

READINESS TO RETURN

Vladimir Jelkić

Institute for Applied Social Research, Zagreb

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In the paper the author investigates the results obtained in view of the readiness of the displaced from the Croatian east to return in the places from which they were exiled during Serbian aggression. The results indicated existence of psychological assumptions for a mass return of the displaced although a considerable number of the displaced did not conform with the Plan of Peaceful Reintegration. The answers of the displaced to the questions investigating the intention to return under present conditions established by the Plan suggest that even in case of successful implementation of the Plan, almost one third of the displaced would not return home. Those with higher level of education, and capable of working would return home in smaller number. The decision to return will primarily depend on complete implementation of the Croatian authorities in the area of displacement. If that basic condition would not be satisfied, majority of the displaced are ready to accept a certain form of presence of international community. On the contrary, the control of local Serbs in the place of return is absolutely unacceptable for nine tenth of the displaced. Investigation also showed that displaced from Vukovar have to a considerable degree different, and for the process of peaceful reintegration, more negative attitudes than the displaced from other municipalities and towns.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to the text of the Basic Agreement on the Region of Eastern Slavonia, Baranya and Western Sirmium, signed on November 12th, 1995 ("Erdut Agreement"), the UN Transitional Administration will ensure the possibility for the return for refugees and displaced persons to their homes of origin. The Article 4 of the Agreement reads: "All persons who have left the Region or who have come to the Region with previous permanent residence in Croatia shall enjoy the same rights as all other residents of the Region." According to the Article 7, all persons who have left the Region, with previous permanent residence in Croatia, have the right to return freely to their places

of residence in the Region and to live there in conditions of security. The Agreement also includes regulations on the right of the displaced to have restored to them any property and on compensation of the property that cannot be restored. The Basic Agreement also plans the election for all local government bodies to be held thirty days before the end of transitional period.

The Basic Agreement came into force after the United Nation's Security Council had issued Resolution 1037 which established UN temporary administration in the Eastern Slavonija, Baranja and Western Srijem (UNTAES). One of the aims of the civil component of UNTAES cited in Article 11 of the Resolution 1037 of January 15, 1996 was to ensure the return of the displaced. Other basic aims of the UNTAES mission are: peaceful reintegration of the Eastern Slavonija, Baranja and Western Srijem into the Republic of Croatia, preservation of multi-ethnic character of the Region, improvement of personal safety among all local residents regardless of their ethnic origin, promotion of fundamental human rights and personal freedom, encouragement of post-war development and reconstruction of the Region in accordance with the general plan of the Republic of Croatia and organisation of free and legitimate elections not later than thirty days before the end of transitional period.

The resolution of the UN Security Council has therefore confirmed the regulations of the Basic Agreement signed by the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the representatives of the local Serbs, which in fact determined the conditions for the return of the expelled inhabitants to the east of Croatia.

The results presented in this paper are based on the extensive survey conducted in 1996 on the sample of 1499 displaced persons. The methods, instrument and subjects are described by Kaliterna and Rimac (1997) and Šakić et al. (1997).

2. THE HOPE ABOUT RETURN

According to our survey more than threefourths of the interviewed displaced persons think that they are well or moderately well acquainted with the statements of the Plan of Peaceful Reintegration of the Region from which they have been banished. Half of the interviewed mostly or completely agree with the Plan (34% mostly or completely disagree and the rest maintain that they are not sufficiently familiar with the Plan).

The insight into the general sentiment of the displaced persons towards their future was obtained on basis of the questions shown in Table 1.

These results compared to those obtained in 1994 (Rogić et al., 1995) show that in the present survey the number of displaced persons expressing optimistic view of their future increased by 13.5%, and the number of those with pessimistic view decreased by 16.4%. The fact that relative majority of dis-

placed persons (43.5%) expressed the beliefs that the situation will soon improve also deserves attention. A shift in the attitude of displaced population toward future observed in the present survey can be explained by a more stable basis for an optimistic projection of the future provided by the military actions "Bljesak" (Flash) and "Oluja" (Storm) which resulted in the liberation of the occupied territories as well as to the started processes of renewal and return of the displaced persons into these areas.¹

Table 1
Attitude of the displaced persons with respect to future

Attitude	Percentage of displaced persons by municipality				Total sample
	Beli Manastir	Osijek	Vinkovci	Vukovar	
Pessimistic attitude and fear that future cannot bring anything good	22.9	22.1	20.4	35.8	28.9
Optimism and belief that soon/future will be better	49.5	46.9	50.8	37.8	43.5
Cannot estimate	27.7	31.1	28.8	26.4	27.7

The answers of the displaced persons were in dependence of their level of education. Pessimistic attitude and fear that future will be no better is less frequently found among the displaced persons without any education (17.0%), and was more frequently expressed by those with secondary school (35.4%) and those with higher and high education (40.4%). On the contrary, the optimistic attitude is, in percentages, evenly distributed among all educational groups. More decisive in estimation of the future were displaced persons with higher level of education – graduates could not form the judgement about their future in 14.4%, whereas among undergraduates who had completed only several elementary-school grades (five to seven grades) this percentage was 40.8. High percentage of undecided about their future indicates bad living conditions of the displaced; insecure personal existence, contributed by the impossibility to influence any decisions essential for their future, as well as to perceive and understand the moments influencing these decisions.

It should also be noted that there is a considerable difference in the attitudes towards future between the displaced persons from Vukovar and those from other three municipalities: pessimistic attitude and fear from future were expressed among the displaced persons from Vukovar by 12.9% more than among those from Baranja, by 13.7% more than among the displaced from the area

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According to the data of the Government of the Republic of Croatia (obtained from the Office for the Refugees and Displaced Persons) a total of 56.252 persons have returned to their places of residence by 16 August 1996; by January 1996, 12.742 of the displaced and by May 1996 additional 32.028 displaced persons have returned to their homes. Presently, a total of 143.385 persons in Croatia still hold the status of the displaced persons.

of Osijek and by 15.4% more than among those from the area of Vinkovci. There is also a proportionally less number of the displaced persons from Vukovar who declared a belief that situation will soon improve. The reason can be found in war atrocities and traumas to which those displaced persons were most exposed: over 50% of the interviewed displaced persons from Vukovar said that they themselves or someone from their family were imprisoned, almost one third of them or their family members were injured or made war invalids, and almost half of them suffered heavy psychic trauma with consequences to be felt for the rest of their lives.

When asked to estimate their own personal status and the status of their family members in future the displaced persons answered as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Perception of personal and family status in future

Estimation of the status	%
Status will improve	44.7
Status will even more deteriorate	8.7
There will be no significant change for some time	25.1
Don't know, cannot estimate	21.5

Only 8.7% of the interviewed were highly pessimistic toward their future, and every fourth displaced believes that no significant change will occur for some time. Since the attitudes of the displaced population depend on the possibility of their return home, it could be concluded that less than one tenth of the displaced persons do not believe in their return, or do not expect that the return if realised as predicted, might improve their situation, and every fourth maintains that the change of their status depends on the future. Whether the significant change would be a change for the better or for the worse, depends definitely on the process of the return.

The period within which the displaced persons estimated that return to their homes will be possible can be seen from Table 3.

Table 3
Estimation of the time of return

Period of return	Per cent of displaced persons				
	Beli Manastir	Osijek	Vinkovci	Vukovar	Whole sample
For less than six months	27.1	23.9	31	5.3	16.3
Within six months or a year	36.3	30.6	23.2	22.2	26.6
For a year or two	16.3	19.0	15.0	29.2	22.9
For more than two years	0.7	2.6	3.9	12.8	7.5
For more than five years	0.0	0.6	0.2	3.1	1.7
Probably cannot return at all	0.2	1.2	0.5	2.4	1.5
Don't know, cannot estimate	19.5	22.1	26.1	25.0	23.6

In the survey carried out two years ago a convincing majority of as many as 61% displaced persons stated that they could not estimate the time of return, whereas in our survey 23.6% of the interviewed shared this opinion. It is obvious that in the meantime the moment of return became considerably closer and perceptible. More than 65% of the answers predicted the range of six months to two years necessary for free return, and we can therefore assume that this is psychologically acceptable period of awaiting the return for the majority of displaced persons.

Positive attitudes toward the return were also confirmed by the answers to the question "Where would you like to live in future?" as can be seen in the following table.

Table 4
Preferred place of return

Selected place	Per cent of displaced persons				
	Beli Manastir	Osijek	Vinkovci	Vukovar	Whole sample
Place from which was expelled	82.0	87.6	91.4	81.2	83.7
Some other place	7.7	7.0	5.2	10.9	8.8
Don't know	10.3	5.4	3.4	8.0	7.4

Distribution of the answers shown by the table indicates that for the great majority of the interviewed displaced persons the village/town from which they were expelled is a desired place of living. In view of the wish for return among the family members, the interviewed displaced persons answered as shown in Table 5.

Table 5
Estimation of the most intensive wish for return among close family members

Family members	Per cent of displaced persons				
	Beli Manastir	Osijek	Vinkovci	Vukovar	Whole sample
Oldest family members (grandfather, grandmother)	6.0	5.8	7.2	10	8.2
Head of the family (father, husband)	10.6	15	9.4	13.1	12.3
Mother (wife) in a family	8.6	4.2	4.2	9.4	7.8
Older children	2.9	1.9	0.9	3.3	2.7
Younger children	0.9	0.2	0.4	1.2	0.9
Others	0.7	0.7	1.3	0.9	0.9
All evenly	67.8	70.2	73.2	53.1	61.6
None in particular	1.7	1.7	2	8.1	4.9
Don't know	0.7	0.2	1.4	0.9	0.9

Almost two thirds of the interviewed displaced persons estimate that the wish to return in the village/town from which they were expelled is equally strong for all family members, and only 4.9% of the sample claimed that the wish to return cannot be ascribed to any particular family member. Among older family members the wish for return is estimated as the greatest several times more often than among children. The same tendency is observed when the displaced persons were asked about the member of the close family who has the greatest wish to live in some other place/village. Among children the wish to live in a village/town other than that from which they were expelled, was expressed more often than among their parents and grandparents. Table 6 shows the results obtained for the whole sample.

Table 6
Distribution of the strongest wish to live in some other village/town estimated among family members

Strongest wish to live somewhere else	
Family members	Percentage of displaced persons in the whole sample
Oldest family members (grandfather, grandmother)	0.6
Head of the family (father, husband)	2.0
Mother (wife) in a family	2.4
Older children	8.8
Younger children	4.5
Others	0.7
All members evenly	3.5
None in particular	73.2
Don't know	4.1

Within almost three fourths of families, none in particular wished to live in some other place/village than the one from which they were expelled. Among these displaced persons the categories that stands out are older children (8.8%) and younger children (4.5%). It is obvious that these children have adapted best and most quickly to new surroundings and they see there better prospects for their own future.

On basis of these results we can conclude about the more evident optimistic view of the future prevailing today among the displaced persons. All family members equally wish to return and they most eagerly want to return to the place from which they were once expelled.

3. INTENTION OF RETURN

Percentage of displaced persons who intend to return in the place from which they were expelled, under the conditions determined by the Plan of Peaceful Reintegration, can be seen from Table 7.

Table 7
The intention of return under the conditions
determined by the Plan of Peaceful Reintegration

Intention of return	Per cent of displaced persons				
	Beli Manastir	Osijek	Vinkovci	Vukovar	Whole sample
I intend to return	69.1	72.2	85.1	40.6	57.6
I should like to return, but do not intend to under determined conditions	16.1	13.7	4.9	37.5	24.9
I should like to return but have not yet decided to do so under determined conditions	12.2	11.8	7.6	15.9	13.3
I do not intend to return (regardless of the conditions)	2.6	2.2	2.4	6.0	4.2

As can be observed the smallest group is the one consisting of those who do not intend to return (4.2%). Every fourth refugee does not intend to return under conditions determined by the Plan of Peaceful Reintegration. The great majority of 57.6% of the interviewed displaced persons intend to return under determined conditions. The per cent of those who have not decided yet indicates a large number of those who are indecisive about the return.

On basis of these data we can conclude that almost one third of the displaced persons would not return home even with the assumption that Plan of Peaceful Reintegration would be successfully carried out. Such a significant change in the national structure on the territory of the Eastern Slavonija, Baranja and Western Srijem would certainly not be in accordance with the national and state interests of the Republic of Croatia, that is, to a certain degree it would indicate that aggressive tendencies of the Great Serbia were partially accomplished.

The picture is even more dissatisfactory when distribution of answers by the municipalities of the displaced persons is analysed. Namely, the attitudes of the expelled Vukovar inhabitants significantly differ from the rest of the subgroups of banished population. Only 4.9% of the displaced persons from the area of Vinkovci said that they would not return under present conditions, but the same opinion was expressed by as many as 37.5% of interviewed displaced persons from Vukovar. A comparison of the percentage of displaced persons

from Vukovar who are ready to return home under present conditions with the percentage of those from other municipalities points to a conclusion that the most difficult will be the process of return to Vukovar.

It is interesting to see the relationship between the intention to return and possibility to decide between peaceful reintegration or military action in order to liberate the Region under the temporary UNTAES authority.

Table 8
Intention to return in relation to the percentage of displaced persons supporting possible options of peaceful reintegration or military action

Intention of return	Present Plan of Peaceful Reintegration	Peaceful solution but different from the existing one	Military action	Undecided
I intend to return	59.6	8.5	21.5	10.5
I should like to return, but do not intend to under determined conditions	13	26.8	56.8	3.4
I should like to return but have not yet decided under determined conditions	27.2	32.0	33.4	7.4
I do not intend to return (regardless of the conditions)	49.7	9.9	28.7	11.7

As can be seen from the above distribution, military action is present in the minds of the displaced persons as a very realistic alternative to the existing Plan of Peaceful Reintegration. Among those who would like to return but not under conditions defined by the existing Plan, there is 56.8% of those who would prefer military action, and undecided were one third of the displaced persons. There is a significant percentage of those who support military action (28.7) among those who do not intend to return. The intention to return is directly related to the degree of confidence in the possibility of a successful implementation of the existing Plan which is obvious from the answers of the four groups of displaced persons (asked about the intention to return under the conditions determined by the present Plan) to the question on their belief in the successful implementation of the Plan (Table 9).

The intention to return in relation to the occupation can be seen from Table 10.

It could be concluded that most decisive about the intention to return are agricultural workers, housewives, retired displaced persons and those from the group "Others". On the contrary, the percentage of army and police officers, students, pupils, highly educated professionals and private undertakers ready to return under the conditions defined by the current Plan for Peaceful Reintegration, is two times lower. In other words, the displaced persons with higher education, younger and working-capable displaced persons will return home

under defined conditions in lower number. This can be concluded on basis of the survey which showed the relationship between education and intention to return: percentage of those ready to return under currently existing conditions decreases with the increase of the level of education.

Table 9
Intention to return and belief in successful implementation
of the Plan of Peaceful Reintegration (data in percentages)

Intention to return	Plan of Peaceful Reintegration will be realised:				
	Completely or almost completely	Mostly	To a lesser degree	Will Fail	Don't know
I intend to return	18.5	36.4	17.8	5.8	21.6
I should like to return, but do not intend to under existing conditions	0.0	15.2	40.0	26.8	18.1
I should like to return but have not yet decided under existing conditions	6.9	23.1	42.9	10.5	16.6
Do not intend to return regardless of the conditions	10.6	21.1	31.9	12.3	24.1

Table 10
Occupation of the displaced persons and intention of return (data in percentages)

Occupation	Intention of return			
	Intend to return	Should like to return but not under the existing conditions	Like to return but have not yet decided under the existing conditions	Do not intend to return regardless of the conditions
Agricultural worker	74.5	22.4	3.0	0.0
Worker	59.7	25.1	12.9	2.3
Office worker	43.3	30.8	17.2	8.7
Technician	55.3	29.4	12.4	2.9
Expert with high/higher education	32.4	38.1	29.0	0.6
Private undertaker	41.7	31.9	14.7	11.7
Army or police officer	29.9	22.2	28.3	19.5
Pupil	34.7	35.7	19.8	9.8
Student	27.7	16.3	40.2	15.8
Housewife	73.1	16.1	8.0	2.8
Pensioner	71.7	13.3	12.6	2.5
Other	85.2	4.7	6.4	3.6
Unemployed/waiting for job	59.7	22.9	2.9	14.5

In view of the emotional attitude toward the place from which they were expelled and the intention to return there, the answers obtained are shown in Table 11.

Table 11
Intention of return and emotional attitude of the displaced toward their homes of origin (data in percentages)

Intention to return	Emotional attitude toward home of origin					
	It is my only home	There are several places which I feel my home	My home is somewhere else	There is no place which I feel as my home	Other	No opinion
Intend to return	90.7	7.4	0.2	0.7	0.3	0.7
I should like to return, but do not intend under existing conditions	90.0	7.7	1.1	0.0	0.0	1.2
I should like to return but have not yet decided under existing conditions	86.0	10.2	1.9	1.0	0.6	0.3
Do not intend to return regardless of the conditions	60.5	19.4	0.7	17.3	0.0	2.0

The highest percentage of those who do not consider the place of their exile their only home or are not tied to any specific place is observed among the displaced persons who do not intend to return regardless of conditions. Among those who intend to return, in nine out of ten interviewed displaced persons the place of exile is felt to be their only home. In almost the same percentage this was also declared by those who do not accept conditions of return and those who have not brought any decision about the return yet.

On basis of the opinion of the interviewed displaced persons, under the assumption that the Plan of Peaceful Reintegration would be realised the percentages of displaced persons who would return to the villages of their exile concluded from their own estimations is shown in Table 12.

Table 12
The percentage of displaced persons who would return to the place of their exile by their own estimation

Number of displaced persons who would return under defined conditions (in percentages)	
All or nearly all	16.2
Majority	36.8
Approximately half	10.4
Only minor part	18.9
None	2.4
Cannot estimate	15.3

From the obtained distribution it is seen that only slightly more than half of the interviewed maintain that under the defined conditions of return all, almost all or majority of the exiled would return home. That number would be significantly lower among the displaced persons from Vukovar – 34.4% as opposed to the number of those from Baranja – 71.1%, Osijek – 73.3% and Vinkovci – 73.7%.

4. THE CONDITIONS OF RETURN

General conditions needed to make a decision about the return and distribution of the interviewed displaced persons by the municipalities can be seen from Table 13.

Table 13
General conditions of return

Condition	Percentage of displaced persons by municipality				Whole sample
	Beli Manastir	Osijek	Vinkovci	Vukovar	
1. I shall return as soon as possible, regardless of conditions	41.7	40.8	52.5	16.9	30.7
2. I should return if:	51.3	49.0	39.1	70.3	58.7
– all conditions set by the Croatian government would be fulfilled	17.5	9.0	7.0	21.5	16.8
– renewal and acceptable living standard would be guaranteed	12.3	15.7	23.5	13.1	14.8
– personal safety would be guaranteed	13.3	19.2	3.6	10.7	11.4
– there would be no Serbs	4.3	1.9	3.1	19.4	11.3
– immigrated Serbs and war criminals would depart	0.1	0.8	0.0	3.3	1.8
– infrastructure would be renewed	0.9	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.7
– return would be massive	0.7	0.8	0.4	0.8	0.7
– return would take place soon	0.7	0.0	0.4	0.4	0.4
– other conditions	0.7	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.2
3. Do not intend to return, regardless of conditions	2.6	2.5	2.3	3.6	3.1
4. Don't know, cannot estimate	4.5	7.7	6.1	9.3	7.6

The table illustrates that for the majority of displaced persons, 58.7%, their return is conditioned by certain circumstances. Renewed infrastructure, en masse return and short period of its realisation are conditions required by the small percentage of displaced persons which could almost be neglected. The same can be said of the condition that the immigrated Serbs and war criminals should depart, which is required by 1.8% of displaced persons. The reason for that is assumed to be in the fact that these conditions follow in order and are preconditioned by the required fulfilment of all conditions set up by the Croat-

ian government (indicated by 16.8%), guaranteed personal safety (11.4%) and the condition that no Serbs would live in the place of return which require 11.3% of the displaced persons. The most important in making decision about the return are therefore the requirements that all terms set up by the Croatian government would be fulfilled, and that renewal and acceptable living standards are guaranteed (14.8%).

When comparing the answers of the displaced persons by the place of residence before exile, significant differences become evident. Only 4.3% of the displaced persons from Baranja (Beli Manastir), 1.9% from the region of Osijek, 3.1% from the region of Vinkovci, but as many as 19.4% of the displaced persons from Vukovar declared the fact that no Serbs should be living in their villages/towns, as most relevant condition of their return. Although in general less highlighted, this corresponds to the requirement that the terms set up by the Croatian government would be fulfilled: it was most important condition for 21.5% of displaced persons from Vukovar in relation to three times less percentage of displaced persons from the region of Vinkovci – 7%, 9% from Osijek and 17.5% from Baranja.

For the refugee population from Vukovar the most frequent condition of their return is that no Serbs would be living in the place of their return, those from Vinkovci consider as most important that renewal and acceptable living standards are guaranteed, the displaced persons from Osijek require guaranteed personal safety and those from Baranja (Beli Manastir) that the terms of the Croatian government are respected.

For the return regardless of any condition were ready slightly less than one third of the displaced persons. The majority of them were from the region of Vinkovci, whereas only 16.9% of displaced persons from Vukovar (which makes three times less per cent of displaced persons) shared the same opinion.

The role of nationality in making decision about the return can be seen from Table 14.

Table 14
Nationality of the displaced persons and their distribution by the conditions of return (in percentages)

Nationality	Conditions of return			
	I shall return as soon as possible, regardless of conditions	I would return under certain conditions	I do not intend to return	I don't know, cannot estimate
Croat	28.4	60	3.5	8.1
Serb	53.2	44.7	0	2.1
Hungarian	51	41.6	0	7.3
Other	38.9	61.1	0	0

The percentages of the displaced persons by their nationality show that more than one half of the displaced persons of Serbian and Hungarian nationality intend to return to the places from which they were banished as soon as it would be made possible, and demand no other conditions. The same attitude share only 28.4% Croats, and in comparison to other nationalities, among the Croats is the highest number of those who are undecided about their return or do not to intend return at all. In other words, under the present conditions for peaceful reintegration the percentage of Croats ready to return is expected to be less than of other nationalities and their decision will depend on the fulfilment of certain specific conditions.

The displaced persons were asked about the circumstances which they consider an influence on their decision to return, and most important were as follows (expressed in percentages):

1. Completely established Croatian government	97.1
2. Personal and family safety	97.0
3. Reconstruction of objects necessary for normalisation of life in a village (medical service, schools, etc.)	92.7
4. Obtaining adequate help for restitution of lost properties	89.8
5. Possibility of employment or other means of obtaining the means to live	75.6
6. Possibility of living without Serbs	58.8
7. Departure of UNTAES and other UN military forces	47.5
8. Something else	1.5

From the answers obtained it can be concluded that in bringing about the decision to return most important circumstances and almost equally significant according to the percentage of answers, are completely established Croatian government and personal and family safety. The percentage of the displaced persons who consider very important the departure of UNTAES and other UN military forces, shows that the returnees would be ready to accept a form of international presence after completely established Croatian control.

The opinion of the displaced persons and their readiness to return in case that the places of their exile would be reintegrated in Croatia but the local government bodies would be run by local Serbs can be seen from Table 15.

As can be seen from the table, the nine tenth of the interviewed displaced persons would never return to the place of their previous residence under condition that the local government bodies would remain in the hands of Serbs, even though the village/town would be reintegrated in the legal framework of the Croatian state. Thus, it is obvious that elections to be held under the UNTAES control are the key-moment for the process of return. As determined by the Articles 12 and 11 (e) of the Erdut Agreement, Resolution 1037, the elec-

tions will be organised by the Transitional Administration. The possibility that majority of representatives elected in town/municipality bodies would be local Serbs means that en mass return of the displaced persons can be hardly expected to these areas.

Table 15
Readiness to return in case that Serbian
local government would remain

Decision to return to the places of exile reintegrated in Croatia but with Serbian local government	%
I would return because it would be again a part of Croatia	1.2
I would return only if the Croatian authority could guarantee safety and a peaceful life	2.8
I would return if some other condition would be fulfilled:	1.3
– all conditions set by the Croatian authority would be respected	0.1
– personal safety guaranteed	0.0
If the village/town would be controlled by the Serbs	
I should not return under any condition	89.7
I do not intend to return regardless of local authority	2.5
Don't know, cannot estimate	2.5

Although not strongly repudiated, the possibility that the place of their exile would be under the temporary UN control leaves a little hope that development of peaceful reintegration in that direction would be stimulating for the majority of displaced persons. This reveals distrust of the Croatian displaced persons into the UN units and institutions which is a consequence of the UN ineffective presence in this region. The UN units and civil officers under the names of UNPROFOR, UNCRO and UNTAES during their mandatory period of more than four years have not provided adequate protection for the remaining non-Serbian population from killing, plunder and banishment that continued in the region under their control. They also have not returned any of the exiled inhabitants to the place of their previous residence.

The prevailing attitude of the displaced persons toward temporary UN administrative control in relation to the readiness to return is shown in Table 16.

From the distribution of the obtained answers it can be concluded that no other conditions other than departure of UNTAES and established Croatian authority would result in the massive return of the displaced persons.

With respect to the help needed upon return the displaced persons consider most essential financial support (Table 17).

On basis of the answers given by the exiled population it can be said that most valuable is considered the kind of assistance which would enable the displaced to make their own independent choices about its use. In other words, the

displaced persons find more satisfactory that they themselves on basis of the provided material assistance, reconstruct their houses than to accept a possibility that the Croatian state builds for them typified houses, uniform buildings and gives them free furniture.

Table 16
Decision of return in relation to the temporary UN control

Return on condition of temporary UN control	%
I would probably return	23.3
I would return under certain conditions:	9.6
– if the immigrated Serbs and war criminals would depart	0.0
– if personal safety would be guaranteed	3.5
– if all conditions set by the Croatian government would be respected	2.4
– if there would be no Serbs	2.1
– if renewal and adequate living standard would be guaranteed	0.4
– if the return would be en mass	0.3
– if the return would take place soon	0.2
– if the infrastructure would be renewed	0.0
Other conditions	0.1
I would never return if the village/town would be under the UN administrative control	63.3
I should not return regardless of the UN control	3.8

Table 17
Types of assistance considered by displaced persons most needed upon their return

Type of help	%
Financial assistance	59.6
Assistance in house renewal	19.8
All kinds of support	4.7
Agricultural and manufacture devices	1.7
Protection of living safety	0.8
Health protection and medical drugs	0.2
Spiritual and religious support	0.1
Cannot estimate	9.4
I do not intend to return	2.7

5. CONCLUSION

The results of our survey conducted with the aim to determine the degree of readiness of the displaced persons from the Croatian east to return to their places of residence from where they were once banished point to the following conclusions:

The relationship toward future and view of the personal and family standing in the future, estimation of the time of return and selection of the place for return, estimation of the strongest wish for return within the close family members and strongest wish to live somewhere else reveal that the hope about return and a general attitude prevailing among the displaced persons give room to a psychological assumption of the readiness to return even though a significant number of displaced persons find the Plan of Peaceful Reintegration unsatisfactory. The situation is most disagreeable among the displaced persons from Vukovar who feel pessimistic when estimating both personal and family position and time of return.

In view of the intention of the refugee to return under the conditions determined by the Plan of Peaceful Reintegration the situation is slightly less positive. Namely, almost one third of the displaced persons would not return home under conditions determined by the Plan of Peaceful Reintegration even if its realisation would be successful. The most negative attitudes toward peaceful reintegration are again observed among the displaced persons from Vukovar. The fact that under present conditions of the Plan the displaced persons with higher education, younger and capable of working are not ready to return in great number is also dissatisfactory.

Obviously, the decision about the return will primarily depend on the complete establishment of the Croatian government. In case that this condition would be fulfilled the majority of displaced persons are willing to accept a form of international presence in this region. On the other hand Serbian local government is completely unacceptable for the nine tenth of the displaced persons, and the same can be said for those who declared ready to return as soon as it would be possible. The temporary UN administration would be accepted by the one third of the displaced persons.

The decision of the UN Security Council (Resolution 1079 of November 11, 1996) on the UNTAES prolonged mandatory period is expected to have a negative influence with regard to readiness to return. Further slowing down and delay of the complete establishment of the Croatian authority over the region also negatively contribute to the readiness of the displaced persons from the Croatian east to return to their homes of origin.

Translated by Vesna Hajnić

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PRIPRAVNOST NA POVRATAK

Vladimir Jelkić

Institut za primijenjena društvena istraživanja, Zagreb

U ovom tekstu autor analizira rezultate istraživanja glede pripravnosti prognanika s hrvatskog istoka na povratak u mjesta iz kojih su prognani tijekom srpske agresije. Rezultati istraživanja ukazuju na to da – unatoč tome što se značajan broj prognanika ne slaže s planom o mirnoj reintegraciji – postoje psihološke pretpostavke za masovan povratak prognanika. Međutim, odgovori na pitanja koja ispituju namjeru prognanika da se vrate kući pod uvjetima koje zadaje plan o mirnoj reintegraciji pokazuju da se, čak i pod pretpostavkom uspješnog provođenja postojećeg plana, kući ne bi vratila gotovo trećina prognanika. Obrazovaniji, mlađi i radno sposobniji prognanici kući će se vraćati u manjem broju. Odluka o povratku u prvom će redu ovisiti o potpunoj uspostavi hrvatske vlasti na području s kojeg su prognanici protjerani. Ukoliko bi taj osnovni uvjet bio ispunjen, većina bi prognanika bila spremna prihvatiti i neki oblik nazočnosti međunarodne zajednice. Suprotno tome, ostanak lokalne srpske vlasti u mjestu povratka potpuno je neprihvatljiv za devet desetina prognanika. Istraživanje pokazuje i to da prognanici iz Vukovara imaju u značajnoj mjeri drukčije i za proces mirne integracije nepovoljnije stavove od prognanika iz drugih općina i gradova.

BEREITSCHAFT ZUR RÜCKKEHR

Vladimir Jelkić

Institut für angewandte Gesellschaftsforschung, Zagreb

In diesem Text analysiert der Verfasser die Ergebnisse einer Untersuchung, mit der die Bereitschaft der Vertriebenen, die während der serbischen Aggression zum Verlassen ihrer Heimatorte im Ostteil Kroatiens gezwungen wurden, ermittelt werden sollte. Die Untersuchungsergebnisse verweisen auf das Bestehen psychologischer Voraussetzungen für eine massenhafte Rückkehr der Vertriebenen, auch wenn viele dem Plan zur friedlichen Reintegration nicht zustimmen. Die Antworten der Vertriebenen auf Fragen, die die Absicht der Heimkehr auch unter den vom Reintegrationsplan aufgestellten Voraussetzungen ermitteln sollen, zeigen, dass fast ein Drittel der Vertriebenen nicht in die Heimatorte zurückkehren würde, selbst wenn der Reintegrationsplan erfolgreich durchgeführt würde. Jüngere und in größerem Maße arbeitsfähige Menschen von höherem Bildungsgrad werden sich seltener zur Rückkehr entschließen. Diesen Entschluss bedingt in erster Linie die vollkommene Wiederherstellung der kroatischen Oberhoheit in dem Gebiet, das die Vertriebenen verlassen mussten. Wäre diese Grundvoraussetzung erfüllt, wäre die Mehrzahl der Vertriebenen dazu bereit, die Präsenz der internationalen Gemeinschaft in dieser oder jener Form zu akzeptieren. Ein Verbleiben jedoch der derzeitigen serbischen Behörden in den Heimatorten der Vertriebenen ist für 90% der Betroffenen vollkommen inakzeptabel. Die Untersuchung ergab ferner, dass die Einstellungen der Vertriebenen aus Vukovar in bedeutendem Maße abweichen von den Einstellungen der Vertriebenen aus anderen Städten und Gemeinden und dass sie sehr viel ungünstiger bezüglich des friedlichen Reintegrationsprozesses sind.