

HUMAN SECURITY *first*



SHORT STUDY HUMAN SECURITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE LIVING IN COLLECTIVE/ALTERNATIVE CENTERS IN BIH

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INTRODUCTION

Youth Resource Center Tuzla as part of the project “Cross - Border Citizen's Network for Peace, Reconciliation and Human Security in Balkans” has conducted research during 2015-2016. Research was regarding human security of young people living in three collective/alternative centers in order to obtain answers to questions of dangers which young people face living in these centers and after leaving centers.

METHODOLOGY

Basic target groups of this research were young people from three collective/centers in BiH: Tuzla (Mihatovici), Bratunac (Bjelavac), Brcko District (Prutace), their parents as well as organizations and institutions which work directly with young people in these centers or have an impact on their lives.

KEY QUESTIONS

- What kind of protection is available to young people in centers?
- What is the role of relevant authorities in solving challenges with which young people face in these centers?
- Are challenges of Human security increased because there are no laws or because they are poorly implemented?
- How do life conditions in centers influence on quality and social inclusion of young people living there?

„Regarding social centers, they send all problematic persons here, as well as children, so they have problems with drug users and alcoholics. They think there are no rules here.

Female participant, Tuzla

PROBLEM

War in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1990s resulted in 1.2 million people who have left the country and over one million internally displaced persons in BiH. Today, two decades after Dayton peace agreement, over 100,000 people is still internally displaced inside BiH, including 8,600 people especially vulnerable population in around 159 centers around country.

Constant presence of these centers for displaced persons inside BiH – which in Bosnia and Herzegovina are called “collective centers” or “alternative housing centers” – represents series of challenges for all people living in them.

One of the most endangered group from this population are younger generations. They are facing series of security challenges which are not part of the everyday lives of their peers in BiH.

PROBLEM ANALYSIS

As it was to be expected, different forms and types of human security challenges have been identified during the research. After initial discussions with participants everybody had easily understood concept of Human security and their answers were connected with a lot of personal experiences and different types of security challenges during their lives in centers and afterwards. Some of them are: psychological violence, infrastructural challenges, ecological dangers, bad economic situation, social differences, religious violence, sexual violence, physical attacks, gender violence as well as cultural violence.

Three most common forms of security challenges for young people living in collective centers in Bosnia and Herzegovina are tied to **economic situation, lack of protection and lack of understanding from relevant institutions** as well as **cultural differences** created among young people living in collective centers and people living in surrounding communities. These Human security challenges prevail over all other forms in all three cities.

Young people from centers are not part of any youth policies or strategies in entities or Brcko District BiH. In addition they are not part of revised strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the implementation of Annex VII of Dayton peace agreement 2009/2014.¹

Young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina in general suffer because of unemployment, poor educational system and lack of opportunities, and these facts are even worse by displaced or young people living in collective centers.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROBLEM SOLUTION

Participant opinions regarding possible changes and perspectives for future are slightly different throughout different focus groups. This currently depends on situation, some of them currently are living in centers and some are not, so their recommendations for future are different. For young people and their parents who still live in centers **perspective is in the continuation of education and relocation to some other city.** For people who have lived in centers situation is somewhat

¹ Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the implementation of Annex VII of the Dayton peace agreement, made in 2002, was the first joined framework of the state document for defining aims, as well as needed planning of necessary actions and reforms toward final implementation of the Annex VII of general Peace agreement in BiH (agreement on return of refugees and displaced persons)

SECURITY CHALLENGES

1. Economic insecurity of young people.

„We pay for everything, electricity, water and garbage. In the collective center we haven't paid for anything”

Focus group participant, Bratunac

2. Lack of protection and understanding from relevant institutions

„We girls never walk alone at night. We are always in the company of boys when we are returning home from school.”

Focus group participant, Tuzla

3. Cultural differences

„Whenever there is some incident in school, they blame us from Prutace.“

Focus group participant, Brcko.

different since they now encounter life situations such as paying rent, utility bills, etc. For them as well future perspectives are tied to their previous life when they were living in centers. Reality and economic surroundings in the terms of socio, economic and political situation is not positive, and they have been living on the margins for the past 20 years. Somehow it would seem that after they leave organized life in centers, no matter how difficult it was, it creates new problems for people after they move out.

For young people living in centers some of practical activities have been recognized as priorities, as **setting up police station or constant police patrol in centers** (Brcko and Tuzla), **better implementation of the law and regulations (speed sign limitations** in Tuzla and **eco police for wild garbage dump sites** in Brcko). In addition for both centers **establishing some sort of control for the people coming to centers** as well as **setting up surveillance cameras**.

In Bratunac priorities regarding human security challenges are **economic strengthening of young people and their families** as well as continuation of education and **integration in local society** through some form of **youth activism and engagement**.

From the **perspective of stakeholders** all of them recognize difficult situation of young people living in collective centers, they recognize the need for **active involvement of other institutions** in the solution of security challenges in collective centers. Their opinion is that **larger inter sectoral cooperation is needed** with all other institutions relevant for Human security, opening or rebuilding existing **facilities which would be places for working with young people** in their free time. To seek from the relevant institutions - Ministry for human rights and refugees BiH to **include on higher level NGOs from BiH** in programs conducted by this ministry. In addition increase of the cooperation between police and other institutions with young people **through establishing mechanisms for communication and cooperation**, more **active work of NGOs with young people** from collective/alternative centers.

CONCLUSION

Young people from Bosnia and Herzegovina in general suffer from the lack of employment opportunities, poor educational system, lack of opportunities and those facts are even worse by young people living in Collective centers. Because of this all relevant institutions and actors need to undertake maximum efforts in order to resolve recognized security challenges of young people living in collective/alternative centers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase presence of the police in collective/alternative centers
2. Better implementation of laws and regulations
3. Opening places for youth activism as a part of collective/alternative centers
4. Increase control of people being housed in collective centers
5. Setting up surveillance cameras in centers
6. Working on economic empowerment of young people from the centers
7. Better and higher inter sectoral cooperation
8. Higher involvement of local NGOs in the programs lead by Ministry for human rights and refugees BiH
9. Establishing mechanisms for cooperation with NGOs