

**Joakim Finne (511) & Belma Sehic (503)**

---

**The ideas of ethnicity among social  
work students and practitioners in  
Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina**

**“Lets all learn from the past and work for a future  
together”**

## OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet

### Abstract

The aim of this study is to explore the ideas about ethnicity and ethnic identity among social work students and practitioners in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). Knowledge about ethnicity is an essential aspect of social work theory for understanding, working and interacting with different ethnic groups, individuals, families, and communities. The study is based on three-month fieldwork in Sarajevo, with a mixed method approach, consisting of qualitative in-depth interviews with students and experts of social work (n=9), and a quantitative survey with students (n=91) of social work and social science. Findings from the quantitative survey showed that ethnicity and ethnic identity is of importance to the participants, and they show strong emotional attachment to their own ethnic group and exploration of ethnic identity. However, some of the questions regarding exploration of ethnic identity, such as cultural practice and activity, are seen to be less prominent in comparison to ethnic identity commitment. The qualitative findings showed that the ideas of ethnicity and ethnic identity is expressed and can be explained through different topics such as religion, friends, family, heritage, and narratives. The context of Sarajevo emerged as an important element. Furthermore, studying social work and living in an ethnically diverse city seemed to contribute to shaping the perceptions of ethnicity and ethnic identity among the participants. Some of the findings indicate that the participants in this research might be affected by being a part of a majority (Bosniaks) in Sarajevo, and thereby lacking the understanding of being a minority. Moreover, it appeared to be important for the social work students and practitioners to explain that they would not discriminate different ethnic groups and that they work and study together despite being from different regions/countries. Similarly, in practical daily life, there is agreement of togetherness, respect for diversity, and prosperity for a brighter future. The findings are discussed in light of ethnic identity theory, narratives and heritage, micro-interactionism and social structure, as well as previous research, with particular attention to implications for social work.

*Keywords: Ethnicity; ethnic identity; cultural diversity; social work; social science, MEIM*

# OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet

## Abstrakt

Målet med denne studien er å få en bedre forståelse av oppfatningene som studenter og praktikere i sosialt arbeid i Sarajevo, Bosnia-Hercegovina (BiH) har om etnisitet og etnisk identitet. Kunnskap om etnisitet er et viktig aspekt ved sosialt arbeid, det vil si i forståelsen, arbeidet og samhandlingen med ulike etniske grupper, enkeltpersoner, familier og samfunn. Studien er basert på tre måneders feltarbeid i Sarajevo, med en “mixed method”-tilnærming, som består av kvalitative dybdeintervjuer med studenter og eksperter i sosialt arbeid (n = 9), og en kvantitativ undersøkelse med studenter (n = 91) av sosialt arbeid og sosialfag. Resultater fra den kvantitative undersøkelsen viste at etnisitet og etnisk identitet er viktig for deltakerne, og at de viser sterk følelsesmessig tilknytning til sin egen etniske gruppe og ved utforskning av etnisk identitet. Noen av spørsmålene som er knyttet til utforskning av etnisk identitet, som kulturelle praksiser og aktiviteter, ser imidlertid ut til å være mindre fremtredende enn forpliktelsen til etnisk identitet. De kvalitative funnene viste at opplevelsen av etnisitet og etnisk identitet uttrykkes, og kan forklares gjennom ulike temaer som religion, venner, familie, arv og narrativer. Sarajevo som kontekst dukket opp som et viktig element. Det at studentene studerer sosialt arbeid og bor i en etnisk mangfoldig by, viser seg å kunne bidra til å forme oppfatningen av etnisitet og etnisk identitet blant deltakerne. Noen av funnene indikerer at deltakerne kan bli påvirket av å være en del av en majoritet (Bosnjaker) i Sarajevo, og dermed mangler forståelsen av å være en minoritet. Hovedfunnene tyder på at det var viktig for studentene og utøverne av sosialt arbeid å forklare at de ikke diskriminerer mellom etniske grupper, og at de jobber og studerer sammen med medstudenter til tross for at de er fra forskjellige regioner/nasjonaliteter. Det framkommer også at studentene i det praktiske dagliglivet har en felles enighet om samhold, respekt for mangfold, og har et positivt syn på framtiden. Funnene diskuteres i lys av etnisk identitetsteori, narrativer og arv, mikro-interaksjonisme og sosiale strukturer, samt tidligere forskning, med særlig vekt på sosialt arbeid.

*Nøkkelord: Etnisitet; etnisk identitet; kulturelt mangfold; sosialt arbeid; sosialfag, MEIM*

## **OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet**

### **Acknowledgements**

Firstly, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to our advisor, Associate Professor Ragnhild Dybdahl for her continuous support of our master thesis. We are also extremely thankful for all of the help that we received at the faculty of political science at the University in Sarajevo during our fieldwork, especially to all of the informants who shared thoughts and experiences with us.

*Zahvaljujemo Vam se na pomoći!*

# OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet

## List of Abbreviations

MEIM:	Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure scale
Bosnian-MEIM:	The adjusted MEIM to Bosnian context
RS:	Republika Srpska
BiH:	Bosnia and Herzegovina
NVivo:	NVivo qualitative data analysis Software; QSR International Pty Ltd. Version 10, 2014.
SPSS:	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

## OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet

### List of tables

- |           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Table 1.  | Ethnic overview in BiH.  |
| Table 2.  | Methods used in this study.  |
| Table 3.  | Overview of the participants.  |
| Table 4.  | The process of the fieldwork.  |
| Table 5.  | Overview of qualitative informants.  |
| Table 6.  | Pseudonyms for the qualitative participants.   |
| Table 7.  | The process of qualitative data analysis.  |
| Table 8.  | Nodes in NVivo.  |
| Table 9.  | The procedure of the Bosnian-MEIM.   |
| Table 10. | Mean Scores for Bosnian-MEIM (Total Score, Subscale 1 and Subscale 2).                           |
| Table 11. | Frequency distribution from students (N=91) showing their answers to Bosnian-MEIM questionnaire. |
| Table 12. | Student responses on all the 12-items of the Bosnian-MEIM scala combined into two categories.    |
| Table 13. | Ethnic background of the participants of the participants from Bosnian-MEIM.                     |
| Table 14. | Overview of the qualitative findings and subfindings.  |
| Image 1.  | A map showing the different religious buildings in Sarajevo, Centre                              |
| Image 2.  | Different religious buildings in Sarajevo, Centre  |
| Image 3.  | RS-border in East Sarajevo   |
| Image 4.  | Graffiti “Samo nek ne puca” - “Just don't shoot”.  |

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract

Abstrakt

Acknowledgments

List of abbreviations

List of tables

<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1. 1 The research question.....	2
1. 2 The relevance of the study to the field of social work .....	3
1. 3 Literature review .....	3
1. 4 Overview of the thesis.....	4
<b>2. BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: BACKGROUND AND HISTORY.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....</b>	<b>8</b>
3. 1 Defining Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity .....	8
3. 2 Theories on Ethnic Identity .....	9
3. 3 Social identity theory of Intergroup Behaviour.....	10
3. 4 History and narratives .....	12
3. 5 Reconstruction and Reconciliation.....	13
3. 6 Identity and Social Work.....	14
3. 7 Micro-interactionism & Social Structure .....	15
<b>4. METHODS .....</b>	<b>17</b>
4. 1 Research design: Mixed Methods .....	17
4. 1. 1 Selection of participants .....	17
4. 2 Fieldwork as a method .....	18
<b>4. 3 Qualitative interviews as a research instrument .....</b>	<b>20</b>
4. 3. 1 Phenomenological approach.....	21
4. 3. 2 Participants for the qualitative interview.....	21
4. 3. 3 Procedure .....	22
4. 3. 4 Interview guide.....	23
4. 3. 5 Data Analysis.....	24
<b>4. 4 Quantitative questionnaire as a research instrument.....</b>	<b>26</b>

4. 4. 1 Participants for the Quantitative Survey.....	26
4. 4. 2 Procedure of the Survey .....	27
4. 4. 3 Data Analysis.....	29
<b>4. 5 Ethical considerations for the qualitative and quantitative study.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>5. PRESENTATION &amp; DISCUSSION: QUANTITATIVE RESULTS .....</b>	<b>31</b>
5. 1 Discussion of the results.....	35
5. 1. 1 Ethnicity is of importance to the students .....	35
5. 1. 2 Subscale 1: Ethnic Identity Search/Exploration .....	36
5. 1. 3 Subscale 2: Ethnic Identity Commitment.....	36
<b>6. PRESENTATION &amp; DISCUSSION: QUALITATIVE RESULTS .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>6. 1 In Sarajevo I always feel welcome .....</b>	<b>39</b>
6. 1. 1 Symbolic markers as a way to understand ethnicity.....	40
6. 1. 2 The effect of living with cultural diversity .....	42
<b>6. 2 Religion as a source for understanding ethnicity .....</b>	<b>44</b>
6. 2. 1 Ethnicity and religious identity intertwined .....	44
6. 2. 2 Respect as a key term .....	47
<b>6. 3 Friendship as a way to understand ethnicity .....</b>	<b>50</b>
6. 3. 1 "Here at the faculty, it does not matter who's who." .....	51
6. 3. 2 Relations seen in regards to ethnicity, ethnic identity and national identity .....	56
<b>6. 4 Narratives as a way to understand ethnicity .....</b>	<b>58</b>
6. 4. 1 Family as a source of heritage and narratives.....	59
6. 4. 2 Other sources of narratives: politics, borders, and educational systems .....	64
<b>6. 5 As a social worker I do not see ethnicity .....</b>	<b>69</b>
6. 5. 1 Never working with the minority and being part of the majority.....	71
6. 5. 2 Being politically correct .....	74
6. 5. 3 Another Perspective; Reframing .....	75
<b>6. 6 A New Generation Focused on the Future.....</b>	<b>78</b>
6. 6. 1 Reconstruction: the city is still affected by the war.....	78
6. 6. 2 Reconciliation & Prosperity for the future .....	81
<b>7. DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>86</b>
7. 1 Mixed method .....	86



7. 2 Literature search .....	86
7. 3 Validity of the qualitative material.....	86
7. 4 Validity of the Quantitative results .....	88
7. 5 Our roles as researchers.....	90
<b>8. CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>9. LIST OF REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>93</b>
Appendix 1 - Research permit from NSD.....	100
Appendix 2 - Request for participation and project information for qualitative interview ...	101
Appendix 4 - Interview guide .....	105
Appendix 5 - Bosnian MEIM .....	107
Appendix 6 - Samskrivingskontrakt .....	109

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Social work always takes place in cultural and social contexts, and the social workers' ideas and understandings of this context are likely to affect their practice. One of the elements of context that has been emphasized in social work, practice, and theory is knowledge and understanding of ethnicity (Cox & Ephross, 1998). The International Federation of Social Work (2014) defines social work as "... a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people [...]". Globalization and constant social change challenge social work practice and education by becoming more complex and uncertain (Payne & Askeland, 2008). The knowledge on how different ethnicities and how their ethnic background are situated within different contexts in the world can be useful to social work practice when working with clients of different backgrounds. Accordingly, the goal of this research is for social workers to broaden their understanding of ethnicity and ethnic identity.

Ethnicity and ethnic identity are likely to play a role in the lives of social workers and students in Sarajevo because it is a multi-ethnic society, which today mainly consists of Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs. Another reason why ethnicity is likely to be significant is that the war (1992-1995) in the former Yugoslavia had significant impact on the relationship between the different ethnic groups in BiH. In the aftermath of the war, BiH was divided into the Federation of BiH and the Republika Srpska. Today, the different ethnic groups live side by side despite the events that occurred during the war in the 1990s. Many people have grown up in a country characterized by narratives, symbols, and imagery that are notably ethnic. By exploring the ideas of the concepts of ethnicity and ethnic identity from students and practitioners of social work in a Sarajevian context, we hope to bring useful knowledge to the field of social work and social science. The social work students represent the newer generation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and we believe they are in a unique positions, and have interesting perspectives on ethnic understanding and their own and others ethnicity identity

## **1. 1 The research question**

The purpose of this research project is to better understand social work students' and practitioners' ideas about ethnicity and ethnic identity in the Bosnian context. We wanted to explore how social work students and practitioners define important terms related to ethnicity, and what role ethnicity plays in different parts of their lives. It was also an aim of the study to gain knowledge that can contribute to the field of social work and social science in contexts where ethnicity is of importance.

Topic:

“The ideas of Ethnicity among Social Work Students and Practitioners in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina”.

Research questions:

1. What ideas do Bosnian Students and Practitioners of Social Work have about Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity?
2. How does the context of Sarajevo as a post-war city affect how the current Social Work generation understand Ethnicity and Ethnic identity?

## **1.2 The relevance of the study to the field of social work**

Social work has an important role to play when understanding, and working with different ethnic groups, individuals, families and communities, and in rebuilding relations following conflict. Social work can contribute to the development of social change and cohesion. In the Sarajevian context, social work is still largely present in the private field, and was a big part of rebuilding the scene in Sarajevo (Skotte, 2003). In order to practice social work one needs to understand the context in which the help is provided, including the ethnic groups and culture. Knowledge from contexts that have been characterized by high diversity be transferable to other contexts in a globalized world, and thus can contribute to new insights into different societies that can show opportunities and not just limitations. Accordingly, we want to demonstrate how social-professional competence, practice, and theory can be understood in other contexts.

The distinction between ‘applied’ and ‘theoretical’ research are sometimes blurred, Ritchie and Lewis (2003) discuss whether one should differentiate between these in the first place. Applied social research is often used when describing studies that aim to provide an understanding of the developing, evaluating or monitoring policy or its practice. To understand the research that is derived from applied social theory, an understanding of social theory to provide context is required, and in further detail understand what is found by the applied social research (Ritchie and Lewis 2003). This project can provide an insight into social theory, that can be understood in light of applied social theory. This is important because it contributes to broadening the understanding of practical social work.

## **1.3 Literature review**

There is a lot of literature on ethnicity and cultural understanding in Sarajevo and BiH in general. Markowitz (2010) writes about the history and culture in BiH and Sarajevo, as well as Grün (2009), who discusses “Construction of Ethnic Belonging in the Context of Former Yugoslavia—the Case of a Migrant from Bosnia-Herzegovina”. Kivimäki, Kramer & Pasch. (2012) writes about the “Dynamics of Conflict in the Multi-ethnic State of Bosnia and Herzegovina”. while Šehagić (2016) focuses on how trauma affects ethno-religious relations

among adolescence in Sarajevo. Bringa (2010) has studied “Nationality Categories and National Identification and Identity Formation in Multinational Bosnia”. There has been some literature on what role ethnicity has in relation to families, friends and other ethnic groups in BiH, where Becker (2016) explores the role of schools, families, and other-group contact on ethnic saliency and student attitudes towards outside groups in BiH. Furthermore, Hjort & Frisé (2006) show how ethnic identity is highly salient among the younger groups in BiH. However, this literature is often from the perspective of political science, peace, and conflict, or international relations. There is also much literature on reconciliation and ethnicity, with relevant studies like Wien (2017) with a study in of “inter-ethnic relations and reconciliation among Youth in Brcko, BiH”, Eastmond (2010) study about “Reconciliation, reconstruction and everyday life in war-torn societies”, which is a detailed ethnographic case study from BiH and Stefanssons (2006) study of sense of belonging in Bosnian towns, also underlines reconciliation.

Although there is literature on social work and ethnicity such as Cox & Ephross (1998) and Døhlie & Askeland (2006), there is little or no literature that specifically reviews social workers and their experience on ethnicity and culture in Sarajevo or BiH in general. We found that the current literature lacks the perspective of a new generation, especially of social workers, and how the new post-war country views ethnic identity in Sarajevo.

#### **1.4 Overview of the thesis**

**Chapter two** is a statistical overview of the ethnic and religious population in BiH, and furthermore gives insight into the historical background of BiH and Sarajevo during the war and after the war.

**Chapter three** is the theoretical framework for the thesis, where definitions on ethnicity and ethnic identity is presented. Further theories about ethnic identity, social identity, and intergroup behaviour is discussed. Also, the aspect of narratives and heritage, reconstruction and reconciliation is presented. Furthermore we present theories on identity and social work, and also a theory of micro-interactionism and how to understand social structures.

**Chapter four** is a presentation of our methodological approach for the mixed method study, where the methods, process, and analysis used in the study is presented, and we present the fieldwork, including the qualitative and quantitative data separately. The ethical considerations of the study are discussed at the end of the chapter.

**Chapter five** is the presentation and discussion of the quantitative MEIM results, where we present the frequency distribution from the Bosnian-MEIM and discuss it in relation to Phinney (1992).

**Chapter six** consists of the presentation and discussion of the qualitative results and findings, where we discuss the qualitative findings and also use the results from the quantitative material to highlight information from the qualitative results.

**Chapter seven** is the discussion of the study, here we discuss strengths and limitations of the study.

**Chapter eight** is the conclusion of the study, and we offer the concluding remarks and summary.

## 2. BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA: BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The nationalities, ethnicities and religious differences in Bosnia and Herzegovina is complex, therefore a brief overview of the differences of the concepts of Bosnian, Bosniak, Croat and Serb will be presented here. As we based our research on primarily on the Bosnian, Bosniak, Serb and Croatian population and the most popular religion based on that, we chose not to incorporate other beliefs like Judaism, Atheism and others. Further in the paper we will refer and use the concepts below to the different ethnicities as Bosniak, Serbian and Croatian.

There has been controversy surrounding the validity of the last census of the demographic data in BiH (Recknagel, 2016), however we will not go into further detail about this, but it is important to mention due to different opinions of the statistic sources. The Agency for Statistics for BiH (2016), published population data for the country of BiH (not the divided federations) with the percentage of: 50.1% Bosniaks/Bosnians, 15.4% Croatians, and 30.8% Serbians (BHAS, 2016). Illustrated below in Table 1.

Table 1. Ethnic overview in BiH

<b>Nationality:</b>	<b>Religion:</b>	<b>Ethnic group:</b>
Bosnia	All under (+ others)	Bosnian
Bosnia	Islam (50,1%)	Bosniak
Serbia	Eastern Orthodox (30,8%)	Serbian
Croatia	Roman Catholic (15,4%)	Croatian

Briefly, Bosnians are described as a nationality regardless of ethnic and religious origin. Whereas Bosniaks are bound in both nationality (Bosnian) and religion. Bosniaks adhere to Islam, often being referred to as "Bosnian Muslims.". Furthermore, Serbs are primarily followers of the Eastern Orthodox Church and Croats are mostly Roman Catholics (Sawe, 2017).

Bringa (2010) has carried out research in Bosnia, and describes it as challenging to define nation, nationality, ethnicity, and religion as they seem to merge into one another.

Historically, Bosnians could choose from categories in the population census in 1948 as "Muslims of undeclared nationality" or Serb and Croat. Where in 1953, there was an option of "Yugoslavs of undeclared nationality.", further in the 1971 census, an option of "Bosnian Muslim" as a nationality occurred. This is to illustrate that the definitions of nationality, ethnicity and religion has a long history in BiH, and former Yugoslavia.

### **The Bosnian War in the 1990s: Before and after**

After Tito's death in 1980, nationalism grew in the Yugoslav states, and in 1989 cooperation in Yugoslavia declined. Bosnia and Herzegovina became independent in 1992. Bosnian Serb leaders opposed this, and wanted to merge with Serbia to protect their own people. A three-year civil war broke out, and it became what many describe as an "ethnic cleansing". The most famous episode occurred in Srebrenica, in the east of Bosnia, in 1995, where approximately 8,000 Bosnian civilians, mainly men, were killed by Serbian forces. The massacre was the first genocide in Europe since World War II, causing NATO to bomb Serbian targets. During the Civil War more than 100.000 people had been killed and half of the population were driven away (Forente Nasjoner 2016). Sarajevo was besieged by the Army of Republic Srpska (the Bosnian Serb Army) from April 1992 to 1996 - the longest siege in the history of modern warfare. It is estimated that about 10 000 people died and 56 000 were harmed during the siege. The army created a blockage around the entire city and freeways and the airport in Sarajevo later opened for outside intervention (Lien, 2012; Riordan, 2010). Following pressure from, among others, the United States, the parties entered into a peace agreement in 1995, referred to as the Dayton Agreement.

Among the conditions of the Dayton peace Agreement was the division of the country into two autonomous parts: Srpska (Serbian Republic), and Bosnia Herzegovina Federation (Croat and Bosnian Democrat). Sarajevo today has East Sarajevo as RS called "Istočno Sarajevo" as the RP part of Sarajevo. It was during the war in BiH that a large number of areas/towns were divided into Serbian, Muslim and Croatian parts. Each part has its own president, parliament and government, and most major decisions are taken in the states. In addition, there is a presidency and a government at the national level - thus common to the whole country. The Presidential Council consists of one Bosniak, one Serbian and one Croatian president, elected every four years (Forente Nasjoner, 2016).



### 3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter we discuss definitions on ethnicity and ethnic identity before we present theories about ethnic identity, social identity and intergroup behaviour, as well as the aspect of narratives and heritage, reconstruction and reconciliation. We also present theories on identity and social work, as well as the theory of micro-interactionism and how to understand social structures.

#### 3.1 Defining Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity

Eriksen & Sørheim (2003) states that the term ethnicity originates from the Greek word *ethnikos/ethos* which originally translated to attitudes, but later referred to a certain people. According to Eriksen & Sørheim, the relationship between different groups create ethnicity, and not the group alone. There are a vast amount of existing definitions of ethnicity. We chose to include Eriksen & Sørheim 's (2003) definition:

*Experienced cultural differences that are made relevant (drawn in) in interaction. An ethnic group is maintained by the fact that these cultural differences (relative to another group) are continuously made relevant. Between the two (or more) groups, it flows information, goods and sometimes people, but there is an invisible boundary between them; a border that is not crossed. This border is the "backbone" of the ethnic relationship; It is the one who keeps the group separate (Eriksen & Sørheim, 2003, 5).*

To understand ethnicity further, Phinney (1992) describes that the term refers to origin and a common heritage with a group membership, and that it is commonly determined by the parents' ethnic origin. Ethnic identity, however, as Branch, Tayal & Triplett. (2000), defines, is the psychological connection to ethnicity. Ethnic identity therefore refers more to the subjective and individual relation to one's ethnicity. Ethnic identity is usually seen in relation to subjective experiences, where it is produced over time from past experiences, choices and actions of individuals (Phinney, 2007). Ethnic identity also changes over time and contexts. The concept of ethnic identity is dynamic and therefore needs to be considered in relation to variation and formation of individuals (Phinney, 1993). Ethnic identity is also an aspect of

social identity, which is defined by Tajfel & Turner (1979), and will be presented further in the chapter of Social Identity Theory. Bø (2007) presents how the primary socialization process is of the family, where the family is one of the most important aspects of significant others. As a social integration, the family usually ensures the way for children and young people into society through care from early growth, which provides the basis for the acquisition of norms and cultural values.

### **3. 2 Theories on Ethnic Identity**

Skytte (2001) writes about different forms of ethnic identity; collective ethnic identity, social ethnic identity, and personal ethnic identity. Collective ethnic identity is when a group shares the same language, cultural territory, and appearance. Above all ethnic markers, language is viewed as the most important one. The individual socializes through relations, where language, and cultural values and norms are learned. Social ethnic identity are the social categories that people classify themselves and others in. Here one distinguishes between the internal and external aspects. The internal aspect is linked to the individual's understanding of his or her identity in relation to others ethnic groups in society. The external aspect is the social categories as others classifies some individuals in, for example, gender, age and religious affiliation. Personal ethnic identity is the identity you get through your upbringing. When referring to personal ethnic identity, one often talks about values, role models and gender roles as incorporated through the rise of the home. Similarly, Bø (2007) presents how the primary socialization process is of the family, where the family is one of the most important aspects of significant others. As a social integration, the family usually ensures the way for children and young people into society through care from early growth, which provides the basis for the acquisition of norms and cultural values.

#### **Jean Phinney's: A three-stage model of ethnic identity**

Phinney is one of the lead researchers on ethnic identity, and developed a three-stage model of ethnic identity development. This model has been applied across ethnic groups and was based on a number of empirical studies of American minority adolescents. However, the model describes the process, and not the content, of identity formation. Also, the meaning

will vary between individuals and groups; and also history, society and context, where this might differ, therefore the ethical issues to be explored may also be different. Ranging from low identity to high identity, Phinney considers ethnic identity a continuous variable; where her model describes progression from unexamined ethnic identity through periods of exploration, and to a achieved/committed ethnic identity. She argues that the process primarily takes place during adolescence. However, according to this model, the identity formation process is activated by being exposed to ethnically relevant issues, and the process can take place at different ages (Phinney, 1993).

Phinney's (1993) three stages are:

1. Unexamined ethnic identity, is characterized by a lack of exploration of ethnic issues, and where early adolescents are seen to might not be interested or given much thought to ethnicity – and where they may have taken over ethnic attitudes from parents or other adults.
2. Ethnic identity search, is characterized as exploring ethnicity. Which can be seen as a turning point, and where events or circumstances initiate a search for ethnic identity. This stage represents a more reflexive matter of ethnicity.
3. Ethnic identity achievement, is characterized as a result of the former exploration. The individual reaches a deeper understanding and appreciation of ethnic belonging and roots and is considered “achieved”.

### **3. 3 Social identity theory of Intergroup Behaviour**

Social identity theory was derived initially from Henri Tajfel and John Turner's work in the 1970s and 1980s, where they studied social identity as a way to explain intergroup behavior. They defined Social identity as: “that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel, 1974).

Social identity theory might help to understand how different groups and group members interact, and how members of different groups view others (Tajfel, 1974). It is established through social identity theory, that when an individual belongs to a particular group and has

defined him or herself as belonging to this group, they will try to accomplish or maintain a positive social identity in the specific group membership.

Tajfel and Turner's social identity theory can be illustrated by an experiment. In the experiment, the researchers randomly divided eight participants into two different groups, and each group was told that they were categorized by previous test scores. When the group members were asked to give points to other group members who were either a part of their own group or the out-group, a strong in-group preference was shown. They gave more points to the people they believed to be in the same group as them. This illustrated that individuals need to maintain a positive sense of personal and social identity in which they favor their group instead of the other groups (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971). The process of categorizing has two primary functions; it contributes to creating structures in our everyday life by defining others, and it helps us to determine our position in our social environment (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

### **Social categorization and intergroup discrimination**

Studies by Tajfel and Turner show that the perception of belonging to a distinct group is enough to trigger bias towards the out-group. This means that if an individual believes that an out-group exists, this might provoke competitiveness and discriminatory responses by the individual or the group as seen in the experiment above (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971). The wish to be connected to a particular social group can be illustrated in various ways. Capozza and colleagues explain the phenomenon as being related to self-confidence. An individual will be motivated to join social groups that increase or maintain their self-esteem. When a group strengthens an individual's confidence, the individual will feel a stronger connection to the groups stereotypical characteristic. This will, in turn, create positive emotions towards the membership of the group (Capozza, Brown, Aharpour, & Falvo, 2006).

The motivation to join the group that strengthens one's self-confidence and positive emotions can also be explained by Tajfel and Turner (1979) as social identification. When an individual feels a sense of belonging to a particular group, they adopt the identity of that group. For instance, if you categorize yourself as a Christian, you will start acting like the other Christians in the group you feel belonging to, and follow the norms of the specific

group you want to or feel like you belong. Your positive emotions and self-esteem will in turn increase because of a stronger tie to the group.

### **Social comparison**

According to Tajfel and Turner (1979), when individuals have categorized themselves as a part of a particular group and accepted the norms and rules in the group, it is common to start comparing the group the individual is in with other groups. This can be considered competitive because favoritism for one's group occurs in contrast to other groups. When two groups do not share the same value system and are considered rivals, they need to compete to maintain positive self-esteem and maintain their identity. Social identity theory can therefore be used to explain how members of different groups try to maintain a particular social status.

### **3. 4 History and narratives**

History, narratives, and the heritage of the narratives are concepts that are equally important in the aftermath of a war and conflict. They are important in order to understand the difficulties of reconstructing the country, but also in the terms of reconciliation of the social. As the concepts merge into each other, it is unavoidable to understand ethnicity, ethnic identity and also national identity, without including the terms of history, narratives and heritage. As presented in chapter two, the war has had a big impact on the country. However, differing from other wars, Viejo-Rose (2015) discusses how the war in BiH ended as a result of outside interventions. The outside intervention may have had an impact on who has the legitimacy and power to assign guilt, construction of the narratives and memory, as well as where the new country's borders are to be established.

Viejo-Rose (2015) described how there tends to be urgent actions to redefine merging states and their citizens following civil wars and states breaking up, and where this can bring new narratives of differences where neighbors, colleagues, friends and even members of the same family can suddenly find themselves on opposing sides of the conflict. Whereas the narratives of a former shared past now seems to be redefined in different narratives that can inevitably destroy previously shared social networks.

### 3. 5 Reconstruction and Reconciliation

A society's reconstruction can be carried out in different ways. This can be seen through policies, politicians, and new legislative changes. However, other impacts can also be seen through school curricula and textbooks, discourses, media, and also through the historical moments. It is not only a question about re-imagining the country's past, but also the reconstruction of its value systems and new narratives. Reconstruction at a more visual and objective level can be seen through the ruins, where rebuilding the buildings, architecture and broken landscape is a form to reconstruct the "new nation". In Sarajevo, a city where architecture reflects a clear and unique multicultural and religious diversity, a program was undertaken to reconstruct and restore the Roman Catholic Cathedral, Gazi Husrev-Beg Mosque, the Sephardic Synagogue and the Orthodox Church (Viejo-Rose, 2015).

The concepts of reconstruction and reconciliation are somewhat linked to the same phenomenon of restoring divided societies following contemporary conflicts. However, reconciliation refers more towards the aspect of social reconstruction, whereas reconstruction tends to involve institutions. Bar-Tal & Bennink (2004) argue that reconstruction of economic, political and physical institutions are seen to provide mechanisms for peaceful conflict resolutions.

Reconciliation is a central component when it comes to conflict and reconstructing divided societies (Lederach, 1997). Although the concept of reconciliation can be defined in many ways, Yaacov (2004) explains how reconciliation refers to restoring friendship and harmony between rivals after a conflict, and can also be referred to transforming relations of resentment or hostility to more friendly and harmonious ones. As a link to social work and practices, Lederach (1997) discusses how the nature of contemporary conflict requires the development of theories and praxis of middle-range actors, as they have the capacity to impact processes and people both at grass root- and macro-levels. With the framework he presents, middle-range can lay the foundation for long-term and sustainable conflict transformation. Also he presents the idea of *locus* and *focus*, where focus is primarily on the relational aspects of solution and conflict – and locus as the social sphere where people, ideas and stories (narratives) come together.

Furthermore, Bar-Tal (2002) argues that intergroup conflict requires the elimination of the perceived incompatibility between opposing parties, which concerns factors like territories, resources and trade; but also self-determination, religious rights, and cultural values. One of the five core changes in regards to reconciliation, is the change of the beliefs about intergroup relations and refers to the changes of past, present, and future; *past* collective memory, which needs to be reconstructed so that they are objective and balanced – *present* beliefs about relations to “enemy” should be normalized – and *future* beliefs should emphasize the mutual bond between the groups.

Vijeo-Rose (2015) present how re-envisioning history can form itself to a historical territorialism where there is little place for reconciliation and dialogue. Not only is it a redefining of history, territory, narratives and heritage, but also as the narratives is seen to be expressed differently throughout the groups, it can also present notions of otherness. Otherness can therefore exclude groups that previously formed a part of the nation. It can be seen to become an irreconcilable boundary of “us” and “them”, and a matter of classifying into distinct group identities. Not only can cultural heritage bond groups together by creating an illusion of homogeneity, but it can also lead to new and wider gap between the groups.

### **3. 6 Identity and Social Work**

Døhlie & Askeland (2006) discuss a social work perspective to understanding and working with groups of different ethnicities and cultures other than one's own. They emphasize the need to understand the context where one work, and that one's own context becomes apparent when it is different than those around you. One might also be asked questions about one's own religion, culture, and customs. From an outside perspective, certain groups might be perceived to be conservative. It is therefore important to try and learn the cultural context so that the social worker can understand how and why the group or individual acts the way they do. Finally, even small cultural groups have individuals who have their own beliefs that do not represent a group, religion, or ideology. The social worker therefore has to understand the

differences between the groups and the individual, and not ascribe the group properties of the individual.

Cox and Ephross (1998) state that knowledge and understanding of ethnicity and how ethnicity can affect an individual's perceptions and responses to problems are highly important in social work practice. Furthermore, the social worker must in addition to knowledge on ethnicity show sensitivity to the culture and traditions of the client. The authors state that there are common elements between all ethnic groups, which in turn affect the social worker. They also points out how the social worker should be aware of the potential differences and diversity within an ethnic group. They state that it may be difficult to describe ethnic groups, and that one can easily create stereotypes by doing so. To work effectively with an ethnic group, the social worker must have knowledge and show sensitivity towards the background and culture of the individual or community. In addition, quality and respect are key terms for the social worker in practice.

### **3. 7 Micro-interactionism & Social Structure**

As identity is seen from a relational and procedural perspective, we chose to use micro-interactionism as a theoretical perspective. Berger and Luckmann are important figures in the micro-interactionist and phenomenological theory tradition. Their theoretical approach tried to show that from a micro-interactionist point of view you can capture how individual social structures are established and reproduced. They use three mutually related concepts: externalization, objectivation and internalization (Aakvaag, 2008).

*Externalization*: which is based on *action*, describes how all social phenomenons are produced through competent, creative and reflexive actors that make meaningful actions in a specific situation on the basis of their knowledge of the situation. Externalization refers to when people act, they interfere and therefore change the outer social and natural world. They “externalize” themselves in their world where they affect the actions of others and objects. Therefore human beings “construct” the world in which they live in daily (Aakvaag, 2008)



*Objectivation*; which refers to the concept of *institutionalization*. Institutions are defined as standardized, meaningful, and normative way of doing certain things, which also therefore regulate social interaction. An institution must consist of four elements to solve its regulatory tasks; a *cultural* reservoir of symbols and situation-definition that makes it possible to give a common meaning to the situation in which you are located; *roles* that relates to certain behavioral expectations and norms which ensures action-coordination; *sanctions* that ensure that role expectations are followed; *symbolic legitimization* justifying what is happening within the institution (Aakvaag, 2008)

*Internalization*; which refers to *socialization*. They believe that community members internalize the norms and rules in which the institutions are based. They make it their own cultural meaning and expectation, which is further linked to institutions and roles. Internalization takes place through socialization. The process where humankind internalizes the pre-made expectations, and thereby becomes a “well-functioning” social participant. This is taught through language, moral rules, norms, customs etc. (Aakvaag 2008).

## 4. METHODS

First, we present the overall research design and participants, and then present our fieldwork, qualitative and quantitative approach. In the qualitative and quantitative parts of the chapter, we present the instruments we used, the procedures, the participants for the approaches and the data analysis. Lastly, we will discuss some ethical considerations concerning the study.

### 4. 1 Research design: Mixed Methods

We have chosen a mixed methods approach, meaning that we used both qualitative and quantitative methods. Different methods are used to answer different questions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). The qualitative approach is descriptive and exploratory. We used a semi-structured interview guide with the intention to get qualitative in-depth interviews. We also chose to include a quantitative part in our thesis. The purpose of the survey was intended to give additional insight into the research question. The survey that we used was based on Phinney's (1992) Multi-Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM). Phinney's MEIM suited our research purpose, which will be presented in the Quantitative Chapter. Lastly, we used fieldwork as a method. This method is characterized by field notes and observations.

Table 2. Methods used in this study

<b>Methods and participants</b>	
<b>Fieldwork</b>	3 months fieldwork with observations, field conversations, informal interviews and notes.
<b>Interviews</b>	Semi-structured interviews with 6 students and 3 experts. Three single in depth-interviews and three paired interviews.
<b>Survey</b>	Quantitative survey taken by 91 students in Social sciences at the faculty of political science in University in Sarajevo.

#### 4. 1. 1 Selection of participants

Here we will present the overall approach to the selection of participants based on age and education and why we chose these, and what we used in both the qualitative and quantitative

methods. To explore our research questions, we had to find participants who fit the following criteria. They had to be:

1. Students or practitioners (experts) in the field of social sciences/social work.
2. Born and currently living in Bosnia-Herzegovina
3. Above the age of 18; and could thereby be considered to be post-war children.

Those belonging to the same generation will be characterized by their fellowship in their historical experience in society (Ringdal, 2013) This means that they will have many similar experiences and references because of the time they were born. We had our selection of students based on the post-war generation because we were interested in how a newer generation that represents tomorrow's BiH perceived ethnicity. Also for ethical reasons, it was easier to include students above 18 years of age, as it was sufficient with their own informed consent.

Table 3. Overview of the participants

<b>Qualitative (n=9)</b>	<b>Quantitative (n=91)</b>
<b>Interviews:</b> Semi-Structured individual interview (n=3) Semi-Structured paired interview (n=3 pairs)	Questionnaire (n=91) - 15 items - see appendix
<b>Fieldwork:</b> Observation Notes Field Conversations Informal Interviews	

*Participants from the entire study: N=101*

## 4. 2 Fieldwork as a method

Fieldwork usually refers to research that occurs “in the field” outside of controlled settings. This method often leans towards observational studies (Mccall 2006). In the social sciences, the researchers' reflexiveness is a part of the fieldwork, because he or she is a part of the environment which is pursued. An ethnographic fieldwork, such as ours, is described as a fieldwork where the researcher tried to learn and understand the culture, customs, symbols, and interactions in the field that he or she pursues. One of the key elements in ethnographic

fieldwork is participant observation; where the researcher takes part in daily activities, rituals, interactions, events, and learns different aspects of the culture (Mccall 2006).

Table 4. The process of the fieldwork



Our fieldwork consisted of living three months in Sarajevo. We made a number of arrangements prior to the fieldwork. We contacted the University in Sarajevo, different NGOs (Non-Governmental Organization) and tried to establish a professional network in Sarajevo so that we had a professional base prior to our travels.

The fieldwork contained both professional relationships and personal ones, where we as researchers tried to establish ourselves in a foreign culture. The relations and experiences that we made during our fieldwork helped us to broaden our understanding of our research question and other topics related to our project. One of the ways that our fieldwork helped us to gather data was through field notes, everyday conversations and observations. We wrote down important moments during our fieldwork, as well as relevant information that we gathered through conversation with professional contacts and friends. We also wrote down observations that we made, which were relevant to our topic at hand. We also took pictures of events and places that were of interest to our topic.

The data that we gathered through field notes and pictures were unsystematic and serve as a source to understand and make sense of our qualitative data. We could also use our unsystematic findings to generate ideas and make sense out of them.

We had advisors both in Norway and Bosnia whom we reported to, and who gave us feedback. For instance, we kept in touch with our advisor in Norway before several interviews. After interviews and before departure, we reviewed our data, and we had contact with Bosnian advisors regarding our interviews and questionnaires. This was an important part of our fieldwork because we had to consider whether we had enough data to answer our

research question. At the end of our fieldwork, we summarized our data; our field notes, pictures, experiences and informal meetings that we registered.

### **4.3 Qualitative interviews as a research instrument**

The qualitative part of the study was conducted using in-depth interviews with single and paired participants as the main instruments for data collection. Kvale & Brinkmann (2015) argue that the 'conversation' is the fundamental form of human interaction, and through conversation, one starts to understand how the other person views the world. We chose to use qualitative in-depth, interviews to allow us to try to understand how the participants experienced and reflected on our research question. The participants were interviewed simultaneously. This was a choice that was made during the fieldwork while consulting with the professors at the University in Sarajevo.

We had three single, in-depth interviews and three paired in-depth interviews, with three of these being expert interviews. We chose to use paired depth interviews as a method, which is defined as a researcher interviewing two participants together. Paired depth interviewing has commonly been used in mixed methods research, often in research that combines both quantitative and qualitative methods (Wilson, Onwuegbuzie & Manning 2016; Morris, 2001). Using paired depth-interview as a method has several strengths and limitations. First of all, the interviews are often easier to set up than single in-depth interviews. The participants often feel safer when they have an established relationship with each other (Wilson, Onwuegbuzie & Manning 2016; Morris, 2001). Paired interviews can be seen as a hybrid of group discussions and in-depth interviews according to Ritchie and Lewis (2003). According to them, paired interviewing can be useful in discussions among colleagues or others who know each other. They point out that it is important that the participants are not too similar so that one can avoid commonality. Firstly we chose to use paired in-depth interviews as a method to gather participants, and also so that they would feel safe to open up and discuss their thoughts and feelings during the interview.

All of the qualitative depth-interviews were conducted in a matter of semi-structured life world interviews. The semi-structured interview is neither an open conversation nor a closed one (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). When you use a semi-structured interview, you choose your follow-up questions according to what the candidate tells you, and not what you want the candidate to say. All participants received the same main questions, and everyone was treated equally. The interviews were to some extent shaped by the informants' answers, and we were therefore open to ask follow-up questions. We used a lifeworld interview to understand the informant's everyday life and perspectives best; to understand the meaning of what was being described by the informants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

#### 4. 3. 1 Phenomenological approach

Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) was the founder of the phenomenological approach. He studied the human consciousness, and claimed that this was the only way that the world could be understood. According to phenomenology, it is the subject that experiences the world, and the world is not seen in in separation to the subject (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). This study was conducted in a phenomenological approach. The point of the study was to capture the participants' experience and to understand and interpret the data through their lifeworld. The reason we chose to use a phenomenological approach was to preserve our participant's subjective experiences, which is one of the main characteristics of the phenomenological tradition (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

#### 4. 3. 2 Participants for the qualitative interview

To find suitable participants in this study, we used purpose sampling as a research method. (Huggett et al., 2018). We planned to interview 10 individuals and ended up with interviewing a total of nine individuals. Two of these were characterized as our key informants. Our first key informant is a professor at the University of Sarajevo. Her unique position as a professor of social work at the University in Sarajevo gives her insight into the social work field. Her role helped us get in contact with students and motivate them to be interviewed by us. The second key informant was one of the students that we interviewed. We got in contact with her when we arrived in Sarajevo. She had knowledge of the social work field in Sarajevo, and she helped us by reaching out to different social work organizations in the area. Establishing a connection with these two key informants helped us

to gain access to the social work field in Sarajevo. This relationship helped us to get in contact with other students of social work and experts in the field. We will use pseudonyms for all of the participants.

Table 5. Overview of qualitative informants

<b>Informants/participants</b>	<b>Description</b>
1 expert informant	Professor at University in Sarajevo ( <b>key</b> )
1 expert informant	Leader of a peace and conflict NGO in Sarajevo
1 informant	Student of social work, bachelor ( <b>key</b> )
2 expert informants	Social workers at a shelter in Sarajevo
2 informants	Social work students, bachelor
2 informants	Social work students, master

Table 6. Pseudonyms for the qualitative participants

Selma	Social worker at a woman's shelter
Sara	Social worker at a woman's shelter
Emina	Student, bachelor of social work
Lejla	Student, bachelor of social work
Esmā	Student, bachelor of social work
Amar	Student, master of social work
Jana	Student, master of social work
NGO leader	The leader of a peace and conflict NGO
Professor of SW	Professor in Social Work

#### 4. 3. 3 Procedure

Each interview lasted approximately 45-60 minutes and was taped with a tape-recorder. Some interviews were shorter and ended abruptly because of the location of the interviews, and some were longer. In one instance, we interviewed two social workers who worked at a shelter. At one point in the interview, there was a work emergency, which caused abruptions and pauses in the interview. All of the interviews with students were conducted at a quiet café

near the school, in areas that were isolated from other guests, aiming to allow the students to feel comfortable in an informal manner. Because of the informal setting, we were able to loosely chat over a coffee before the interviews. This allowed us to get to know the participants, and create a comfortable setting. One of the expert interviews were conducted at a quiet restaurant in the city, this was the desired location of the informant.

The interviewer should have knowledge on the theme and terminology when interviewing an expert because this will allow the interviewer to gain respect and symmetry in their relation. Open questions allow us to collect whatever he or she feels is important for the setting, and they should lead to certain themes (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). When we were interviewing experts, we made sure to do our research on their work and review our techniques as interviewers. Using a semi-structured structure allowed us and the participants a certain amount of reflexivity during the interviews, and it gave us as researchers the possibility to create follow-up questions that we found relevant to the situation and to the statements of the informants. An important issue that was presented during our interview was the language barrier. The most common language that was spoken among our informants was Bosnian, but many of the students also spoke English.

#### 4. 3. 4 Interview guide

The interview guide consisted of 18 questions about culture, diversity, ethnicity, social work, and everyday life. The questions that we asked were created to give us insight into our research question. We started by informing the participants about the background and purpose of the project, what the interview would be used for and information about the consent form. If any information was unclear, we would explain it. The first question was "What kind of personal experiences have you had with cultural diversity in today's Sarajevo?" This question helped us to gain insight into the informants personal experience, and it also helped us to navigate our next questions. The next question was about ethnicity: "How would you describe the concept of ethnicity?". These types of questions helped us to gain negative and positive characteristics of the concepts of ethnicity and cultural diversity. The next series of questions that were asked followed in the theme of culture, ethnicity and social work and were selected to highlight relevant areas of our research question.



#### 4. 3. 5 Data Analysis

NVivo is a computer program that is commonly used in a qualitative analysis, where the researcher can organize and analyze non-numeric or unstructured data (Nvvo, 2018). We used NVivo in our process of handling our qualitative material. We had in total 70 pages of transcribed material from our nine informants. From this, we used text-condensation through NVivo as a method for reading our material. The analysis was divided into different phases. The results of our qualitative research were categorized using Nvivo, and the fourth stage of text-condensation. NVivo allowed us to categorize the material by using nodes. Nodes are units that we can name whatever we like.

Table 7. The process of qualitative data analysis



The illustration above is an example of our process using NVivo. Firstly, we imported the documents into the program. In our case, we imported interviews and field notes. Secondly, we set up nodes consisting of themes we viewed as relevant to our research question. We then coded the nodes according to themes in our interviews and gathered references where we could look up information from our interviews regarding each theme. An example of a reference that we used was one student says:

*“There are not any differences made [between the students of] social work [...] we are all different faiths [...] We all get along, and we all work together, this can be described as the success of [studying] social work.” (Amar)*

This reference was categorized under ”social work” and ”ethnicity” We then use these references to systematically analyze the material. Furthermore, we used a query to explore the connections between the themes we created in nodes and eventually started writing and analysing.

Stage one of text-condensation is know as decontextualization. In this stage, we started to familiarize ourselves with our qualitative material and read through it as a whole before we

started to break it down into meaning units. Meaning units are the smallest unit that reflects insight that we need to understand sentences or paragraphs (Bengtsson, 2016). NVivo uses the term nodes in regards to meaning units. The process of text-condensation is different in Nvivo from when doing it manually, because you do it digitally, but it is in principle the same method. In the second stage, Bengtsson (2016) presents the recontextualisation, where the researcher re-reads the text while looking over the meaning units, and making final decisions on whether the unmarked text should be left unmarked. In stage three the researcher begins to categorize the meaning units and creating layers of the material.

Table 8. Nodes in NVivo

War, post-war	Social work	Division	Ethnicity	Family
Culture	Religion	Discrimination	Politics	Friends

When categorizing our results, we used NVivo, to sum up our main findings. When using NVivo, you mark and drag the material from the interviews into folders that are named nodes. These nodes are individually summed up as references. These references contain all the marked information relevant to each node. The nodes that we created were "Ethnicity", "Friendship", "War", "Division", "Culture", "Belonging", "Religion", "Social work". We chose to categorize our nodes into these themes because they were consistent throughout our transcribed material, and they allow us to answer our research question.

We used the themes that we categorized in NVivo and divided the material into different chapters which were the base for presentation and discussion of the qualitative results. The findings that are shown in the nodes are presented through meaningful quotes that represent the information gathered from the students and experts. Each chapter reflects the nodes that were derived from our material in NVivo. The chart above is an illustration from NVivo of our nodes. They are categorized into a number of references from our material, meaning that our node on War, , and Culture are those with the most references.

#### **4. 4 Quantitative questionnaire as a research instrument**

The quantitative part of our study was based on a descriptive survey where we searched to gain broader knowledge about the perceptions that students of social work have towards ethnicity. We wished to investigate the phenomena by collecting empirical data using a controlled method to avoid bias, and for the participants to feel open to answer question anonymously. Our survey was based on descriptive statistics, which is purely a descriptive summary of the data and do not say anything about the world beyond the observed. Further it was a cross-sectional survey, where we based it on a population at one particular time, which the respondent answered only once (Ringdal, 2013). This method can only tell us something about what happens during the time we performed the survey, thus it cannot provide us with information that would have been developed over time. Therefore, with this method we searched to find perceptions about ethnicity, and not causality or correlation.

##### **4. 4. 1 Participants for the Quantitative Survey**

We strived to have approximately 100 students in our study, and ended up with 91 participants. To select participants for the quantitative survey we primarily handed out the questionnaire to social work and social science students at the faculty, where most of students were in the age of 20-25. Both factors of generation and study direction were therefore considered. Furthermore, we decided not to include gender as a category in our survey as we saw that female students were overly represented when we visited the university and participated in lectures. This choice was also based on ethical reasons, as the small population of male students may have been identifiable in our review of the survey, and there was a chance we would know who they were. We ended up with participants who were majority of social work students (82%), and the rest were students of social science. The participants were between 20-25 years old, with the mean age of 22.4. years (SD= 2.22). Furthermore, the majority of the students were Bosniaks (64.8 %), see table 13 and discussion in chapter 5.

#### 4. 4. 2 Procedure of the Survey

As a starting point, we used MEIM - The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure by Phinney (1992), further it was adjusted, translated, tested in a pilot-questionnaire and handed out. This will be presented in this chapter, as shown in table 9.

Table 9. The procedure of the Bosnian-MEIM



We chose to use the questionnaire MEIM - The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure which was developed by Jean Phinney to measure the process of ethnic identity development in adolescents and young adults. It was primarily developed to compare ethnic identity and its correlates across groups, however it also shows elements to particular ethnic groups. It has been primarily used with participants over the age of 12, and including adults. The questionnaire is a measure of ethnic identity based on elements of ethnic identity that are common across groups, and therefore can be used with all ethnic groups. The original MEIM had a 4-point response scale, which we chose to use. Further, the suggested ethnic groups that are presented in the original MEIM can be revised and adapted to particular population (Phinney 1992). It has been found to have good reliability from several studies when compared across ethnic groups and age (Phinney, 1992; Roberts et. al., 1999; Ponterotto, Gretchen, Utsey, Stracuzzi & Saya, 2003; Worrell, 2000)

The original MEIM ranges from 12-item scale, with two subscales: Ethnic Identity Search and Ethnic Identity Commitment. As presented below, there are 5 items (questions) that refers to Ethnic Identity Search, and 7 items (questions) to Ethnic Identity Commitment.

<b>Subscales:</b>	<b>Questions:</b>
Ethnic Identity Search/Exploration (5 items):	1, 2, 4, 8, and 10
Ethnic Identity Commitment (7 items):	3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11 and 12.

The preferred scoring is using the mean of the item scorings – that is the mean of all the 12-items. The two factors of Ethnic Identity Search and Ethnic Identity Commitment can be used

independently in research – where the “Identity Commitment” subscale is more correspondingly in the usage of “Ethnic Identity”, and where the “Identity Search” subscale refers to assess a sense of belonging to one's group (Phinney 1992).

We first adjusted the questionnaire, with help from our supervisor, to fit the local context and our target population due to different ethnic groups. It was adjusted again when we arrived in Sarajevo and met with the members of the faculty and professors. This is in accordance with the suggestions of Phinney (1992) who says that the ethnic groups in the original MEIM can be adapted to particular population. We discussed the terms and options to have under the question “My ethnicity is...”, and we were advised on appropriate terminology for the different ethnic groups. It was adjusted again during this time. After meeting with the faculty members we were asked to translate the questionnaire so that it would be easier for the students to understand the questions and answer sufficiently. The translation of the questionnaire was conducted with the help of the faculty member Dr. Samir Foric, and the Bosnian translated version was again compared to the English questionnaire by Belma Sehic. Finally, the questionnaire was again reviewed by Professor Sanela Šadić and confirmed to be understandable and ready to be distributed. The main adjustments we did were adapting different ethnic groups related to our context, and the translation of the questionnaire to Bosnian.

The Ethnic Groups adjusted to context:

My ethnicity is:

- (1) Bosniak
- (2) Croatian
- (3) Serbian
- (4) Mixed: Parents are from different groups
- (5) Other (write in): \_\_\_\_\_
- (6) I do not feel belonging to any ethnic group, and I identify myself exclusively from Bosnia and Herzegovina
- (7) Next to ethnic affiliation, I identify myself as from Bosnia and Herzegovina

After adjusted, the Questionnaire ended up as the original MEIM; a structured questionnaire of 12-item scale, with the original MEIM response-scale of 1 to 4: (1) Strongly agree (2) Agree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly disagree” - however only in a translated and adapted version. In addition, the students were asked to provide information on Age, Study-Direction and Ethnic Group (adapted to Sarajevo).

In an effort to deliver a questionnaire that was sufficiently understandable, we decided to pilot test it informally on five Bosnian speaking students. A pilot questionnaire refers to testing of forms on a small selection. The feedback we received was that it was understandable and easy to fill out. After the fully revised questionnaire was completed and the pilot-testing finished, we decided it was of sufficient quality and ethical standard. The questionnaire was handed out to the students during lectures, and it was filled in on paper. We found it to be most appropriate to distribute the questionnaire on paper to the students during lectures, because they had more time to review it properly and everyone had the same time period to fill out, and also due to reference from the faculty members that handing it out during lectures would be most appropriate. We handed out a total of 100 questionnaires, and received a total of 95 back, out of these, 91 were deemed usable. The four questionnaires that could not be used were because the students didn't fill out the form correctly or at all.

#### 4. 4. 3 Data Analysis

We analyzed our data set of descriptive statistics in SPSS version 24, and chose to do frequency distribution for the whole MEIM. The answers were coded as the original MEIM suggested in response scale 1 to 4 (1. Strongly agree - 2. Agree - 3. Disagree - 4. Strongly disagree). We chose frequency distribution because when there are few variable values, a frequency distribution provides a good overview of the data, and also as non-parametric statistics are based on fewer and easier assumptions. It shows us an ordered list of the variables and the number of units that have each variable value (Ringdal, 2013). As for the use of crosstabs, there was a shortage of units on the different ethnic groups, were the major proportion was Bosniak (64.8%), and the other ethnic groups were too small in number to be meaningful. Furthermore, we also did a mean-calculation, both for the whole MEIM 12-item scale, and also the factors of the two subscales of Ethnic identity search and Ethnic identity commitment. The results will be presented in chapter five.

#### **4. 5 Ethical considerations for the qualitative and quantitative study**

Prior to the fieldwork we had to apply for a research permit from the Norwegian Center for Research Data, because the information we gathered from our interviews possibly contained sensitive information about our informants, which was approved (Appendix 1).

The qualitative data was gathered by an offline tape recording, and was deleted after transcribing the material which was kept on a secure server that only the researchers had access to. The quantitative questionnaire was handed out to students at the Faculty of political science in Sarajevo, and was filled out anonymously. The questionnaire was created in a way that one could not identify the informants. Ethical considerations regarding quantitative data collection were processed also in a meeting with the member of the faculty, Dr Samir Foric, where we went considered ethical aspects of each item of the questionnaire. The faculty approved the study and confirmed that it was in accordance with ethical guidelines.

Before interviewing our participants we had to consider different ethical and moral perspectives. First, our interview guide contained personal and sensitive questions that might be difficult for our participants, which is why we chose informants above the age of 18. Secondly, we had to review our questions closely, so that they would be understood correctly. Thirdly, we had to be clear about our roles as researchers. We met our key informants several times during our fieldwork, this can be seen as an ethical issue because of the personal influence it may have brought into the interview and where we had to be aware of our role and influence during the fieldwork. Before every qualitative interview our informants were presented with a consent form (Appendix 2). The consent form contained information about the research project and parts of what would be discussed during the interview. The informants had to sign the consent form in order to participate in the research project.

We have also agreed to send the abstract of the paper and a shorter version to an NGO that helped us during our fieldwork and to send a shorter version to the faculty in Sarajevo. This is especially important because we were told that there has been a recurring problem with students gathering information through interviews and not sending the finished material back to the informants. The study will be written up as a manuscript for publishing, and the key faculty collaborators in Sarajevo will be invited to take part in this process.

## 5. PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION: QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

The Bosnian-MEIM had a response-scale of 1 to 4: (1) Strongly agree (2) Agree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly disagree. As presented, the preferred scoring is using the mean of the item scorings (12 items). The two subscales can also be used independently – the “Identity Commitment” subscale is more correspondingly in the usage of “Ethnic Identity”, and the “Identity Search” subscale refers to a sense of belonging to one's group (Phinney 1992).

Table 10. Mean Scores for Bosnian-MEIM (Total Score, Subscale 1 and Subscale 2)

Measure	N	Mean	Min.	Max.	SD
<b>Total Score</b>	91	2,02	1,17	3,83	0,53
<b>Subscale 1. Ethnic Identity Search</b>	91	2,22	1,40	4,00	0,56
<b>Subscale 2. Ethnic Identity Commitment</b>	91	1,89	1,00	3,71	0,60

Table 10 presents the mean score on 2.02 for the total of 12-items, furthermore 2.22 for the subscale of ethnic identity search and 1.89 ethnic identity commitment. The results show that the mean of the two subscales ranges closely to Agree (2), and also the total mean score on all of the 12-items. Table 10 shows that the mean is on Agree (2) for all the items, however seen with the frequency distribution (below), the questions under subscale 1 is seen to have more responses on [disagree and strongly disagree] and questions under subscale 2 have more responses on [strongly agree and agree].

Table 11. Frequency distribution from students (N=91) showing their answers to Bosnian-MEIM questionnaire.

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.	32,2	56,7	6,7	4,4
2. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.	6,6	37,4	39,6	16,5
3. I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.	36,3	54,9	6,6	2,2
4. I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.	16,5	56,0	22,0	5,5
5. I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.	32,2	51,1	11,1	5,6
6. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.	29,7	42,9	24,2	3,3
7. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.	29,7	58,2	11,0	1,1
8. In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.	15,4	57,1	23,1	3,3
9. I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.	35,2	49,5	11,0	4,4
10. I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.	18,7	42,9	30,8	7,7
11. I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.	25,3	50,5	23,1	1,1
12. I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.	30,0	54,4	11,1	4,4
$n=91$				%



To make it easier to interpret the results from the frequency distribution we chose to combine the responses of “Strongly Agree – Agree – Disagree – Strongly Disagree” into two categories of [Strongly agree + Agree] and [Disagree + Strongly Disagree], which is presented in table 12. From there we filtered out the highest frequency in the two categories to see what the population mostly agreed and disagreed on.

Table 12. Student responses on all the 12-items of the Bosnian-MEIM scala combined into two categories.

Items (Questions)	[Strongly Agree + Agree]	[Disagree + Strongly Disagree]
1.	88,9 %	11,1 %
2.	44,0 %	56,1 %
3.	91,2 %	8,8 %
4.	72,5 %	27,5 %
5.	83,3 %	16,7 %
6.	72,6 %	27,5 %
7.	87,9 %	12,1 %
8.	72,5 %	26,4 %
9.	84,7 %	15,4 %
10.	61,6 %	38,6 %
11.	75,8 %	24,2 %
12.	84,4 %	15,5 %

The highlighted numbers show the highest frequencies in the two categories. A qualitative review of the results from the frequency distribution indicated a difference in the feelings and thoughts vs. participation in activities, as Phinney (1992) describes as the subscales of ethnic identity commitment and ethnic identity search, and which we will present below.

#### *Feelings and thoughts about ethnicity - Ethnic Identity Commitment*

It is seen as the highest frequencies have a tendency to lay mostly at [Strongly Agree and Agree] when it comes to questions of thoughts, feeling and understanding of ethnic background and membership. We made a basis on 84 percent and higher to show the highest frequency in this category. Thus it shows us that the feelings and thoughts of the population present an agreement to the questions of (highest to lowest percent over 84%):

**Question 3 (91.2%)** on “I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me”.

**Question 7 (87.9%)** on “I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me”.

**Question 9 (84.7%)** on “I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group”.

**Question 12 (84.4%)** on “I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background”.

However, **Question 1** shows contradictory a high agreement (88.9%) on “I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.” which is one of the items of the subscale of Identity Search.

*Participation is less prominent than feelings and thoughts - Ethnic Identity Search*

However there is a differentiation when it comes to participation and being active in organization. The highest “disagreed” variables were on the questions regarding Identity Exploration. We made a basis on 25 percent and higher to show the highest frequency in [Disagree + Strongly Disagree]. The questions that presented the highest frequency in this category was (highest to lowest percent over 25%):

**Question 2 (56.1%)** on “I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group”.

**Question 10 (38.5%)** on “I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs”.

**Question 4 (27.5%)** on “I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership”.

**Question 8 (26.4%)** on “In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group”.

The questions gives an insight that emotions and thoughts are closely related to the importance of ethnicity and ethnic identity- as Phinney (1992) presents as Identity Commitment. However, it seems that participation in, for example, activities regarding ethnic group and cultural practices are less prominent than Commitment - as Phinney (1992) presents as Identity Search/Exploration. However, seen with the mean-scores in table 10. the mean is Total (2.02), Search (2.22) & Commitment (1.89), and show indication that the majority of the participants tend to respond primarily around on the response agree (2) for both of the subscales. However, with a slight deviation, seen with the frequency distribution, ethnic identity commitment lays mostly around [Agree], and ethnic identity search around [disagree]. In comparison that the total mean of the responses indicate towards agree (2), the response percentage on [disagree + strongly disagree] in the frequency distribution indicates

that the highest frequencies in this category, which is for the items that refers to the subscale of ethnic identity search, can show that importance of ethnic identity search is seen to be slightly less prominent. This will further be discussed in the discussion of the results.

Apart from the 12-item scale, there was also the possibility to fill in “my ethnicity is...” where we got the following percentage:

Table 13. Ethnic background of the participants from Bosnian-MEIM

<b>My ethnicity is:</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Precent</b>
Bosniak	59	64,8 %
Croatian	9	9,9 %
Serbian	7	7.7 %
Mixed: Parents are from different groups	5	5,5 %
I do not feel belonging to any ethnic group, and I identify myself exclusively from BiH	6	6,6 %
Next to ethnic affiliation, I identify myself as from BiH	5	5,5 %
<b>Total:</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Among the ethnic groups Bosniaks were mostly represented with 64.8%, Croatian with 9.9% and Serbian with 7.7%. In addition to the question “my ethnicity is...”, there were also questions about “my father's ethnicity & my mother's ethnicity”. The participants responded that their own and their parents’ ethnicity were identical, apart from a few (n = 4) where the information on parents’ ethnicity was missing. This is interesting in that we might have expected there to be more diversity.

## **5. 1 Discussion of the results**

In this chapter, we discuss the main findings from the Revised MEIM-survey, in order to give insight into how the students at the faculty of political science perceive ethnicity and how they practice ethnicity. The findings that were presented in the frequency table will subsequently also be used when discussing some of the qualitative results. Findings from the quantitative survey showed that ethnicity and ethnic identity is of importance to the participants, and they show strong emotional attachment to their own ethnic group and exploration of ethnic identity. However, ethnic identity search, such as cultural practices, participation in, and activity, is seen to be less prominent in comparison to ethnic identity commitment.

### **5. 1. 1 Ethnicity is of importance to the students**

The high scores presented in the frequency table 11 can be interpreted to mean that ethnicity is important among the students. These findings were concluded from different questions and answers; the common denominator is that the students either agree or highly agree to issues that are related to their understanding, awareness and pride in their ethnic group or background. The importance of ethnicity can be compared to the findings of Hjort (2004) who also uses MEIM. She describes a group of 30 girls aged 13-23 in Mostar, and looking into ethnic identity and reconciliation. Her findings indicate that ethnicity are highly salient and of importance for the girls. Hjort (2004) compared different groups, something that we cannot do because we have mainly Bosniak students participating in the survey. Her results show that belonging and commitment are more salient than identity search and exploration. When the mean numbers between the studies, we find similarities, and our results show similarities with a mean on 2.22 on subscale 1 and 1.89 on subscale 2, indicating that there is a difference between ethnic commitment and search between the students. Unfortunately, Hjort (2004) used another version of the MEIM with a 5-point scale, so that the results are not directly comparable.

### **5. 1. 2 Subscale 1: Ethnic Identity Search/Exploration**

Ethnic Identity Search/Exploration refers to how the students discover their attachment to their ethnic groups. To question one (whether they have spent time trying to find out more about their ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs), 89% replied that they agree or strongly agree, while 11% disagreed. These findings indicate that the students actively engage in activities that are connected to their ethnic background. However, in question two “I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group” 56.1% disagree or strongly disagree. Question 10 also shows that 38.6% does not participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs. While question one indicate that most of our students engage in activities related to their ethnic affiliation, question eight and ten show a higher degree of ambivalence towards participating in cultural practices or organizations related to their own ethnic group. Hjort (2004) found that the exploration of ethnic identity is shown to a lesser extent that she expected prior to the study. Among our students, ethnic identity is shown highly important, but we can also draw parallels to Hjort (2004) findings about ethnic salience among girls in Mostar. The students might find ethnicity to be of importance, but they do not seem to act out their ethnic affiliation or background in organizations or other practices.

### **5. 1. 3 Subscale 2: Ethnic Identity Commitment**

Ethnic Identity Commitment refers to the students’ positive feeling towards their ethnicity. Among our highest scores were those that showed a high degree of ethnic pride, ethnic understanding and a contempt with one’s ethnic membership. Question nine regarding ethnic pride show a frequency of 84.7% on agreeing, similar results are also shown in question regarding to how the students understand their ethnic background and how happy they are with their ethnic background. These results show that the students who participated in our survey are well aware of their ethnic background, and that they also show positive feelings towards it. The results can be seen in light of Phinney’s (1993) three stages of ethnic identity. Stage two and three of her model show how exploration of identity contributes to a more reflexive understanding of ethnic identity, whilst lastly reaching a deeper understanding. Our students are mostly young adults, ranging from 20-25 years old. Results show that our

students, although a young age, indicate a high level of understanding when it comes to their ethnic background.

Tajfel & Turner (1979) claim that categorizing oneself as a member of an ethnic group has two main functions; it contributes to creating structures in our everyday life by defining others, and it helps us to define our position in our social environment. One way to view our quantitative findings are; the students have a clear sense of their ethnic background, what it means to them and take pride in their ethnicity because it helps them define their position in a culturally diverse society where they are most likely often reminded about their ethnic background.

## 6. PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION: QUALITATIVE RESULTS

In this chapter we will discuss the qualitative main findings which are divided into six different sections, each with respective sub-findings coherent to the main finding. In our qualitative findings, ethnicity is understood through other subjects, which are presented as an overview in table 14. When presenting our qualitative findings, we will subsequently present findings from our quantitative material to highlight and compare our findings because we believe that they are intertwined and will broaden the understanding of our research questions when seen in light of each other. Our first finding will be presented in the following order:

Table 14. Overview of the qualitative findings and subfindings

<b>Main Finding</b>	<b>Sub Finding</b>
<b>In Sarajevo I always feel welcome</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Symbolic markers as a way to understand ethnicity</i></li> <li>- <i>The effect of living with cultural diversity</i></li> </ul>
<b>Religion as a source for understanding ethnicity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Ethnicity and religious identity intertwined</i></li> <li>- <i>Respect as a key term</i></li> </ul>
<b>Friendship as a way to understand ethnicity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Friendship is not affected by ethnicity at the University</i></li> <li>- <i>Relations seen in regards to ethnicity, ethnic identity and national identity</i></li> </ul>
<b>Narratives as a way to understand ethnicity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Family as source of heritage and narratives</i></li> <li>- <i>Other sources of narratives: politics, borders and educational systems</i></li> </ul>
<b>As a social worker I do not see ethnicity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Never working with the minority and being part of the majority</i></li> <li>- <i>Being politically correct</i></li> <li>- <i>Another perspective; Reframing</i></li> </ul>
<b>A New Generation Focused on the Future</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Reconstruction: the city is still affected by the war</i></li> <li>- <i>Reconciliation and Prosperity for the Future</i></li> </ul>

## 6. 1 In Sarajevo I always feel welcome

Sarajevo stands out in the interviews as something that the students describe as a metropolitan city where they feel accepted and welcome and a place where different ethnic groups live amongst each other. In many ways, Sarajevo becomes a symbol of inclusion and acceptance and a way of understanding how the students perceive ethnicity. One perspective that is frequently brought up among our participants is how Sarajevo is different than other cities in BIH. According to the students, they do not differentiate between the different ethnic groups in Sarajevo or their university when making friends or working together. Most of our students argue that the diversity in Sarajevo is constructive towards their understanding of different ethnic groups. Many of the students characterize Sarajevo as culturally diverse by contrasting the city to their own hometown.

One student illustrates this finding

*"In Sarajevo, we are always welcome. The people here are very good people. They don't care about what your name is or what your past"* (Emina)

One thing many of the students point out is that Sarajevo is different from their hometown and that living and studying in Sarajevo has an impact on how they view ethnicity and others ethnicity.

One student illustrates this by saying

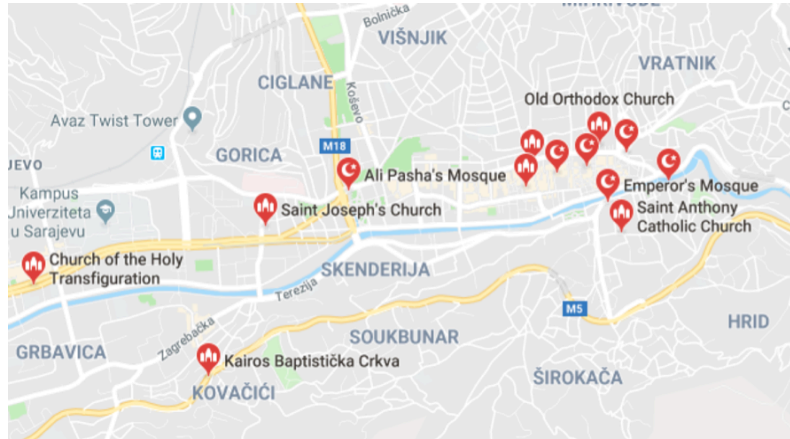
*"I am always in Sarajevo [rather] than [staying] in my hometown, because I feel [more] comfortable in Sarajevo"*(Lejla)

Sarajevo as a city is important for the students. It, therefore, becomes important to look at why Sarajevo serves as a city where social work students feel that ethnicity and cultural diversity is different than their hometowns. One unique aspect of Sarajevo that is important to highlight when discussing these findings, is the architectural and symbolic value that Sarajevo has. In Sarajevo, one of the external aspects that are clear are the mosques, churches, and synagogues that are apparent in the city. As Viejo-Rose (2015) points out, the



architecture reflects a clear and unique multicultural and religious diversity. The picture below shows the different houses of faith surrounding each other in Sarajevo.

Image 1. A map showing the different religious buildings in Sarajevo, Centre



### **6. 1. 1 Symbolic markers as a way to understand ethnicity**

Paulsen (2007) argues that Ethno-religious symbols are used to mark the different ethnic groups in Mostar. One way that Paulsen (2007) describes the ethnoreligious markers, is the way the Mostarians hang up flags in accordance with their national identity. Religious symbols in this context act as symbols of ethnicity. In a way, one could draw parallels to the way the students and practitioners describe Sarajevo as an inclusive city.

The fact that the population is exposed to architectural buildings that represent different religions and cultural activities might be a factor that contributes to broadening the perspective on cultural diversity among students and inhabitants of Sarajevo. In addition, the symbolism and architectural surroundings might contribute to the way youth in Sarajevo perceive ethnicity and their own ethnic affiliation. As seen in the image above, the different religious buildings are highly represented in the city center of Sarajevo. One often passes mosques and churches during daily activities, as well as hears the church bells and the mosques "call to prayer" which one can hear from loudspeakers around the city and calls as a reminder to pray for the Muslim inhabitants of Sarajevo.

Image 2. Different religious buildings in Sarajevo, Centre



Image 2 shows some of the religious buildings in the Sarajevo city center. The different houses of faith represent symbolic markers. According to the students' statements on inclusion and acceptance, the diversity around them might serve as an explanation to their understanding of cultural diversity. A study looked into artifacts with ethnic or national symbols like flags and maps, in a multi-ethnic area in Stockholm, Sweden. The findings showed that the artifacts served as identity markers and that the symbols were not a resistance to the mainstream society in Sweden, but instead complimentary proud additions to their identities as minorities (Wiltgren 2014). The results from Wiltgren (2014) showed that that artifacts were identity markers and could be a way to interpret the findings from our students, and how they understand and connect to Sarajevo.

The cultural diversity in Sarajevo is something that the students praise. One way to understand this is that the way Sarajevians express their ethnic identity contributes to broadening the understanding of cultural diversity among the students. Ethnic Identity is usually seen in relation to subjective experiences according to Phinney (2007). One aspect to keep in mind is that the students belong to a generation that did not experience the war, and depend on other types of subjective experiences. It also means that their subjective understanding of the symbolic markers might be different from older generations. Becker, Enders-Comberg, Wagner, Christ & Butz (2012) found that exposure to the German flag to an outgroup increased prejudice among nationalistic participants. The researchers also

viewed these findings in light of social identity theory. Among our qualitative findings, we cannot draw any parallels to prejudice on the basis of nationalistic or symbolic markers among the students.

### **6. 1. 2 The effect of living with cultural diversity**

The students' statements about experiencing Sarajevo as a positive place for experience and growth in relation to cultural and ethnic diversity is a strong argument for studying in diverse areas. Understanding ethnic diversity can be argued to be a positive trait. For example, Døhlie & Askeland (2006) point out that the social workers need to apply themselves in the culture in order to understand and help the people involved. To be able to conduct social work in a manner that is helpful, having experienced ethnic and cultural diversity is likely to be positive. According to the students in our study, Sarajevo seems to be the place in Bosnia where the social worker is able to get a broader understanding of ethnicity. These findings indicate that the way the students view ethnicity amongst themselves is in a way influenced by the fact that they live in Sarajevo.

*"In Sarajevo, I feel always welcome. For me, it's always beautiful and I am always in Sarajevo than my city hometown, because I feel comfortable I Sarajevo. I have many friends and I feel welcome wherever I go"(Jana)*

Jana points out how she feels comfortable in Sarajevo. As other students also point out, many young people have a different viewpoint toward different ethnicities. Because Sarajevo is the capital of BiH, more young people gravitate towards the city for studies and work, which creates a modern scene with different cultures and ethnic groups. One is, therefore, more exposed to that which is different from yourself, and individuals learn to understand each other in a way that is more difficult to do in smaller cities in BiH. The students have difficulty explaining exactly why they think Sarajevo is different than other and smaller cities in BiH. When we asked our expert on the matter of Sarajevo being different than other cities, she pointed out that it might be because of the ethnic division in many of the smaller cities in BiH.

*“Because most of these towns are ethnical cleansed. So there are very few students who have the opportunity to meet other nationalities.”* (Professor of SW)

The same student also said says:

*“ If you have a create a problem [with someone of a different group than your own] in Sarajevo versus in smaller cities, they would not succeed because it’s a bigger city”* (Jana)

What many of the student’s mention is the geographical size of the city, and how this somehow makes a difference towards understanding different ethnic groups. When they refer to size, we believe that they are referring to the fact that larger cities often have a larger cultural diversity than smaller cities. Our experts claim that smaller cities are ethnically cleansed, which in turn might affect how the students interact with other nationalities than their own in their hometown.

One student says

*“Because there is more of us, there is [subsequently] more [ethnic] groups too. We respect one another. There is no room for creating problems [between the groups] because it will not have any support. But every other city where there is one group that is bigger, it creates a problem towards the group that is smaller.”* (Esma)

Although Sarajevo is mostly inhabited by Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks) most of the students seem to experience the city as highly multicultural. Esma also points out that the number of people living in Sarajevo and the size of the city is one of the factors that makes it more open to cultural diversity. If Sarajevo as a metropolitan city is a symbol for cultural diversity and inclusion, it serves as a place where social workers and social work students develop an understanding that might be lacking in other smaller places in Bosnia. The comments from the students seem to show that being surrounded by cultural, religious and ethnic diversity serve as a platform that contributes to increasing knowledge and tolerance among the future social workers. They seem to differentiate between Sarajevo and smaller cities and/or their hometowns which might be an indication that symbolic markers and cultural diversity have an effect on how the students perceive ethnicity.

## **6. 2 Religion as a source for understanding ethnicity**

Our findings show that religion plays an important role for the social work students. It is something they bring up during the interviews and in conversation, but it does not seem to play a role in relation to whom they chose to be with on their spare time, at the faculty or in their professional practice. The students say that it does not matter what religious background one has, and with the exception of one, they have not experienced discrimination on the basis of religion. However, the students often refer to religion as a way to describe ethnicity and ethnicity as a way to describe religious background. Religion becomes a way to categorize the different ethnic groups. When the students refer to a specific ethnic group, the individual or groups religious background is often mentioned. For instance, an individual with a Christian orthodox faith is often categorized and referred to as Christian orthodox. Religion and ethnicity become apparent as intertwined terms, and the findings show that religion becomes important to understand how the students understand ethnicity.

Our sub finding was that the word "respect" is frequently mentioned as a way to describe their behavior towards people of another religious group than their own, and it seems important for the students to convey their respect towards ethnic groups and individuals of different faiths. Respect in this context serves as a way to understand how the students believe one should act and think about ethnic groups.

### **6. 2. 1 Ethnicity and religious identity intertwined**

In Kolarovs' (2015) dissertation on the complex cultural identities in Bosnia among Bosnians with mixed religion and ethnicity, she finds that religion seems to play a role in the construction of cultural identity among her participants, and Bosnians who are not part of a religious group have a greater risk of experiencing discrimination than those who do. Although the target group is notably different, it is apparent among our findings that religion does seem to matter when creating and understanding ethnic identity, which means that our findings can compare to those of Kolarov (2015).

One example of how many of the students answered questions regarding ethnic or cultural understanding:

*“We are all equal, and honestly faith does not have anything to do with it [how we act as social workers]. We all have a faith at the faculty... I have had [social work] practice and most of the students have had it, and there you meet people with a lot of different faiths... for example, your pedagogue is Croatian, the psychologist is Serbian, and another one is Muslim. Everyone gets along...”* (Esma)

When Esma describes the people that she worked with in her practice, she described the Serb and Croat by using their ethnic background, although the matter she started talking about was their religious backgrounds. This is a common denominator when referring to religious backgrounds among our participants.

Skytte (2001) points out that religion cannot be categorized as ethnicity, but rather a part of one's ethnic identity. She categorizes religion as a part of the external aspect of social categories, for example, gender, age, and religious affiliation. The ethnic identity of the students and others can, therefore, be understood in light of their religious background, and religious therefore become one of the main cultural distinguishing factors among the different ethnic groups in Sarajevo, and BiH in general. We did not explicitly ask our participants questions regarding their religious background, but it became apparent to us that their religion was an important part of their identity. These results can be seen in light of Kolarov (2015) in the way that ethnicity is important when understanding religion as well as social work theory, where it is often understood that religion is seen through the context of the client, the relationship to self, others, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation (Streets, 2014) This is similar to how our students refer to religion.

One student says

*“I mean; around me, it lives people with other religions. There are Croats, Bosniaks, Serbs, yes protestants and Catholics.”* (Jana)

One can understand this in light of identity creation in BiH. Bosnians are described as a nationality regardless of ethnic and religious origin. Whereas Bosniaks are bound in both nationality (Bosnian) and the Islamic religion, and are referred to as "Bosnian Muslims". Further, Serbs are primarily followers of the Eastern Orthodox Church and where Croats are mostly Roman Catholics. One's ethnic background will then create an indicator of their religious background and identity, which serves as a way to describe one's ethnic and religious background. One can, for instance, be both Bosnian and Muslim by being Bosnian, but one can also be Muslim and not Bosnian. This double identity distinguishes the Bosniak from those who are not Muslim in Bosnia, but the term Bosniak also says something about the individuals' ties to Islam, because the religious affiliation is connected and apparent with the term.

Our findings that indicate how religion and ethnicity are intertwined concepts, that can be understood in light of Šehagić (2016) who argues that people in BiH, first of all, strive for a normality. To do this they promote a certain degree of social cohesion and include ethnoreligious other in a shared national identity as "Bosnian". If we are to understand the results in light of Šehagić (2016), the participants of the study feel they want and need to maintain normality amongst their faculty members, and in practice. Religious acceptance is a way of achieving this, and by accepting the different religions that live amongst you, you will, in turn, create what Šehagić (2016) described as a "Bosnian identify".

The results from our Bosnian-MEIM showed that most of the students had a clear sense of their ethnic background, and had a strong sense of belonging to their own ethnic group, which as discussed indicates that ethnic identity and background is important for the students. This raises the question of whether a high degree of ethnic pride and belonging is connected to how one views religion and ethnicity as intertwined subjects. In a study by Becker (2015) of ethnic saliency and attitudes among high school students in BiH with data from 78 high schools and 53 cities and towns across BiH. They find statistical significance on the effect that religious service attendance has on ethnic saliency, with means that those students who attend either a mosque or church on average, show a greater increase in ethnic salience than those who do not (Becker, 2015). These findings are interesting in light of our own because

our findings indicate that religion plays an important role among our students when understanding and talking about ethnicity.

Although we have no data on the participant's service attendance in different houses of faith, it seems that religion and ethnicity are subject matters that are understood in light of each other among our participants, and this might be affected by their own religious background and attendance to a different house of faiths. In addition, the results from our Bosnian-MEIM shows that about half of the participants (56.1%) are not active in organizations or social groups that include most members of their ethnic group. If students understand this question in light of religious affiliation, Becker's (2015) results on ethnic saliency among those who are active in religious activities can be seen in light of our results, to why many of the participants in the Bosnian-MEIM have high frequencies on identity search on some questions. However, it does not explain why almost half the participants of the survey do not choose to participate in activities related to their ethnic affiliation but still show high ethnic saliency.

### **6. 2. 2 Respect as a key term**

Respect is a word that was frequently used among our participants. When they talk about different ethnic groups and their religious affiliation, many of the students used the words *respect* to describe the appropriate attitudes one should have towards their faith, and in addition how respect is important for individuals to understand each other's religious and ethnic affiliation. In this context, respect can be understood as an action as well as a thought-system towards people of different religious and ethnic backgrounds.

However, it is important to note that the words "respect" is not as frequently used in regards to questions regarding ethnic background, but it is a term that is used when religion is introduced in conversation. Ethnicity and religion have been shown to be closely intertwined in Sarajevo and BiH in general. Respect is shown in this context as a word that is used to understand how to approach and understand different religious groups, which in turn give an insight into how they view different ethnic groups.



One student illustrates this with this statement

*"...As long as we respect one another and [don't] have prejudice, why wouldn't we function? You have to respect [each other]. I think as long as you don't disrespect anyone on their [religious] basis, I think everything is okay we can function as we already have until now. And I think of the faculty, this direction, I have colleagues who are from different religious and groups and we get along perfectly." (Lejla)*

As Lejla illustrates, respect becomes apparent when trying to understand people with different religious beliefs.

Another one says:

*"... I also did practice in an institution. I worked with almost blind, and blind children. And there were children with different religions, and I mean there was no problem. And even between them, there was no problem. Because they learn, from the people that work there, to between them to respect and get along." (Emina)*

Emina points out how there were children of different faiths where she had her social work practice, and how respect was an important quality for patients to learn from the social workers. Respect is shown in this context as something that is done. Respect is taught and learned, and it is something that is shown through actions and words. Esma follows up by saying:

*"Because you know even if this is a Muslim country it is strange when you see a young girl with hijab and I was afraid of that no one should sit with me or talk to me because I wear hijab, but my seven friends [at school] are so full of respect, I can't explain how great that is." (Esma)*

A sign of respect for Esma is when her fellow students sit with her despite her wearing a hijab, is for Esma a sign of respect. They respect her faith and her choice to show it. The action of showing respect is seen as a way to show understanding towards what is different and new, and this captures the essence of what many of the student's view as respectful of

what is different than what they are used to, and how they themselves wish to be around individuals of different groups.

One of our experts say that:

*"Religion is playing a much bigger part now [than before the war] and it's now normal to get married in Mosque or Church. It's happening quite often with these people I couldn't believe would get married in Mosque or church. They are getting married because of its cultural norm today. After everything, my nation survived, its normal to return to the roots of our religion. I totally respect that"* (NGO leader)

According to this informant, religion is playing a bigger role now than it did before. He says that people are now taking part in religious activity more than they used to before the war. It is apparent among our participants that the younger generation does identify themselves within an ethnic group which often is associated with a specific religion. Our findings cannot draw conclusions on whether Sarajevo is more or less religious now than before the war, however, we can draw parallels to religion being a part of everyday culture, because the inhabitants of Sarajevo are surrounded by religious symbols and architecture as well as they are exposed to people who represent different religious and ethnic groups. Through what our expert talks about, it is apparent that religion becomes a way to understand one's identity which has shown to be an important factor when understanding ethnicity.

According to theories by Tajfel and Turner (1979), the motivation to join the group that strengthens your self-confidence and positive emotions can also be explained as social identification, and when an individual feels a belonging to that group they start to adopt that identity of that certain group. In one example, Tajfel and Turner (1979) draw parallels to religious affiliation; if a Bosnian categorize him or herself as a Bosnian Muslim or Bosniak, that individual will, in theory, start acting like the other Bosniaks, by adapting their norms. Our expert also points out that more people are religious now than before the war, and he says that this is a normal reaction to what the nation has survived. Religion might in this sense be understood as something that brings the nation together.

### **6.3 Friendship as a way to understand ethnicity**

In the analyzed material from the interviews, we found that interaction with significant others is seen as important for our participants and including how they describe and perceive ethnicity. The subfinding under this chapter is “Friendship is not affected by ethnicity at the University”. However, we found a view contradicting the thought of friendship at the University, regarding how relations outside the arena of University can be viewed differently. Further, the subfinding of “Relations seen in regards to ethnicity, ethnic identity and national identity” is presented, where the concept of categorization arises when the participants unknowingly categorize themselves and others, which can be seen as how they define ethnicity and ethnic identity in regards to relations.

The students in this study were primarily around the age of 22 (mean 22.34), they can be viewed as somewhat late adolescents (early adulthood). Accordingly, the last stage of Phinney's (1993) three stages of ethnic identity model, is the stage of ethnic identity achievement, which is relevant to where they are in regard to their ethnic identity process. According to this model, being exposed to ethically relevant issues activates the formation process, and the last stage is characterized by former exploration, and further where the individual reaches a deeper understanding and reflection of ethnic identity, belonging, and roots. Seeing accordingly to the Bosnian-MEIM, the results show tendencies to more agreement on questions regarding Ethnic Identity Commitment than questions concerning Ethnic Identity Search/Exploration - which may indicate the "ethnic identity achievement" stage of the participants.

The mentioned stage of age and ethnic identity achievement, is in regards to highlight that the student participants were reflective throughout the interviews when it came to the reflections on ethnicity and their ethnic identity, as Branch, Tayal & Triplett (2000) describes as a more subjective, individual psychological connection to ethnicity. Further, it is also seen when it comes to that they seem to not be notably affected by narratives and others value-systems as they present that some younger people are, which will be discussed further under the chapter family as a of sources of heritage and narratives. They have commonly shown to be at a stage where both past and present experiences, and also the awareness of their social work studies –

can be seen to have imprinted a somewhat high reflexivity about what ethnicity and ethnic identity means to them.

Throughout the interviews we observed that reflections and experiences with close relations and how they described their everyday life, can be seen as a way to understand how they perceive ethnicity and their own ethnic identity. As the participants are social work students, the insight of their ideas and reflections on ethnicity and ethnic identity in regards to relations, is also likely to be important for their social work practice when interacting with other relations. Døhlie & Askeland (2006) presents a social work perspective about understanding and working with groups with different ethnicities than one's own, and where the main point is to understand the context you work in.

### **6. 3. 1 "Here at the faculty, it does not matter who's who."**

The reflections and ideas the participants have about ethnicity and relations (friends) present an idea of ethnic identity - in the sense that ethnic identification can present itself through for example friends and group association. In Tajfjel & Turner's (1979: Tajfjel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971) experiment on social identity theory, the findings illustrated how the individuals, in a need to maintain a positive sense of personal and social identity, favored their own group instead of others. However, through our findings, we observed that the majority commonly expressed the importance of friends as close relations and connections as regardless of ethnicity and religion. The quote below is from one of our participants that represent what most of our participants shared when it came to thoughts about friends and ethnicity, especially at the University. Presented in the following comment:

*"You found the right person! I have like 8 friends [...] and 3 of us are Muslims and 2 are Croatian and rest of them are Serbian. And we start together at social work and we started hanging out for 3 years and that's great you know. My friends are so full of respect, I can't explain how great that is. Let me show u a picture (shows a picture of them and points out friends: Who's who and who's Bosniak, Serbian and Croatian). Some are the first year of master and third year of bachelor, but we are always together always hanging out and yeah..." (Emina)*

She states that the friends from the University are also whom she spends time with during her free-time. Also, she explains how they are full of respect in regards to her head coverings and how this is an important quality she appreciates. During this interview, several other points occurred regarding how they all respect the different religious beliefs and practice, where they celebrate, participate and support each other on different religious celebrations like Ramadan and Christmas. The significance of others and how important it is to have friends regardless of ethnicity and religion is presented in another quotation, answering the question on experiencing specific differences based on ethnicity at the University, Jana described how:

*"We are drinking coffee here altogether. They are not talking about the war, or "you are Muslim" no... We never see that. We are all together. If you need help with some subject I know that I will help you, you will give me a question. [...] It does not matter what their name is. In the faculty, I never see that. My name is (...) and hers is (...). But we are good and so close. And we are helping each other. Here at the faculty, it does not matter who's who, I see that" (Jana)*

Both Emina and Jana described how ethnicity and religion do not matter, neither for the choice of close friends or connections with other students at the University. Also, other participants had the same opinion about "it does not matter" in the sense that they do not distinguish between different ethnicities. Here, we only present two statements, but it was commonly expressed both in the interviews and throughout the fieldwork that ethnicity did not matter when it came to friendship in general. Not only did our participants share that ethnicity is not a factor when it comes to friendship, we also had that experience ourselves. During our stay in Sarajevo, and also while visiting the University, we became acquainted with Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs. All who were equally kind and welcoming, and we gained new acquaintances and friends that we will cherish and remember for a long time.

However, seeing that the statements presented are based primarily on friendship at the faculty, Aakvaag (2008) presents how a social phenomenon is produced through competent, creative and reflexive actors that make meaningful actions in a specific situation on the basis of their knowledge of the situation. For example, a social system like school exists only because people come together in concrete situations and "do school" together. Therefore, the

university- context the participants are in, can be seen in a thought of a specific situation - where their knowledge of the situation can be seen as a school norm of perceiving each other as equal as students, and non-based on whatever ethnicity or religion they may have.

Externalization, as Aakvaag (2008) mentions, applies to actions in specific situations, where individuals externalize themselves differently in different settings. This might explain, as how the school setting may affect how they externalize themselves as fellow students who help each other out and where they "do school" together, and therefore why they see each other as equals despite ethnic differences. As Aakvaag (2008) presents, institutions are defined as a standardized, meaningful and normative way of doing certain things, which also, therefore, regulate social interaction. As the University presents itself as an institution, there is some meaningful and normative way of doing certain things - as mentioned the norm of being equal students despite ethnic differences - and which again regulate social interaction.

The aforementioned is just a representation of how different settings can be seen as affecting how one perceives others; as for the University they define the setting that they are all equal here and that the understanding that they have all the same value despite differences in ethnic background. As Jana stated: "Here at the faculty, it does not matter who's who". As illustrated from Lejla and Jana (above) their relations with friends is not only fixed at the University, however also when they drink coffee with their "school" friends, whom they hang out regardless of the location. The margin of different settings is somewhat discursive, though one of our participants had a different view on where the "margin" is, and she expressed an aspect of a different mind that can occur when perceiving different settings:

*"Well, as far as the faculty is concerned, and our direction. We all know to go to drink coffee together. And we are different religions. But I think in the global, here in Sarajevo, that applies more on a business level. I think that how they say it «friendship is friendship, and service is service». When there is socializing, then again everyone looks for their own. They own ethnic group. I mean, you can go out sometimes, students and colleagues, and we all go out. But then again, people usually search for the same, Bosniaks with Bosniaks, Protestants with Protestants... In the end, everyone is looking for their own."(Lejla)*

The statement from Lejla gives an viewpoint on how different settings can affect the ideas of ethnicity and relations in how she represents the thought on *"in the end, everyone is looking for their own"* , but also gives an insight on how ethnic identity surfaces differently.

Referring to definitions on the different forms of ethnic identity, Skytte (2001) describes the collective ethnic identity as when a group shares the same language, cultural territory, and appearance - and personal ethnic identity as the identity you get from your upbringing where values can be seen as incorporated through the rise of the home. The collective ethnic identity can be seen at the University that they all get along great, as they share the same language, cultural aspects and identification as fellow-students and as citizens in Sarajevo. However, the quote *"In the end, everyone is looking for their own"* from Lejla, might present an aspect of personal ethnic identity, which refers to value-systems incorporated from home and where "their [own]" can be seen as the [personal] aspect of ethnic identity.

Accordingly, Tajfel & Turner (1979) also present this in the sense of belonging, where when an individual feels a belonging to a certain group, they will adopt the identity of that group. In their social comparison theory they describe how favoritism for one's own group occurs in contrast to other groups, which is useful for interpreting the statement *"their own"* which may represent the sense of belonging and adapting the identity of that "group". Also, favoritism arises when one searches for "their own", also as seen in the quote below from the NGO leader:

*"It is truly disturbing. Truly disturbing... Even if they are willing, their families will disagree with this. Its ok to marry French, German, whoever, but not this other whomever that is [Bosniak, Serb, Croat]"* (NGO leader)

It presents us a possible link to the quote: "...in the end everyone is looking for their own" from Lejla, also as a personal ethnic identity aspect. The NGO-leader presents a contradictory idea to where the majority expressed that they do not have a problem or differing thoughts about other ethnicities, but when "push comes to shove" the common concept of "birds of a feather flock together" arises. In this particular quote he was referring to "this other whomever that is" as the opposite ethnicity; as for example, a Serbian family would disagree to marry for example a Bosniak and vice versa. The NGO leader has worked throughout his

career with different reconciliation organizations and gatherings, and during the interview, he expressed frequently the notion about that it is easier to work with young people, but where the family - as in the older generations - have somewhat different views. Which again, presents an idea of how personal ethnic identity can resurface when it comes to situations regarding other settings than at the University. In regards to family and the older generations, this is further discussed in the chapter of sources of narratives.

The statement from Lejla however, is only from one of the participants we interviewed and not the truth for everyone. Although it is meaningful it does not represent the majority of students, nor do we have enough data to draw parallels to other informants. However, it is important to mention that different opinions occur, as the NGO leader also expressed, and may represent the idea of what people express and what they eventually do is reflexive and subjective.

The aforementioned discussion on school-setting and relations outside the University, is to emphasize that for the participants different arenas outside the University may present different perceptions, as Lejla presented as "friendship is friendship, and service is service", and also how the NGO leader expressed in regards to for example marriage— there is a sense of ethnic affiliation. With the link to how different arenas can also present how one views the relations to other ethnicities, a study in of inter-ethnic relations and reconciliation among Youth in Brcko, BiH by Wien (2017) (Brcko is a town near Sarajevo), also presented how the majority of the participants were aware of certain ethnic division, but where for example school, sports-clubs and youth centre was multi-ethnic arenas, however when it came to for example nightlife and others there was some limitations. Which can be seen as how some participants have different opinions regarding multi-ethnic arenas such as the University, but other perceptions regarding other arenas outside.

The Bosnian-MEIM results indicated that ethnic identity was important to the participants; where pride of the ethnic group, understanding of group membership, and feelings about ethnic background are at a high percentage. However, in the findings from the interviews, the majority of our participants express regularly that when it comes to friendship at the University, and also other friends, ethnicity does not determine the friendship. Ethnicity and



Ethnic Identity appear to be important to the students from the interview and participants from the survey – but not in the sense that they differentiate between other ethnicities or that friendship is affected by ethnicity. Though, there is a factor of differences and different opinions to remember throughout. As to different contexts, such as family, some have expressed through experiences that it is affected by ethnicity, which will be presented under the chapter of "family as a source of heritage and narratives."

### **6. 3. 2 Relations seen in regards to ethnicity, ethnic identity and national identity**

The idea of ethnic identity arises to some extent together with the national identity in the context of Bosnia, where national identity is bound in the term Bosnian - and where the ethnicities of Bosniak, Serbian and Croatian are predominant. In this sense it becomes a discussion of whether relations and friendship are affected by ethnic identity affiliation or national identity. Using Skytte (2001), social ethnic identity is where people classify themselves and others in social categories - we observed that the participants commonly categorize each other in ethnic identity, rather than national identity. However, in everyday life, it is unavoidable to categorize others, as it makes it easier for us to understand the complexity of the people and objects around us. This may be a factor due to the context of the interview, and where they may not refer to each other as "Bosniak, Croat or Serb" in the pure daily relations and conversations. Similarly, Aakvaag (2008) describes this as the concept of social life where actors design meaningful and organized social and how we create an understandable world that is possible to orientate in.

In the sense of national identity, the statement from Lejla and "their own" the questions what is actually "their own"; when the plural definition of Bosnians in Sarajevo is all ethnicities; so that's regardless of religious or ethnic background. The sense of the nationality "Bosnian" is as already mentioned Muslims, Orthodox, and Catholic, but the division arises when you look at the personal ethnic identity. Majority of the participants in the interviews, but also seen throughout the fieldwork, define themselves as either ethnic Bosniak, Serbian or Croatian, but also to religious affiliations like Protestant, Catholic or Muslim, and therefore also based on religion. As Viejo-Rose (2015) discusses, it may be seen as to become an boundary of "us" and "them" and a matter of classifying into distinct group identities. It creates an illusion

of homogeneity, but can also lead to new and wider gaps with other groups. Which is also what Tajfel (1979; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971) presented with how positive sense of personal and social identity aligns through creating favoritism of their own group instead of others.

Relations and friendship are therefore diffuse when it comes to discussing if it is modified by ethnic identity affiliation or national identity. However, as mentioned, the participants express throughout an idea of "others" as in a link to ethnic affiliation. A study by Bagci & Celebi (2017) showed that the connection between national identification and positive attitudes towards ethnic identity was strengthened when the perceived cross-ethnic friends national identification also was higher. Similarly, Bringa (2010) found that her informants in Bosnia differentiated between concepts dependent on closeness in social terms with members of the other group . In her study, the villagers referred to their neighbors and co-villagers as Catholics, but to people from Croatia as Croats. Both of these studies highlight the same thought about the sense of closeness, and that closeness defines the attitudes, perception, and relations of others and therefore also the ethnic/national affiliation. However, Bagci & Celebi (2017) present an understanding that ethnic affiliation differs when individuals share higher national identifications.

Both studies may display why and how our participants categorize each other, as it can be seen to the closeness of their relations and also how individuals perceive their own ethnic/national identity. Throughout the interviews, the participants did primarily use religious affiliations, as Bringa (2010) also presented, when referring to close relations. Also, sharing the nationality of Bosnia may also be a indicator on how they understand ethnic affiliation differently, this when referring to close relations as difference in religion, rather than difference in ethnic groups. Both of the studies highlight somewhat the same thought about the sense of closeness, and that closeness defines the perceptions of others, and therefore also their ethnic/national affiliation. Bagci & Celebi (2017) however, present an understanding that ethnic affiliation differs when individuals share higher national identifications. Both studies may display why and how our participants categorize each other, it is due to the closeness and also how individuals perceive their own ethnic/national identity.

How to conceptualize nationality in BiH, as presented in the chapter of the overview, background and history of BiH, has been historically difficult due to history and the war. However, the three ethnic groups have the nationality of Bosnians when indicating national identification rather than ethnic group identification. Ethnic and national identity emerges somewhat in this sense. Though, it is also in the subjective understanding each individual has. Each individual will have their own conception of what ethnicity and nationality mean to them, but also in how perceive and name the other ethnicities. The concepts of ethnic and national identity is something that they have grown up with, and still experiencing today, but also something that will carry on in the future; and therefore also future practice. In some sense it contributes to how they view their own ethnic identity and also others, for example if their own ethnicity is opposing to that or as "their own". It is not a debate around the fact of not categorizing – as this is something we do to make the world more understandable, but how this can contribute to the narratives about "us and them", and as previously stated can lead to a wider gap between the groups in the future.

#### **6. 4 Narratives as a way to understand ethnicity**

Who is "us" and who is "them" is not only an effect of the post-war and history, although this has to be highlighted when it comes to a post-war city like Sarajevo. It can also be seen to additionally be more founded in the narratives that have been brought from generations to generations. The new generations have been taught values, narratives, and boundaries through family, friendships, media discourses, educational curricula and organization, the ruins of the war, locally borders as the RP presents and more.

We present the subfinding of “Family as a source of heritage and narratives”, where the participants commonly expressed through experiences and thoughts about narratives, that the heritage of the narratives from family that can be seen as a source of creation of the perception of ethnicity and ethnic identity. Further, they expressed how the thoughts, narratives, and value-systems from family can contribute to how for example young's inherit these pre-made assumptions about other ethnicities, which can be seen as something they may also have experienced themselves in their upbringing which also gives a view of how

family and narratives contribute to the forming of one's ethnic identity. As a link to narratives, it was likewise regularly expressed throughout the interviews, and experienced through informal conversations through the fieldwork, how structures like politics, educational systems, borders, and other structures/institutions, additionally present narratives, - we also present the other subfinding of "Other sources of narratives: politics, borders and educational systems".

#### **6. 4. 1 Family as a source of heritage and narratives**

The participants have expressed the importance of family as significant others and close relations, and where the findings showed that family can be seen in the construction of identity, hence understanding the ideas of ethnicity and ethnic identity. Additionally, concepts of heritage and narratives came up throughout the interviews as a common reflection on experiences they have had with younger people, and how this may seem to contribute to the forming of one's self. Similarly, Bø (2007) presents how the primary socialization process is of the family, where the family is one of the most important aspects of significant others. As a social integration, the family usually ensures the way for children and young people into society through care from early growth, which provides the basis for the acquisition of norms and cultural values. For instance, the statement of "*their own*" (Lejla) can be seen as a statement of inherited inner values of "something" and a sense of belonging to "something"; for example a family's tradition, religion, cultural norms, and values.

As mentioned in the theory chapter, Viejo-Rose (2015) presents how narratives of differences can be seen to be highlighted more after a war, and where family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues can suddenly find themselves on opposing sides of the conflict. Where the narratives of a formerly shared past, now seem to be redefined in different narratives and which can inevitably destroy, for example, previously shared social networks. We can see how the shared previous narratives are suddenly now redefined as an impact of the war in several different interviews. When talking about scenarios they have experienced many seem to express that the narratives and value-systems people bring from their homes and family is contributing to, for example, ethnic and religion deviation.

The heritage of narratives that goes from one generation to another, in this sense from parents to children, can quickly become something they take for granted. As children inherit narratives from their significant others, as Bø (2007) describes the family as the primary socialization process, they can become blind to the perception of others that they inherit. In this case, it is a narrative about “the others” and pre/post-war narratives. Esma brings a point to how narratives from parents affect the children, and where the children do not reflect on the basis of their own thoughts but rather inherited perceptions from home. Furthermore where she states the view on how that affects the separation even more.

*“And we had a problem once when we were in the bus, a boy came in, and said that “do you not want to hang out with me, because someone of “mines” did kill someone yours?” and he laughed mockingly. Like “I would do the same”. He didn’t even turn 18, we were all kids. But then when you calculate, that’s not his opinion. That is from his home. In fact, we wouldn’t maybe be how we are if we did not bring it from our home. Maybe it would be different. And then we are separating ourselves...”(Esma)*

Further, Amar explains how he mostly has witnessed children, as in those younger than him, share this thought of nationalism and other ethnic "appraisal", in the sense where the children do not have enough capacity to be reflexive and therefore further inherit the parent's value-system. He sums it up as "*this all depends on their parents*", which can be seen as the pure effect of how narratives bring value systems to the children that they have not opinionated purely themselves.

*"I have had the experience that mostly kids share nationalism, because of their parents. Like he's a Muslim, you have to hate him this and that... and this all depends on their parents"(Amar)*

In both the statement from Esma and Amar there is a common agreement that it depends on their parents and what they bring from their homes. Also where Esma expresses “...*but then when you calculate, that’s not his opinion*” can be seen as a link to Phinney’s (1993) first stage of ethnic identity where she describes it as unexamined ethnic identity, where early

adolescents may not give much reflexivity to ethnicity and where they there may take over ethnic attitudes from parents for example. In this sense, the children (early adolescents) have not reached the second stage where they are reflexive enough to create their own perception and opinion of what ethnicity means to them, and therefore are more or less open to internalize what the parents navigate.

The second stage that Phinney (1993) describes is the ethnic identity search, which is characterized as exploring ethnicity, and representing a more reflexive matter of ethnicity. It is often seen as a turning point, where events or circumstances can initiate this reflexivity. A statement from Lejla, below, when she described the practice she had with early adolescents under social work studies, shows us the dimension of how transitioning and also socializing with peers and other ethnicities for the children has an positive impact. They learn to have common respect and break out from the value-systems and narratives they bring from their homes. As a link to Phinney (1993) it may seem as a turning point where is the "circumstance" can contribute to the reflexivity.

*“But then again there are kids that bring from home [prejudice] how they parents teach them, and then again when somehow they get together in this “place” they get along, and the children get used to it with time. In fact, common respect, and they learn that. To respect one another.”*(Lejla)

When youths transition into their teens, there is a detachment from the parents and where peers get a more central role in the youths life. As the participants in this research are young adults of adolescent's, as earlier stated in the friend's chapter, they have another understanding about the war as they have managed to acquire their own thoughts, beliefs, and opinions. It can be said that they have reached Phinneys (1993) last stage of ethnic identity, which is ethnic identity achievement, where the individual reaches a deeper understanding. However, with the NGO leaders previously mentioned statement about “...*their families will disagree with this*” , he further states in the interview:

*“... Ask students, easy question. Would you like to marry a person of a different nationality, some of them might say yes, but in reality, their family will forbid it.”* (NGO leader)

It seems to be contradictory, wherein the bigger scheme of things most of the participants express that ethnicity and religion do not matter to them subjectively, as seen in the discussion of friendship and ethnicity. However, when they discuss experiences of others and family they tend to make statements that there is still an ethnic "problem" due to the effect of the war, for examples the narratives from home. As Viejo-Rose (2015) states new narratives bring differences where neighbors, colleagues, friends and even members of the same family can suddenly find themselves on opposing sides of the conflict. Also where the foundational narratives of a formerly shared past now seem to be redefined in different narratives that inevitably can destroy social networks.

Heritage is not only bound to narratives and the socialization of cultural norms and values from the family, but also biological heritage. Ethnicity is presented by Phinney (1992) as referring to an origin and a common heritage with a group membership and is commonly determined by the parent's ethnic origin. As seen in link to the Bosnian-MEIM, the percentage of the questions "my ethnicity is..." and the parents ethnicity is quite similar – for example the percentage of Bosniak students were 64.8% and where the mothers ethnicity was 67.4% and fathers ethnicity was 68.5% (there was a higher percentage of the parents due to 2 missing values). Seen in relation to Phinney's definition of ethnicity and the Bosnian-MEIM results, it also presents how ethnicity can be understood in relations to heritage.

In addition to the expressions the students about family and narratives, Lejlas statement about "their own" and our NGO leaders statement about family and marriage, also show how ethnicity presents itself as a factor of heritage. Value systems and narratives are seen as a contribution to the subjective experience of what ethnicity and ethnic identity is to them. However, as Phinney (2007) presents ethnic identity, it is produced over time, from past experiences, choices, and actions of individuals. In a link to this, and in how the majority of the students view their ethnicity, they present reflexivity and subjective understanding of their identity – where they commonly express that their ethnicity is important to them, also seen with the Bosnian-MEIM. However, they do not differentiate friendship or other people in regards to ethnicity throughout the interviews. As Branch Tayal & Triplett (2000) describe

ethnic Identity, it is understood as the subjective and individual relation to ethnicity, and can show why and how the difference of opinions occur when viewing ethnicity.

Emina further presents how the effect of the war is not only in seen for example ruins, narratives, and objective institutions, but can also be felt in having significant others that have had a more personal experience with the war. However, she still assign the sense of "that is not me". Several interviews have described the notion of having family, friends, and neighbors that have experienced the war somewhat "more", but where they still express the notion of "that is not me".

*"My father was in the war, but that's my father..., not me. You know my boyfriend's father lost every single man in his family, but that is his father... not me."* (Emina)

As Emina describes; it is her parents, and boyfriend's parents that have lost family in the war, but she states "that's them – not me". Several other interviews also emphasize the notion of not attaching experiences, thoughts, and ideas of others – primarily of significant others, to their own beliefs. In a link to this, Phinney (1993) presents the stage of ethnic identity achievement – it shows how the student may have reached a deeper understanding and reflexivity of ethnicity; seen in the sense of how they reflect on how family and narratives can contribute to one's perception of ethnicity and ethnic identity – but how they do not affiliate with the same perceptions.

The findings on how they reflect over the narratives that others, and themselves, have been surrounded by and inherit from family, can show us how they view ethnicity, their ethnic identity and how much importance they add to it. Also, these are factors that contribute to the whole city, and not only the participants' views. Although how narratives inherited from generations to generations keeps the narratives going, one cannot see the narratives as only being brought from family. The narratives can also come from politics, media and other structures. Narratives inherited from for example parents to children, is also due to that the parents have inherited the narratives from others; for example media, politics and discourses – and also pre-war narratives.



#### **6. 4. 2 Other sources of narratives: politics, borders, and educational systems**

There were multiple students and experts who mention politics throughout the interviews, which seem to affect a lot of the community in Sarajevo. The quotes that are presented show us the main opinions on what the participants express, also to mention there were no specific questions regarding politics, but this is continuously highlighted by our participants in the interviews. As the narratives that contribute to the socialization of citizens does not only come from significant and close others, but it lays in the discourses and narratives that the media and politics bring to the community. As described in the theory chapter, Aakvaag (2008) presents how socialization means internalization of norms and rules and where they, therefore, make it their own cultural meaning and expectation. So in this sense, it is not only from significant others, but also for example, from politics, discourses of borders, education systems, and media. However, media in this sense is viewed as a connection point between the population and for example politics, and not discussed as an own source of narratives.

The NGO leader mentioned how the different narratives from different ethnicities inherited from others, like politics, media, propaganda, discourses, families, neighbors, parents to children etc. bring out differences in the social sphere. Where "three sides are told the very same stories" shows us how the "object" of war, is seen three ways; as in this case from Bosniaks, Serbians and Croatians point of view.

*“Different histories. And we are told we are the victims. “It was them taking our nation, we were refugees, they killed us, we were only defending ourselves [...] so all three sides are told the very same stories. So it is deeply divided.”(NGO leader)*

Further, Esma, expresses on the topic of war, how politicians emphasize the narratives the country and the citizens, in fact, is trying to escape from. The quote below illustrates many of the same expressed thought around this subject from our students, where they would like to go further to a brighter future, but where the macro-structure (politics, institutions, media, discourses) seem to hold back. It becomes a domino effect where politicians emphasize the negative narratives, which again goes out in the media and becomes a discourse that spreads out narratives to the population, which the population internalize the narratives as a truth.

*“...There is a little number of citizens that mention this [the war] because it has passed some time. More or less the politicians emphasize this.” (Esma)*

The NGO leader furthermore presents the case of how narratives can be seen as influencing the belief and value systems of the population. He presents how media and politics feed the population negative narratives, which again then affect the parents passing this down to their children.

*"Ask them if they would like to go to (...) No, Chetniks\* are living there. I have family members of a mixed marriage who would feel uncomfortable going to East Sarajevo\*. Who knows who lives there? This is the feeling here. Generally, we are all good and normal people, but for 20 years they are feeding us this negative narrative so they hated towards the others. Again, Sarajevo is much better than rest of the country... You can't compare Sarajevo to the rest of the country. But even Sarajevo, this is not healthy. So youth are deeply divided. [...] Everything comes up to politics. This is the main problem here. [...] So it is very easy to play on nationalistic feelings. [...]. So this is happening here, people keep voting for the same parties for 26 years now, and no changes.” (NGO Leader)*

\* Chetniks: Members of a Serbian nationalist organization force formed during World War II.

\* The Serbian Republic – RS- part of Sarajevo

How he presents that people do not feel comfortable going to East-Sarajevo, which is the deviation where the majority of Serbian people live (The RS part of Sarajevo), presents again how narratives contribute to a further separation. Not only is it separated into the "Bosnian" and "Serbian" part of Sarajevo, but also it makes a bigger separation when narratives of feelings and fear get involved. However, he does state that Sarajevo is different from rest of the country, as it is a metropolitan, but where the youth are still deeply divided because of the narratives that still present the effects of the war. He also states how the nationalistic feelings are a big part of why the politicians that in fact represent no change, gets re-elected again and again. Which further contributes to the sense of no change. Eastmond's (2010) study of a detailed ethnographic case study from BiH, also show how the political realities in post-war

BiH add to the complexity. Where there is a parallel system of government, external agencies and internal nationalist elites have the stakes in continuing ethnic separation.

Image 3. RS-border in East-Sarajevo



The picture is The Serbian Republic border just 500 meters drive up from the main car street and occupies the east area and hills around the metropolitan Sarajevo. With this, the discussion about how heritage of narratives can become an issue is not only factor, but in a post-war country like Bosnia, there is also an issue when it comes to heritage to land and property. As in Sarajevo, there has been land given and land taken for the past 20 years. As previously stated, RS is today established as an entity in east Sarajevo called "Istočno Sarajevo", this is only a few minutes from the center of Sarajevo. This is not only a question about the deviation of an area and a city into "federation of BiH" and "Republika Srpska", but becomes and still is a question about what belongs to whom and therefore where the narratives around it add to further separation.

To understand how narratives additionally can influence the concept of borders, Jana describes us how the portrayal of Mostar and how "deeply divided" it is actually, is only a presentation of the "outer world" looking at Mostar, and whereas the citizens in Mostar do not experience this in the same sense.

*"... and also in Mostar.. Where there is a Muslim and Croatian side.. and I know this one girl there who says she doesn't even think about that... at it is honestly really sad that it is like that... "I don't go to the Muslims side," she says she goes to coffee over there, I hang out with them, and does not even look at that the way its portrayed." (Jana)*

It is not only a question about narratives in Bosnia and the war, but also narratives that the outside world has of Bosnia. The narratives, views, and how the world looks at for example Mostar, and including Sarajevo and Bosnia and Herzegovina in total, also contributes to the narratives about separation. However, the statement above is about Mostar, but it is also reflected in Sarajevo, where the years after the war and still today, Sarajevo is known to be a multi-ethnic city. The outer world shares a somewhat opposing thought of rival sides living together and questions it – indeed which is one of the reasons for our fieldwork. However the majority of the participants states the same notion about the statement about mostar "it is actually not as it is portrayed" in Sarajevo too.

Furthermore, there are also narratives supplied from schools, wherein BiH there is a particular situation regarding education systems that are affecting ethnic division and narratives. Several participants, and also NGO's in our meetings with them, have expressed the notion regarding the education system in BiH. Briefly explained, Torsti (2007) & Becker (2016) outline how the administrative levels in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republic of Serbia (RS) affect the education system in BiH, where schools are divided into ethnically divided curricula and classrooms, defined as "two schools under one roof". The ethnically biased curricula, for example, which is present in history textbooks, also creates a division in "us and them" and victims/perpetrators regarding the war.

In a link to this topic, Phinney (1993) presents her first stage of ethnic identity as the unexamined ethnic identity, where early adolescents do not give much thought about ethnicity and where they may have taken over attitudes from parents, but also other adults like for example teachers in this case. Furthermore, an ethical biased curriculum and ethical divided schools therefore also unite as a heritage of narratives and discourses, as this is the primary arena and education the children get from a young age. They are less reflexive at this stage and are therefore more receptive to outer influence. As the school curriculum teaches different narratives and history, and also where the ethical division becomes a normality and norm, they internalize this as fact. Accordingly, as Aakvaag (2008) presents, internalization takes place through socialization, and where they internalize the norms and rules which the institutions present, and they make it their own cultural meaning and expectation. Not only is

school the primary arena in regards to socialization theory, as Becker (2016) describes; the educational institutions pass on values, norms, and models of behavior that are mediated appropriate in a given society.

The point of narratives is that it is bound to be both an effect and an issue in the aftermath of a war, but also in the reconstruction and reconciliation. As heritage is embodied in some sense, narratives, religion, culture, beliefs and value systems will have transferability from before the war, during the war and after the war. With that in mind, one cannot see "the new Sarajevo" as a blank canvas, it is colored by history, narratives, ruins, heritage, culture, religion, and people - which our participants are surrounded and affected by. In regards to the student participants, the majority emphasize how they have the vision to prosper into a brighter future without deviation and the focus on ethnic and religious separation. But with a link to narratives, it almost becomes a paradox where it seems that the new generation of post-war generation (our participants) have a sense of openness and perception of a brighter future. However, the narratives and heritage the families, and also politics, educational systems, borders, and narratives from the war, seem to pull them back in some sense. It almost becomes a tug of war, where the majority of the participants wants to prosper and work for a brighter future together, but the narratives presented keep holding them, the community and the country back.

Politics and narratives are not only an objective factor in regards to continuing ethnic separation in Bosnia and Sarajevo but is a way to understand how our participants reflect over this and how they perceive ethnicity through all of these "external" factors. Different ethnicities – different understandings – create different discourses and narratives of the past, present, and future, but where we can see that it is also individual and subjective. The narratives presented, both from the family and from politics, educational systems, borders, and other discourses, contribute to the factor that the social work students also have to keep this in mind when going out in practice, as they can meet opposing sides with opposing views. They stand before the meeting with different ethnicities, but not only that – the different ethnicities will therefore also bring different narratives in the "meeting". Also, the social worker should be aware of the potential differences and diversity within an ethnic group. In either case, as Cox and Ephross (1998) presents, the knowledge and understanding

of ethnicity and how ethnicity can affect individual's perceptions and responses to problems are highly important in social work practice.

### **6. 5 As a social worker I do not see ethnicity**

We asked our participants whether they thought they were affected by the fact that they studied and practiced social work, with regards to perceiving their own and others ethnic group. We found this question to be interesting because social work is an academic and practical field where one learns about enhancing the well-being of individuals, families, and communities, as well as understanding the differences between individuals. Among these differences are ethnicity, religion, and culture, and the informants, students and social workers, say that people are not treated differently because of their ethnicity.

One student says:

*“There are not any differences made [between the students of] social work [...] we are all different faiths [...] We all get along, and we all work together, this can be described as the success of [studying] social work.”* (Amar)

When the topic of social work practice surfaced during the interviews, almost all of the students answered that they would not discriminate between different ethnic groups in any way and that they are able to work and study together despite being from different regions or countries. These findings show the same pattern by the way the students describe their relation to religion, friends and family. The students say that they would not be influenced by different ethnic groups and that they are in a way "colour blind"; meaning that they don't differentiate between the groups or religions. Most of the students did, however, acknowledge the fact that there are differences in religion, ethnicity and in cultural activities among fellow students and in BiH in general. Although these differences were mentioned, a common denominator was that when it comes to social work as a practice and theoretical field, properties related to ethnic, religious or cultural background was not of importance. The students were however keen on talking about their inclusive and open faculty, and being a part of this constructive environment.

A study of inter-ethnic relations and reconciliation among youth in Brcko, BiH shows that younger people in Brcko BiH feel a pressure to engage in deeper relationships with people of their own ethnic background than people of other ethnic backgrounds, and that this is formed through media discourses, politics, educational systems and the family (Wien 2017). It must be noted that these results are derived from informants that are in a different area in BiH and the sample is rather small (<10). Nevertheless, the results that Wien (2017) present differs from the ones that are derived from our students, in that the students we interviewed are persistent when claiming the lack of difference between the different groups at the faculty and among the future social workers.

In regards to work or student discrimination, the majority of the students say that they have experienced little to no discrimination at the faculty, nor in social work activities. However, one student presented a case where one teacher was standing behind her for a longer period of time during an exam. She explains that the faculty had some issues with a student wearing headphones under their hijab. She told us that she spoke with the professor and that she does not really regard the issue as problematic nor discriminatory.

Amar says

*“And we as a group of social work students, we are avoiding this nationalism. The most important thing is togetherness and the future of Bosnia. It is not important which faith you have, but what kind of human you are. And to look forward, and to work for togetherness, and us as social workers succeeding in doing this. And I feel that ethnicity is not as important at our faculty.”* (Amar)

Amar presents a perspective on what he believes to be important as social workers and as Bosnians. The way Døhlie & Askeland (2006) explains the social worker and their mandate as having to understand the differences between the groups and the individual and learning the context of what the individual is, is something that is in line with what the students communicate. One way to interpret these findings is that being a social worker and learning social work theories contributes to broadening the understanding of ethnic, cultural and religious differences amongst individuals and groups, which in turn affect how the students

view groups that are different than their own. These findings seems to be apparent in the field of social work as well, according to our informants.

One social worker says:

*“We don’t have prejudices here. Any women who asks for help is entitled to it. Even children. So even if it is a Romanian, someone from a different country, or that is not our nationality, we accept it.”* (Selma)

As seen in other findings, living in an environment that is often described by the students as highly cultural, might broaden one's understanding of differences between groups. Cox and Ephross (1998) state that knowledge and understanding of ethnicity and how ethnicity this can affect an individual's perceptions and responses to problems are highly important in social work practice. Furthermore, the social worker must in addition to knowledge on ethnicity the social worker must show sensitivity to the culture and traditions of the client. The students actively talk about their relationship with friends and colleagues who belong to different ethnic groups than their own, and how the faculty represent somewhat of a free-space which includes all ethnic groups and faiths. The social worker students might be highly affected by their surroundings as being a part of a group of other social workers and in an inclusive faculty and city which in turn influences the way the student view ethnicity, ethnicity groups, and ethnicity. In light of Carole Cox (1998), the social work students seem to benefit from their culturally complex surroundings in light of future practice.

### **6. 5. 1 Never working with the minority and being part of the majority**

One of our expert informants points out how one's ethnic background as a Muslim and as a Bosnian Muslim was is that noticeable when you are surrounded by others who are like yourself. Working with just the majority might affect the way one perceives and understands the minority. One of our experts points out how this might lead to what he refers to as being politically correct. In this context, being politically correct is referring to saying something and meaning or doing something else. Becker (2015) explores the role of schools, families, and other-group contact on ethnic saliency and student attitudes towards outside groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). He finds that families have an effect on increasing the



tolerance towards outside groups and that secondary schools in BiH have a secondary role because of homogeneity. One could draw parallels between our research on the basis of the homogeneity among the faculty students. One of our findings are on the basis of our expert interviews and show how being "politically correct" and being a part of the majority can serve as a problem when understanding ethnicity.

One of our experts says:

*"Social Workers live in very ethical clean areas; this is just the fact. And how often do they have the opportunity to work with people from the different group? Very rarely. If we speak about Republica Srpska, these returnees to Republica Srpska are a minority. Really, and regarding even context of social work and possibilities of helping people are very limited. Even because of this, this reduces the opportunities to work with diverse people"* (Professor SW)

The majority of the population in Sarajevo are Bosnian Muslim, this is also represented among our participants as shown in the Bosnian-MEIM, which means that our participants who are Bosnian Muslim do not have the experience of being a minority in Sarajevo, which in turn affects how they perceive ethnicity in their personal life.

Becker (2016) found that tolerance towards other ethnic groups than your own is affected by ethnic homogeneity within secondary schools in BiH. According to psychological theories, an individual will be motivated to join social groups that increase or maintain their self-confidence, and that the perception of belonging to a distinct group is enough to trigger discrimination towards the out-group. (Tajfel, 1970; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971) When a group strengthens an individual's confidence, the individual will feel a stronger connection to the group's stereotypical characteristics. This will, in turn, create positive emotions towards the membership of the group (Capozza, Brown, Aharpour, & Falvo, 2006)

In light of theories presented, one would believe that the students in Sarajevo would affiliate themselves with their own ethnic group. However, the material that we have derived from our qualitative material shows completely different results. The majority of the participants in this study are of the same ethnic group. The students rarely mention this fact, and in general,

they have a joint opinion that one's ethnicity does not matter among them. We chose to include statements from our experts because we believe that they touch upon an important finding which is that the students might not be aware that they are a part of the majority and therefore do not understand the role of the minority.

Although the experience of our students is not explicitly reflected in this finding, their lack of responses to this question can be interpreted in light of political correctness and lack of understanding of their own role as a part of the majority. The choice to affiliate oneself with a certain ethnic group as Capozza, Brown, Aharpour, & Falvo (2006) points out might not be apparent with our participants.

When we asked our students whether they participate in cultural practices of their own group, such as special food, music or customs, the answers were quite divided, with 61,6% either agreeing or strongly agreeing, and 38,6% disagreeing and strongly disagreeing. These results show that although the majority of the social work students have a tendency towards participating in cultural activities with people of their own ethnic background, a vast amount of the students do not. Almost 40% of the students chose to not take part in activities where they are surrounded by people of their own ethnic membership. This raises the question why so many of these students differ from theories presented by both Capozza, Brown, Aharpour, & Falvo (2006 and Tajfel & Turner (1970).

Our expert says:

*"...You know; the perception of the majority is not the same as the perception of the minority. If you are a minority, then you are very aware of being a minority. And the majority is not aware that they are violating someone's right. The perception is completely different. But when I have this cross-cultural experience, my feeling is changing. Suddenly, in this diverse context, I become aware that I am Muslim, and I am especially Bosnian. It's not easy being Bosnian in this cross-cultural context, especially being Muslim. If I say here in Sarajevo, that I don't eat pork and don't drink alcohol, it is not important information for any person here. But when I go somewhere else, it suddenly becomes very interesting [that] I don't eat pork, and in that context, I become aware that I am different" (Professor SW)*

As our expert points out, BiH is divided into ethnically clean areas, but diversity is still shown at the faculty of political sciences at the University in Sarajevo, and there are many different ethnic groups at the faculty. Although one ethnic group is dominant in certain areas, this does not necessarily limit the possibilities of the social worker, because most areas in the world are predominantly one ethnic group, and this makes the contrast between the ethnicities even larger.

Categorizing in “us” and “them” and parting with one’s own ethnic group is theoretically established (Viejo-Rose 2015) The qualitative results that are presented from the students and practitioners regarding how they view different ethnic groups are almost exclusively positive, as seen from the results we have presented above. If these results are trustworthy, the students and practitioners that we interviewed have shown an openness and willingness towards understanding, learning and working with different ethnicities, which gives great promise towards Sarajevo and the generations ahead. However, one must be critical to the findings according to other sources in our material.

### **6. 5. 2 Being politically correct**

One factor that has to be presented here is the fact that the students might feel the willingness to follow the norms and rules that are set for social workers at the faculty. This is usually what happens when an individual is categorized themselves as a member of a group, according to Tajfel and Turner (1979). The question is if these rules and norms actually reflect the actions and inner thoughts of the individual. According to our NGO leader, there is an issue regarding the younger generation being politically correct.

*“Our main concern is young people [when we are hiring]. We hope we meet really talented young people, but again, most of them will be giving you political correct answers during interviews. So when we ask if [they] have problems with meeting Serbs, they say no. [But when we ask if they can travel] to east Sarajevo, they are resistant, and claim that the individuals who live in east Sarajevo should come to us instead”*(NGO leader)

Our expert shares his experience with people saying one thing and doing another. His statement illustrates what Tajfel & Turner (1979) discuss. If one argues that collectively, the younger generation feels the need to follow norms and rules in accordance to political correctness, one has a problem when trying to work out how ethnicity is actually perceived among the younger generation, social workers and the population in general.

*"Everybody wants to be politically correct, accepted, you get things easier. It is important to show up in a mosque or a church. This [behavior] creates a separation"* (NGO leader)

Being politically correct presents a problem when practicing social work when social work is a profession that is supposed to create social cohesion between groups (IFSW 2014). Our informant points out the certain employees have difficulties traveling to Republika Srpska. If this is the case, one is presented with an issue as a social worker. Døhlie & Askeland (2006) state that the social worker has to understand the differences between groups when helping an individual. In addition, the individual shall not be ascribed the properties of a group. This means that if the social worker does not want to travel to a certain part of the city because of the ethnic group that lives there, he or she ascribes the client certain properties that aren't necessarily true, which presents a big issue for both the social worker and the client.

Although this is undoubtedly an issue when practicing social work, one cannot conclude that this does not conclude that this is the case in Sarajevo, as a majority of our informants have a different opinion. These findings are primarily derived from two experts, and the findings can therefore not be said to represent the students. However, the differences pointed out by the experts and the students do highlight an important aspect of this study; the different experiences across generations. Ethnic Identity is defined by Branch, Tayal & Triplett (2000) as the psychological connection to ethnicity. We would argue that one's understanding of ethnic identity and ethnicity might, therefore, be very different across generations.

### **6. 5. 3 Another Perspective; Reframing**

This sub finding shows how the students in light of being social workers and a part of a younger generation, contribute to reframing the existing idea of ethnicity and ethnic identity in Sarajevo. The students that we interviewed have been collectively persistent in their view

of their own and others ethnic identity. They have often uttered that their ethnicity is of no importance, and that division between ethnicity is a matter of the past in Sarajevo. In contrary to the results from the Bosnian-MEIM that show a high awareness of ethnicity, the students seem to be divided when it comes to "doing" their ethnic background by participating in cultural practices of their own group, such as special food, music, or customs, which can indicate that many of the informants distance themselves from showcasing their ethnicity, even though the results show that the student is proud of their background with 84.7% agreeing to this in our Bosnian-MEIM.

Visser & Bakker (2016) studied the categorization and ethnic identity among young adults in Sarajevo. One of their findings is that their informants who are a part of the younger generation in Sarajevo want a more open and flexible framework to understand ethnicity, especially by underlining how the category "Bosnian" can feel empty in light of the other ethnic identities Visser & Bakker (2016) refer to this as *reframing*. The Bosnian MEIM shows that only 8.8% of the participants chose to categorize themselves as Bosnian, while 62.6% categorized themselves as Bosniak. One can interpret this as if the students feel proud of their background and identify themselves with the category that also is correlated with a religious background, but still, don't view ethnicity as something that is apparent in their everyday life.

When asking one of the students how he views ethnicity in light of how professional practice, he responded that the most important thing for him is togetherness and not to focus on nationalism. This illustrates the findings (Visser & Bakker (2016) present on how acting towards a "reframing" on how one views the differences between the groups towards a new way of thinking and acting.

This can be described as externalization. As Aakvaag (2008) says, one "externalize" themselves in a world where one can affect the actions of others and objects. Therefore, human beings "construct" the world in which they live in daily. One way to understand the way the students present themselves and talk about ethnicity, ethnic identity and the future & now of Bosnia-Herzegovinian and Sarajevo. By focusing on the future and how they believe one should view ethnic identity as a person, social worker, student, they contribute to

constructing the reality they live in. They reframe what some might expect of them, and contribute to a new understanding.

One of the students says:

*“I don’t want to watch past. Because it’s important to look towards the future...I can sit with anyone [at school]. I remember in 2 years we all sat together, without regard to ethnic background. Maybe it is because it is a new generation, with new experiences, new history. We all helped each other during the different subjects and it does not matter who you are we all helped each other”*(Jana)

We questioned Jana about discrimination, and it became apparent then instead of answering whether she had personally faced discrimination, she was more interested in presenting her thoughts on the future. When Jana chose to change the focus of the interview, this action can be understood in light of Aakvaag (2008), where Jana contributes to her constructing the world she lives in. This form of construction is seen throughout the students. However, as presented above, we received quite different responses from our experts. They both highlight perspectives that are different and possibly affected by the context in which they understand the questions. The experts are both in an age group where they were adults during the war, and they have lived through political and religious changes that the students have not. Therefore, the experts might present very different perspectives than the students. One perspective is not necessarily more correct than another. It might, however, contribute to a different framing and construction between the different generations.

Social workers are commonly known to work with a bottom-up perspective, or rather through grassroots-movements. Visser & Bakker (2016) present this perspective regarding the informants in his research, and how they have contributed from the lowest starting level. The same view can be used to understand our participants. One of the students shed light on the fact that social workers in Sarajevo that are not considered to be part of the high-class society, and she says that social workers are considered to be the lowest class of people. Social workers are not politicians. One can view social workers and social work as a profession where practitioners work from grass-root movements, and contribute to change from the bottom and among each other. Our findings indicate that this is apparent among the

students at the faculty of political science. She expresses how there are individuals and families in desperate need of social workers in Sarajevo, and how the social worker is an essential part of Sarajevo.

## **6. 6 A New Generation Focused on the Future**

The majority of the student participants emphasized the notion of "rebuilding" former value-systems of narratives, discourses and the effects of the war, while also expressing how it is a new generation circling Sarajevo, and they express the thought and focus on togetherness and a brighter future. This leads us on to the thought of a new generation and reconstruction and a reconciliation belief in Sarajevo and BiH. In this chapter the subfinding of "Reconstruction and Perceptions; the city is still affected by the war" and further, the subfinding of "Reconciliation and Prosperity for the Future" will be presented.

### **6. 6. 1 Reconstruction: the city is still affected by the war**

The war has affected the entire city historically, and there is a melting point with different religions, ethnicities, and people who live side-by-side. But the city is in a flux, and the modern Sarajevo represents hope for the future. As we have witnessed throughout our fieldwork Sarajevo is still affected by the war, and one can see this through ruins and bullet holes on buildings. However, as mentioned, the mosques, cathedrals, synagogues, and churches have been restored, and therefore represent a sense of a newer and brighter future. The changes and reconstruction undergoing the city is an on-going process. As Viejo-Rose (2015) presents, internally reconstruction can be seen through policies, politicians and new legislative changes. But not only that, it can also be seen through reconstructing discourses, media, school curricula or historical moments, and on a more objective and visual level; rebuilding buildings, architecture and the broken landscape is a part of the reconstruction. In this sense, it is not only a question about re-imagining the country's past on an objective level, but also the reconstruction of its value systems and narratives.

Reconstruction can be seen as a link to policies, politicians, and legalities change, but also school curricula as Viejo-Rose (2015) described. There is an ongoing situation where there are policy disagreements when it comes to dividing schools, as previously stated in the school organization of BiH under the chapter of other sources of narratives. Jana presents us a statement of how the new generation wants improvement and refers to a particular case in Jajce, which has been repeated by other participants too. Without going into too much detail, a brief description of the situation in Jajce, which is a town in BiH, the politicians tried to separate a school into "two schools under one roof" multiple times, and in 2016 there was a big protest from the students. There were demonstrations from the students in this case, where Nansen Dialog also went in with conferences to sort out dialogues. In the end, the schools were not separated after all. During our fieldwork we met one of the NGO's from Nansen dialogue who informally shared this, and also several students/professors and NGO's have stated this. They express that it is problem when it comes to what the "microstructure" (students) wants, and where the "macro-structure" (politics, policies etc.) drives to separate the schools into Bosnian/Serbian.

*"[...] Why go back to the past? Let's all learn from the past and work together for a future of togetherness... And this is now improving in Bosnia, as you can see in Jajce, with the schools. But this is not because of the children [that they want to separate the schools]. Because the children want the improvement, but it is because of the adults [Teachers, Politicians, Parents]... it is one step forward..." (Jana)*

The shift in the value system that the society undergoes after a war can therefore not only have an impact on the new narratives, but also an impact on new generations. This can and has been noticed, in the schools, school curricula and, the organization of it. Jana's statement about the two schools, and also where other participants have emphasized this, the children want improvement but where it differs from the macro-structure. However, she mentions that it is now improving, which also has been expressed by others, though not only regarding the "two schools", the majority want to look towards a brighter future but where the overall macro-structure seems to push and pull into ethnic deviations in some sense.



*"... I don't want to watch past. Because it's important to go in the future. But I'm not saying that there are not people who are watching the past. Because of the past of this... it's difficult for somebody and for somebody it's not."(Jana)*

Jana describes how "it is difficult for somebody and for somebody not", which can be seen with feelings of resentment, and that for some it is difficult to just proceed into the future. It is not undoubtedly that for some, the effects of the war is deeply integrated. Also objective factors can contribute, where the ruins and marks have been reconstructed in some sense, but however there are still marks around in the city. It can unconsciously contribute the visibility and feelings of the effects of the war, and therefore can contribute to the feeling of not being able to just forget and go into the future. This is also a way to understand how it might influence the perception of ethnic identity further, and how the students and the city are seen to be influenced by the objective factors. The picture under presents how not only ruins and shot marks can affect the still felt presence of the war, but also graffiti:

Image 4. Graffiti "Samo nek ne puca" – "Just don't shoot"



In the majority of the interviews the theme of war was expressed, even when we did not ask specific questions about the war, so it seems to have an impact. We emphasize reconstruction in the sense of that the city on an objective level has been, in some degree, reconstructed after the war, but where it is still felt - and how the interview participants have expressed throughout; it is still a subject for them in regards to ethnicity questions. On a more internal level, reconstruction of the aforementioned policies of "two schools", can give an insight of reconciliation views and the shared thought of "work for a future together". Reconstruction in this sense is important when understanding how Sarajevo as a post-war city can still affect

how the participants understanding of ethnicity. However, they express commonly the wish of that the country is not to be affected by the thought of separation of ethnicities, but rather a future together.

### **6. 6. 2 Reconciliation & Prosperity for the future**

We had a lot of input on the thought of a new generation and reconstruction of former value-systems, beliefs and the wholeness of the country, particularly the city of Sarajevo. However, as seen in the interviews, the students have expressed that there is still a lot more work, and in this sense, there is a an internal reconstruction still lacking after 20 years. The internal reconstruction refers to the social reconstruction, which as previously mentioned in the theory chapter can be seen as the concept of reconciliation. As Tal & Bennink present, reconstruction differs from reconciliation in some sense; where reconstruction is more based on institutions and where reconciliation lies in the definition of the social reconstruction. As both reconstruction and reconciliation emerge into one another in this sense, one cannot see the factors of the war as inevitable and not important. Here, Yaacov (2004) presents reconciliation as "reconciliation in its simplest form means restoring friendship and harmony between the rival sides after conflict resolution, or transforming relations of hostility and resentment to friendly and harmonious ones".

With a link to this, it may seem like a paradox when the reconstruction of policies in for example the "two schools" in Jajce – differs from a thought of reconciliation –whereas the children want improvement and reconciliation in the sense of relations with other ethnicities and united school, but the reconstruction of politics and policies clash with the notion.

With a link to Yacov's (2004) definition of reconciliation of transforming relations of hostility and resentment to friendly and harmonious ones, there was commonly expressed throughout the interview in a sense of future, look at the better and progress. Accordingly, Bar-Tal (2002) discusses how future beliefs should emphasize the mutual bond between the groups. As the interview participants have expressed, with the context of social work studies, they emphasize a mutual bond of future beliefs - and also where despite different ethnicities they all expressed the same notion of working together.

However, to mention, to understand the notion of reconciliation has to be seen in the socio-economic/political sphere that Bosnia is in as of today. For example, Stefansson's (2006) study of "sense of belonging in Bosnian towns" highlights how the high stake of poverty and unemployment in BiH affects that reconciliation remains too abstract and less of a priority to take interest in. This is something to be aware of in the wider scheme of things, however, our participants do have a sense of priority when it comes to both reconciliation and prosperity to the future - which can also be seen in how social work studies and a new generation can affect the view of reconciliation and future prosperity.

*“Trying to explain, trying to work with people. But it is difficult and takes time working with people and gaining their trust. It just takes time [...] Changing mentality, changing [...] helping people uh [...] how to word it. Supporting people to be more open, more tolerant, more flexible and to move forward. Our focus is on reconciliation, understanding each other, meeting other people. So we are trying to support people to be better people”* (NGO leader)

The NGO leader presents here, with his work as an NGO, an important angulation to how the reconciliation takes time, and how the importance of trust is when working towards togetherness. However, he also states the fact of reality; how the younger generations are more open-minded towards for example marrying a person of a different nationality, but whereas in reality, the family would forbid it as previously mentioned in family and narratives. That also shows how there are some difference between the generations; the post-war generation and parents. Also, he states the fact of changing mentality to be more flexible and to move forward – and where reconciliation and understanding is the main focus. Where the focus can be seen with Lederach (1997), and where he presents the concepts of focus and locus as; focus is primarily on the relational aspects of solution and conflict – and locus as the social sphere where people, ideas, and narratives come together. It can be seen with the NGO leader reflections on their *focus* on “moving forward”, with the *locus* of creating a sphere to support people to be more open, flexible and understanding each other and meeting other people. His position as an NGO and how he reflects on “moving forward” also correlates with the majority of our student participants.

As Lejla describes below, in the sense of respect for each other and focusing on looking at the better, both the *past* and *future* is presented. She emphasizes that "this has happened and now we need to look at the better" as Bar-Tal (2002) presents how *future* beliefs should emphasize the mutual bond between the groups, can be seen in the way she describes "have respect" for one and another as a way to understand her thought on reconciliation.

*"... people think this has happened and it has passed, and now we need to look at the better. I think you don't even have to love each other, but just to have respect. Why not. But again, there is a mix."*(Lejla)

Several interviews used the phrase of "the war has happened and it has passed" with the sense of perceiving the future brighter and work together. However, as Lejla describes above, Amar presents below with the statement:

*"Why would we want to hear about the war, when we can turn around and look at the future, and in good spirit to achieve these goals. I have grown up in a city with people from different religions, and it gets respected honestly. [...] And I think that there is not so much hate as it was earlier, maybe it is because it's a new age [modern age], new society and friends, and everyone is here together to accomplish what they want to achieve. Why would nationalism in one side become a whole, I mean there is no purpose in that. "* (Amar)

Amar states how "...when we can turn around and look at the future, and in good spirit to achieve these goals" and where "it's a new age, new society, and friends". There are statements throughout several of the student interviews, as we have discussed, where the thought of "looking at the future" and therefore focus on reconstruction and reconciliation. The students and post-war generation seems to be striving to reconstruct the value systems, beliefs, and narratives about the war, and turn it around to look into the future as a goal to live together, respect each other and build a nation that is diverse but also united. As Phinney (1993) describes the last stage of her three-stage model of ethnic identity, it comes to the stage of ethnic identity achievement where it characterizes as a result of former exploration and where the individual reaches a deeper understanding and reflexivity. Accordingly, the students have shown reflective matter when it comes to the understanding of ethnicity and

their own ethnic identity, and what it means to them - and wherein the statements of reconciliation they reflect on the importance of not modifying the city into distinct ethnicities, but rather a sense of togetherness.

*“The majority wants a normal life, without problems. To not go back to the past. Because that’s has been, has been.”* (Lejla)

Though Lejla presents a statement that majority of our participants have also expressed, and it is about the sense of a "normal" life – without going back to what has been all the time. Eastmond (2010) key points in her article about detailed ethnographic case studies from BiH, that the participants are striving for a sense of normality – and not so much in engaging in inter-ethnic reconciliation. However, as for our different meetings with NGO’s they do work on inter-ethnic reconciliation, as presented by our NGO leader and other informal conversations with other organizations during our fieldwork. As for our student participants they have also expressed a clearer view to "not go back to the past" and more towards in a brighter future – but likewise as in the sense of just living a "normal" life.

Throughout the interviews, they have expressed that in the practical daily life there is a sense of togetherness, respect for diversity, and prosperity for a brighter future as the common agreement. As Lederach (1997) presents how reconciliation in contemporary conflicts requires a development of middle-range actors, as they have the capacity to impact the people and processes both at grass root- and macro-level. With middle-range actors, one can lay the foundation for long-term and sustainable conflict transformation. As our social work students have reflected the notion of “better future”, and going forward as a base, this can be seen as a link to being the middle-range actors once they get out in different practices, and can build the ethos of “a new generation focused on the future”.

Amar, below, presents how social work is important in the topic of ethnicity, as for avoiding nationalism and working for the togetherness and future of Bosnia. Furthermore, how they as a group of social work students need to bring this to the agenda and succeed in working on this. On the other hand, the University can be seen also as an informal reconciliation arena, in

the sense where the students do find themselves in relations with other ethnicities, and becomes somewhat an arena and context where it is less influenced by ethnicity.

*"[...] I think... it is important to respect one another, and that there is no nationalism present... which this country is represented by. And we as a group of social work students this year, we are avoiding this nationalism. The most important thing is togetherness and the future of Bosnia. It is not important which faith you have, but what kind of human you are. And to look forward and work for togetherness, as us as social workers to succeed in doing this." (Amar)*

The perception of ethnicity is to be reflected in somewhat other areas other than at questions about “what does ethnicity mean to you”. The participants reflected over ethnicity in regards to everyday life, with relations to friends, the faculty and family – but also where the notion of narratives, war, reconstruction, politics, and reconciliation arises throughout the interviews – it is important to understand that this is also a way to understand what ethnicity means to them. We can also see that Sarajevo, in this case, as a post-war city has an interesting link to how many of our participants have ideas about ethnicity – they have a sense of understanding that Sarajevo is different than other cities in Bosnia, but where they are reflexive around how narratives, politics, institutions and the city itself is contributing to how the differing understanding of ethnicity and ethnic identity can be perceived by them, their friends, their family and the society. In summary, the majority still has a common agreement that there is no other way than going forward towards a brighter future of the population – but also for them as a new generation and social workers. As an ending, Jana presents with the notion of a new generation:

*“...and maybe it is because it is a new generation, with new experiences, new history... and all new... yeah.” (Jana)*

## **7. DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY**

In quantitative surveys, observations are recorded as numerical data, while collected material from qualitative surveys registers as text data (Ringdal, 2013). In this study, each method is shown to be beneficial to answer our question at hand. They complement each other and should also be understood in light of each other. We will present the limitations and strengths of the study and choice of methods.

### **7.1 Mixed method**

The benefits of mixed methods are that it brings a more comprehensive picture of our research questions. The qualitative interviews allow us to gather a thick description of our research question. Our survey presents us with characteristics of our informants which allow us to create a deeper meaning and understanding of our research question. The fieldwork and informal interviews we did were also sources of important information in addition to the quantitative and qualitative. However, these observations were less systematic and sometimes difficult to present. Disadvantages with mixed methods can be that it is very complex, and that it takes much more time and resources. This poses a problem with a project this size and within the time frame that we were presented with. The richness of the data has posed a problem, and it is possible that we should have selected less to be presented. Furthermore, there can also be difficulties in implementing and the drawing the findings together.

### **7.2 Literature search**

The literature searches that were done when we started the study project could have been more systematic and we could have found a larger number of articles. If this research had been better, it could have contributed to create a better interview guide which might have given us more nuanced information from the participants of the qualitative study. A better use of empirical related studies, such as those using the same questionnaire, would have been useful.

### **7.3 Validity of the qualitative material**

The qualitative part of this study has limitations, for example, we cannot generalize the information that we have gathered to other populations. Our goal was not to generalize the

information from our interviews, but instead to gather meaningful information about our participants' world. However, the number of informants was large enough to allow us to gather rich descriptions of the phenomenon. We put effort into making the interview situations as comfortable as possible so that the informants could express themselves, and we could ask for clarifications and try to make sure there was mutual understanding. However, there is likely to have been some misunderstandings due to for example the language barrier. Informants may not always have wanted to share all their ideas about these topics that could be seen as sensitive.

There is also a question about the neutrality in the study. Neutrality in qualitative studies is difficult, and the researcher might have a bias whether it be prejudice, ignorance, lack of knowledge (Dwyer and Buckle 2009). Another limitation of this study is the available data on the topic at hand. There is currently no English literature on social workers in Sarajevo and their perception of ethnicity. This means that we cannot compare our findings with others', although we can compare our findings with those made in other academic fields, which questions the reliability of the study. Another limitation of this study is that our data might not be large enough to fully understand the perception of ethnicity, although with a larger data it would have been restricted how much work we could have done due to time and also having a qualitative part.

### **Paired interviews**

Paired interviewing has received little attention in the qualitative research literature (Wilson, Onwuegbuzie & Manning 2016). Therefore we took a risk when choosing a method that is not as well established as single-in depth interviews. Using this method might have caused the students to answer in a different way than they would have in single-in depth interviews. However, in our experience, the participants were a lot more willing to be interviewed in pairs than alone, which contributed to a larger number of informants. Secondly, pairing participants was a helpful strategy when language was a barrier, because the participants helped each other with the communication. The informants could ask each other when they had questions about translation and other things that was difficult to convey. We had an instance where the paired interviews were with two people of different ethnic background; Bosniak and Serb. This might cause a problem if the participants do not feel safe to express



themselves freely because of the other person's presence. On the other hand, it might also cause interesting perspectives and discussions among the participants.

### **Transcription**

The sound quality of the first interviews were of lesser quality than the rest of the interviews. This is because we became more aware of how and where we should conduct the interviews to get the best sound as possible. By transcribing interviews after each interview, we became more aware of how we asked questions, and how the participants responded. The information derived through our interviews therefore evolved, and we learned what questions we should and should not ask. One issue was the language barrier. All of the participants spoke English as a second language, which sometimes made it noticeably difficult for them to get a point across. Because one of the researchers were of Bosnian descent, she was able to translate some of the words and help the participants get across some of the information that they struggled with.

### **7. 4 Validity of the Quantitative results**

A study has validity if it measures what it is supposed to measure It is not easy to know whether this has been achieved. There are many types of validity, and we consider construct validity and external validity relevant. Construct validity involved the extent to which we manage to operationalize the concepts, in this case particularly, ethnicity (Ringdal, 2013). The fact that nearly all those invited to take part took part, completed the forms, may indicate that the questionnaire was easy to understand. In this study the use of mixed methods and field observations is likely to strengthen the validity. Also the close cooperation with local experts is likely to have made the questionnaire better. External validity is the degree to which you can generalize to the population (Ringdal, 2013). In our case, the population is social work students in Sarajevo. Because the sample size in this study comprised approximately half of the social work and social science students at the University of Sarajevo, we believe that it is possible to say something, although limited, about the population of social work students based on our results from the Bosnian MEIM. However, we cannot generalize these results to the general Bosnian population, as they are interpreted in light of social work and social science students, and their practical and academic backgrounds. This is similar to reliability, in that we should be careful to generalize. We do

not know if others would have gotten the same results as us, but by using a standardized questionnaire we strengthened the reliability. Approximately 74 social work students were represented in the Bosnian-MEIM and 5 social work students were represented in the qualitative interviews, with <101 participants from different fields in the social sciences. With a selection sample at this size, we believe that our results do have some transferability.

One of the strengths of this study is the choice of the MEIM questionnaire. One of the reasons we chose to use MEIM was that because the validity of the MEIM questionnaire is already established. MEIM has been used in several studies and has shown good reliability – however, this is in comprising across different ethnic groups and ages (Phinney, 1992; Roberts et. al, 1999; Ponterotto, Gretchen, Utsey, Stracuzzi & Saya, 2003; Worrell, 2000). The systematic errors that can occur include that the participants misunderstand the question, lack of memory or underreporting. In this sense there would be a question of false negative or false positive (Skog, 2004). These are factors that are somewhat inevitable and on the other hand understandable that they might influence the answers. One such systematic error source that might be apparent in our Bosnian MEIM is that we had a four-point scale instead of a five-point scale. The original MEIM contained a four-point scale, while Phinney’s Revised-MEIM consisted of a five-point scale, which we were not aware of prior to the study. In retrospect, it might have been wiser to choose a five-point scale. This would have allowed the students to choose a neutral midpoint when filling out the survey, which means that they could answer “neither agree” nor “disagree”. However, our data showed variation throughout the responses which gives an indication that the students actively reviewed the questions when filling them out. Furthermore, it gives a sign of that the questions were answerable and understandable. In addition, we considered the members of the faculty to help us with revising the questions to make them understandable, but also sent out the pilot-questionnaire to secure the validity of the questions. There are multiple factors to be recognized that can be challenging in regard to the questionnaire that includes questions of behaviour. Such as how sensitive a theme is, and where respondents can respond to answers that are socially accepted (Ringdal, 2013). However, with a questionnaire that is anonymous there is more room for the respondents to answer truthfully than what it is with a face-to-face interview.

## **7.5 Our roles as researchers**

Both of the researchers are both born and raised in Norway. The female researcher has a Bosnian background, which can be seen as both a resource and a challenge. As she considers herself both Bosnian and Norwegian, and she speaks the local language, we view her ethnic background as a resource. It allowed us to gain access to certain platforms; especially those where language and culture plays a role. For instance, she was able to translate during formal conversations with different NGOs and other public institutions. She had also visited Sarajevo prior to the fieldwork, and had practical insight and knowledge about the city.

As the female researcher has an Bosnian background, she had to continuously be reflexive of her role as a neutral researcher. Also, because of the background, she is was most likely viewed differently than the male researcher. This is a variable that is difficult to control. It does not necessarily impact in negative matter, but it is important to be aware and conscious of the role one plays in relations to participants in the study. Not only does this apply to the female researcher, but all researchers who conduct an ethnographic field study where interviewing is a method. The male researcher is to a larger extent considered a foreigner, because he does not understand the local language, nor is he familiar with the cultural norms in the country. This places this researcher in a different position than the female one. This position can be considered both a strength and a possible challenge, as it allows him to view the field from a different perspective than the other researcher. However, it also excludes him from certain conversations and information shared in local language.

### **Writing together**

We decided to conduct this research project together for several reasons. Firstly, we were able to expand our project, so that we were able to use a mixed methods approach, which possible gave us a broader insight into our research question. Furthermore, we found it to be beneficial for us to have experienced a cooperation this comprehensive because it will prepare us for further cooperation in the future. Being two researchers also strengthened the research as it allowed us to discuss and reflect on the findings more thoroughly. We worked somewhat separately when processing the qualitative material, and we ended up with the same findings which can be seen a strength in this study.

## **8. CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY**

With this study, we have tried to gain a better understanding of the ideas that social work students' and practitioners in Sarajevo have of ethnicity and ethnic identity. Through our fieldwork, and with the quantitative and qualitative methods, we highlight our research questions from different perspectives.

Findings from the Bosnian-MEIM showed that ethnicity and ethnic identity is of importance to the students, and we found that they show strong emotional attachment to their own ethnic group and exploration of ethnic identity. However, on some of the questions regarding exploration of ethnic identity, such as cultural practice and activity, tended to be less prominent in comparison to ethnic identity commitment. Seen in light of Phinney's (1993) three-stage model of ethnic identity and Tajfel & Turner (1979) social identity theory, the results indicate that the students have a high level of understanding of their ethnic background, which can contribute to defining their position in an ethnically diverse city. The qualitative findings showed that the ideas of ethnicity and ethnic identity are expressed and can be explained through different topics, such as religion, friends, family, heritage, and narratives. Religion and nationality become ways to understand ethnicity and ethnic identity, and are presented by the students as intertwined terms. Friends, family, narratives, and heritage also serve as explanations for how the students form ideas of ethnicity and ethnic identity. Additionally, the context of Sarajevo as a post-war city that is ethnically diverse seem to contribute to shaping the understanding of ethnicity and ethnic identity among the participants. The students expressed how the aftermath of the war can still be felt and seen, despite the reconstruction and reconciliation that is already evident in Sarajevo. They also share a thought that Sarajevo is different from other cities in Bosnia, and the majority of the students express the notion of moving forward towards a brighter future with mutual respect for diversity.

We believe that the study contributes to a broader understanding of ethnicity and ethnic identity among social workers in Sarajevo, and adds to a field where there is little research, at least in the context of Sarajevo. Furthermore, we think that our approach and findings can be useful for other multi-ethnic post war societies. The students in this study, who we categorize

as "the new generation of social workers", brings a unique and important perspective to the academic and practical field of social work, and the understanding of ethnicity and ethnic identity. We hope that the study can be used to understand different perspectives on ethnicity and ethnic identity among social workers and students in other contexts.

## 9. LIST OF REFERENCES

- Aakvaag, G. C. (2008). *Moderne Sosiologisk Teori*. Abstrakt Forlag.
- Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina. (2016) Sarajevo, Juni 2016. (BHAS).  
Retrieved from: <http://www.popis2013.ba/popis2013/doc/Popis2013prvoIzdanje.pdf>
- Ashforth, B. E., & Mael, F. (1989). *Social identity theory and the organization*. *The Academy of Management Review*, (14:1, 20-39.). Retrived from:  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/258189>
- Bagci, C. S & Celebi, E. (2017). *Are your crossethnic friends ethnic and/or national group identifiers? The role of own and perceived crossethnic friend's identities on outgroup attitudes and multiculturalism*. (Vol. 48: Issue. 1.) *European Journal of Social Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2278>
- Bar-Tal, D. & Bennink, G. (2004). The Nature of Reconciliation as an Outcome and a Process. In: Yaacov, B-S-T. (ed.) *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation*. (2004) Oxford: University Press. DOI:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195166439.003.0002
- Bar-Tal, D. (2002). *From Intractable Conflict Through Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation: Psychological Analysis*. (Vol. 21: No. 2.). *International Society of Political Psychology*: Tel Aviv University. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00192>
- Becker, M. T. (2016). *How do schools Affect Ethnic Saliency Levels of Students in Bosnia and Herzegovina?*. (Vol 61: 1.). *Comparative Education Review*. The University of Chicago Press Journals. <https://doi.org/10.1086/689831>
- Becker, M. T. (2015). *Divided Schools and Divided Societies: Ethnic Saliency, Socialization and Attitudes among High school seniors in Bosnia and Herzegovina*. The University of Mississippi: ProQuest Dissertations Publishing. Retrieved From:  
<https://search.proquest.com/docview/1696076181?pq-origsite=primo>
- Becker, J. C., Enders-Comberg, A., Wagner, U., Christ, O., & Butz, D. A. (2012). *Beware of national symbols: How flags can threaten intergroup relations*. *Social Psychology*, (43:1, 3-6.) <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.hioa.no/10.1027/1864-9335/a000073>
- Bengtsson, M. (2016). *How to plan and perform a qualitative study using content analysis*. Malmö, Sweden. Elsevier forlag. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.npls.2016.01.001>
- Branch, C. W., Tayal, P. & Triplett, C. (2000). *The relationship of ethnic identity and ego*

- identity status among adolescents and young adults*. (Vol. 24, Issue 6.). International Journal of Intercultural Relations. Columbia University: New York, Usa.  
[http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767\(00\)00031-6](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0147-1767(00)00031-6)
- Bringa, R. T. (2010). *Nationality Categories and National Identification and Identity Formation in "Multinational" Bosnia*". (11 (1-2): 80-89.) The Anthropology of East Europe Review, Norway: University of Bergen. Retrived from:  
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/1074/81a04b44500c05e8260ac5a16cbaaf6f6844.pdf>
- Bø, I. (2007). *Barnet og de andre. Nettverk som pedagogisk og sosial ressurs*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Capozza, D., Brown, R., Aharpour, S., & Falvo, R. (2006). A comparison of motivational theories of identification. In R. Brown & D. Capozza (Eds.) *Social identities. Motivational, emotional and cultural influences*. (pp. 52-72). Hove & New York: Psychology Press.
- Cox, B. C. & Ephross P. H. (1998). *Ethnicity and Social Work Practice*. Published: Oxford Scholarship.
- Dwyer, S. & Buckle, J. (2009). *The space between: On being an insider-outsider in qualitative research*. (Vol 8: Issue 1). International Journal of qualitative methods.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690900800105>
- Døhlie, E. & Askeland, G. A. (Red.). (2006). *Internasjonalt sosialt arbeid*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget
- Eastmond, M. (2010). Introduction: Reconciliation, reconstruction and everyday life in war torn societies. In: Steur, L. (ed.) *Focaal – Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology*. (2010): 3-16. <https://doi.org/10.3167/fcl.2010.570101>
- Eriksen, H. T. & Sørheim, T. (2003). *Kulturforskjeller I Praksis. Perspektivet på det flerkulturelle i Norge*. (utg. 3) Oslo: Gyldendal.
- Forente Nasjoner. (2016) *Land: Bosnia-Hercegovina*. FN-Sambandet. Retrieved from:  
<https://www.fn.no/Land/Bosnia-Hercegovina>
- Grün, S. (2009). *Construction of Ethnic Belonging in the Context of Former Yugoslavia—the Case of a Migrant from Bosnia-Herzegovina*. (10(3), Art. 22) Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung. Forum: Qualitative Social Research. Retrived from: <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0903226>.
- Hjort, H. & Frisé, A. (2006). *Ethnic Identity and Reconciliation: Two main tasks for the*

- Young in Bosnia-Herzegovina*. (Vol. 41:161.) Adolescence: Roslyn Heights. Göteborg University, Sweden. Retrived from:  
<https://www.thefreelibrary.com/Ethnic+identity+and+reconciliation%3a+two+main+tasks+for+the+young+in...-a0145526479>
- Hjort, H. (2004). *Ethnic Identity and Reconciliation: Two main tasks for the Young in Bosnia-Herzegovina*. (No. 11) (Doctors degree) Adolescence: Roslyn Heights. Department of Psychology/Social Anthropology: Göteborg University. Retrived from: [https://globalstudies.gu.se/digitalAssets/809/809973\\_WP11Hjort.pdf](https://globalstudies.gu.se/digitalAssets/809/809973_WP11Hjort.pdf)
- Huggett, C., Birtel M. D., Awenat, Y. F., Fleming, P., Wilkes, S., Williams, S. & Haddock, G. (2018). *A qualitative study: experiences of stigma by people with mental health problems*. The british psychology society: london and manchester. Retrived from: <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2166&context=tqr>
- Hummel, E. (2014). *Standing the test of time – Barth and ethnicity*. Observatori: Centre d’Estudis Australians, Australian Studies Centre, Universitat De Barcelona. Retrived from: <http://revistes.ub.edu/index.php/coolabah/article/viewFile/15523/18679>
- IFSW (2014). *Internasjonal Definition of Social Work*. Retrieved from: <http://ifsw.org/policies/definition-of-social-work/>
- Kivimäki, T., Kramer, M. & Pasch, P. (2012). *The dynamics of conflict in the Multi-ethnic state of Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Country conflict analysis study. Friedrich ebert stiftung. Retrived from: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/sarajevo/09418.pdf>
- Kvale, S. & Brinkmann, S. (2015). *Det kvalitative forskningsintervju*. (3 utg.) Oslo: Gylden Akademiske
- Kolarov, I. (2015). *Bosnian Complex Cultural Identity*. (Doctors Degree) The Chicago School of Professional Psychology: Philosophy in Psychology. Retrived from: <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1749789531/fulltextPDF/97C15FEEB38C4776Q/1?accountid=26439>
- Lederach, J. P. (1997). *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington DC. Retrived from: <https://pestuge.iliauni.edu.ge/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/John-P.-Lederach-Buildin-Peace.-Sustainable-Reconciliation-in-Divided-Society.pdf>
- Lien, G. (2012). *Virker forsvarsrettet sikkerhetssektorreform på Vest-Balkan? – metodisk*



- rammeverk for effektmåling av FSSR*. FFI-rapport 2011/01729. Forsvarets forskningsinstitutt. [https://urn.nb.no/URN:NBN:no-nb\\_digibok\\_2016012608095](https://urn.nb.no/URN:NBN:no-nb_digibok_2016012608095)
- Markowitz, F. (2010). *Sarajevo: A Bosnian Kaleidoscope*. University of Illinois Press. Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield.
- Mccall, G. J. (2006). *The fieldwork tradition*. The SAGE handbook of fieldwork. Sage publications. Edited by Dick Hobbs & Richard Wright
- Morris, S. M. (2001). *Joint and individual interviewing in the context of cancer*. (Vol:11, 553-567.) Qualitative Health Research. doi:10.1177/104973201129119208.
- NVivo. (2018). "What is Nvivo". Retrieved from: <http://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo/nvivo-products>
- Paulsen, I. (2007). "De kan jo ikke bare komme hit og lage fred"! *Motdiskurser og lokale strategivalg blant en gruppe unge i Mostar, Bosnia og Hercegovina*. University of Bergen: Department of Social Anthropology. <http://hdl.handle.net/1956/2878>
- Payne, M. & Askeland G. A. (2008). *Globalization and International Social Work. Postmodern Change and Challenge*. Innbundet: Contemporary Social Work Studies.
- Phinney, J. S., & Ong, A. D. (2007). *Conceptualization and measurement of ethnic identity: Current status and future directions*. (54(3), 271-281.). Journal of Counseling Psychology. doi:10.1037/0022-0167.54.3.271
- Phinney, J. S. (1993). A Three-Stage Model of Ethnic Identity Development in Adolescence. In: Bernal, M. E. & Knight, G. P. (Ed.) *Ethnic Identity. Formation and Transmission Among Hispanics and Other Minorities*. State University of New York Press, Albany.
- Phinney, J. S. (1992). *The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure - A New Scale for Use with Diverse Groups*. (Vol. 7: Issue 2.). Journal of Adolescent Research. California State University at Los Angeles. DOI: 10.1177/074355489272003
- Ponterotto, J., Gretchen, D., Utsey, S., Stracuzzi, T., & Saya, R., Jr. (2003). *The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM): Psychometric reviews and further validity testing*. (63, 502-525.) Educational and Psychological Measurement. DOI: 10.1177/0013164403063003010
- Recknagel, C. (2016) *Bosnia erupts in feuding over new census data*. RFERL - Radio Free Europe Radio Liberty. Retrieved from: <https://www.rferl.org/a/bosnia-census-results-spark-feuding/27831183.html>

- Ringdal, K. (2013). *Enhet og mangfold. Samfunnsvitenskapelig forskning og kvantitativ metode*. (3. utgave). Fagbokforlaget, Oslo
- Riordan, K. J. (2010). *Shelling, sniping and starvation: the law of the armed conflict and the lesson of the siege of Sarajevo*. Victoria University of Wellington Law Review. Retrieved from: <http://www5.austlii.edu.au/nz/journals/VUWLawRw/2010/12.html>
- Ritchie, J. & Lewis. J. (2003). *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. Sage Publications, London.
- Roberts, R., Phinney, J., Masse, L., Chen, Y., Roberts, C., & Romero, A. (1999). *The structure of ethnic identity in young adolescents from diverse ethnocultural groups*. Journal of Early Adolescence, 19, 301-322.
- Sawe, B. E. (2017) Religious Demographics of Bosnia and Herzegovina. World Atlas. Retrieved from: <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/religious-demographics-of-bosnia-and-herzegovina.html>
- Šehagić, M. (2016). *How a Collective Trauma Influences Ethno-Religious Relations of Adolescents in Present-Day Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina*. (Independent Resercher) Germany. Social Inclusion: Open Access Journal: Vol: 2.
- Skotte, H. (2003). *'NGOS' Rebuild in Bosnia without Planning*. On the Reuters Foundation's Alert Net. Retrieved from: <https://reliefweb.int/report/bosnia-and-herzegovina/ngos-rebuild-bosnia-without-planning>
- Skytte, M. (2001). *Etnisk Minoritetsfamilier og Sosial Arbeid*. Oslo: Gyldendal 89-117
- Spears, R. (2011). Group identities: The social identity perspective. In: In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.). *Handbook of identity theory and research* (Vol. 1, pp. 201-224). New York: Springer.
- Stefansson, A. H. (2006). *Homes in the making: Property restitution, refugee return, and senses of belonging in a post-war Bosnian town*. International Migration (44(3): 115–39.) <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2006.00374.x>
- Streets, J. S. (2014). Relational Social Work and Religious Diversity. In: Rosenberger, J. B (ed.) *Relational Social Work Practice with Diverse Populations* (2013) Essential Clinical Social Work Series.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G.

- Austin, & S. Worchel (Ed.). *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33-37).  
 Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Tajfel, H. (1974). *Social identity and intergroup behaviour*. *Social Science Information*, 13(2), 65-93. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/053901847401300204>
- Tajfel, H., Billig, M. G., Bundy, R. P., & Flament, C. (1971). *Social categorization and intergroup behaviour*. (Vol. 1(2), 149-178.). *European Journal of Social Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2420010202>
- Torsti, P. (2007) *How to deal with a difficult past? History textbooks supporting enemy images in Post-War Bosnia and Herzegovina*. (Vol: 39:1) *Journal of Curriculum Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220270600765278>
- Vedder, P. & Virta, E. (2005). *Language, ethnic identity, and the adaption of Turkish immigrant youth in the Netherlands and Sweden*. (Vol:29(3), 317–337). *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*.
- Viejo-Rose, D. (2015). *Reconstructing Heritage in the Aftermath of Civil War: Re-Visioning the Nation and the implications of International Involvement*. In: Jenkins, T. (Ed.). *Political Culture, Soft Interventions and Nation Building*. (1:2015) Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group. London and New York.
- Visser, O. & Bakker, M. (2016). *Multicultural Vanguard? Sarajevo's Interethnic Young Adults between Ethnic Categorization and International Spaces*. (68:3, 460-486) *Europe-Asia Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2015.1136595>
- Wien, J. (2017). *My Parents Never Taught Me to Hate. A study of Inter-ethnic Relations and Reconciliation among Youth in Brcko, Bosnia and Herzegovina*. (Master's Thesis). Department of Social Anthropology: University of Oslo.
- Wilson, A. D, Onwuegbuzie, A. & Manning, L-S. (2016). *Using Paired Depth Interviews to Collect Qualitative Data*. University of North Texas.
- Wiltgren, L. K. (2014). *Youth using national symbols in constructing identities*. Linköping University Post Print. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2013.815706>
- Worrell, F. (2000). *A validity study of scores on the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure on a sample of academically talented adolescents*. (60, 439-447.). *Educational and Psychological Measurement*. Retrieved from:  
<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/00131640021970646>

Yaacov, B-S-T. (2004). Introduction: Why Reconciliation? In: Yaacov, B-S-T. (ed.) *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation*. Oxford: University Press

## Appendix 1 - Research permit from NSD

Ragnhild Dybdahl  
Postboks 4 St. Olavs plass  
0130 OSLO

Vår dato: 04.08.2017

Vår ref: 54757 / 3 / ASF

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

Tilbakemelding på melding om behandling av personopplysninger

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 16.06.2017.

Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

54757 How does cultural diversity characterize the everyday life of students at the University of Sarajevo?

Behandlingsansvarlig Høgskolen i Oslo og Akershus, ved institusjonens øverste leder  
Daglig ansvarlig Ragnhild Dybdahl

Student Joakim Finne

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet, og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger vil være regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. Personvernombudet tilrår at prosjektet gjennomføres.

Personvernombudets tilråding forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 01.05.2018, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Dersom noe er uklart ta gjerne kontakt over telefon.

Vennlig hilsen  
Katrine Utaaker

## **Appendix 2 - Request for participation and project information for qualitative interview**

### Request for Participation in the Research Project

#### *Cultural Diversity and Everyday Life*

##### Background and purpose

The purpose of this research project is to get more knowledge about ethnic differences and cultural diversity, and how this characterizes everyday life for students of Social Work at the University of Sarajevo. The main issue is how the wide diversity we find in today's Sarajevo can affect everyday life for students at the University of Sarajevo.

The research project is a master's thesis in Social Science, Social Work – at the Faculty of Social Sciences - University in Oslo and Akershus. The project is conducted by two master degree students: Joakim Finne and Belma Sehic, and under the supervision of associate professor Ragnhild Dybdahl.

##### Participants

The selection of the population is preferred to be students of Social Work at the Faculty of "Politickih Nauka" at the University of Sarajevo. The sample selection is based on the topic of the research project, and where we wish to get more knowledge about the link between everyday life and experiences of the students.

##### What does the participation in the study involve?

The questions that participants will be asked are relevant for our study topic. Any other information that we do not find relevant for the research project will be excluded. There will be questions about experiences, thoughts and opinions about the wide ethnical diversity in Sarajevo, and how this can affect you as a student in Social Work at the University of Sarajevo. We wish to have a maximum of 1 hour face-to-face interview, where there will be an open interview with some key questions that we think will be relevant to highlight our topic.

We will ask your permission to record the information through sound recording and notes. This information will only be available to the project managers. Neither sound recordings nor notes will be disclosed to any third-party, and will be securely stored until the project is finished, when the data will be destroyed. We know of no harmful or unpleasant side effects from participating in the project.

##### Information about you

We will not collect any additional personal information about you, other than what occurs in the interview. Everything that is said throughout the interview is confidential. No form of *written* personal data and information will be disclosed, whether through Name, Social Security Number, Address, Number or Email. Nor will any form for *oral* information be disclosed. The contact between us will be confidential. This also means that we will not be able to reach you after the interview is finished. If you want to know the results of the project,

you will have to contact us, or our supervisor. Personal information that is not relevant will not be included in the transcription of data.

The research project is a Master Thesis, and may also be published as academic publications. However, your participation will not be recognizable in the final publication. The project is scheduled to be completed by May 2018. Recordings and other data transcripts will be deleted from all servers after the finished Master Thesis.

#### Voluntary Participation

It is voluntary to participate in the study, and you can at any given time withdraw your consent without giving any reason. If you withdraw, all information about you will be anonymized and deleted.

#### Contact

If you wish to take part in the project, or you have any further questions about the study, please contact:

Joakim Finne: +387 60 353 64 11

Belma Sehic: +387 60 356 51 81

#### Supervisor:

Ragnhild Dybdahl: +47 414 70 508

*The study has been reported to the Data Protection Officer for Research, NSD – Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS.*

#### Consent for Participation in the Study

*I agree to participate in an interview*

I have received information about the study, and I am willing to participate. I know that I can withdraw at any time.

-----  
Signed by project participant / Date

## **Appendix 3 - Request for participation and information on quantitative survey**

### Request for Participation in the Research Project

#### *Cultural Diversity and Everyday Life*

##### Background and purpose

The purpose of this research project is to get more knowledge about ethnic differences and cultural diversity, and how this characterizes everyday life for students of Social Work at the University of Sarajevo. The main issue is how the wide diversity we find in today's Sarajevo can affect everyday life for students at the University of Sarajevo.

The research project is a master's thesis in Social Science, Social Work – at the Faculty of Social Sciences - University in Oslo and Akershus. The project is conducted by two master degree students: Joakim Finne and Belma Sehic, and under the supervision of associate professor Ragnhild Dybdahl.

##### Participants

The selection of the population is preferred to be students of Social Work at the Faculty of "Politickih Nauka" at the University of Sarajevo.

##### What does the participation in the study involve?

The questions that participants will be asked to answer for our survey is about ethnic background, ethnic identity, cultural and ethnic understanding. The survey can be both electronic or on paper, and will be anonymous. The information from the survey will only be available to the project managers and will be disclosed to any third-party, and will be securely stored until the project is finished, when the data will be destroyed. The survey will take about 5-10 minutes to complete. We know of no harmful or unpleasant side effects from participating in the project.

##### Information about you:

We will not collect any additional personal information about you, other than what occurs in the survey. No form of *written* personal data and information will be disclosed. This also means that we will not be able to reach you after the survey is completed. If you want to know the results of the project, you will have to contact us, or our supervisor.

The research project is a Master Thesis, and may also be published as academic publications. However, your participation will not be recognizable in the final publication. The project is scheduled to be completed by May 2018.

##### Voluntary Participation

It is voluntary to participate in the study, and you can at any given time withdraw your consent without giving any reason. If you withdraw, all information about you will be anonymized and deleted.

##### Contact:



If you wish to take part in the project, or you have any further questions about the study, please contact:

Joakim Finne: +387 60 353 64 11

Belma Sehic: +387 60 356 51 81

Supervisor:

Ragnhild Dybdahl: +47 414 70 508

The study has been reported to the *Data Protection Officer for Research, NSD – Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS*.

Consent for Participation in the Study:

*I agree to participate in a survey*

I have received information about the study, and I am willing to participate.

-----  
Signed by project participant / Date

## Appendix 4 - Interview guide

### Interview Guide – Qualitative Interview

Phase 1 – Small talk and information (about 10 min.)

Loose talk (about 5 min.)

Information (about 5 min.)

- Topic of the interview and conversation, background and purpose of the project
- What the interview is to be used for
- Information about sound recording and consent
- Questions if anything is unclear, or if they have any other comments or questions

*Start of Recording*

*Examples of questions we want to ask:*

Phase 2 – Initial Questions (about 10 min.)

Experiences

What kind of personal experiences have you had with cultural diversity in today's Sarajevo?

What does cultural diversity mean to you?

- Follow-up Questions

Phase 3 – Key Questions (about 30 min.)

Mapping of ethnicity and cultural understandings:

How would you describe the concept of ethnicity?

- Follow-up Questions

How would you describe your culture?

- Follow-up Questions

Can you tell how you experience the cultural diversity of your University?

- Follow-up Questions

Do you belong to a group in your country that is different from other (ethnic) groups?

- Follow-up Questions

Are your parents from the same group?

- Follow-up Questions

How important is belonging to this group to you?

- Follow-up Questions

What to you feel is most important thing about your culture?

- Follow-up Questions

Have you experienced discrimination on the basis of you ethnicity/cultural practice?

- Follow-up Questions

Have you ever experienced others being discriminated on the basis of ethnicity/cultural practice?

- Follow-up Questions

Everyday Life:

Have you experienced that different ethnicity and cultural diversity have influenced you everyday life?

- Follow-up Questions

Has your personal experiences been tied in different opinions about what/who Sarajevo is?

- Follow-up Questions

Everyday Life and Social Work:

How does ethnicity influence your studies?

How do you think ethnicity can influence your professional practice?

How does cultural diversity influence your studies/practice?

- Follow-up Questions

Do you describe your study as inclusive of different ethnicity and cultural diversity?

- Follow-up Questions

Do you describe yourself as inclusive of the different ethnicity and cultural diversity?

- Follow-up Questions

Phase 4 – Summary (about 5-10 min.):

Have I understood you correctly in.....

- Follow-up questions for any answers

Summarize short findings:

Is there anything you want to add?

## Appendix 5 - Bosnian MEIM

### Istraživanje ”Kulturalna raznolikost i svakodnevni život”

Pitanja koja slijede tiču se osjećaja vaše etničke pripadnosti i Vaših reakcija na tu temu. Ispitivanje je dio istraživačkog projekta MA (Master) teze na Univerzitetu Oslu, Norveška – HIOA , pod naslovom «Kulturalna raznolikost i svakodnevni život».

Molimo Vas da popunite ovaj upitnik:

Imam \_\_\_\_\_ godina

Studiram: \_\_\_\_\_

Na pitanje etnicke grupe, smatram sebe kao: \_\_\_\_\_

Ne osjećam pripadnost nijednoj etničkoj skupini već se identificiram s (napišite kojom skupinom): \_\_\_\_\_

Koristite ispod upisane brojeve da bi označili stepen saglasnosti sa svakim stavom:

1. Trudim se da naučim više o etničkoj skupini kojoj pripadam, proučavajući historiju/povijest, tradiciju, običaje i navike

(1) u potpunosti se slažem (2) slažem se (3) ne slažem se (4) nimalo se ne slažem

2. Aktivan/na sam u organizacijama ili društvenim grupama u kojima su uglavnom osobe koje pripadaju mojoj istoj etničkoj skupini.

(1) u potpunosti se slažem (2) slažem se (3) ne slažem se (4) nimalo se ne slažem

3. Svjestan/na sam mog etničkog porijekla kao i značaja istog

(1) u potpunosti se slažem (2) slažem se (3) ne slažem se (4) nimalo se ne slažem

4. Razmišljam često na koji način moja etička pripadnost utiče na moj život

(1) u potpunosti se slažem (2) slažem se (3) ne slažem se (4) nimalo se ne slažem nimalo

5. Pripadnost mojoj etničkoj skupni čini me sretnim/om

(1) u potpunosti se slažem (2) slažem se (3) ne slažem se (4) nimalo se ne slažem

6. Osjećam snažnu pripadnost mojoj etičkoj skupini

(1) u potpunosti se slažem (2) slažem se (3) ne slažem se (4) nimalo se ne slažem

7. Potpuno shvatam šta znači pripadnost mojoj etničkoj skupini

(1) u potpunosti se slažem (2) slažem se (3) ne slažem se (4) nimalo se ne slažem

8. Da bih saznao/la više o mom etnicitetu, pričao/la sam često o toj temi sa drugim ljudima

(1) u potpunosti se slažem (2) slažem se (3) ne slažem se (4) nimalo se ne slažem

9. Osjećam ponos zbog pripadnosti mojoj etničkoj skupini

(1) u potpunosti se slažem (2) slažem se (3) ne slažem se (4) nimalo se ne slažem

10. Sudjelujem u kulturnim djelatnostima zajedno sa ljudima iste etničke pripadnosti kao npr. muzičkim skupovima, kulinarskim ili ostalim običajima

(1) u potpunosti se slažem (2) slažem se (3) ne slažem se (4) nimalo se ne slažem

11. Osjećam jaku povezanost za svoju etničku skupinu

(1) u potpunosti se slažem (2) slažem se (3) ne slažem se (4) nimalo se ne slažem

12. Moja etnička pripadnost pruža mi osjećaj zadovoljstva

(1) u potpunosti se slažem (2) slažem se (3) ne slažem se (4) nimalo se ne slažem

13. Osjećam pripadnost u sljedećoj etničkoj skupini:

(1) Bošnjaci

(2) Hrvati

(3) Srbi

(4) Mješovita pripadnost (roditelji različitih etniciteta)

(5) Drugo (koje?) \_\_\_\_\_

(6) Ne osjećam pripadnost nijednoj etničkoj skupini i identificiram se isključivo kao Bosanac i Hercegovac

(7) Pored etničke pripadnosti identificiram se kao Bosanac i Hercegovac

14. Etnička pripadnost mog oca je (naznačiti gore navedenim brojem):

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7)

15. Etnička pripadnost moje majke je (naznačiti gore navedenim brojem):

(1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7)

**Zahvaljujemo Vam se na pomoći!**

## Appendix 6 - Samskrivingskontrakt

### Samskrivingskontrakt

**Før:**  
Belma Sehic  
Joakim Finne

**Kandidatnummer:**  
503  
511

**Veileder:**  
Ragnhild Dybdahl  
Antall veiledningstimer: 22 t + feltbesøk

#### Hovedansvar for ulike deler:

Det har underveis i prosjektet og masteroppgaven blitt jobbet sammen om alle punkter, både når det gjelder forarbeid, feltarbeid, kvalitativ metode/intervjuer, kvantitativ metode/spørreskjema, analyse og diskusjon. Hovedansvaret i denne oppgaven ligger på hva som har blitt skrevet, men hvor det har gått like mye arbeid fra hver. Alt som ikke spesifiseres under har blitt skrevet sammen.

#### Belma Sehic

- 3. Theoretical Framework
  - 3. 2 Jean Phinney's: A three-stage model of ethnic identity
  - 3. 4 History and Narratives
  - 3. 5 Reconstruction and reconciliation
  - 3. 7 Micro-interactionism & Social Structure
- 4. Methods
  - 4. 4 Quantitative questionnaire as a research instrument
- 5. Presentation & Discussion: Quantitative Results
  - Presentation of results (until 5.3 discussion of the results)
- 6. Presentation & Discussion: Qualitative Results
  - 6.3 Main finding: Friendship as a way to understand ethnicity
  - 6.4 Main finding: Narratives as a way to understand ethnicity
  - 6.6 Main finding: A new generation focused on the future

#### Joakim Finne

- 3. Theoretical Framework
  - 3. 2 Skytte on Ethnic Identity
  - 3. 3 Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Behaviour
  - 3. 5 Identity and Social Work
- 4. Methods
  - 4.3 Qualitative Interviews as a research instrument
- 5. Presentation & Discussion: Quantitative Results
  - 5.3 Discussion of the results
- 6. Presentation & Discussion: Qualitative Results
  - 6.1 Main finding: In Sarajevo I always feel welcome
  - 6.2 Main finding: Religion as a source for understanding ethnicity
  - 6.5 Main finding: As a social worker I do not see ethnicity