A BRIEF RETROSPECTIVE ON THE PROBLEM OF REFUGEES IN THE YUGOSLAV WARS 1991-99

Borislav Radović

"And you, where do you come from?"
"From nowhere!"
A terrified Slavonian peasant to a journalist of the RT Belgrade,
at the Belgrade railway station, November 1991

*

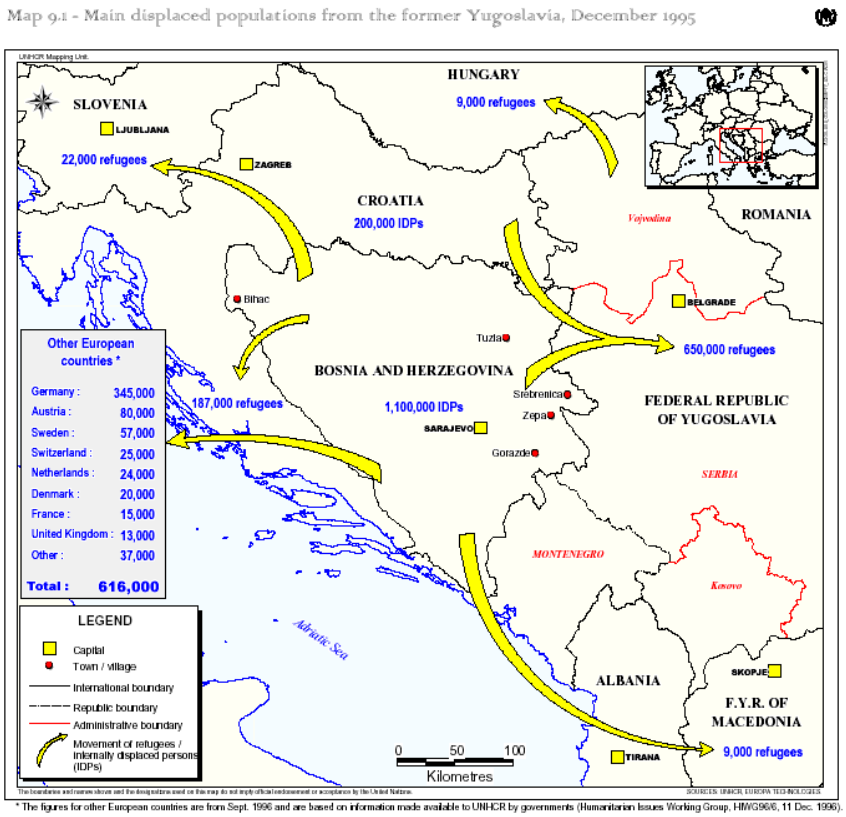
In the last decade of the 20th century, the former Yugoslavia was theatre of four wars:

1. War in Slovenia (June 27– July 7, 1991)
2. War in Croatia (summer 1991 – 1995)
3. War in Bosnia and Herzegovina (spring 1992 – November 1995)
4. War between NATO and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, i.e. Serbia and Montenegro (March 23 –June 11, 1999)

Each of these conflicts produced its contingent of refugees (persons who left the republic of their origin and went either to some other ex-Yugoslav republic or to a third country) and internally displaced persons (individuals who found refuge in some other location *within* their republic of origin). But, no matter how we call them, both "refugees" and "internally-displaced persons" shared one fundamental thing: they had to leave their homes because of war and try to continue their broken lives elsewhere. In the great majority of cases, these were the quite common people who never thought seriously about leaving their homes and

who, to the very last moment, believed there would be no war at all, although the acute phase of the Yugoslav crisis began at least two years before the actual outbreak of hostilities, at the end of June of 1991 in Slovenia. Our idea about the optimism of the ordinary Yugoslav is corroborated by the fact that mass exile began only *after* the outbreak of classical hostilities that involved at least two large armed groups.

And when the conflicts began, and Yugoslavia went ablaze in a whole series of wars,[1] there occurred a real explosion of compulsory emigration:

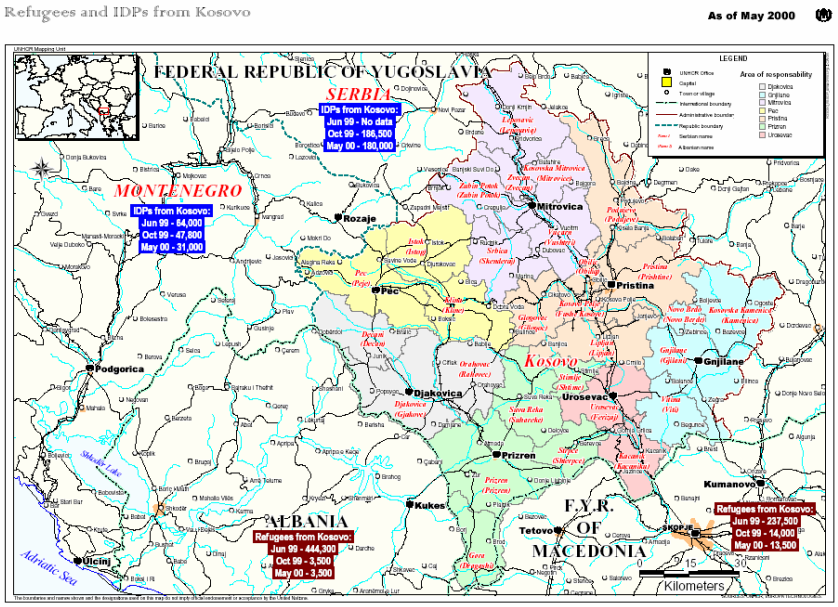


Source: UNHCR (www.unhcr.ch)

However, this spectacular and tragic map does not illustrate all big movements of refugees in the Yugoslav wars. For example, it does not demonstrate

[1] This work does not deal with the causes and events leading to the break-up of Yugoslavia and Yugoslav wars, since we tried to address that subject elsewhere ("Yugoslav wars 1991-9 and some of their social consequences", www.ian.org.yu/tortura/eng/publications/monografija/01.pdf). Therefore, we invite the reader to take the present work as an addendum to the previous essay.

the refugee movements during and after the NATO-FRY conflict in spring and summer 1999. This is how the refugee situation looked like after the conflict:



Source: UNHCR (www.unhcr.ch)

If we sum the numbers presented in the two maps and compare them with the 1991 Census data, we will obtain the astonishing results: out of 23 528 230 inhabitants of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, there were 3 725 300 refugees and IDPs, which represents 15.83 % of the total population. This means that almost every sixth citizen of the former Yugoslavia has experienced exile or internal displacement.

If we analyze only the territories where conflicts actually took place (Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo),2 the figures become even more dramatic: out of 11 079 665 inhabitants of these territories, there were 3 716 300 refugees and IDPs, i.e. 33.54 % of the total population, which means that every third inhabitant of these territories became refugee or IDP.

If, finally, we perform a similar analysis for each of these territories separately, we will realize that the percentage for Croatia (4 760 344 inhabitants) was 15.58%, for Bosnia (4 364 574 inhabitants) 51.08%, and for Kosovo (1 954 747 inhabitants) 47.7%. In other words, during the wars in these countries, almost

[2] This analysis excludes Slovenia

every sixth inhabitant of Croatia and every second inhabitant of Bosnia and Kosovo experienced the fate of refugee!

A sad historical aftermath of this process is the fact that many of the war-affected persons from the former Yugoslavia are still refugees and IDPs. Thus, in 2003 (for IDPs) and 2004 (for refugees), UNHCR reports:

Country	**Number of refugees**	***Number of IDPs***
Croatia	4 387[3]	31 279[4]
Bosnia and Herzegovina	22 517[5]	404 721[6]
Serbia and Montenegro	291 415[7]	256 891[8]

The figures reveal that Croatia has mainly solved the problem, that Bosnia has mainly solved the problem of refugees (but remains burdened with a huge number of IDPs), while Serbia and Montenegro is burdened both with a huge number of refugees *and* a huge number of IDPs. Even in 2004 (five years after the Kosovo war and nine years after the wars in Croatia and Bosnia), Serbia and Montenegro remains the most burdened of all ex-Yugoslav countries.

In fact, if we take into account *the number of IDPs only,* we will see that in 2004 Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro were among the ten most burdened countries in the world:

[3] *Refugee trends 1 January – 30 June 2004 - refugee populations, new arrivals and durable solutions in 81,mostly developing, countries*, p. 4, UNHCR (www.unhcr.ch)
[4] *2003 global refugee trends - overview of refugee populations, new arrivals, durable solutions, asylum-seekers and other persons of concern to UNHCR*, table 1, (www.unhcr.ch)
[5] *ibid.* p. 4
[6] *2003 global refugee trends - overview of refugee populations, new arrivals, durable solutions, asylum-seekers and other persons of concern to UNHCR,* table 1, (www.unhcr.ch)
[7] *Refugee trends 1 January – 30 September 2004 - refugee populations, new arrivals and durable solutions in 73, mostly developing, countries*, p. 6, UNHCR (www.unhcr.ch)
[8] *2003 global refugee trends - overview of refugee populations, new arrivals, durable solutions, asylum-seekers and other persons of concern to UNHCR*, table 1, (www.unhcr.ch)

MAJOR IDP POPULATIONS OF CONCERN TO UNHCR (at 1st January 2004)	
Country	IDPs
Colombia	1 244 400
Azerbaijan	575 600
Liberia	531 600
Sri Lanka	386 100
Russian Federation	368 200
Bosnia and Herzegovina	327 200
Georgia	260 200
Serbia and Montenegro	256 900
Afghanistan	184 300
Cote d'Ivore	38 000

Source: *Refugees by Numbers, 2004 Edition*, p. 12, UNHCR (www.unhcr.ch)

*

Reconsidering the previously exposed figures, we can ask ourselves about the reasons of such a magnitude of compulsory migrations during the Yugoslav wars. We believe that the answer is given by the following five major causes:

1. All Yugoslav wars of the 1990s (except the war in Slovenia) were of a kind that military operations also took place within smaller or bigger cities. There is a long list of the cities that underwent siege or bombardment (Vukovar, Mostar, Zadar, Pakrac, Gospić, Karlovac, Derventa, Drvar, Sarajevo, Dubrovnik, Priština...). It meant, first of all, that a significant number of civilians happened to be in the locations where such fighting took place.
2. Even worse, civilians were often *intentionally targeted* by armed groups and local political authorities, within the so-called "ethnic cleansing". The term denotes a set of actions that the police, military and political authorities take in order to annihilate or significantly reduce an ethnic group in a particular territory. The actions ranged from brutal "cleansing" by artillery or tanks, through various forms of physical and sexual violence, to dislodgement, expropriation, dismissal from job, loss of various civil and social rights and all possible forms of pressure, discrimination, intimidation and humiliation.[9]

[9] Details on the methods, perpetrators and victims, locations, effects and human drama of ethnic cleansing in Yugoslav wars are contained in numerous reports and publications, of which we especially recommend those published by the United Nations Special rapporteur for human rights

3. The Yugoslav wars, as almost all other great wars in Europe, have brought about what we might call "the war misery", by which we mean a general impoverishment of all aspects of life. Aside from a frequently unbearable social and political climate, the Yugoslav wars have imposed to the population harsh living conditions, even in the regions where no actual fighting or "ethnic cleansing" took place. If we include in this also mass unemployment (caused by war) and compulsory mobilization, we can easily understand why many individuals decided to leave their homes and become refugees.
4. However, people did not leave only under the threat of violence – they also did so when the territory they lived in came under the authority of the ex-enemy, as part of a peace settlement. This happened in countless locations in Bosnia after the conclusion of the Dayton peace agreement (November 1995), as well as in Croatia, after the signing of the Erdut peace agreement and the final reintegration of the former Republic of Serbian Krajina into the Republic of Croatia, in 1998.
5. Lastly, and most importantly, the shocking magnitude of the refugee movements in the Yugoslav wars is explained by the fact that these were *interethnic wars* in *ethnically mixed territories.* As we know, the SFRY was an ethnically mixed country, construed in a way that its various parts (republics and autonomous provinces) contain (or embrace) the bulk of individual (the so-called "constitutive") nations and bigger national minorities. "The bulk" becomes clear if we take a look at the table that we have constructed on the basis of the last pre-war SFRY census:

Tadeusz Mazowiecki, International Confederation of Red Cross, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE MAIN ETHNIC GROUPS in the REPUBLICS of the SFRY (according to the 1991 census)[10]						
	Croats	Slovenians	Moslems	Serbs	Montenegrins	Macedonians
in Croatia	3 708 308	23 802	47 603	580 762	9 521	4 760
in Slovenia	53 688	1 718 318	26 725	47 097	4 233	4 412
in Bosnia	755895	▣	1 905 829	1 369 258	▣	▣
in Serbia (with both autonomous provinces)	109 214	8 340	237 358	6 428 420	140 024	47 577
in Montenegro	6 249	407	89 932	57 176	380 484	860
in Macedonia	▣	▣	▣	44 159	▣	1 314 283
Total	4 633 354	1 750 867	2 307 447	8 526 872	534 262	1 371 892
Outside of the "mother" republic	925 046	32 549	401 618	2 098 452	153 778	57 609
% outside of the "mother" republic	19.96	1.86	17.4	24.6	28.79	4.2

▣ = *included in the census column "Others". We assume that these were small, numerically negligible contingents.*

The table demonstrates clearly that the degree of inclusion of a particular group in its "mother" republic varied from republic to republic. In the case of dissolution of Yugoslavia along the former republican frontiers (which was precisely the scenario sanctioned by the international community on grounds of the opinions and recommendations issued by the Arbitration Committee of the Conference on Yugoslavia, a.k.a. the "Badinter commission"),[11] a minimal number of Macedonians (and especially Slovenians) would be left out of their "mother" republic, while such an outcome would affect one sixth of ethnic Moslems, one

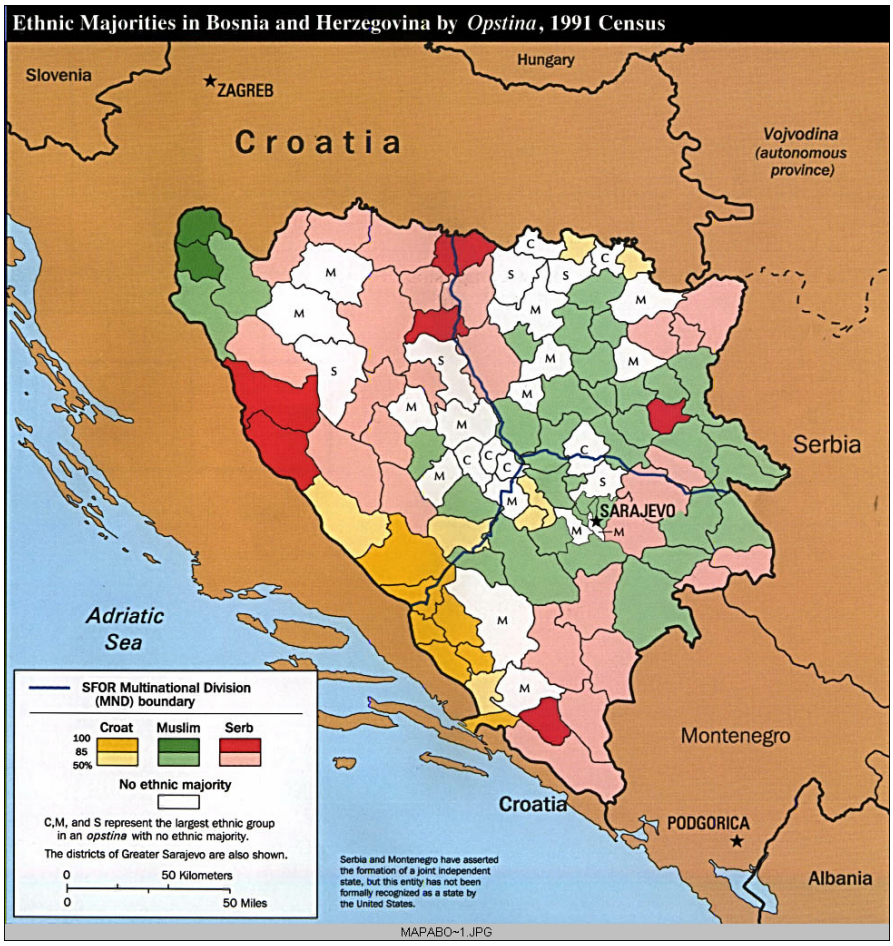
[10] *Popis 1991 [Census 1991],* Savezni zavod za statistiku, CD-ROM, Beograd, 1997.

[11] The capital importance of this solution, as well as the importance of other opinions of the Badinter commission, has eluded many analysts of Yugoslav conflicts. For a brilliant analysis of the context and consequences of the decisions of the Badinter commission see: Roland Rich, "Recognition of States: The Collapse of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union" (www.ejil.org/journal/Vol4/No1/art4.pdf). The reader can find the entire text of the Commission's decisions in: Alain Pellet, " The Opinions of the Badinter Arbitration committee: A Second Breath for the Self-Determination of Peoples" (www.ejil.org/journal/Vol3/No1/art13.html).

fifth of ethnic Croats and one fourth of ethnic Serbs. In other words, if the SFRY dissolved along the erstwhile republican borders (which, then, would become "hard", international borders), Moslems would have a large national minority in Serbia (primarily in the region of "Sandžak"), Croats would have one large minority in Bosnia and one small (but by no means negligible) minority in Serbia, while Serbs would have large minorities in Bosnia and Croatia (first of all in Slavonia, as well as in the region known as "Krajina").

However, ethnic mixture was not only significant between republics. It was especially the case *within* some republics, and first of all within Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Picture 1: Ethnic Majorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina by Opstina, 1991 Census



Source: www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/bosnia/ethnic_majorities_97.jpg

Even a casual look on the map reveals the extraordinary complexity of the geographical distribution of the main ethnic groups in Bosnia. The picture of what Serbian politician Vuk Drašković labeled the "leopard skin" could easily suggest to everyone that a war in Bosnia, should it happen, would be extremely cruel. Or more precisely, every idea of territorial separation and unification of ethnic groups would clash against the following three unpleasant facts:

1. absence of compact ethnic territories (for example, the division of the Moslem population into the eastern and western group of municipalities; the division of the Croat population into the southern, central and northern group; the division of the Serb population into the eastern and western group)
2. existence of the groups of municipalities that are "cut off" (isolated) from the "mother republic" or from the republican capital (thus the "isolation" of the western group of the "Moslem" municipalities (the so-called Bihać pocket) from Sarajevo; the "isolation" of the "Croatian" municipalities in the Central Bosnia from Croatia; the "isolation" of the western "Serbian" group from Serbia)
3. existence of numerous municipalities with high ethnic mixture

But, the ethnic territorial distribution was even more complex than the map illustrates. Namely, there was practically no municipality in Bosnia and Herzegovina that did not contain numerous *mono-ethnic* villages of minority ethnic groups. Still, the situation was even more complicated, since *almost all* municipal centers in B&H (and these were the biggest settlements, i.e. cities) were multi-ethnic, while smaller settlements in their surroundings (i.e. villages) were mono-ethnic, with a high frequency of villages of minority ethnic groups. In fact, the sociological truth about the pre-war Bosnia could be also stated in this way: *multi-ethnic cities, mono-ethnic villages*.[12] In Bosnian cities Moslems, Croats and Serbs lived together, but they lived separately in villages.

[12] And that is one of the biggest tragedies of the Bosnian war. Not only that the village is more susceptible to the sentiments and ideas of ethnic nationalism, but the war has also brutally interrupted the further modernization of the Bosnian society and further urbanization (as one of its basic ingredients). Had the peaceful development of Bosnia continued, the inexorable urbanization (with all its ingredients, such as the multiplication of all possible contacts and the increase of geographical and social mobility) would in all probability have lead to every possible mixing between various ethnic groups. It would therefore have lead to the establishment of a strong multi-ethnic society, and, especially, to the reinforcement of a non-ethnic, civil self-designation of individuals. In support of this thesis, we can state that the vast majority of the B&H citizens who declared themselves as Yugoslavs in the 1991 Census (239 857 in total, or 5.49% of the total population) lived in the municipal centers (i.e. cities). The number becomes even more telling if we observe that the dwellers of Bosnian cities with more than 50 000 inhabitants declared themselves as Yugoslavs 2.67 times

In the case of an inter-ethnic war, this situation announced at least two horrifying things:

1. grisly and bloody street fighting, with a rather uncertain destiny of those ethnic groups that would found themselves unorganized and unarmed;
2. unselective destruction or eviction of whole villages;

War in Bosnia, especially, had to be avoided by all means.

Yet, when it happened, there occurred a real explosion of refugee movements that, as in all other Yugoslav wars, followed the logic of *ethnic territorial grouping*. It meant that people were fleeing (or were expelled) towards their "mother" republic or towards the territories controlled by the armed forces of their ethnic group. This, in turn, meant that the refugee movements were extremely dynamic and complex as they followed the bewilderingly complex and volatile military situation in the field. This is how the military situation in Croatia and Bosnia in April 1995 looked like:

Source: UNHCR (www.unhcr.ch)

The reader should compare this map with the preceding one in order to make an idea about the *directions* of refugee movements. Schematically, we can

more often than the Bosnian average. We can therefore state that Yugoslavianism was a *civil* political identity in both meanings of the word.

state that ethnic Croats fled (or were expelled) towards the Croat-controlled areas or towards Croatia itself (i.e. towards the parts of Croatia that were not war-affected), ethnic Serbs fled towards the Serb-controlled areas or towards Serbia itself, while ethnic Moslems fled towards the Moslem-controlled areas, towards other republics of ex-Yugoslavia (mainly Croatia and Slovenia) or towards third countries. The only exception to this logic of ethnic grouping were the movements of Bosnian Muslims towards Croatia, but we have to say that these took place *before* the outbreak of hostilities between Croatian and Muslim armed forces in Bosnia.[13]

However, even the map exposed above is not a true graphic representation of the *definite* territorial settlement of ethnic groups in the war-affected territories, since two significant events happened after April 1995:

1. Offensive actions of the Croatian army *Flash* (May 1995) and *Storm* (August 1995), during which the bulk of the remaining Serbian minority in Croatia fled the country; [14]
2. Signing of the Dayton peace agreement (November 1995) that definitely tailored the political map of Bosnia, which, in turn, produced additional refugee movement.

*

One of the major demographic consequences of the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia was *ethnic territorial homogenization*. In Bosnia and Kosovo the homogenization was total (Kosovo) or almost total (Bosnia). In Kosovo, the remaining non-Albanian groups (Serbs predominantly) are grouped in the North, as well as within a few isolated, numerically weak enclaves scattered across the province. As for Bosnia, it was divided in virtue of the Dayton peace agreement into the two entities: the Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although, for the time being, we do not dispose of precise numerical data to substantiate our analysis,[15] everything we know about Bosnia makes us

[13] In October 1992, the HVO, armed forces of Bosnian Croats, attacked Bosnian Muslims in the municipality of Prozor. The ensuing conflict between the HV (Croatian Army) and the HVO *and* the armed forces of the Bosnian government lasted until the signing of the Washington agreement in February 1994.

[14] We will not discuss here whether these people were victims of ethnic cleansing or have they decided to leave Krajina of their own will, within a premeditated plan, as Dr. Dražen Živić affirms in his "Veličina, uzroci i posljedice iseljavanja/izbjega Srba iz Hrvatske" ["The scope, reasons and consequences of the expatriation/exile of Serbs from Croatia"] (www.hrz.hr/aktualno/zivic1.htm). What matters here is that these people lost their homes and *de facto* became refugees.

[15] Namely, the long-awaited Bosnian census, which had to take place in 2001, has not been carried out so far (February 2005).

believe that the majority of Serbs are concentrated in the Republika Srpska, while the majority of Moslems and Croats are grouped within the Federation, the ethnic situation of which is even more complicated by the fact that Croats are concentrated in the South, within the boundaries of the former "Croat Community of Herzeg-Bosnia". In fact, there are only two major cities in Bosnia where the ex-enemies continue to live together: Mostar (which is a *de facto* "divided city", in a permanent state of fragile balance between Croats and Moslems) and Brčko (which is directly governed by the international community and serves, we might say, as a kind of a shop window of the success of its peace-making mission). Everywhere else in Bosnia, common multi-ethnic life is – at least for the time being – a thing of the past. Of course, we mean common life in any significant numerical proportion.
However, ethnic homogenization was not exclusively a matter of the territories where the conflicts actually took place. A similar destiny befell also some other republics and provinces of the former Yugoslavia. Let us look at the ethnic majorities in the 1991 Census and in the first post-war population surveys:

A. Republic	B. Ethnic majority	C. Part of the ethnic majority in the total population of the republic (1991)[16]	D. Part of the ethnic majority in the total population of the republic (2002)	E. Difference (D-C)
Slovenia	Slovenians	87.55 %	83.06 % [17]	- 4.49 %
Croatia	Croats	78.09 %	89.63 % [18]	+ 11.53 %
Serbia (central Serbia)	Serbs	88.91 %	89.48 % [19]	+ 0.57 %
Serbia (the province of Vojvodina)	Serbs	56.79 %	65.05 % [20]	+ 8.25 %
Serbia Total	Serbs	72.85 %	77.26 % [21]	+ 4.41 %
Macedonia	Macedonians	64.62 %	64.17% [22]	- 0.45 %
Montenegro	Montenegrins	61.84 %	40.64 %	- 21.2 %

If we omit Montenegro from this table (since the weakening of its ethnic homogenization is only fictional)[23] and Slovenia (where the weakening did not

[16] *Popis 1991 [Census 1991],* Savezni zavod za statistiku, CD-ROM, Beograd, 1997.
[17] *Popis prebivalstva, gospodinjstev in stanovanj, Slovenija, 31. marec 2002 [Census of population, households and apartments, March 31 2002]* (www.stat.si/popis2002/gradivo/POPIS-2002-PSO1.pdf)
[18] *Popis stanovništva, kućanstava i stanova 2001 [Census of population, households and apartments 2001]* (www.dzs.hr)
[19] *Коначни резултати пописа 2002 [Final results of the 2002 census]*. (www.statserb.sr.gov.yu/zip/esn31.pdf)
[20] *ibid.*
[21] *ibid.*
[22] *Попис на населението, домаќинствата и становите во Република Македонија, 2002 година [Census of population, households and apartments in the Republic of Macedonia, 2002]* www.stat.gov.mk/../zakon_popis2002.htm
[23] According to the 1991 Census, Montenegrins constituted 61.84 % of the population of Montenegro, while Serbs constituted 9.29 %. According to the 2003 Montenegrin census (which is still not on the Internet but has been widely commented in the media), the total population amounted to 672 656 persons, of whom 273 366 were Montenegrins (40.64 % of the total population) while 201 892 were Serbs (30.01 %). Whence this spectacular decrease of Montenegrins (and the equally spectacular increase of Serbs) came? We think that after a year-long political conflict between the partisans of

occur through the numerical increase of the minorities),[24] we will observe that the strongest homogenization occurred in Croatia and Serbia.

The changes in Croatia are, first of all, caused by the decrease of the number of Serbs from 581 663 (12.15 % of the total Croatian population in 1991) to 201 631 (4.54 % of the total Croatian population in 2002).[25] In other words, between the censuses, Croatia lost 380 000 Serbs. The majority of these people fled Croatia during and after the war, with the bulk of the refugees settling in Serbia and the minority going to the parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina that were ultimately included into the Republika Srpska. By the same token, Croatia practically became a mono-ethnic country.[26]

As for Serbia, as illustrated by the table above, ethnic homogenization took place especially in Vojvodina, northern Serbian province. Two major processes explain the phenomenon:

1. Arrival of the Serbian refugees from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina;
2. Numerical decrease of the national minorities, Croats, and especially Hungarians. According to the 1991 Census, Serbia (without Kosovo) was home to 101 053 Croats (1.29 % of the total population of Serbia), of whom 74 226 lived in Vojvodina (3.69% of the total population of Vojvodina). In 2002, Serbia (without Kosovo) was home to 70 602 Croats (0.94% of the total population of Serbia), of whom 56 546 lived in

Montenegrin independence and the partisans of Montenegrin remaining in the commonwealth with Serbia, a number of inhabitants of Montenegro who had declared themselves as Montenegrins in the 1991 Census declared themselves as Serbs in the 2003 Census. Namely, in 1991 Montenegrins and Serbs constituted 71.13 % of the population, while in 2003 they constituted 70.65 %. It is obvious then that what we deal here with is one and the same contingent, with the self-designations "Montenegrin" and "Serb" varying within.

[24] Namely, in comparison with the 1991 Census, the number of *all* national minorities, except Bosniaks and Albanians (and negligibly Russians, Germans and Ukrainians) decreased. But even the numerical increase of these few growing minorities cannot explain such a significant decrease of the part of Slovenians in the general population. The answer is given by the fact that, when compared with the 1991 Census, the number of "Slovenians" decreased by 58 294, while, on the other hand, the number of those who " did not want to reply" rose from 0 in 1991 (as this solution did not exist in previous censuses) to 58 294. Finally, in comparison with the 1991 Census, the number of persons of "unknown" nationality rose from 42 355 to the fantastic 126 325. However, the methodological explanations presented at the end of the census report give no clue to what this "unknown" category might be. Therefore, we cannot say what this category represents and how it is possible that 6.43% of the Slovenian population are of "unknown" ethnic affiliation.

[25] *Popis stanovništva, kućanstava i stanova 2001 [Census of population, households and apartments 2001]* (www.dzs.hr)

[26] Right after "Serbs" come "other undeclared" (1.8% of the total population), followed by "others" (0.49%) and "Bosniaks" (0.47%). All other declared national minorities (Italians, Hungarians, Albanians…) are numerically inferior to Bosniaks. *Popis stanovništva, kućanstava i stanova 2001,* table «Stanovništvo prema narodnosti» (www.dzs.hr)

Vojvodina (2.78% of the total population of Vojvodina). In other words, between the censuses Serbia lost 30 451 Croats and their part in the general population fell from 1.29 % to 0.94%.[27] As for Hungarians, according to the 1991 Census, Serbia (without Kosovo) had 345 376 Hungarians (4.4 % of the total population of Serbia), of whom 340 946 lived in Vojvodina (16.94% of the total population of Vojvodina). In 2002, Serbia (without Kosovo) had 293 299 Hungarians (3.91% of the total population of Serbia), of whom 290 207 lived in Vojvodina (14.28% of the total population of Vojvodina). In other words, between the censuses Serbia lost 52 077 Hungarians and their part in the general population fell from 4.4 % to 3.91%.

Still, in spite of the increased ethnic homogenization, Vojvodina, together with Macedonia (which is, in fact, a very unstable *bi-ethnic* country), remains the most ethnically diverse territory of the former Yugoslavia.

However, we must observe that after the wars the Serbian minority in Croatia and the Croatian minority in Serbia are practically nonexistent. One could cynically remark that Croatia and Serbia have been very successful in "exchanging" their populations, and we might only wonder if the further ethnic homogenization represents an inexorable destiny of the former Yugoslav countries. We believe that the answer to this question depends on the outcomes of the following issues:

1. Will the repatriation of refugees and IDPs lead to any significant restoration of the pre-war ethnic diversity?
2. Will there be any dynamic economic development which, coupled with a tolerant and non-xenophobic political climate, would reopen the new republican borders and make possible a normal, voluntary emigration.

It is certain that none of these processes can happen without a sufficient and continuous engagement of the international community as well as without a *genuine commitment* of the local political authorities to the cause of multi-ethnicity, civil society and respect of human rights.

Optimism or pessimism on these matters, we think, is a personal affair.

[27] It is certain that at least a part of the Croats from Vojvodina left their homes under the forms of pressures, personal attacks and intimidation that could be defined as "ethnic cleansing". This concerned the inhabitants of several villages in Vojvodina who, faced with attacks from the members of the ultra-nationalistic Serbian radical party, left their homes. See more details in several reports published by the Belgrade-based Fund for humanitarian law: *Pod lupom: kršenje ljudskih prava na teritoriji bivše Jugoslavije 1991-95,* Fond za humanitarno pravo, Beograd, 1997.

REFERENCES

2003 global refugee trends - overview of refugee populations, new arrivals, durable solutions, asylum-seekers and other persons of concern to UNHCR, UNHCR (www.unhcr.ch)

Коначни резултати пописа 2002, (www.statserb.sr.gov.yu/zip/esn31.pdf)

Pod lupom: kršenje ljudskih prava na teritoriji bivše Jugoslavije 1991-95, Fond za humanitarno pravo, Beograd, 1997.

Popis 1991, Savezni zavod za statistiku, CD-ROM, Beograd, 1997

Попис на населението, домаќинствата и становите во Република Македонија, 2002 година (www.stat.gov.mk/../zakon_popis2002.htm)

Popis prebivalstva, gospodinjstev in stanovanj, Slovenija, 31. marec 2002 (www.stat.si/popis2002/gradivo/POPIS-2002-PSO1.pdf)

Popis stanovništva, kućanstava i stanova 2001 (www.dzs.hr)

Pellet, A. " The Opinions of the Badinter Arbitration committee: A Second Breath for the Self-Determination of Peoples" (www.ejil.org/journal/Vol3/No1/art13.html)

Refugee trends 1 January – 30 June 2004 - refugee populations, new arrivals and durable solutions in 81,mostly developing, countries, UNHCR (www.unhcr.ch)

Refugee trends 1 January – 30 September 2004 - refugee populations, new arrivals and durable solutions in 73, mostly developing, countries, UNHCR (www.unhcr.ch)

Rich, R. "Recognition of States: The Collapse of Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union" (www.ejil.org/journal/Vol4/No1/art4.pdf).

Živić, D. "Veličina, uzroci i posljedice iseljavanja/izbjega Srba iz Hrvatske" (www.hrz.hr/aktualno/zivic1.htm).