* (0.849) |
| **Non-believers** | 1.049 (1.573) | | | | |
| **Highly educated** | | -4.680** (1.427) | | | |
| **Bosniaks** | | | 5.541*** (0.618) | | |
| **Others** | | | | 2.077 (1.669) | |
| **Ethnic fractionalization** | | | | | -0.351 (0.846) |
| **N** | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |
| | F(2,77) = 2.353 | F(2,77) = 9.331*** | F(2,77) = 31.227*** | F(2,77) = 3.911* | F(2,77) = 2.084 |
| **Adj. $R^2$** | 0.033 | 0.174 | 0.434 | 0.059 | 0.027 |

All continuous predictors are mean-centered and scaled by 1 standard deviation. Standard errors are heteroskedasticity robust. *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

Source: Author.

When trying to determine the factors which explain territorial variation of the vote for the Social Democrats, five models were tested. In each model, there was one variable of interest, while the variable measuring the urban-rural divide served as a control variable. In other words, we tried to examine whether we could predict the variance of the vote for the Social Democrats, while controlling for the urban-rural divide. Only two models were significant, while one was marginally significant. When controlling for the urban-rural divide, in model 2, we the percentage of university-educated people as a negative predictor of the SDP B&H vote. The amount of variance explained was relatively low. Also, in this model, urbanization was a significant predictor of electoral success of the Social Democrats. However, in model 3 we could explain more than 40% of the variance due to the ethnic cleavage, while the effect of the urban-rural divide disappeared.

*Table 4. Predictors of DF-GS B&H Vote*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Constant** | 8.914*** (0.670) | 8.914*** (0.603) | 8.914*** (0.400) | 8.914*** (0.662) | 8.914*** (0.663) |
| **Urban** | 0.438 (0.943) | 3.435*** (0.774) | 0.472 (0.435) | -0.076 (1.096) | 1.033 (0.599) |
| **Non-believers** | 0.620 (1.148) | | | | |
| **Highly educated** | | -3.670*** (1.000) | | | |
| **Bosniaks** | | | 4.665*** (0.363) | | |
| **Others** | | | | 1.880 (1.540) | |
| **Ethnic fractionalization** | | | | | -0.569 (0.631) |
| **N** | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |
| | F(2,77) = 1.088 | F(2,77) = 10.871*** | F(2,77) = 71.263*** | F(2,77) = 4.213* | F(2,77) = 1.192 |
| **Adj. $R^2$** | 0.002 | 0.200 | 0.640 | 0.075 | 0.005 |

All continuous predictors are mean-centered and scaled by 1 standard deviation. Standard errors are heteroskedasticity robust. *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

Source: Author.

Just like in the case of the Social Democrats, only two models, 2 and 3, were statistically significant when trying to predict the territorial variance the vote for the Democratic Front-Civic Alliance list. Again, when controlling for the urban-rural divide (which returned a significant, positive coefficient), we could observe that lower percentages of highly educated inhabitants could serve as a predictor of vote variance. Also, the significant of the urban-rural divide disappeared when ethnicity was factored in. However, a much larger percentage of the variance (over 60%) could be explained by the ethnic cleavage, i.e., the percentage of Bosniaks in a given municipality. Therefore, one can say that in the case of both of these political parties, the ethnic cleavage is a far stronger predictor of territorial variance than any other structural characteristic.

*Table 5. Predictors of NS B&H Vote*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Constant** | 2.810*** (0.303) | 2.810*** (0.415) | 2.810*** (0.407) | 2.810*** (0.350) | 2.810*** (0.432) |
| **Urban** | 0.407 (0.537) | 1.475** (0.550) | 2.701*** (0.782) | 1.438* (0.685) | 2.949*** (0.823) |
| **Non-believers** | 3.534*** (0.360) | | | | |
| **Highly educated** | | 1.902 (1.111) | | | |
| **Bosniaks** | | | 1.318*** (0.295) | | |
| **Others** | | | | 2.754** (1.026) | |
| **Ethnic fractionalization** | | | | | -0.455 (0.329) |
| **N** | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |
| | F(2,77) = 83.091*** | F(2,77) = 32.181*** | F(2,77) = 31.501*** | F(2,77) = 67.285*** | F(2,77) = 23.412*** |
| **Adj. $R^2$** | 0.675 | 0.441 | 0.436 | 0.627 | 0.362 |

All continuous predictors are mean-centered and scaled by 1 standard deviation. Standard errors are heteroskedasticity robust. *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

Source: Author.

As opposed to the previous two discussed parties, all five models were significant in the case of Our Party. For this list, the share of non-believers and the share of Others served as strong predictors of the variance, explaining more than 60 percent, whereas the ethnic cleavage was less pronounced. The urban-rural divide disappeared from the picture when considered alongside the share of non-believers, which is to be expected due to high correlation of these two predictors. Of the three parties analyzed, Our Party is the only one which can be described as showing voter variation which is not primarily ethnically based. This supports the idea and the self-image of this party as non-ethnic and civic.

For the variance of the vote for Denis Bećirović, all five models were significant. Due to high correlation between urban population and non-believers, both predictors were not statistically significant in the first model. Lower shares of highly educated people served as a relatively good predictor of the vote for this candidate, as well as the share of Others. However, model 3, which considered the ethnic cleavage, explained over 90 percent of the variance, as the high share of Bosniaks strongly predicted higher vote percentages for Bećirović. The election of the two members of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina is in itself envisaged to provide ethnic representation and thus a strong role of the ethnic cleavage should not come as a surprise. However, since Bećirović ran as a candidate of a range of parties, some with a non-ethnic, and some with a more ethnic self-image, against a candidate of the main Bosniak ethnic nationalist party, Izetbegović from the SDA, one would be inclined to expect ethnicity to play a less pronounced role as a predictor of the vote.

*Table 6. Predictors of Bećirović Vote*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Constant** | 27.350*** (1.689) | 27.350*** (1.607) | 27.350*** (0.549) | 27.350*** (1.550) | 27.350*** (1.705) |
| **Urban** | 1.910 (2.382) | 11.683*** (1.870) | 3.985*** (0.594) | 0.768 (2.742) | 5.932*** (1.565) |
| **Non-believers** | 4.802 (2.824) | | | | |
| **Highly educated** | | -9.275* (3.765) | | | |
| **Bosniaks** | | | 14.306*** (0.495) | | |
| **Others** | | | | 8.848* (3.976) | |
| **Ethnic fractionalization** | | | | | -2.483 (1.724) |
| **N** | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |
| | F(2,77) = 7.064** | F(2,77) = 14.886*** | F(2,77) = 389.848*** | F(2,77) = 19.732*** | F(2,77) = 5.658** |
| **Adj. $R^2$** | 0.133 | 0.260 | 0.908 | 0.322 | 0.105 |

All continuous predictors are mean-centered and scaled by 1 standard deviation. Standard errors are heteroskedasticity robust. *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

Source: Author.

*Table 7. Predictors of Komšić Vote*

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Constant** | 18.865*** (1.155) | 18.865*** (1.102) | 18.865*** (0.576) | 18.865*** (1.087) | 18.865*** (1.153) |
| **Urban** | 1.491 (1.767) | 7.400*** (1.379) | 1.760** (0.628) | 0.996 (1.720) | 4.009*** (1.147) |
| **Non-believers** | 2.903 (2.050) | | | | |
| **Highly educated** | | -5.608* (2.233) | | | |
| **Croats** | | | -9.015*** (0.490) | | |
| **Others** | | | | 4.956* (2.256) | |
| **Ethnic fractionalization** | | | | | -1.786 (1.134) |
| **N** | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 | 80 |
| | F(2,77) = 6.436** | F(2,77) = 12.310*** | F(2,77) = 138.511*** | F(2,77) = 13.804*** | F(2,77) = 5.705** |
| **Adj. $R^2$** | 0.121 | 0.223 | 0.777 | 0.245 | 0.106 |

All continuous predictors are mean-centered and scaled by 1 standard deviation. Standard errors are heteroskedasticity robust. *** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$.

Source: Author.

In the case of Komšić, all five models were significant as well. Again, in model 1, the highly correlated predictors of urban population and share of non-believers cancelled each other

out. Also, just like in the case of Bećirović, lower shares of highly educated people and higher shares of Others could serve as relatively good predictors. However, the model with the ethnic predictor explained over 70 percent of the variance. The paradox of this model is that a lower share of Croats is a very strong predictor of the vote for Željko Komšić, a candidate that ran and won the Croat seat in the Presidency. If Komšić were truly a civic candidate, one would expect the ethnic cleavage to play a minor role in explaining his variance of the vote or if municipalities with both Croats and Bosniaks present had a tendency to support him, we would see a significant results in model 5, which uses ethnic fractionalization as a predictor. On the contrary, these results point to a conclusion that his vote can be modelled almost exclusively with the help of the ethnic cleavage in such a manner that the less Croats in a municipality, the more likely that municipality will have high vote shares for Komšić.

## Conclusion

In this paper, I analyzed the 2022 election in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the perspective of territorial, rather than voter differences. Thus, instead of relying on survey data to build a model predicting party vote outcomes, I used municipality-level data. I considered the three main self-described non-ethnic or civic party lists, SDP B&H, DF-GS and NS, as well as two self-described non-ethnic or civic presidential candidates, Denis Bećirović and Željko Komšić. I examined the role of the urban-rural divide, the ethnic cleavage, the religious cleavage and the educational cleavage. The results have shown that SDP B&H and DF-GS tend to gain support in areas with less highly educated people. However, for both parties, the share of Bosniaks was a far better predictor. In the case of Our Party, we could truly detect non-ethnic voting, as its variance of the vote could be explained to a large percentage with the share of non-believers and others. In the case of presidential candidates, ethnicity was, again, the most important predictor. Also, for Komšić, the share of Croats was a very strong negative predictor, which again confirms the argument that his electoral victories are due to heavy support in Bosniak majority areas, and not because of any kind of substantial support in those municipalities where a tangible number of ethnic Croats live.

Thus, this short analysis has confirmed the predominance of the ethnic cleavage in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also singled out Our Party as the only self-described non-ethnic or civic party in that country that truly draws support along other variances of territorial characteristics, such as religiosity and the share of Others.

The limitations of this paper lie in the small number of cases (80) and the non-inclusion in the analysis of other lists and candidates for contrast – i.e., SDA, NiS, and HDZ, as well as Bakir Izetbegović and Borjana Krišto, respectively. Future studies of the territorial dimension of cleavages in Bosnia and Herzegovina should try to increase the number of cases by collecting data at polling station level and including all relevant parties and candidates, both self-described ethnic and non-ethnic.

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