Role of Bosnian-Herzegovinian (Bosnian) Immigrant Organizations in Sweden on Socio-Economic Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia)

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Abstract

This thesis aims to contribute to the growing field of research on migrant transnationalism by analyzing immigrant organizations among Bosnian immigrants in Sweden. The main focus of the study is on the effects of the immigrant transnationalism phenomenon for socio-economic development within home communities by investigating and analyzing the structures and processes that allow transnational activities to take place. The research applies qualitative methods involving fifteen in-depth interviews with leaders of immigrant organizations and three interviews with counterpart organizations and government officials in Bosnia. The findings reveal that the bounded solidarity is the primary motive for initiating and implementing transnational projects among immigrants. In addition, the ability to navigate in both localities – host and home – enables these organizations to effectively implement their activities in both contexts. To ensure that the results of their projects reach the beneficiaries, immigrant organizations to some extent rely on their local contacts and trusted collaborators in the home state. This allows immigrant organizations to use informal channels and structures in the implementation of their transnational projects and activities.

Keywords: transnationalism, migrants, immigrant organizations, bounded solidarity, social capital, Sweden, Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Chapter 1: Introduction

During the past decade, scholars and policy makers have directed increased attention to the migration-development nexus (De Haas, 2010: 227). For a long time, migration movements were observed primarily as one-way flows. Most of these movements emerged from so called less developed and flowed to more prosperous and safer areas, or from regions with fewer work and living prospects to those that are considered to be better-off and offering more opportunities for achieving better and more secure standards of living. By focusing on dynamics that force people to leave their home countries and the socio-economic consequences of their departures this research on one-way migration largely ignored the multiple connections migrants continue to nurture with their countries of origin. Nowadays, studies in migrant transnationalism literature emphasize the lasting contact between expatriate communities and their home countries and regions (Portes and Zhou, 2012).

These recent studies concentrate on the involvement of immigrants in the actions demanding frequent travel to and from their home countries, and other means of contact with individuals from their home countries. In contrast to the conventional assimilation perspective in sociology, transnational immigrants continue to live dual lives, and enjoy differentials of benefits between their host and home countries, eventually designing new socio-economic structures. Scholarly focus on the intense circulation of immigrants between their home and host countries has been an important supplement to the literature focusing primarily on assimilation within their host countries and thus, overlooking the presence of continuing ties with those left in the home countries (Bauböck, 2003; Vertovec, 2004).

Relatively recent literature has started to acknowledge transnationally oriented migrants as potential development actors (Lopez, et al., 2001; Leeson, 2007). For example, remittances sent by migrants to members of their home society are seen as a more efficient means for poverty reduction and economic growth than official, complex development programs and/or aid (Kapur, 2003; Ratha, 2003). Remittances by far surpass the amount that developing nations receive in aid and even match their state currency earnings from exports (Portes et al., 2007: 243).

Nowadays, a new branch of research is examining the collective activities of transnational migrants. Here, the focus has shifted from an individual or a family as a unit of analysis to an organization in order to investigate collective transnational migrant activities between their home and host communities (Portes and Zhou, 2012: 19; Beauchemin and
Schoumaker, 2009: 1898). Portes and Zhou (2012) argue that when the decisions of family units and individual actors are aggregated they can have a major impact on both host and home states. There has been a growing body of literature (covered in Chapter 2) analyzing the effects and origins of transnational immigrant organizations in the US and Europe (Guarnizo et al., 2003; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003; Lacroix, 2011; Nijenhuis and Zoomers, 2012; Cebolla-Boado and Lopez-Sala, 2015; Portes and Fernández-Kelly, 2015). However, structures and processes that migrant organizations create through development-related initiatives within their home societies or communities remain neglected areas of research (Portes et al., 2007: 244).

This thesis aims to contribute to the growing field of research on migrant transnationalism by analyzing immigrant organizations among Bosnian-Herzegovinian (hereafter Bosnian) immigrants in Sweden. It focuses on analyzing and understanding structures and processes that allow transnational activities to take place using interviews with the leaders of Bosnian immigrant organizations in Sweden. Interviews were further complemented with meetings and interviews with three counterpart organizations and government officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina (hereafter Bosnia). This dual-viewpoint offers a broader understanding of socio-political dynamics involved in various forces affecting the phenomenon.

Bosnian immigrants are one of the largest groups of immigrants in Sweden (Andersson, 2012: 277). They came to Sweden in the 1970s and are considered to be the immigrant group that has integrated the best in the Swedish society. Living in Sweden for almost fifty years has allowed a significant proportion of them to become adapted to life in their host country and has provided time for their organization and implementation of transnational activities.

With these concerns in mind, this thesis aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the stated driving forces behind Bosnian transnational immigrant projects and activities in their home state, Bosnia?

2. What are the processes through which Bosnian immigrant organizations in Sweden identify and implement transnational projects and activities in their home state?

The thesis is composed of four chapters. The second chapter provides a theoretical overview of the transnationalism, transnational immigrant organizations, informal institutions, and social capital within the context of socio-economic development. The third chapter explains the methodology and provides a brief overview of the results of the 25 surveyed organizations. The fourth chapter focuses on presenting and discussing the results of the 15 in-
depth qualitative interviews with the leaders of transnational immigrant organizations in Sweden. Finally, the last, fifth, chapter provides concluding remarks and suggestions for further research.

The following two sections of the Introduction provide a background on Bosnian migration waves to Sweden and a history of Bosnian immigrant organizations in Sweden.

1.2 Waves of Bosnian Migration to Sweden

Sweden has a long history of labor immigration. One of the largest immigrant groups in Sweden are migrants from ex-Yugoslavia. They predominantly arrived to Sweden in two waves. The first wave was between the 1960s and 1970s. At the time, Yugoslav immigrants represented an important asset in terms of labor for the industrial development that ‘western’ and central Europe depended upon (Schierup, 1995: 285). Yugoslavs were recruited as guest workers filling job vacancies in the booming economies of their host countries in Western Europe (Kogan, 2003: 598). Moreover, Yugoslavia’s liberal economic reform encouraged labor-oriented migration, and thus many Yugoslav labor immigrants came to work in Sweden (Schierup, 1995: 285). Even though this type of migration was considered temporary, a vast majority of Yugoslavs attracted by Swedish employment opportunities and the social security system eventually ended up settling there (Zivan, 1979).

The second wave came almost 20 years later in the early 1990s. It was a forced refugee migration due to the outbreak of the civil war in 1991 (Schierup, 1995: 286). During this period Sweden became home to approximately 100 000 individuals who came as refugees due to the breakdown of Yugoslavia (Migrationsverket, 2016). Individuals from Bosnia represented the largest proportion of Yugoslav refugees in Sweden, as this Yugoslav country was the most affected by the war (US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, 2001). In a blanket decision on the part of the Swedish government, an estimated 50,000 Bosnian asylum seekers were granted with a permanent residency in Sweden in 1993 (Eastmond, 2006: 145). By 1996, together with family reunifications, this figure reached 70,000 (Eastmont, 1998: 163). The majority of refugees were Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks) characterized as young, well-educated and from diverse social backgrounds (Ibid.).

Many refugees were allowed to stay in Sweden for the duration of the Bosnian war. Based on their status in Sweden they were expected to return to their country of origin once the conflict had settled. Despite this, many refugees managed to change their temporary status and become Swedish citizens. The latest national statistics estimate that the population of
Bosnian immigrants in Sweden is 58,880 (Central Bureau of Statistics in Sweden, 2017). Additionally, according to the same report the population of ex-Yugoslav immigrants in Sweden in 2017 was 65,887 (Ibid.). Therefore, as Bosnian immigrants are also ex-Yugoslav immigrants it is challenging to know the exact percentage and number of Bosnian (as opposed to ex-Yugoslav) immigrants of Bosnian descent living in Sweden.

1.3 Brief History of Bosnian Immigrant Organizations in Sweden

Supported and funded by the Swedish pluralist program for minorities and immigrants, Bosnian refugees started creating their own immigrant associations shortly after coming to Sweden (Eastmond, 1988: 163). Importantly, until 1992 there was a well-established Swedish Yugoslavian National Association whose members were Yugoslav labor immigrants who stayed in Sweden (Medic, 1995: 154). This association was formed in the 1970s and at its peak had 25,000 members from 124 organizations across Sweden (Serbernas Riksförbund i Sverige, 2018). However, with the breakup of Yugoslavia, there was also a transformation of this large association into the Serbian Association in Sweden that counts 7,000 members from 43 Serbian organizations across Sweden.


While facilitating the orientation and adaptation process for newcomers, Bosnian immigrant organizations also provided a significant connection with the home state institutions (Eastmond, 1998: 164). Many immigrant organizations were formed with the objective to preserve Bosnian identity by nurturing language, music, and tradition (Medic, 1995: 157; Eastmond, 1998: 163). Bosnian associations in Sweden claim being open to all Bosnians. However, represented by the Bosnian flag¹ and the new national anthem, they delicately

¹ The majority of Serbs and Croats in Bosnia do not identify with Bosnia as the multi-ethnic state and primarily accept Serbian and Croatian national symbols as their own even though they live in Bosnia. Bosniaks are the only ethnic group that entirely identify themselves with Bosnian national symbols. The other two constitutive peoples prefer using their ethnic national symbols and display Bosnian symbols only during very formal occasions.
exclude all groups other than Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims) (Eastmond, 1998: 170). Thus, the members of these organizations are almost exclusively Bosniaks (Medic, 1995: 158). While Bosniaks were joining primarily Bosniak organizations, members of the other two constitutive people of Bosnia, Serbs and Croats, mostly favored joining associations formed by Serbian and Croatian immigrants. Thus, Bosnian immigrant associations mirror the complexity of post war government in Bosnia where each ethnic group promotes its own ethno-nationalism.

In the beginning Bosnian immigrant organizations played a vital role by offering a place for support and adaptation. During 1993, members of these organizations started organizing themselves under the slogan “Bosnians helping Bosnians” where Bosnians living in Sweden collected humanitarian help for the people in Bosnia (Medic, 1995: 154). The fact that many refugees in Sweden still had families and friends living in Bosnia encouraged a momentum and solidarity to help their fellow citizens.
Chapter 2: Understanding Transnational Organizations

The following chapter aims to explain transnational immigrant organizations and their importance within the field of migration studies. Hence, the first section focuses on defining transnationalism and providing a brief review of how and when the concept became significant for migration related research. Afterwards, the second section presents research trends regarding transnational immigrant organizations in Europe. This is followed by a short section on the state on current migration research in Sweden. The fourth section provides a short discussion of the relationship between a nation state and migrant organizations. It explains the dual modus operandi of migrant organizations — within host and home states, and the role of informal institutions that facilitates this process. Finally, the fifth section presents the concept of social capital and its vital role in enabling the operation process of transnational projects specific for transnational immigrant organizations.

2.1 Defining Transnationalism and Transnational Immigrants

In recent years, the concept of transnationalism has become increasingly prominent in the global conversation on migration. The term was coined by a group of anthropologists in the early 1990s and refers to the multiple socio-political interactions migrants create across nation-state borders (Basch et al., 1994; Schiller and Fouron, 1999). Numerous studies focusing on transnationalism demonstrate various structures that cross-border immigrant activities can take. These studies offered an alternative to the assimilation theory which dominated migration-related research (Portes et al., 2007: 251). Contrary to the assimilation theory, which views migration as a straightforward process in which immigrants progressively integrate and become assimilated in the host society, transnationalism emphasizes a constant link that migrants have with their home society (Basch et al., 1994). Therefore, migrants are considered to be simultaneously engaged in, and connected to, more than just one society and in more than just one locality.

It is important to note that the concept of transnationalism was not immediately accepted by scholars, and many skeptics rejected the concept and decided to continue their research focusing primarily on the conventional theory of assimilation (Portes, 2010: 195). This skepticism towards the concept was primarily due to it being used to describe and explain diverse phenomena, which created confusion about its meaning. Moreover, similar critics argued that the concept itself offered no novelty as migrants moved and preserved transnational
links by exchanging letters, supporting different people’s movements and revolutions from abroad, and similar. These transnational migrant activities have been actively present in lives of migrants even before their ‘official’ recognition by social scientists.

In order to further develop and define the concept of transnationalism a group of social scientists refined and clarified the concept for it to be empirically measurable (Portes et al., 1999). These scholars endorsed a definition that perceives transnationalism as “the grassroots activities conducted across national borders by actors in civil society, independent of and sometimes in opposition of official directives and rules” (Portes et al., 2007: 251). This definition of transnationalism embraces various attempts of activists in different countries dealing with a variety of issues such as environment, democracy, human rights, etc. (Evans, 2000). Hence, immigrant transnationalism is perceived as part of these activities and defined as “occupations and activities that require regular and sustained social contacts over time across national borders for their implementation” (Portes et al., 1999: 219). It encompasses various ties and connections that enable individuals or organizations to implement their regular across-border activities as part of their daily lives (Vertovec, 1999: 447).

Furthermore, this definition attempted to separate continuous daily involvement from sporadic and random activities of providing members of home societies with remittances or periodic visits. On the contrary, this newly coined term emphasizes the frequent and lasting immigrant participation in the socio-economic life of their home societies through continual, regular cross-border communication. Thus, transnational organizations are those organizations whose aims and projects are partially or completely realized in states other than where their members live (Portes et al., 2007: 252). This definition further clarifies that transnationalism is not a characteristic of all immigrants and is also not opposed to assimilation of immigrants in the host society.

Therefore, transnationalism acknowledges that migrants are concurrently involved within various localities and levels of the transnational social arenas in which they exist. It is important to note that a constantly increasing number of social interactions continues to exist across borders despite the definite political clarity of nation-state boundaries (Ibid.). The variety of migrants’ activities in both host and home societies is recognized as the key component of transnationalism (Schiller et al., 1992: ix). Moreover, the concept is particularly central for understanding and analyzing activities pursued by immigrants and cultures created that are not specifically tied to a particular national context. It therefore highlights the role of different economic and social networks created by immigrants across space and in connection to their places of origin (Portes, 2010: 195).
This more precise definition of transnationalism also allows a distinction between international cross-border activities managed by international organizations, corporations, or governments and the transnational sphere run by grassroots programs, civil society organizations, including ‘ordinary’ immigrants directly. Furthermore, one may think of transnationalism as a form of globalization led by the common people. Authors Guarnizo and Smith (1998) coined the terms *globalization from above and globalization from below* to distinguish between the cross-border activities led by governments and corporations and those organized by immigrants and small entrepreneurs (Portes, 2010: 196). Contrary to the formal globalization activities led by governments and international corporations, the globalization ‘from below’ stands for activities run by communities and individuals that mobilize their networks in order to adapt to the activities of the former (Ibid.).

Finally, the ‘novelty’ that transnationalism brought to the discussion on migrants acknowledges that some migrants continue to be actively involved in socio-economic processes that encompass national borders while at the same time they become part of their host societies (Basch et al., 1994; Faist, 2000; Kivisto, 2001; Levitt, 2001; Portes et al., 1999). Nowadays, there have been various studies that investigate manners in which current migrants and their predecessors preserved different relations to their home countries while simultaneously becoming integrated in their new host societies (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007: 129). As it will be discussed in the next section, recent studies on immigration accept that migration has never been a straightforward action in which migrants entirely assimilated within the host society and cut ties with their home society.

### 2.2 Current State of Research on Transnational Migrant Organizations in Europe

Research regarding migrant organizational transnationalism and transnational practices mainly originates from the ‘West’ (Østergaard-Nielsen, 2003: 764). Even though at the beginning of the 21st century there was more empirical research available in the US than in Europe, lately there has been a growing interest among European researchers within the sphere of immigrant’s transnational organizing (Rogers, 2000; Nijenhuis and Zoomers, 2012). The most extensive empirical research in this field in the US has been conducted by Portes and his colleagues (2007; 2008; 2015). Their results show that that immigrant transnational organizations in the US contribute towards development of their home communities. Although this kind of research has been relatively novel in the European context, numerous researchers
demonstrate the transformative role of immigrant organizations within their home communities.

Several studies in Spain and Belgium reveal that Moroccan immigrant organizations are very active in transnational immigrant activities. In her qualitative study Østergaard-Nielsen (2009) focuses on instances where Moroccan migrants living in Spain take part on a collective scale in transnational developmental projects. Østergaard-Nielsen investigates the role of policy within the host country and its role in supporting and encouraging transnational activities in Morocco. Moreover, another study conducted in Spain by Cebolla-Boado and Lopez-Sala (2015), among others, investigates the role of the largest immigrant organizations in Spain in development and international cooperation. They interviewed and surveyed 85 Peruvian, Dominican, Colombian, Ecuadorian, and Moroccan immigrant organizations and concluded that the requirement of the host country for the implementation of developmental transnational activities can trigger organizational involvement in these activities in their home states.

Similarly, using semi-standardized questionnaires and interviews, Godin et al. 2015) explored why and how Moroccan and Congolese immigrant organizations in Brussels develop transnational activities. The comparison of these two groups concluded that Moroccan organizations are more successful in mobilizing their community members for private funding while Congolese organizations rely on their networking with other social actors (other civil society organizations in Belgium, Belgian and EU foundations and development initiatives) for transnational activities.

Moreover, in another study that focused on the organizations of migrants from Suriname, Morocco, and Ghana in the Netherlands, Nijenhuis and Zoomers (2012) concluded that organizations were: mostly led by well-educated men; not linked only to home countries; primarily focused on humanitarian activities; led by voluntary engagement; heavily dependent on fundraising. Furthermore, their research showed that an aggregate impact of immigrant organizations is limited and focused primarily on sporadic charity transnational work and is especially dependent on the involvement of older generations of immigrants (Nijenhuis and Zoomers, 2012: 23).

Lastly, studying Polish and Indian migrant organizations in the UK, Lacroix (2011) examines the concept of the transnational organizational field. These fields are formed by various networks of immigrant organizations whose activities are transnational. Lacroix’s study of these fields depicts the emergence of immigrant societies managing through pressures of the adaptation process in the host state, and their will to continue the maintenance of ties
with home states. His research demonstrates that fields in which immigrant organizations are embedded play a crucial role in the connections they preserve out of the host state. According to Lacroix these fields are determinants of how organizations structure and focus their cross-border activities. Another recent study of Lacroix (2015) examined Moroccan immigrant organizations in France and their three-stage transition over time. This transition was related to socio-political changes within the host state. The author concludes that active involvement in organizational transnational projects in the home state is a relatively new phenomenon and is led primarily by the third generation of educated community leaders and by the availability of funding and development schemes on both sides of the Mediterranean Sea.

Finally, one may conclude that the empirical studies of immigrant transnational organizations in Europe have been focused on relatively long-established groups of immigrants from the global “South”. The results of current research indicate that there are various determining factors of engagement of immigrant associations in transnational activities. These are mainly related to opportunities and demands that allow for transnational organizing by host government; interest, needs, and abilities of migrants to organize and lead organizations and projects; and size and financial capability of group members.

2.3 Brief Overview of Migration Research in Sweden

Sweden is a country with a relatively long history of receiving migrants. Intensive research regarding migration started in 1960s due to an increased public interest in the issues concerning the minority groups (Hammar, 1990: 97). Prior to that migration research was scarce and primarily focused on emigration of Swedes to the United States or other countries. Hammar (1990) emphasizes that the early research was concerned with exploring the sociological and economic status of migrants in Sweden. Moreover, this early research focused on issues of assimilation and integration of different migrants (from Denmark, Finland, Greece, Yugoslavia, Portugal, and Iceland) within the Swedish society (Ibid.).

The pioneer studies in Sweden on migrant organizations were conducted by Bäck (1983). Bäck studied ethno-national organizations and identifies the following four functions of migrant organizations: i) cultural; ii) political; iii) integrational; and iv) functions related to the homeland (Mikkelsen, 2003: 44). Following him, various studies were conducted that focus on ethnic groups such as studies on specific migrant organizations (Jaakkola, 1983, 1987, 1989); the study by Bäck and Peura (1990) about Yugoslav immigrant organizations; and research on the creation of Bosnian immigrant organizations in the early 1990s in Sweden.
conducted by Medic in 1995. Most of these studies explored the role of migrant organizations in integration of migrants within the host society.

Moreover, in 2003, Dahlstedt presented a study in the Nordic Council of Ministers Report on Immigrant Organizations in the Nordic Region (Mikkelsen and Dahlstedt, 2003). Dahlstedt’s mapping of ethno-national organizations in Sweden is considered to be one of the most exhaustive studies on immigrant organizations conducted in Sweden since 1980s.

Nowadays, there is a present interest in the role of immigrant organizations in Sweden, but to some extent focusing on exploring the benefits of these organizations in regards to assisting integration and socio-political participation of migrants in the host society (Odmalm, 2004; Malm, 2005; Akis and Kalaylioglu, 2010; Scaramuzzino, 2012). Therefore, there is a lack of research regarding the role immigrant organizations play in economic development of their home societies as a result of transnationalism.

2.4 Transnational Immigrant Organizations and Nation States

Since transnational immigrant organizations exist in at least two spheres — host and home states — they are not only aware of, but also operate within structures and regulations in both countries. These organizations are, in most cases, registered and operational as formal entities in their host countries. By contrast, their transnational activities in the country of origin are often realized in the informal domain through social capital and social networks. This is precisely what differentiates transnational activities of immigrant organizations – their actions go beyond national borders and take place outside of official state regulation (Portes et al., 1999; Guarnizo et al., 2003; Morales and Giugni, 2011). Even in instances when these actions are supervised by state actors, the main feature of transnational activities is that they represent target-oriented activities by members of civil society (Portes, 2010: 197).

Previous research shows that environment and opportunities available to immigrants within the host country are significant in establishing and shaping immigrant transnational organizations (Cebolla-Boado and Lopez-Sala, 2015). Both immigrants and their organizations live and operate within the laws and regulations of their host communities. In the specific case of Sweden, the host state officially supports and provides funding for operations of immigrant organizations and their activities within the context of Sweden. Hence, organizations registered and founded in Sweden need to follow rules and regulations imposed by the Swedish authorities.
Furthermore, in order to explore the role of migrant organizations in conducting developmental activities in their home communities it is necessary to examine the presence of home countries in this process. More specifically, governments of sending nations sometimes have not ignored the initiatives of their emigrants and have also striven to influence them (Portes et al., 2007: 253). Understanding the potential for money flows through remittances, investments in infrastructure (such as housing, schools, hospitals, religious objects, etc.), investments in business activities in home societies, and other philanthropic activities are some of the primary reasons for the involvement of governments. These actions by immigrant organizations abroad in some cases have received essential significance for the development of home societies (Vertovec, 2004). Moreover, besides providing material capital, immigrant organizations are also valuable for the development of home communities through both formal (by organizing conferences, seminars, and training) and knowledge sharing networks with their communities of origin (Kuznetsov, 2006). Therefore, states, and relevant development organizations and agencies frequently strive to support the circulatory movement of migrants and knowledge (Faist, 2008: 27).

Governments that recognize the potential of investment activities by its migrants try to keep its emigrants engaged through various incentives. One of them is by allowing migrants to preserve their citizenship even if they live abroad. By permitting this dual citizenship, home governments enable migrants to vote and stay connected with the decision-making processes within the home society. Moreover, embassies and consulates have also been involved in serving migrants in host countries by providing assistance and support with documentation and communication with the home country. Therefore, the work of home government representations (globalization from above) in host societies is increasingly directed towards transnational initiatives of emigrants (globalization from below).

Even though some governments are increasingly involved with promoting transnational initiatives, activities towards and within their home states originate from immigrants themselves (Guarnizo et al., 1999; Smith, 2005). It is immigrant organizations themselves that choose whether and to what extent they are willing to collaborate with home governmental authorities and institutions (Portes et al., 2007: 254). In their research Portes et al. (2007), recognized that this willingness to cooperate with the home state government depends on the i) scope and resources home governments are able to contribute and ii) the purpose for which these resources are ultimately used for. Hence, poor and weak governments often collaborate in a symbolic manner (e.g. offering dual citizenship; participate in conferences and seminars organized by transnational immigrant organizations, and similar).
The degree to which the state government is involved in transnational initiatives also depends on the state’s capacity and its interest. As demonstrated through previous research (Lacroix, 2015; Cano and Delano, 2007), those states that act as sending-states\(^2\), which have, in some instances, formalized agreements with host states, establish stronger ties with their transnational immigrant organizations. Through common efforts organizations and sending-states, to some extent, collaborate on implementing initiatives within the home states.

By contrast, collaborations with migrants are more challenging in cases when home states do not have established policies and strategies towards their emigrants. Being implemented independently of official rules and regulations, immigrant transnational activities are frequently conducted through primarily informal structures and regulations (Pries, 2006). For these informal operations to function it requires a set of its own systems and regulations that can be interpreted as informal institutions. Basing the operation of informal institutions on norms these institutions can be defined as “socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated, and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels” (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004: 727).

Moreover, one may argue that informal institutions are especially significant in cases when the home state is characterized as a state that does not have all its “institutions functioning properly” (Ibid.). In such cases informal institutions substitute and/or complement formal ones to help achieve results in areas in which formal ones failed (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004: 730; Narayan, 2002: 61-62). This state failure within a certain institutional aspect can also be perceived as a state failure — a state failure to deliver certain public service to its citizens. In his sectoral approach towards interpreting failed states, Frödin (2010) defines that state failure does not imply collapse of the entire state apparatus. On the contrary, states may fail in some state/institutional aspects, but not necessarily all (Frödin, 2010: 283). According to this understanding, a state might be able to supply and deliver some public goods (e.g. schooling), but fail in the provision of others (e.g. public health). Thus, a state failure in this sense does not imply the presence of chaos and anarchy, but simply a lack of efficient institutional functionality within some sectors.

Through their operational duality, transnational immigrants and their organizations are able to function within both highly organized, institutionalized and weak, failed states. Their transnational character allows them to adapt and exist in often very contrasting settings and

\(^2\) States that deliberately create policies with host states and send migrants abroad in order to reduce unemployment at home.
pursue their goals. In cases when functioning institutions and regulations facilitate and authorize their work within the home state, it is informal institutions that enable them to operate within the home state arena.

Therefore, in order to explore informal institutions within the transnational arena and facilitate migrant initiatives it is necessary to look into what constitutes these institutions. Since origins of informal institutions are often unclear, Helmke and Levitsky (2004: 731) argue that these entities should be explored through understanding a) the actors involved and interests behind them and b) ways in which informal rules are created and communicated to other actors in a way that they develop into a set of common expectations.

2.5 Role of Social Capital in Migrant Transnational Activities

In the context of transnational migrant organizations, social capital and social networks play an important role in fostering informal institutions and transnational activities. The concept of social capital has been developed by the French sociologist Bourdieu (1979) and the American sociologist Coleman (2000) who focused on individuals or small groups as units of analysis. The foci for both researchers were benefits accruing to persons or families due to their connections with others (Portes and Landolt, 2000: 531). In Bourdieu’s engagement with the concept it was instrumental that individuals intentionally created relations with others for the benefits that these relations would bring later (Bourdieu, 1979: 2-3). As a result, he distinguished three forms of capital — money, social, and cultural — and concluded that these three types of capital were mutually interchangeable, meaning they could be traded for one another and essentially demand such exchange for their development (Ibid.). Therefore, any significant social capital can rarely be obtained without either the possession of some substantial resources or the possession of some cultural knowledge that enable the individual to form relations with valued others.

Coleman, Bourdieu, and other sociologists view the significance of community ties because of the benefits that they granted to a person in the shape of secure expectations (Portes and Landolt, 2000: 534-535). Through its use by other disciplines the concept of social capital became a trait of the community itself (Ibid.). This stretch is considered to be controversial due to its application on different kinds of issues and theories engaging diverse units of analysis (Portes, 2010: 28). There are multiple definitions of social capital and this thesis engages with

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3 This form of capital is defined as the official educational qualifications a person possesses together with other obscure complex of ideals and manners.
an understanding that social capital is an example of an informal norm that fosters collaboration between human beings (Fukuyama, 2001: 7) and that it is the capacity to gain access to resources through membership within networks and/or bigger social arrangements (Knoke, 1999: 17; Baker, 1990: 619; Portes 1998: 6). Norms in which social capital operates are crucial for social capital to exist. These norms are different and can range from a reciprocity between two friends and all the way to perplex and systematized principles such as religion. However, it is crucial that norms are a part of human interactions and are actualized in expected situations — in situations of needed reciprocity. For example, the norm of reciprocity can potentially exist in all interactions a person has with others, but is only actualized when dealing with those one considers his/her friends. By this explanation, trust, social networks, civil society that have frequently been associated and equalized with social capital, all arise due to social capital but do not institute social capital itself. Therefore, not all sets of norms constitute social capital, but only those that lead to cooperation of groups and usually those related to traditional qualities such as trust, reliability, reciprocity, credibility, and similar.

Furthermore, social capital plays the key role in transnational migration since transnational communities demonstrate that immigrants living in developed countries do not forget or abandon their kin and societies, nor their cultural-historic attachments (Portes, 2010: 196). Transnational groups exemplify a specific form of social embeddedness which relies on family and cultural ties to defeat the obstacles of space and official governmental procedures in order to ensure a continuous movement of individuals, information, and goods beyond nation borders (Portes, 2010: 195). The importance of community ties in forms of social capital are vital due to benefits it provides to individuals in the shape of reliable expectations (Portes and Landolt, 2000: 534).

A crucial form of social capital, tightly related to transnational immigrant organizations, is bounded solidarity. More specifically, bounded solidarity or trust in the communal fate of a group, can be perceived as the mechanism through which community ties are converted into sources of social capital and consequently the means through which network assets can be accessed by group members. In order for bounded solidarity to operate and for members to be willing to share common resources group member need to have an established sense of togetherness and belonging. Ability to identity oneself with his/her own sect, group, community, ethnicity is a powerful source for bounded solidarity motivation. Portes (1995:15) observes that among co-ethnics the motivation is philanthropic and results in “…transferring resources to others because of the identification with in-group needs and goals.” Moreover, the residential vicinity arising from geographic density and concentration of ties results in an
‘enforceable trust’ that acts as a protection against misconduct, ensuring reciprocation (Shih, 2002: 10).

Since the idea of reciprocity lies in the basis of social capital, and only immigrants can access the desired material capital, critics might wonder what the members of home communities have to offer in return. Moreover, reciprocity expectations are challenging to administer across space and the key social structures that generate “proper” trust are very thin. In this scenario, transnational civic contributions primarily flow as a result of the altruistic motivations founded on ideals and particularly on bounded solidarity (Portes, 2010: 201-202). Immigrants act upon the feeling of duty and obligation towards their families and communities that remain in the home country. It is precisely these community ties, embedded in bounded solidarity as a form of social capital, that play the crucial role in sustaining and triggering activities by transnational immigrant organizations. Through bounded solidarity, immigrants who have left their home society and have become more resourceful feel the altruistic need to share with the less resourceful members who remained at home (Portes, 2010: 33).

Continuous humanitarian assistance by immigrant transnational organizations produce endorsement and status for migrants within their home communities. As the status of migrants increases among the home community, leaders of transnational immigrant organizations are very respected not only among general population but also local authorities (Guarnizo et al., 2003). In these cases, recipients of philanthropic activities are usually beneficiaries and thus the reciprocity is generated through symbolic capital in a form of gratitude as ‘exchange’ (Bourdieu, 1977).

However, it is important to note that transnational immigrant organizations do not implement their philanthropic projects within home societies as a quest for status and approval (Portes, 2010: 216; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2009: 1637). On the contrary, they are led by a sincere concern for the challenges faced by their home communities. The working inspiration in the creation of such united initiatives seems to be an addition to that behind family remittances — now that migrants’ financial situation improved, they want to do something for the families and communities that still struggle at home (Portes, 2010: 202).
Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter is concerned with methodology and research process used for this thesis. The first section discusses qualitative research and the selection of interviews as the research method. The research process and its challenges are detailed in the second section. Finally, the third section presents short findings regarding the background of the research subjects — Bosnian immigrant organizations in Sweden.

3.1 Selected Research Method(s)

This thesis employs interviews as a qualitative research method to fit the explorative purpose. Qualitative research allows for understanding of motives and actions behind the involvement of Bosnian immigrant organizations in the socio-economic development of their home state. Semi-structured interviews enable the exploration of individual’s perspectives and experiences in a detailed and comprehensive mode (Bryman, 2012: 418). While conducting qualitative studies, a researcher must be mindful of personal biases in order to allow for an objective approach to both its research subjects and the interpretation of the results (Creswell, 2009).

In contrast to quantitative research, that allows for generalized conclusions and focuses on the frequency of certain outcomes, qualitative research aims to detect conditions that trigger specific outcomes to occur (Selznick, 1996: 251; Bennet and George, 2005: 31). As qualitative research usually lacks the generalizability of the quantitative research, the replicability of its findings is more challenging. Accordingly, this type of research is sometimes perceived as subjective and prone to selection bias. The suggestion is that researchers applying qualitative methods are prone to confirm their own theories and preconceived views. In addition, qualitative research is also criticized for proposing generalized conclusions in its findings (Bennet and George, 2005: 80; Collins, 1992: 182). Understanding such criticism, this thesis strives to make its research process transparent.

3.2 Research Process

Identifying relevant Bosnian immigrant organizations in Sweden was a challenging process. Even though the Swedish Business Register contains data on all registered non-profit associations in Sweden, their database cannot be divided according to either the types of activities the associations do or the background of their members. Hence, the representatives from the Department of Economic Statistics at the Central Bureau of Statistics in Sweden
recommended using the list of Bosnian immigrant associations in Sweden compiled by the Immigrant Institute. The Institute’s website contains a long list with contact information of organizations registered in Sweden and associated with and/or are related to Bosnia. In addition, the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sweden and the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina each have shorter but very relevant lists of organizations that are recognized as active in both keeping the Bosnian tradition and language alive among the Bosnian immigrants in Sweden, as well as in fostering integration of Bosnian immigrants in the Swedish society.

The first step in this research was to contact all the organizations from the above-mentioned lists in order to determine their relevance/eligibility for this research process. However, shortly after the beginning of the process, it was evident that the Institute’s list had not been updated, and as it was impossible to reach the majority of the organizations. This was especially true for those organizations that only contained a phone number of their contact person. Moreover, some of the organizations on the list were no longer active, or contacts provided were no longer associated with the organization. As the other two lists were much smaller, they had less outdated contacts. It was relatively easy to reach those organizations that had e-mail addresses, websites, and social media accounts.

During the second step of the research process, an excel sheet was created with relevant contact information of the most visible and currently active 36 immigrant organizations/associations, identified during the step one. The visibility and activity were determined by the ability to reach these organizations.

In the third step, the 36 identified organizations were contacted separately over the period of four weeks at the beginning of 2018. The organizations were contacted primarily through email, phone, or Facebook page messaging. The purpose of this first contact was to introduce relevant organizations’ representatives to this research and ask for their participation in it. Finally, 27 organizations had responded, with two organizational representatives unable to participate in the study.

Afterwards, during the fourth step a total of 25 organizations were contacted again with a short survey to learn about and understand the type of work conducted by Bosnian immigrant organizations in Sweden. A part of this list (name of organization, location, and website) is presented in Appendix I. The survey focused on the following five aspects:
1. **Type of immigrant organization**
Organizations are formed for different purposes. Thus it was important to learn about the focus of each organization. Some examples of types of immigrant organizations are: i) religious – that gather immigrants in order to share their common religious identity; ii) cultural – that gather immigrants to enjoy and take care of their cultural heritage through dance, language courses, etc.; iii) professional – that enable professional development and foster better integration into the Swedish job market; etc. The organizations could add and explain their own focus regardless of these three and were not obliged to select only one focus.

2. **Main geographic focus**
To determine whether the primary focus of organizational activities was Sweden or home locality, each organization was asked about where it implemented its projects and activities.

3. **Number of immigrants involved in the organization as members**
The number of immigrants involved in the organization as members was used as a proxy to determine the size of the organization.

4. **Type of organizational funding**
In order to learn more about how the projects and activities were financed in each organization it was useful to learn what the main organizational funding source was: i) public or ii) private entities or are activities funded primarily by iii) membership fees and/or donations? The representatives were able to select more than one answer.

5. **Degree of development support in home countries**
Finally, to learn about transnational activities, the organizations were asked the following question: Has your organization implemented any kind of projects and/or activities in Bosnia? Those organizations that answered positively this question were then asked to state whether they would be willing to participate in an interview to provide more information about the organizational transnational activities.

These questions were based on the methodology developed by the Comparative Immigrant Organizations Project (CIOP) and applied by several case studies presented in the book *The State and the Grassroots* published by Portes and Fernández-Kelly (2015). For the
the purpose of this research, the information on the above-mentioned five aspects was used for providing an overall understanding of the background of the surveyed organizations.

The survey answers were collected and integrated in the excel file together with their contact information. Brief findings will be presented in the following section of this thesis. These findings were used in the research process to provide an overview of the magnitude and diversity of Bosnian immigrant organizations in Sweden. In addition, the survey enabled the identification of those Bosnian immigrant organizations that have a transnational character and are involved in both their host and home societies.

During the final, fifth, step, the interviews were conducted with representatives from those organizations that stated that they had been implementing activities in both countries, Sweden and Bosnia. The results revealed that there were at least 15 Bosnian immigrant organizations that had been involved in implementing transnational activities in Bosnia. These organizations differ in many aspects, but all, to some extent, implement their activities in both countries. The details regarding the manner in which these organizations operate will be presented and analyzed in the next chapter.

Furthermore, it is important to mention that four of these 15 organizations are not specifically targeting only Bosnian immigrants, but are more focused on gathering their corresponding ethnic groups. They gather individuals not based on geographic origin, but on the ethnic sentiment. Namely, three organizations involved in this study are concentrated on gathering Serbs from both Serbia and Bosnia. Similarly, one organization involved in the research gathers immigrants of Croatian origin regardless of whether they come from Bosnia or Croatia. However, all four of these organizations have relevant ties to Bosnia and are involved in implementing projects and activities at some level in Bosnia (as well as Croatia, Serbia, and Sweden). As such, they have been included in this research and have contributed with valuable insights and information.

The interviews with 15 relevant representatives were conducted via phone or in-person over the period of twelve weeks. Interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions allowing interviewees to share their experiences. Each interview focused on the following aspects: organizational background and structure, its members, reasons for initiating and implementing projects in their home state, type and nature of implemented projects, ways in which projects are initiated and realized, and challenges and opportunities faced while implementing transnational projects. The interviews varied in length due to the availability of the interviewees. At the beginning of each interview, the interviewee was introduced to the research and ensured that his/her answers would be anonymous. On average, the interviews
lasted for approximately 30 minutes ranging from 15 to 45 minutes. Time was the most challenging factor for all representatives as the vast majority of them, 14 to be exact, contributed his or her time to the organization voluntarily. This means that the leaders contribute their time to organizational activities after their work hours. Also, all of the interviewed representatives were the leaders of their organizations. Therefore, the interviews were conducted at times and in places that were most convenient for the interviewees themselves.

In addition, three interviews were conducted with relevant contacts/organizations in Bosnia in order to investigate project implementation from a perspective of the home society as well. These interviews were conducted in Bosnia over a period of two weeks in March 2018. They involved relevant representatives of partner organizations and institutions that had been collaborating with Bosnian immigrant organizations in Sweden. These contacts were provided by the leaders of immigrant organizations and were gladly available to participate in this study. The interviews were audio recorded (when possible) and in the vast majority of cases, detailed notes and quotes were taken. All the interviews in this research were conducted in one of the official languages of Bosnia – Bosnian, Serbian, and Croatian. Due to time and resource limitations, the interviews were not transcribed nor translated into English. As the three languages are the mother tongues of the researcher, there were no language barriers between the interviewees and the interviewer. This lack of language and cultural barriers also allows for a better understanding of non-verbal means of communication, which enables a better understanding of certain cultural practices as well. However, the fact that the researcher was from the state in which organizations implement their transnational initiatives might have prevented them to share some details regarding project implementation. This could be due to a concern that the researcher is related to or knows individuals who could potentially threaten projects implementation in Bosnia.

It is important to note that a small sample of this study will not allow for generalization of its results and conclusions (Bryman, 2012: 418). However, this research will contribute towards a better understanding of why and how immigrant organizations implement transnational activities in their home states. Moreover, during the field work the researcher has been aware of ways in which her personal characteristics (ethnic background, gender, age, etc.) might have indirectly impacted the research subjects (Scheyvens 2003: 4, Creswell 2009: 8). Since ethnic background is a defining trait in many aspects for individuals from Bosnia, the researcher has ensured each interviewee about her objectivity towards the researched matter and data treatment. As the research topic itself is not particularly sensitive and the research is
carried out solely for the academic purposes the interviewees’ honesty and reliability should not be questionable in particular.

### 3.3 Brief Survey Findings

This sub-section presents a brief overview of the survey findings. Its purpose is to provide background information on the 25 active and visible organizations by using descriptive statistics. Moreover, survey results aim at portraying the variety of Bosnian immigrant organizations in Sweden. The list of all organizations involved in the research process can be found in the Appendix I.

The vast majority, 19, of the surveyed organizations are mostly focused on the promotion of the Bosnian culture and preservation of the Bosnian language. Three organizations are specifically dealing with the provision of humanitarian assistance, two focus media and information, while the main goal of one organization is the provision of sports activities to its members.

All organizations realize its activities in Sweden. However, 15 organizations stated that they also conducted activities in Bosnia as well. The representatives of these 15 organizations were further involved in this research process.

The number of members involved in each organization varies. Some organizations reported having 20 members, while some have almost 3,000 members. Organizations that represent national associations\(^4\) have the most members. For example, the Serbian National Association in Sweden claimed it had approximately 10,000 members, while the Association of Bosnian-Herzegovinian organizations in Sweden reported having around 9,000 members on their lists.

In regards to types of organizational funding, almost all organizations, 23 of them, reported receiving some sort of public funding from a relevant Swedish institution. In addition, they all collect membership funding. Only two organizations reported not receiving any public funding and being primarily dependent on donations for the realization of its activities. These organizations realize their activities primarily in Bosnia.

Finally, all organizations that reported being involved in some sort of implementation of transnational projects and activities were contacted for further interviews, as described in the previous section. The list of all interviewees can be found in the Appendix II. The results and the analysis of those interviews are presented in the next chapter.

\(^4\) Several smaller organizations with a similar interest and a focus area unite in a national association.
Chapter 4: Ways in Which Bosnian Immigrant Organizations Deal with Transnational Projects and Activities

The aim of this chapter is to understand i) the driving forces behind transnational immigrant projects and activities in the home state and ii) the processes through which Bosnian immigrant organizations in Sweden identify and implement transnational projects and activities in their home state. The first section presents the complexity of Bosnian governance. The second section discusses the members of Bosnian immigrant organizations. The third section firstly defines the motive, and secondly explains mechanisms behind the identification and implementation of transnational organizational immigrant projects and activities. Finally, the last section discusses the dual context in which Bosnian immigrant organizations operate.

4.1 The Complexity of Bosnian Governance

Bosnia is a developing country with imposed, complicated democratic and governmental systems (Hayden, 1988; Bastian and Luckham, 2003) and a population estimate of 3.8 million (CIA, 2018). Having an externally designed system of governance through the Dayton Peace Agreement, Bosnia probably has one of the world’s most complicated government system consisting of 14 federal units and 14 governments and parliaments (Gavric et al., 2013).

![Figure 1: Map of Bosnia with two entities, one district – Brčko, and ten cantons (ReliefWeb, 2018)](image_url)
Figure 1, presents the governance and ethnic structures in Bosnia. The country is divided into two entities (the Republic of Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and the Brčko district. The Dayton Peace Agreement was created by the representatives of the international community with an aim to stop the bloodshed and satisfy all parties involved. This Agreement was signed by relevant representatives of the parties in conflict in December 1995. The Agreement also became the Bosnian Constitution which defines its population along ethnic lines and recognizes the three largest ethnic groups – Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs as constituent peoples along with Others (OHR, Constitution BiH - Preamble, line 10). Others represent different minority groups living in Bosnia such as Roma, Turks, Ukrainians, etc. They are considered to be Bosnian citizens too, but with limited political rights. For example, they cannot apply to be the members of the Presidency as the three-member Presidency is composed of the three elected members representing the three constituent peoples—as prescribed by the Bosnian Constitution.

The governmental division is further supported by the geographical ethnic division of the three constituent peoples. As shown in the Figure 1, the vast majority of the population in the Republic of Srpska are Bosnian Serbs. The Federation consists of both Croats and Bosniaks, each of them having dominion over different cantons. The exceptions are two cantons, Central Bosnia and Herzegovina Neretva, where both ethnicities are equally dominant. Finally, the smallest unit of governance is the Brčko district that has an equal representation of all three ethnic groups.

In regards to corruption, Transparency International ranks Bosnia in 91st place out of 180 countries in their corruption index with the score of 38 for its perceived level of public sector corruption (Transparency International, 2018). A 2017 Freedom House report on democracy in Bosnia reveals that the overall index of democratic freedoms has been slightly increasing over the past decade (Jahic, 2018). On a scale from 1 to 7 (1 being the most democratic, and 7 the least democratic governance), Bosnia scored 4.57 for the last year. As a result, this report also characterizes Bosnia as a partially free democratic country (Ibid.).

These statistics portray Bosnia as a less developed country with a complex and not effectively functioning governance. Its institutions are operational, but not in a manner that is beneficial for all its citizens. Considering all these factors and the actual unemployment rate of

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5 Bosnia does not have one president as the head of state. Instead, it has a three-member Presidency.
38.68\% (Trading Economics, 2018), a report by the Institute for Stabilization and Transition from October 2017 identifies Bosnia as “a failed state in heart of Europe” (IST, 2017, para. 1).

Furthermore, relating the sectoral approach to failed governance explained in the Chapter 2, one may argue that the Bosnian governance can be perceived as failed. Some of the reasons for this are the presence of high levels of corruption within the public administration, relatively low level of democratic freedoms, and a high level of unemployment. As Frödin (2010: 282) explains, failed governance does not imply the absence of order and existence of state institutions. It means that the government has failed to provide and supply its public and private goods in some spheres (Ibid.). This hyper-bureaucratic system of governance, high levels of corruption and unemployment contribute towards institutional malfunctioning and failure.

4.2 Members of Transnational Bosnian Immigrant Organizations

Members of the Bosnian immigrant organizations are mostly Bosniaks. Since the majority of Bosnian Serbs and Croats identifies with Serbia and Croatia, respectively, they are members of Serbian and Croatian immigrant organizations, respectively. Three Serbian and one Croatian immigrant organizations were involved in this study as some of their transnational activities are targeted towards Bosnia as well. Members of these organizations belong to Serbian or Croatian ethnic groups.

The interviews with the leaders reported that educational background of their members varied as well as their financial status. The exception was the organization that dealt with connecting Bosnia and Swedish entrepreneurs as its members were mostly well-established and highly educated individuals with extensive connections in Sweden and Bosnia.

According to the interviewees, members of their organizations are predominantly individuals older than 40 years. There are four exceptions: two youth organizations whose members are primarily youth of Bosnian/Serbian descent, a foundation that assists in the integration of orphans in Bosnia, and the organization that strives to connect Bosnian and Swedish entrepreneurs. Eleven leaders of the organizations stated that older members feel more connected to the home state and the majority of them still have living family, relatives, and friends in Bosnia. Older members speak the language fluently and the majority of them were not born in Sweden.

The interviewees mention the following reasons for the low percentage of youth membership: “Youth are not attracted to our activities which are mostly focused on the
preservation of tradition, language, and culture” (Interviewee 5, 2018-01-25) and “...youth prefer to join other organizations that focus on sports-related, mostly football and folklore, activities” (Interviewee 3, 2018-01-17). Several of the interviewed organizations report having no youth members. By contrast, two of the interviewed youth organizations specifically strive to attract and gather young members of Bosnian/Serbian descent.

It is challenging to label youth as ‘immigrants’ since the majority of these young people were born in Sweden and often speak better Swedish than Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian. Leaders of these organizations state that they find it challenging to attract young Swedish Bosnians. Youth organizations are led by youth and conduct transnational activities that are more related to youth interests. Examples of these activities are: collection of donations for orphanages and children’s hospitals in Bosnia, connecting young Bosnians from Sweden and Bosnia with entrepreneurial backgrounds and interests.

Interpreting the member structure suggests that transnational activities are primarily supported by older immigrants who still preserve strong ties with members of the home state. In addition to feeling more connected to the home state, older individuals are also perceived to have more information, time, and resources to contribute to transnational initiatives (Guarnizo et al., 2003). The data collected for this thesis indicates that youth involvement in these activities is lower and more sporadic.

Importantly, one interviewee raised his concerns regarding transnational immigrant projects and suggested that “...instead of trying to save our states of origin, we should better invest this money into strengthening our status and networks in Sweden” (Interviewee 2, 2018-01-16). In his opinion, the majority of Bosnians living in Sweden are still not economically strong enough to conduct meaningful and “life-changing” projects in their home state (Ibid.). He believes that organizational efforts should be aiming at establishing networks that would enable individuals, especially young ones, to prosper and grow in Sweden which would in the long-run enable the implementation of more systematic and larger projects in the home state.

4.3 Bounded Solidarity and Social Capital Enable Transnational Activities

Social capital and bounded solidarity motivate and enable the implementation of transnational projects and activities. The significance of these mechanisms in the implementation of

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6 Research relevant parts of the interviews were translated by Nikolina Talijan Hinic and are presented in the italic letters throughout this thesis.
transnational projects will be further explored and demonstrated in the following two sub-
sections.

4.3.1 Motives for Transnational Activities Lie in Bounded Solidarity

When the interviewees were asked to explain the reasons for implementing transnational projects and activities, these were the most often answers: “Bosnians in Sweden are doing better than in Bosnia, so we want to help citizens of Bosnia to win everyday life battles” (Interviewee 6, 2018-02-03); “We simply wanted to join our forces in Sweden and help those living in our motherland” (Interviewee 5, 2018-01-25); “It is our duty to help our country and its people” (Interviewee 9, 2018-02-18), and similar. The interviewees explained that the motivation for being involved in transnational activities stems out of the care and interest for those who still live and remain in the home state.

These examples demonstrate that transnational immigrant activities are to a great extent motivated and triggered by the feeling of obligation and solidarity towards their families and communities in the home state. Being able to identify with individuals living in Bosnia immigrants feel a moral obligation to share and transfer their resources with them (Portes 1995:15). Portes (2010:34) argues that community ties embedded in bounded solidarity are easily transformed into power to such an extent as it forces members of a specific group to act altruistically and sometimes sacrifice for the communal good. Immigrants nurture their bounded solidarity through constant connection with their families, relatives, and friends in Bosnia. One interviewee explained that many, especially older Bosnian immigrants live “...with one leg in the Balkans, and the other one in Sweden. In that way they are always in between two places” (Interviewee 2, 2018-01-16). It is precisely this connection and communication that enables immigrants to grasp daily realities of Bosnian people. Another leader stated: “We are aware that Bosnians struggle. All our donations are given out of solely altruistic purposes and we hope that patients using the donated equipment will be the greatest beneficiaries” (Interviewee 14, 2018-03-01). Being able to identify with their fellow co-ethnics and understanding the hardships faced by people living in Bosnia, immigrants are willing to share their resources with their less well-off members living in home states (Portes, 2010: 33). Hence, one notices that the preservation of strong community ties and identification with ethnicity cultivates bounded solidarity and empowers immigrants to realize transnational activities in their home state.
As previously discussed, Bosnia is a country of three constitute peoples — three ethnic groups (and Others\(^7\)). Due to the relatively recent conflict between the three ethnic groups and the current socio-political arrangement there is somewhat little contact between the three groups. Consequently, bounded solidarity and community ties towards their co-ethnic members in Bosnia direct their transnational efforts primarily towards members of their own ethnic group. Being able to identify with their fellow co-ethnics, the majority of the interviewed organizations implements transnational activities in towns, cantons where their ethnic group represents the majority: “...through contact with our families and friends in Bosnia we learn about their troubles” (Interviewee 11, 2018-02-23), “Community members in Bosnia often contact us for help hoping we can ease their troubles...” (Interviewee 4, 2018-01-17). Hence, the majority of organizations with ‘Bosnia and Herzegovina’ in its name have directed their activities towards Bosniaks in Bosnia; three Serbian organizations to parts of the Republic of Srpska; and the Croatian organization reported having directed its initiatives towards Bosnian Croats. The ethnic and governance fragmentation in Bosnia (see Figure 1) further enables these transnational projects to target members of specific ethnic groups only.

Only one interviewed organization was the exception. The members of this organization come from all ethnic groups and have backgrounds in entrepreneurship, academia, and arts. Its main transnational initiative is to connect entrepreneurs and academics from Bosnia and Sweden. Its leader stated that they (as organization) “Aim to contribute towards development of Bosnia by encouraging collaboration and promotion of entrepreneurship opportunities. We recognize potentials of cross-border collaboration and connections between Bosnians in Sweden and in Bosnia” (Interviewee 18, 2018-03-18). This organization has been active in the advocacy directed towards legislative changes in the sphere of the private sector in Bosnia. Focusing on improvements within the private sector, their activities aim at benefiting the economy as whole and do not target a specific ethnic group.

Even though identification with co-ethnic members is somewhat challenging in the setting of Bosnia, the interviewees claim that their transnational projects aim at helping those in need: “Our members just want to do good for our people” (Interviewee 10, 2018-02-22). Therefore, one may conclude that being able to feel bonded solidarity with co-ethnics remaining in Bosnia is vital for both sustaining interest in and implementing transnational initiatives.

\(^7\) Due to the scope and size of this thesis, issues related to the Others (non Serb/Croat/Bosniak minorities) will not be discussed.
4.3.2 Social Capital Provides Means for Transnational Activities

The interviews reveal that the immigrant organizations rely on social capital and social networks for the implementation of their transnational projects and activities. This sub-section offers an understanding of the nature of projects and activities and discusses the project/activity realization cycle. It explains how organizations identify and/or select, and implement their transnational projects and activities.

According to the interviewees, the majority of the transnational projects implemented by their organizations are humanitarian-focused and are related to social causes. Through their projects, the organizations aim at helping the most vulnerable members of the Bosnian society and their beneficiaries are often students; orphan children; children with disabilities; unemployed rural populations; individuals living in socio-economically disadvantaged conditions; returnees; etc. Moreover, a vast majority of these organizations, thirteen to be precise, primarily implement ad-hoc activities based on current needs of its beneficiaries. Long-term commitments to realization of specific projects are rare and done only by three of the interviewed organizations.

Immigrant organizations identify and/or select their transnational projects differently. Ad-hoc projects and activities are usually sporadic, and happen on the urgent basis of need through one-time material or financial donation of capital. By contrast, long-term projects, to some extent, strive to contribute towards a long-term change. They are continuous and are realized at least once a year.

Furthermore, ad-hoc projects and activities are often implemented as a result of a natural disaster (e.g. floods), a serious need (e.g. financial assistance for medical treatment), or a genuine wish to contribute with a donation of some kind. Organizations report that they often decide what type of activity they want to support and then make direct contacts to the representatives of those activities in Bosnia.

For example, one youth-related organization contacted the children’s hospital department in a local hospital in Bosnia and asked what their needs were. The hospital staff suggested the organization to provide video game appliances for children who stay in the hospital due to cancer treatments. As a result, the organization donated approximately four video game appliances to the children’s department of this hospital. This specific hospital was selected as it is the only hospital that supports this kind of treatment for children in Bosnia who are of the same ethnic group as the organization’s members.
Similarly, a women’s organization realized that they had left-over money from their donations for floods in 2014. Hence, they decided to assist in building a house for a socio-economically disadvantaged single-mother’s household in Bosnia. Likewise, another organization has donated anesthetic machines to hospitals around the Federation entity and also claims to have contacted the hospitals’ staff and asked them about their needs directly. Thus, one may conclude that ad-hoc projects and activities are conducted in accordance to the needs of beneficiaries with an aim to help.

The interviewees state that their organizations are also frequently contacted in cases when individuals and families are in desperate need of financial resources for medical treatments or existential matters. As organizations, they strive to help as much they can, but they claim that amounts of received requests simply outweigh the capacities of the members. Even though the immigrants are aware of the socio-economic hardships of the life in Bosnia, they are simply unable to financially respond to every single case.

Long-term projects are identified in a fairly similar manner and usually involve a partner (individual or an organization). These types of projects and activities are mostly realized by immigrant organizations that are registered as foundations and charities. Hence, their primary purpose is not to simply gather the immigrants and provide a place for cultural and linguistic preservation, but to involve immigrants (and other interested individuals) in assisting in running their causes in Bosnia. For example, one big foundation (together with another Bosnian immigrant foundation from the UK) runs a local organization in Bosnia that assists in integrating young orphans\(^8\) with disabilities into society. Their transnational project is funded by individual or company donations and of Bosnian immigrants who are relatively financially stable.

Long term projects of other charity organizations are also funded by donations. Interviews suggest that these organizations enjoy credibility and trust from immigrants who are willing to contribute to their causes. This credibility is enforced by the trust organizational leaders enjoy among Bosnian population in Sweden and a transparent history of the already implemented activities. This enforceable trust is sustained by the leaders of organizations realize long term transnational projects are very well connected not only to the Bosnian population in Sweden, but also to the Swedish society (Portes and Landolt, 2000). Hence, these organizations rely on private social networks these individuals have in order to generate

\(^8\) Once they turn 18 and are not pursuing higher education, youth are dismissed from Orphanages in Bosnia and are expected to live independently. This is an issue for many of them due to various challenges in the job market, but also the acceptance of individuals with disabilities by Bosnian society.
funding for its activities. Moreover, these organizations mostly have a relatively long history of implementing charitable transnational activities in Bosnia and have created trust and support over time.

In regards to implementation of their transnational projects, almost all organizations report that they rely on collaboration with either local organizations or individuals in Bosnia. According to the interviewees, direct collaborators in Bosnia are selected through personal contacts of members and recommendations by trusted individuals from Bosnia. These collaborators are usually identified through social networks organizations have or were introduced to through already established and trusted sources (their local community; friends and family; etc.). For example, one interviewee reported that: “We have developed a close collaboration with a small organization in Bosnia because this is the organization members of my family in Bosnia volunteer at” (Interviewee 14, 2018-03-01). Other leaders have reported that their collaboration with organizations/individuals in Bosnia was developed through “…mutual friends of our member introduced us to our contact in Bosnia” (Interviewee 8, 2018-02-15), “We believe the Red Cross is a respectable organization in Bosnia and so we decided to ask them to help us realize our project” (Interviewee 10, 2018-02-22), “Through our personal connections in Bosnia we were introduced to two social workers who became the leaders of our organization in Bosnia” (Interviewee 6, 2018-02-03). Therefore, one may conclude that the primary role of trusted collaborators in Bosnia is in helping in identification and by providing access to project beneficiaries.

Importantly, immigrant organizations still manage the provision of finances and implementation of projects and activities. All, except three organizations, report that they usually send their own representatives with donations from Sweden to Bosnia. Representatives then meet the beneficiaries and transfer the donation in material goods or money directly. For example, one organization has built a house for a single-mother headed household in a small Bosnian municipality. The organization had sent several representatives who then paid for the required building materials directly. Similarly, another youth-related organization that donates to children living in orphanages around Sarajevo explained how they select a group of representatives who travel to Bosnia together every year. This group purchases goods (clothes, food, hygiene items, etc.) and takes them to the selected orphanages directly. When asked why this was the preferred method of money/donation handling, the interviewees answered: “Our rule is to never send money, but have our representatives deliver it directly to those in need” (Interviewee 2, 2018-01-16), “When we purchase the donations we are sure they ended up in the right hands” (Interviewee 5, 2018-01-25), and similar.
Moreover, one interviewee reported that his organization: “...had experienced a misuse of donations in the past by [their] collaborators in Bosnia” (Interviewee 2, 2018-01-16) and that due to this reason they prefer to have a representative distribute the donations. The interviews suggest that donations for almost all ad-hoc projects and activities are distributed in this manner. The leaders mentioned several examples of donation misuse, such as: “Our trusted collaborator would keep the donation money for himself. We heard about this from other contacts in Bosnia” (Interviewee 12, 2018-02-27), and “Money we collected never reached the beneficiaries and we have no idea what happened to it” (Interviewee 8, 2018-02-15). Portes (2010: 203) notices that trust maintained by bounded solidarity is especially prone to impropriety. The absence of official agreements or firm overarching social structures ensuring reciprocal anticipations leaves the participants of transnational projects and activities no other option but to believe in a goodwill character of their long distance collaborators (Ibid.).

On the contrary, the organizations that implement long-term projects and activities have a different approach. They mostly rely on collaborations with local organizations in Bosnia. In such cases, immigrant organizations establish long-term connections and relationships with the organizations. For example, the leader of a charity organization that has developed a strong collaboration with a small local organization in Bosnia through their family reported that the charity relies on “…the local Bosnian organization to identify beneficiaries” (Interviewee 7, 2018-02-07). The high degree of trust and long cooperation ensures that funds raised in Sweden reach the beneficiaries directly. Additionally, with time the collaboration between two organizations has become semi-formalized as the local Bosnian organization submits reports on how the money has been spent. The funding is usually spent on providing material capital such as small farm animals like goats for entrepreneurship purposes, school materials for children, and similar. Other two organizations that implement long term projects also report having a semi-formalized relationship with their contact organizations in Bosnia.

The grounds that enable this collaboration in transnational long-term activity implementation between two organizations is trust — an important element of social capital. Trust facilitates access to resources to the beneficiaries and it accelerates transactions for donors as it guarantees against malfeasance (Portes, 2010: 34). Furthermore, trust guarantees reciprocity of donor’s expectations. The organizations also frequently receive reports and gratification notes from the beneficiaries from the organizations in Bosnia that received funding. In the case of humanitarian-related initiatives reciprocity comes from symbolic gratification as exchange (Bourdieu, 1977). In addition to trust, organizations explained that
their long-term projects and activities have also been formalized to some extent usually through a form of a written agreement.

Therefore, one may conclude that trust is an important element in the identification and selection phase in transnational projects and activities. Organizations do trust their contacts and collaborators in providing them with information regarding beneficiaries in Bosnia. However, during the implementation phase, organizations prefer to be directly involved in dealing with finances and avoid a potential misuse of donor funding. As explained above, exceptions are semi-formalized agreements in the realization of long-term projects and activities.

The interviewees report that direct involvement in project’s implementation also contributes towards their members feeling more connected to the cause itself. As such, this direct engagement not only increases donors trust and transparency during the implementation process, but also enables donors to be directly exposed to the situation of beneficiaries. The previously mentioned youth-organization that donates items to orphanages stressed the significance of its direct involvement by their members. Its president states that “…this enables Bosnians born in Sweden to learn more about issues faced by Bosnians... it helps us connect” (Interviewee 5, 2018-01-25).

4.4 Dual Modus Operandi of Bosnian Immigrant Organizations

Due to the nature of their transnational projects and activities, Bosnian immigrant organizations operate in two nation states — Sweden and Bosnia. To be able to understand the functioning duality of immigrant organization, one needs to acknowledge contextual and operational differences between host and home states of Bosnian immigrants. One the one hand there is Sweden, a developed democratic country with relatively strong and effective governmental institutions. And on the other hand, there is Bosnia, much less developed and to some extent a failed state.

Using their dual modus operandi, Bosnian immigrant organizations, navigate between these two contexts. Being aware of not only the laws and regulations, but also socio-political contexts within both states, these organizations are able to maneuver their aims and activities within both settings. It is precisely this dual operational mode that enables Bosnian immigrant organizations to initiate and realize their transnational projects and activities.

Being registered in Sweden, organizations are bound to comply by laws and regulations imposed by the state. As all but one of the interviewed organization are registered and receive
some type of public funding, they are obliged to report its spending in accordance to the rules determined by that particular public entity. The interviewees report that this funding is provided for direct organization-related activities such as refreshments for meetings, organization of events and manifestations, language and other types of classes and is to be spent on activities gathering their organizational members. Clearly identified guidelines and procedures prohibit organizations to use any kind of state funding for their transnational activities directly.

Therefore, to realize and implement their activities and projects in Bosnia, the organizations principally rely on donations. These donations are mainly made by members of organizations or other, mostly Bosnian immigrant, individuals willing to contribute towards a specific cause. It is important to note that in most cases donations are separate of regular membership fees and are collected through various means. The organizations gather donations either online, through Swish⁹, or in the form of tickets for organizational events such as celebration of the Bosnian Independence Day, cultural festivals, sports events, gala dinners, etc. For organizing these types of events, the organizations are eligible to seek funding provided by the Swedish institutions. Money collected from tickets can be used as funding for transnational activities. Moreover, these events not only enable Bosnian immigrants to meet and learn about current organizational plans and projects, but also strengthen their feeling of bounded solidarity and connections with their home society.

During their individual interviews, six representatives of Bosnian immigrant organizations in Sweden stated that the support and structure provided through Swedish state institutions were crucial for the work of immigrant organizations. Moreover, three interviews specifically explained how this support by the home state encouraged Bosnian immigrants to form organizations to help preserve their national identity and also help each other. One interviewee stated that: “In my opinion, the only reason why we managed to organize ourselves and have our organizations is due to the long history of organizing present in Swedish society” (Interviewee 11, 2018-02-23). Hence, these leaders explained that by unifying themselves in the organizations, Bosnian immigrants were able to collectively help their home state as well. This was especially important in the early 1990s when the majority of refugees came from Bosnia to Sweden. Helping their fellow citizens within the home state was imperative for immigrant organizations at the time as the Bosnian war was still taking place at the time.

⁹Swish is a Swedish mobile application connected to a personal bank account that enables individuals to transfer money to other SWISH users.
The immigrants who made it safely to Sweden wanted to help their families and friends who stayed at home and immigrant organizations enabled them to do so collectively. Through the organizations, the immigrants were able to coordinate their donations (money, clothing, personal hygiene items, etc.) and send it collectively to Bosnia in order to help those who remained there (Medic, 1995). A vast majority of organizations reported that at the time their collective efforts were focused on sending aid to Bosnia. Their collective activities in this field declined towards the end of 1990s together with the end of the Bosnian war.

Over the past three decades, as the Bosnian immigrants have stayed in contact with members of their home state, their organizations in Sweden have too. This connection enables immigrants to follow the political and socio-economic progress (or lack of) in Bosnia and makes them aware of how matters function within their home state. Interviews reveal that the majority of immigrants in Sweden still have families (usually older parents, or siblings with their families), relatives, and friends who remained in Bosnia. Hence, the motivation to stay involved, for some individuals, is due to direct and personal ties and connections to individuals who still live there (Portes and Landolt, 2000).

Furthermore, this constant connection and relationship that transnational immigrants nurture with their home state is what allows dual modus operandi for Bosnian immigrant organizations (Levitt, 2004). These organizations respect the rules and obligations they have to their host state. Simultaneously, understanding the complex and slow procedural system of the Bosnian governance, the immigrant organizations implement their activities using their social capital and social networks.

The interviews reveal that the Bosnian immigrants are not oblivious to the issues of corruption, malpractice, slow administration and responsiveness within the Bosnian governmental apparatus. A relatively recent example of slow responsiveness by the Bosnian government were the Bosnian floods in 2014. During these floods, numerous households were severely damaged and many Bosnian immigrant organizations collected donations for those in need. Touched by the severity of events, numerous Bosnian immigrant organizations collected donations not only from their members, but also from wider Swedish society as well. The collected food and humanitarian relief items were sent by trucks from Sweden to Bosnia. Due to slow procedural management and activities many trucks were forced to wait at the border crossing to enter Bosnia for several days. Several interviewees explained that they were aware of how slow and corrupt Bosnian government is, but that they were disappointed by the state’s inefficiency in times of urgency. One interviewee explains: “I understand that our goods had to be examined before entering the country as we are not a registered aid-delivery
organization. However, it was devastating to see how slow and corrupt the legislation process is” (Interviewee 2, 2018-01-16). In addition, the other interviewee claimed that “...and so they were uncertain what kind of products we were bringing in and kept our trucks at the border for days...” (Interviewee 6, 2018-02-03).

A leader of another organization explained that, to the best of his knowledge, the representatives of some political authorities were waiting for ‘the right’ political moments to allow humanitarian donations to enter the country. This waiting for ‘the right’ moment aimed at gaining public support for that particular politician and help him/her ‘win’ points for the general elections in October that year. Hence, in some instances local home state politicians and authorities used the altruistic donations for those in need as a way to score their individual political points. This interviewee expressed an even deeper mistrust in the governance of the home state after learning about this incident.

However, two organizations involved in this study have been collaborating with local governmental institutions at some levels. Namely, one organization has been negotiating the construction of a ‘safe house’ for individuals in socio-economic need together with the Center for Social work and a local municipality authority where the house is to be built. As the Center for Social work is under direct jurisdiction of the local municipality, it was a necessity to involve the local authority in order to gain a permission for this project. Moreover, the interview with the representative of the local authority in Bosnia revealed that the municipality was ready and willing to collaborate as it “recognized the mutual benefit of this opportunity” (Interviewee 17, 2018-03-16). In this case the municipality is even willing to contribute the municipality owned the land for the house to be built on. This project is still in the planning phase and the immigrant organization hopes to have it started in May this year.

The leader of this organization reported in her interview that the trust between the local authorities and the immigrant organization was established due to the trusted collaborator. The trust with this collaborator was established during a previously conducted activity and the fact that the collaborator had “…recommended local authorities as a potential and trusted partner and so we decided to meet with them” (Interviewee 6, 2018-02-03). The interviewee further revealed that the nature of the project and direct purchase of materials should ensure no misuse of their donations.

This example demonstrates that the collaboration between the authorities and immigrant organizations is not always slow and impeding on the local side. However, the scope and nature of this research was unable to investigate other potential motives behind the local
municipal authority’s involvement in this particular transnational project other than for benefit of the local people in need.

Another organization, that was mentioned previously, specifically targets higher levels of governance in Bosnia in order to create long-lasting connections among young Bosnians in Sweden and Bosnia. Since their beginning in 2000 this organization has been active in promoting trade with Bosnia and strove to connect Bosnian companies and entrepreneurs in order to increase trade-related activities between the two countries. The organization has realized that their attempts were hindered by slow and ineffective regulations in Bosnia.

Consequently, in order to continue its mission, the organization firstly created strong ties with the Swedish Embassy in Sarajevo. Having support and recognition by the Swedish Embassy provided credibility for this organization. The connection and trust by Swedish Embassy in Sarajevo serves as a source of trust and social capital for this particular organization and enables a collaboration with the Bosnian government. Moreover, this credibility allows the organization to use its position in Bosnia to advocate for shortening of the bureaucratic process needed for cooperation among Bosnian and Swedish companies and entrepreneurs. Their main means of action are advocacy and negotiations through round-tables and conferences that allow not only Swedish and Bosnian companies to meet each other but also interact with relevant representatives of Bosnian authorities.

Therefore, one may conclude that Bosnian immigrant organizations combine a set of formal and informal rules and tactics. Their home state related activities are conducted within the form of clearly defined and functional procedures that also support and finance their existence. By contrast, Bosnian immigrant organizations frequently implement their transnational activities in Bosnia employing informal rules and structures (Helmke and Levitsky, 2004: 726). They do so by directly targeting beneficiaries in the host state and navigating through local procedures using their trusted collaborators. For example, one interviewee reveals that since the import of medical equipment and school materials is a complicated and slow process they have decided to contact and collaborate with the Red Cross of the Federation of BiH\(^\text{10}\): “Through their own contacts, Red Cross monitored and assisted the import process of our anesthetic machines to Bosnia” (Interviewee 9, 2018-02-16). This leader emphasized how this collaboration with Red Cross ensured a much faster import of their donations. Similarly, a few other interviewees explained that their trusted collaborator also

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10 Red Cross Society of Bosnia consists of Red Cross of the Republic of Srpska, Red Cross of the Federation of BiH, and Red Cross of Brčko District.
possessed a wide social network in Bosnia and/or had connections that expedite imports of their donations through private connections. Other interviewees explained how by sending their representatives to provide and/or purchase donations they avoided transaction procedures and also lowered their transaction costs.

Immigrant organizations involved in transnational projects demonstrate being capable of following strictly designed rules by the host state, but also to find manners in which they ensure their projects are implemented in the home state in informal but legal manners. Findings suggest that the vast majority of transnational projects are conducted without involvement of home state authorities and through involvement of trusted local collaborators.
Chapter 5: Conclusions

This thesis aimed to investigate why and through which processes and structures Bosnian immigrant organizations in Sweden realize transnational projects in their home state. By applying the concepts of bounded solidarity, social capital, and informal rules, the thesis intention was to identify channels through which the investigated organizations implement their transnational projects and activities in Bosnia.

As this study has demonstrated, the primary motive and driving force for transnational projects and activities lies in bounded solidarity. Interviews suggest that immigrants’ transnational activities are led by their feeling of moral obligation to assist their fellow co-ethnics in Bosnia. Social capital and informal channels also play a significant role in the actual process of identification and realization of transnational initiatives.

Being able to navigate within two contexts, Swedish and Bosnian, interviewees reveal that their organizations have developed dual modus operandi. To be specific, their organizations are capable of dealing with organized Swedish bureaucracy, while simultaneously relying on social networks and informal channels to navigate their projects in the setting of a somewhat failed state such as Bosnia. As suggested by theory (Portes, 2010: 206), interviewees reveal that these informal channels are preferred to ensure that their donations reach the beneficiaries in an efficient and cost-effective way.

Furthermore, this research identified two types of transnational projects i) ad-hoc and ii) long-term projects. As discussed in Chapter 4, the majority of immigrant organizations implement ad-hoc, sporadic projects in Bosnia. Only three out of fifteen interviewed organizations have realized long-term projects that are implemented at least once every year. This data indicates that donations in aid and material goods are itself are not the major driver of socio-economic development in Bosnia. These initiatives mainly represent symbolic attempts to help Bosnians survive their everyday hardships.

Since the data for this thesis were based on qualitative methods they will not allow for a generalization of the results. However, this research provides a glimpse into why and how one of the largest and so called ‘best integrated’ immigrant groups in Sweden implements its transnational initiatives in its home state. On the basis of these findings, further research could focus on understanding the role these immigrant organizations have in the process of integration in the host state.

Finally, this thesis offered a unique perspective in the growing volume of transnational immigration literature by investigating informal structures and channels created by
transnational immigrant organizations. By reaching out directly to immigrant organizations it was possible to learn about their motives and the processes of transnational involvement.
References:


# Appendix I: List of Surveyed Organizations

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## Appendix II: List of Interviewees

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