

## **International Symposium: Migration Trends between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Austria**

Date: **Friday, 26 September**  
Venue: **Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Sarajevo**  
Language: **English**

**Organisation of the Partnering Institutions: Centre for Refugee and IDP Studies (CESI) Faculty of Political Science, University of Sarajevo and Department for Migration and Globalization, Danube University Krems, Austria.**

### **I. Rationale**

The countries of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and Austria are intricately linked together by a longstanding migration history:

- The Austrian annexion of BiH in 1908, which also led to the recognition of Islam as an official religion in Austria
- Labour migration since the 1960s has been an important factor for the development of the Austrian economy and has had a wide-ranging impact on both societies
- Forced migration in the wake of the dissolution of former Yugoslavia brought substantial number (over 50.000) of Bosnian refugees to Austria
- New ongoing labour and student migration since the post-war period (1995-onward) including return migration, transnational migration etc., continues to affect both countries' economies and social life
- 2016 will mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the labour force agreement between Austria and then-Yugoslavia, now ex-YU countries including BiH.

The Danube University Krems holds the only Chair for Migration in Austria and offers the university course in Migration Studies/Migration Management as part of its teaching programme for professionals and academics, while BiH does not have a Chair for Migration nor MA programmes or graduate academic courses in migration studies. The Centre for Refugee and IDP studies (CESI), formed in 2011 by the support of UNHCR at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Sarajevo, is the first of its kind in the Western Balkans region, and serves as a hub for number of academic activities, networking and exchanges that gather local, regional and international researchers who focus on migration issues, in particular the regional forced migration issues – plight of the war displaced, refugees, returnees and diaspora groups, as well as asylum seekers and illegal and transit migrants from outside of the region.

**This event aims to promote research and education in migration studies and to join the researchers from BiH and Austria together in a common act of strengthening the scientific cooperation and promoting the field in the two countries.**

## II. Brief Synopsis of the Symposium and Call for Participation:

This symposium has a twofold dimension which we find relevant to migration research and studies. It addresses both migration impact factors (social, political, economic, cultural and other) and migrant/migration experiences in both countries (Bosnia being the sending country and Austria being the receiving country).

Moreover, we are also interested in the research on *the transnational practices of migrants* i.e., experiences of movement/mobility and immobility of migrants between the two countries, and the migrants' life patterns (settlement, integration, return) as well as social/cultural/religious identities negotiated in-between the two countries.

**We invite the participation of BiH scholars with broader research focus on migration topics in BiH, and in particular those researching the migration issues that bind together Austria and BiH by addressing the following lead questions:**

**-When?** Periodic overviews of migration flows between the two countries, with an emphasis on the last century, including the discussion of the prevailing myths about the migration and its social impacts.

**-Which?** Characteristics of migration and experiences of migration – migration and mobility patterns (circular, return migration), various settlement and integration patterns, diaspora and transnational practices, including the identity issues, relationships between migrants and other populations.

**-How?** How different migration trends impact the two countries economies, education, science, culture and social life, including development and socio-political transformation.

## III. Thematic issues to be discussed at the symposium:

- *Role and impact of science on understanding of migration* trends and migration discourses in both societies.
  - Scientific knowledge vs. myths about emigration from BiH and BiH immigrants in Austria
- *Characteristics of migrants/migration between. BiH-Austria*
  - Historic perspective with focus on recent and current trends including outcomes, such as circular migration, open end migration, return migration.
- *Economic factors and social impact of long-term migration between the two countries*
  - Role of migration for Austrian/BiH economy and society
    - Politics and bilateral agreements, development, business, education, science, health, culture.
  - Relations between emigrants and resident population in BiH,
  - Role of social networks and possible transformation of society
  - Role of Islam in modern BiH - discourses in Bosnia and lessons to be learned for Austria and other countries of immigration
- *Migration experience: Identity, integration, return, mobility and transnational practices*

- Integration in Austria and reintegration practices in BiH with focus on livelihoods, social (re)integration patterns, socio-cultural identities and various other aspects of migration/migrant experiences.

#### IV. Objectives of the Conference

- Exchange of perceptions on the impact of migration trends both on BiH, the country of origin, and on Austria, the country of destination
- Fostering exchange between scientists and practitioners from countries of origin and countries of destination to enhance research and education in migration studies
- Establishment of long-term academic partnership/cooperation between the two universities and between the Migration and Globalisation Department in Krems, Austria and the CESI research centre /migration scholars in/from BiH.
- Joint academic publication on migration trends and impacts between BiH and Austria within the Migration and Globalisation Series of the Edition Donau-Universität (Danube University Press)

#### V. Participants and Target Groups

- Social science scholars and students from BiH and Austria
- Decision makers and authorities in migration policies
- International organisations
- Representatives of Civil Society working with migrants
- Charity communities and faith-based organisations
- **Participants through the Study Visit from Austria, Danube University**

Name of Participant	Function
Biffli, Gudrun, Univ. Prof. Dr.	Head of Department Migration and Globalisation Dean of Faculty of Business and Globalisation
Altenburg Friedrich, Mag., MSc	Deputy Head of Department, Course Manager
Zentner, Manfred, MMag	Researcher at the Department
Achatz Bärbel, Mag.a	Student
Karger Birgit, Mag.a	Student
Kayahan Kaya	Student
Keller Myriam	Student
Knieper Kristien, Dipl.Soz.Päd.in	Student
Maier Michael	Student
Schmidt Katharina, Mag.a	Student
Simader-Schober Franziska	Student

Bosnian scholars are encouraged to send in their abstracts of **250 words in English** describing their undertaken research in the above suggested topics latest **by 15th of September**.

Those accepted to present their papers on the symposium will be informed by 20<sup>th</sup> of September.

**All presenters will publish their papers through arrangements with the department for Migration for Migration and Globalization, Series of the Edition Donau-Universität (Danube University Press).**

We are now accepting your Abstracts. Please send them together with any other inquiries about the event to CESI email address [cesi@fpn.unsa.ba](mailto:cesi@fpn.unsa.ba)

We are looking forward to your participation!

CESI team