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Jačanje kapaciteta institucija Republike Srbije za
upravljanje migracijama i reintegraciju povratnika

International Organization for Migration

Project: "Capacity Building of Institutions Involved in Migration Management and the Reintegration of Returnees in the Republic of Serbia"

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R E P O R T

Survey on the Needs of Returnees in the Republic of Serbia





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Summary

The problem of reintegration of returnees to Serbia under the Readmission Agreement with the EU is big and will remain a constant topic within the strategic planning and design of policy measures in the years to come. In recent years, this fact has been adequately recognised in relevant documents in Serbia (the National Employment Strategy 2011-2020, the Strategy for the Reintegration of Returnees under the Readmission Agreements), and the collection of data on the needs of returnees has improved the database records for a more successful management of this type of migration.

The report was produced based on two surveys. One was conducted on a sample of 500 returnees throughout Serbia, while the other was carried out on a sample of 295 relevant institutions (service providers) at the local level in 100 municipalities in Serbia.

The main conclusions of the survey are the following:

1. The perception of the basic problems and needs of returnees is accurate: respondents from local institutions and organisations pointed out the same thing the returnee survey showed: that this is a poorly educated social group with high unemployment and a very bad economic situation.
2. Returnees are active in the labour market: they are considerably more oriented towards employment than towards obtaining social assistance, they are ready for various forms of employment support and it is particularly important to point out that the majority of them prefer self-employment support.
3. The problem of unemployment generated by poor education threatens to repeat itself in next generations as well, because of a large percentage of children who leave school before completing secondary school. For this reason, support in this field is equally urgent as the support in employment.
4. Another important problem involves housing conditions in which returnees live. This problem is more about the quality of housing rather than about the ownership status. Returnees would in this case accept various forms of support, and the problem has been correctly perceived by service providers as well.
5. Local institutions are relatively well acquainted with the problems of returnees. However, it may be said that it is necessary to expand the information on this phenomenon from the circle of individuals and instances in charge of dealing with this problem to a wider range of service providers, and it is especially important to better connect the various stakeholders in the design and implementation of support measures.





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6. The social safety net for returnees is especially weak in municipalities that have a small concentration of returnees: both, the perception of the problem and the nexus between actors in the support network are weak there, and this pushes the returnees in these municipalities towards the very margins of society. It should be borne in mind that nearly 1/3 of all returnees live in these municipalities.
7. The awareness raising campaign on the problems of reintegration of returnees should target employees of centres for social work as a special target group. Research has shown that they insufficiently clearly recognise returnees as a special social group, and precisely the centres for social work are places of cross-section of information flows towards other institutions on the needs of returnees and towards the returnees themselves about the possibilities of using various social services and support measures.





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Introduction

The problem of reintegration of returnees to Serbia under the Readmission Agreement with the EU is substantial and it adds a new burden to the basket of problems related to migration within this territory. There are no accurate estimates as to the number of possible returnees, but they usually range between 50,000, as was counted in mid-2000s in different EU countries, and the unofficial number of 100,000, as mentioned in the Strategy for the Reintegration of Returnees under Readmission Agreements (hereinafter referred to as the Strategy).¹ What is certain, however, is that these people are faced with numerous difficulties in everyday life and that they are deprived of elementary needs such as food, housing, health care, etc. One possible consequence of such a situation is a larger percentage of so-called secondary migration - persons returned based on bilateral readmission agreements who failed to integrate into society and were leaving the country again. This is why, as the Strategy emphasises, the integration process is the most important link in the chain of sustainable migration control. In order to successfully solve these problems and efficiently manage this aspect of migration, it is necessary to have up to date and reliable information on the needs of returnees.

The importance of a successful integration of migrants, including returnees to the Republic of Serbia, for the successful functioning of the community, as well as the need for quality and up to date information on their movement and needs were also recognised in the document titled *Towards Developing a Policy on Labour Migration in the Republic of Serbia* (so-called White Paper) that set key directions and elements for migration management in this domain.²

This report was produced as part of activities within the fourth component of the project *Capacity building of Institutions Involved in Migration Management and Reintegration of Returnees in the Republic of Serbia* that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) implements through pre-accession funds of the European Commission and in cooperation with the Commissariat for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia as well as the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of the Republic of Serbia.

The fourth project component is focused on supporting central and local institutions and service providers in the area of planning, monitoring and implementation of the reintegration of returnees, and the research underlying this report should provide an insight of the needs of returnees in the area of housing, employment, health care, education, social protection, obtaining necessary documents and overcoming language barriers.

¹ This was Germany's estimate in 2003 on the number of illegal migrants from Serbia and Montenegro alone in its territory.

² Manke, M. (2010) *Towards Developing a Policy on Labour Migration in the Republic of Serbia: A White Paper*. Belgrade: IOM.





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This project objective is in line with strategic orientations of the Government of the Republic of Serbia policy in this domain. The lack of reliable information on the needs of returnees has been recognised in the Strategy. The Strategy is the result of the efforts to integrate returnees into society through effective government policy, in an efficient, rational and sustainable manner, with full respect for the returnees' fundamental rights and their active participation. Part of establishing the migration management system should also be the strengthening of institutional capacity for conducting regular analyses and assessing the needs of migrants. This capacity is a prerequisite for successful planning, especially in terms of their integration into the community, and it should belong to both, managers in the public administration as well as professionals in service providing agencies, such as social workers, teachers, health care staff, etc.





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Methodology

Survey on returnees

The research conducted is a survey based on a structured questionnaire containing batteries of questions about the basic needs of returnees and obstacles to meeting those needs. Most questions concerned households and a small number was related to the respondent himself/herself. The survey was carried out by trustees for refugees and internally displaced persons from selected municipalities that were included in the sample and the questions were answered by adults from households who had gone through the experience of emigration and were at the same time able to provide all necessary information about their respective household.

The survey was conducted on a sample of 500 returnee households stratified by regional density. Three strata were singled out: a) Belgrade, the Raška District and the Pčinjski District, which have a high concentration of returnees; b) Banat, Southeast Serbia and Southwest Serbia, which have a medium concentration of returnees, and c) other districts, where the concentration of returnees is low.³ Within each stratum, surveys were conducted in larger and smaller towns, since the size of the town can be expected to have implications on institutional capacities and the quality of services provided.

Structure of the returnees' sample

Following the control of logical consistency and the quality of data, 435 questionnaires collected in 28 municipalities were analysed. The households surveyed were mostly concentrated in urban areas (86%, as opposed to 14% in villages). As expected, most of them were from Sandžak (29%), southern Serbia (Pčinjski and Jablanica districts - 21%) and Belgrade (22%). A total of 16% of households in the sample were from Vojvodina and 13% were from other parts of Serbia.

Among the respondents were 74% of men and 26% of women. Their age ranged between 19 and 68, but the concentration was highest between 30 and 50 years of age - as much as 60% of returnees were in this category. These are people with a poor educational structure, where one-half has completed primary school, one quarter does not have any formal education and another quarter has completed secondary education. Only two persons in the sample had university degrees. The situation is no better in terms of additional skills: only 4% of respondents used the computer, only 1/3 had a driver's license, 33% of respondents

³ In the Raška district in Southwest Serbia, the concentration of returnees is dominant in municipalities belonging to the Sandžak area: in the Raška district, about 85% of returnees are in municipalities of Novi Pazar and Tutin, and in the Zlatibor district, some 90 returnees are in the Sjenica and Prijepolje municipalities.





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spoke a foreign language (which is not surprising considering that many had lived abroad for a number of years) and 28% had some craft skills. The situation was even worse in terms of the position in the labour market: only 13% of respondents were employed, of which one half with an employer and the other half were self-employed (a smaller number in agriculture). The highest percentage of respondents were unemployed (around 60%), but there were many dependents as well (around ¼, mostly housewives).

These persons live in households with the average size larger than the Serbian average - 4.25 members. The average share of children under 7 in these households is 14% and the average share of children under 15 is 27%. Many households (62%) have children and the highest recorded number of children per household was 5 for children under the age of 7 and 7 for children under the age of 15. The average share of persons older than 65 years of age was unexpectedly small - only 3%, which means that a very small number of returnee households are multigenerational (only 10%). The highest recorded number of persons over the age of 65 in one household was 3. Overall, these figures produce an average dependency rate (the proportion of household members of inactive age) of 29%, with the highest number of children and elderly persons in one household being 7. Let us add that the average share of employed household members was only 9%, the share of those earning any kind of income was 29%, and the percentage of unemployed members of the household who are actively seeking work was 39%. Altogether, this gives a picture of a catastrophic economic situation of returnee households: there is a large share of dependents, a small proportion of those earning some income and an extremely small percentage of those with a stable income, i.e. a job.

Survey on service providers

The survey on providers of services to returnees at the local-level included institutions relevant for the successful (re)integration of returnees, as well as NGOs dealing with issues of migrants, returnees and Roma, as the largest ethnic group among returnees. The data was collected electronically in a way that the respondents themselves filled out the questionnaire and returned it to the specified e-mail address. Questionnaires were sent to more than 100 municipalities, to the following institutions:

- Local self-government,
- Trustee for Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons,
- Centre for Social Work,
- Branch Office of the National Employment Service,
- Local Police Department,
- Primary health care centre or other medical institutions,
- Primary school or school administration



The data collection method caused the questionnaire to be short and focused on main research questions. The questions were grouped into three categories: (a) general information on the respondent and the institution, (b) the perception of returnees and their problems and (c) the approach to dealing with issues of returnees.

Structure of the service providers' sample

Upon the expiry of the deadline for submitting the questionnaire, a total of 295 questionnaires were received. Replies came from 107 municipalities (97, if Belgrade, Novi Sad and Nis each count as one administrative unit). The number of filled-in questionnaires by municipality generally varied between 1 and 4, but there are several municipalities from which a larger number of questionnaires arrived, and these are all municipalities with a high or medium concentration of returnees.⁴ A total of 105 questionnaires came from the strata with a high concentration of returnees (Belgrade, Raška and Pčinjski districts), 69 came from the strata with a medium concentration (Banat, Southeast and Southwest Serbia) and 121 questionnaires came from the strata with a low concentration of returnees (other areas). This means that there are enough units in the sample to carry out an analysis by strata. During the logic control, we found 13 questionnaires from 8 municipalities that do not have returnees according to IOM records, where the respondents also replied that this phenomenon did not exist in their midst. These questionnaires were not included in the analysis, which means that the analysis was performed on 282 questionnaires.

By far the largest number of filled-in questionnaires came from municipal administrations (118), followed by centres for social work (75), the National Employment Service (42) and police departments (29). The number of questionnaires received from other institutions and organisations was insignificant. For further analysis, it is interesting to note that 64 respondents were highly positioned persons (heads, deputy heads, directors, heads of departments, etc.), 157 persons who, within their competencies, have or should have direct contact with returnees (commissioners, employees in centres for social work, etc.), and 74 persons employed on jobs that are not directly related to returnees.

⁴ The exception is Požarevac, where the estimated concentration of returnees is not big, but from which absolutely the largest number of questionnaires came (12).



Results of the survey on returnees

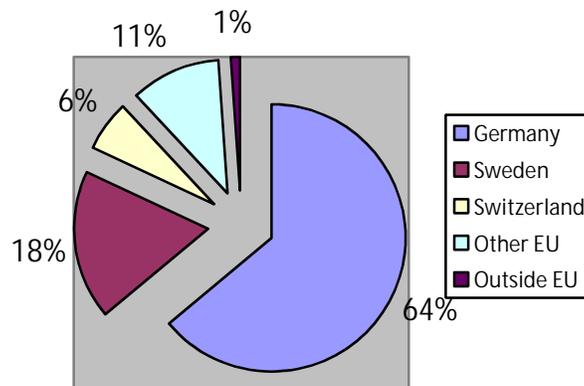
The experience of migration and return

The highest number of returnees surveyed resided abroad only once for longer than 30 days since 1990 (over 2/3). Another 20% had two such stays in this period, and only 12% had 3 or more stays. The surveyed returnees' lengths of stay visibly vary depending on the year when they emigrated. Whereas those who left after the visa liberalisation (2010-2012) spent one year or less in the destination country, which was the only possible length, the length of stay of those who went abroad after the political changes in Serbia (between 2001 and 2009) extended for up to 5 years (95% of respondents). If they left Serbia during the 1990s (more precisely, between 1991 and 2000), the length of stay ranged between 1 and 12 years (90%), while among those who left before 1991 there are persons who resided abroad for over 40 years in continuity (only 25% of these persons resided abroad for less than 10 years).

Most of them returned from abroad after 2000, as many as 92%, and the biggest wave came in 2010/11, when 46% of respondents returned. It is interesting that in mid- 2000's, there was a change in the trend in terms of the return destination. Namely, about 2/3 of the returnees surveyed returned to Sandžak by 2005, while in all other regions about 2/3 or more returnees arrived after 2005 (in southern Serbia this number was 70% and in Belgrade as high as 82 %!).

By far the largest number was returned from Germany (64%), followed by Sweden (18%) and Switzerland (6%). Only 4 respondents were returned from countries outside of the EU (excluding Switzerland), namely from Macedonia, Canada and the Dominican Republic.

Graph 1. The country from which they returned to Serbia





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After 2000, there was a change in the trend in terms of countries from which Serbian citizens returned (and to which they went). Until 2000, Germany dominated as a destination country (about 85% of returnees went there and returned from there), while after 2000 this country was a destination for about 40% of returnees, and a significant increase in this type of migration was recorded for Sweden, Switzerland, Norway and France.

What is interesting is that this type of migration is a family strategy - as much as 77% of respondents were accompanied by one or more family members during their last stay abroad. Only 18% of households have only one member who at least once stayed abroad for longer than 30 days. Two members with longer stays abroad occur in additional 20% of households, and 3 to 6 members in another 56% of households! Even more interestingly, family relationships are not a resource on which they can realistically plan such a venture, because most of the respondents (75%) have no immediate family members living in the country from which they were returned, nor do they or their immediate family have assets in the country from which they were returned (95%). This kind of strategy is more evident in Sweden and Norway (over 90% of respondents) and Switzerland (84%) rather than in Germany (71%).

A smaller number received financial assistance for their return, a total of 27%, and a larger number did not. For those who received such assistance, its amount ranged between EUR 50 and 10,000. The average value was EUR 888, and the highest concentration (60%) was between EUR 250 and 1,000. A total of 62% of respondents received a travel certificate ("laissez-passer" document) for their return and 38% did not. There is no visible nexus between the type of welfare state and the frequency of financial assistance when returning: in Germany and Sweden, 25% received financial assistance and in Switzerland and Norway 46% and 42%, respectively. Likewise, no significant nexus can be seen between the year of going abroad and the year of obtaining financial assistance when returning: among those who emigrated between 2010 and 2012, the share of those who received financial assistance was 25%, the share among those who emigrated between 2001 and 2009 was 30%, the share among those who emigrated between 1991 and 2000 was 25%, and among those who left Serbia before 1991, a total of 20% received financial assistance when returning.

An interesting observation is that 59% of respondents plan to go abroad again for longer than one month. In terms of such a plan, there are no statistically significant variations by country from which they returned the last time. Likewise, there are no significant variations between men and women from our sample. This finding should be borne in mind in light of the statement from the White Paper on labour migration that it is "... extremely important to consider the notion of 'migrant intentions' when devising various policy options, because success can only be achieved if migrants see a clear alternative to re-emigration".



Let us note at the end of this section that this kind of irregular emigration is not a motive for internal migration upon return to Serbia. Due to the sample size, this trend cannot be monitored at the municipal level, but it is noticeable at the level of regions that only the respondents who had previously lived in Kosovo or the former Yugoslav republics have remained in Serbia, with no clear concentration in one of the regions, and that all others returned to the same regions (Belgrade, Sandžak, Southern Serbia, other).

Lack of personal documents

In this part of the report we will describe the household situation in terms of basic personal documents. We asked questions about which documents household members were lacking, what were the main reasons for not having them, what form of support they needed for obtaining such documents and what type of support was the most important.

The main finding was that the most important documents were missing in about 7% of households, and that the main reason for their absence was that households did not have enough money to pay fees for their acquisition.

Table 1. Lack of basic personal documents, % of households

Type of document	% of households
Certificate of citizenship	7
Birth certificate	5
Marriage certificate	1
ID card	7
Passport	8
Work booklet	3
Health card	5
Diploma, copy or nostrification	2

We can see from the previous table that the lacking documents are interconnected/mutually conditioned, which logically raises the question of priority in providing support: obtain a birth certificate, then an ID card, health card, etc. In approximately one half of households in which documents are lacking, more than one document is lacking (usually 2-3). These are multi-member households, mostly those with 3-6 members.

Table 2. Reasons for the lack of basic documents, % of households

Reason	% of households
Did not even try, do not need them	0
Lost or destroyed	4
Never had them	1
Do not know who to turn to	3
Cannot afford to pay fees	14
Discrimination	2
Corruption	0
Other	3

The good news is that in this group there are only a small number of those who never had some personal documents or who feel that they do not need them. Of those who indicated a reason, 2/3 indicated one reason and the rest indicated mostly two reasons. In the latter case, the most common reason was the combination of lack of money on the one hand, and destroyed/lost documents or discrimination, on the other.

In line with the responses to the previous question, the most frequently mentioned form of necessary support was money for fees (18% of households, i.e. almost all that expect support). A certain number of households added some other form of support: explanation of the procedure 6%, presence of a third person during the procedure 5% and 1% expressed the need for something else. Finally, when asked to single out one of these forms of support as the most important, by far the largest number consequently chose financial support, followed by explanation of the procedure and assistance in the procedure.

Economic situation

As was mentioned in the description of the composition of returnee households surveyed, their activity and employment structures are extremely unfavourable. This fact has direct effects on the structure of returnee households' sources of income and their financial potential.



Table 4. Sources of income in returnee households

Source of income	% of households
Salary (from formal and informal, regular and periodic employment)	46
Pension	9
Social assistance	35
Assistance of relatives/friends	16
Renting of real estate	0
Selling of own agricultural products	2
Beggary	3
Other	1

The previous table shows a fairly high percentage of returnee households that receive assistance, whether social or from the primary social network. The fact that less than a half of households receive income from employment is also worrying. In households that have more than one source of income, it is usually a combination of employment and some form of social assistance (half of those cases) or employment and assistance from relatives/friends (1/4 of those cases).

The result of the situation shown above is an extremely bad economic situation of the households surveyed. Total consumption in almost half of the households (48%) in the month before the survey was lower than the minimum wage in Serbia (RSD 15,138). The average for all households in the sample was RSD 21,579, with an average consumption per household member of RSD 5,770. As much as 50% of households in the sample were below the 60% median consumption per household member (RSD 4,500). This data speaks of high relative poverty within this population category as well, i.e. of large internal disparities in terms of financial potential.

Given the previous findings, it is not surprising that as many as 97.7% of respondents stated that their household income was insufficient to cover basic needs such as food, payment of bills, health care, hygiene, education and local transport.

When asked to choose one answer to the question about the type of assistance that would most improve the economic status of their household, the respondents most often chose finding a job.



Table 5. Desirable type of assistance for improving the economic situation, % of respondents

Type of assistance	% of respondents
Finding a job	80
Obtaining social assistance	10
Assistance of friend/relative	1
Humanitarian aid	8
Sale of real estate or other property	1

The results shown in this table speak for themselves about the importance of supporting returnee households in finding employment for some of their members.

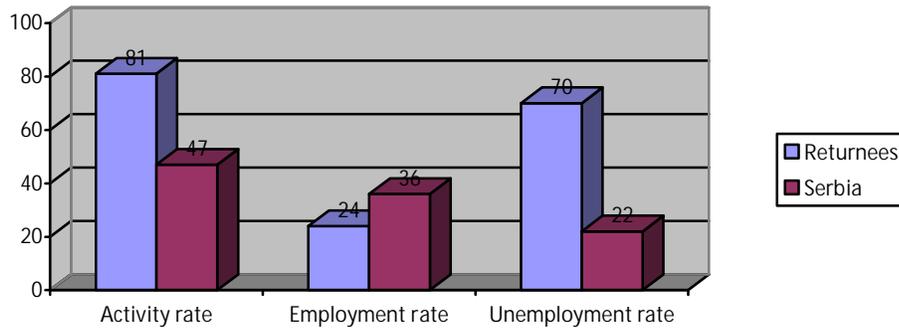
Assistance in finding employment

As was pointed out in the introduction, the situation of returnees in the labour market is extremely unfavourable. Based on the questions about the number of active, employed and unemployed household members, we found out that the activity rate among returnees under the Readmission Agreement was 81%, the employment rate was 24%, and the unemployment rate was 70%.⁵ These figures indicate a considerably worse situation of returnees compared to the already unfavourable picture of the labour market in Serbia in general.

⁵ The activity rate is the share of the active population (all people working or seeking employment) in the working age population (over 15 years of age). The unemployment rate is the share of unemployed persons actively seeking employment in the total active population. The employment rate is the share of employed persons in the working age population.

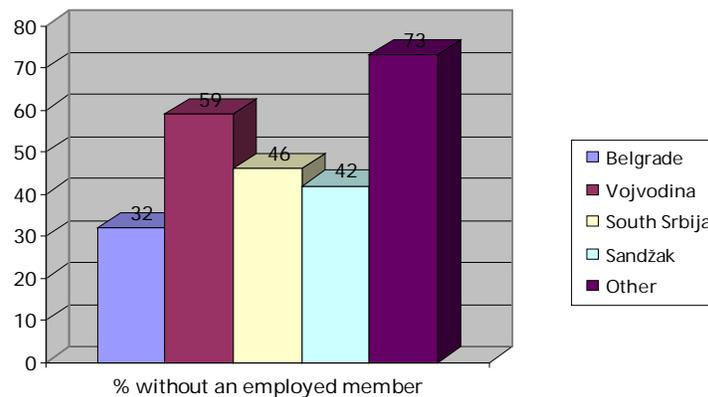


Graph 2. Indicators of the situation in the labour market, comparative data for returnees and Serbia⁶



A special problem is the fact that as much as 47% of households surveyed do not have any members who are employed (either formally or informally). This problem is not evenly distributed at the regional level, and it is least pronounced in Belgrade, which offers most possibilities both at the formal and informal market, and most pronounced in environments with small concentration of returnees and Vojvodina.

Graph 3. Regional distribution of returnee households with no employed members, %



⁶ The data are not fully comparable as they were not collected by identical instruments, but they indicate the difference in labour market positions reliably enough. Data for Serbia from the RSO communication for the last quarter of 2011.

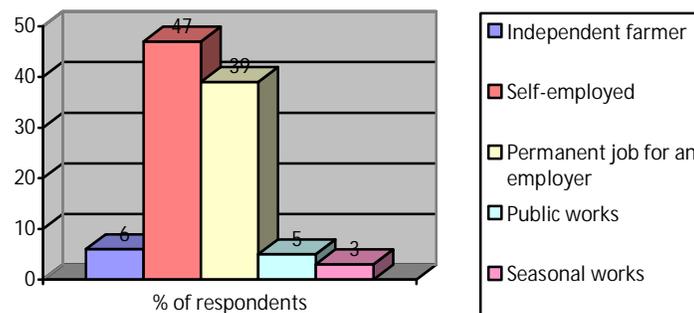


It is not only the overall returnee employment that is the highest in Belgrade, but the employment structure as well, in the sense that the highest average number of formally employed returnees and the smallest number of informally employed returnees live in Belgrade, while in the areas with a low concentration of returnees the situation is reversed – of all regions in Serbia, these have the lowest share of formally employed returnees and the highest share of informally employed returnees.

The total number of returnees registered with the National Employment Service (NES) corresponds to the total number of unemployed job seekers (about 700 in all households surveyed). However, 110 respondents replied to the question as to why their household had an unemployed member who was not registered with NES. The majority of them stated that this was because they did not believe that they could find a job through the NES. This is the most important reason for non-registration that was recorded in the research on the general population in Serbia as well. When choosing the most important type of support for registration with NES, the surveyed returnees most frequently indicated the explanation of the registration procedure as the first type, and the procedure of obtaining the lacking documents as the second most important type of support. Other forms of support (presence of a third party while the procedure is performed, improvement of knowledge of the Serbian language) were chosen considerably less often.

Unemployed respondents were also asked what kind of job they would like to get. Their most common choices were self-employment and permanent employment with an employer.

Graph 4. Desirable type of employment, unemployed returnees, in %



Desirable types of employment do not have a significant correlation with the respondents' age (only the respondents above 45 years of age opted for agriculture somewhat more often), but there are visible differences in terms of gender and educational skills.

Table 6. Desirable type of job for unemployed persons, by gender, %

Type of job	Gender	
	Male	Female
Independent farmer	6	0
Own business (self-employed)	49	17
Permanent job for an employer	39	42
Public works	4	33
Seasonal works	2	8

From the table above it can be concluded that men are more likely to start their own business, whether in agriculture or some other field, while women are more likely to opt for occasional engagement in public or seasonal works, and they equally often choose employment with an employer.

Table 7. Desirable type of job for unemployed persons, by educational skills, %

Type of job	Educational skills		
	No school	Primary school	Secondary school / craft
Independent farmer	10	3	6
Own business (self-employed)	45	44	56
Permanent job for an employer	33	43	35
Public works	2	8	4
Seasonal works	6	2	0

Here the correlation is weaker than with gender, but it is noticeable that less educated respondents more often choose low-skilled jobs, while those who are more educated are somewhat more ready to start their own business.



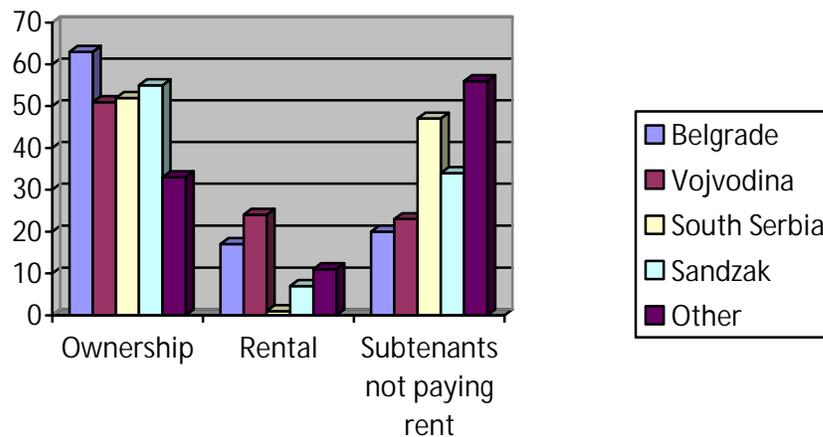
Housing

Housing is another important aspect of the returnees' quality of life. In order to analyse this problem, we asked a few questions about the housing status and quality of housing conditions, and about the desirable solution to the housing problem.

More than half of the surveyed returnee households own some kind of housing space, a total of 54%, of which 1% has outstanding loans. The next large group includes those that live in premises which they do not own, but do not pay the rent, 34%, while 11% have a typical subtenant status. The largest number of returnee families lives in premises intended for housing, a total of 89%.

Housing status is not evenly distributed by regions.

Graph 5. Regional distribution of housing statuses, %



We can see, therefore, that in terms of the housing status, the situation is again most favourable for returnees from Belgrade and least favourable for those living scattered across West, Central and East Serbia.

The housing quality was assessed based on the quality of basic infrastructure and the housing facility itself. The data are shown in the following table.

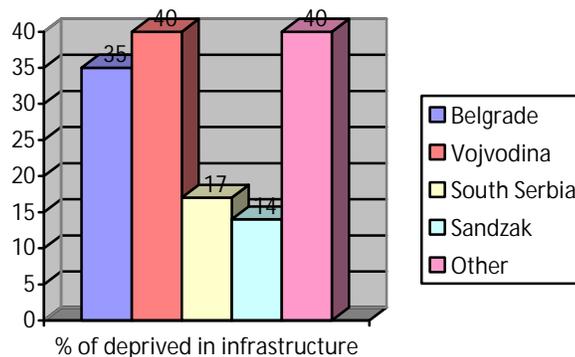


Table 8. The share of households that lack some infrastructural element or have some problems with housing space, %

No bathroom	35
No WC	26
No electricity	10
No running water	12
No connection to sewer or septic tank	34
No telephone connection	56
Not enough room for all members of the household	60
There is moisture	71
The roof is leaking	54
The walls/floors are dilapidated	62
The woodwork is worn out	76
Not enough daylight	49

In order to more concisely assess housing conditions, we have developed two indices: the index of infrastructural equipment and the housing quality index, and based on each of them we have classified households into those that are deprived and those that are not.⁷ Based on the first index, 27% of households were rated as deprived, and based on the other, as much as 71%. The regional distribution of scores according to these indices is shown in the following two tables.

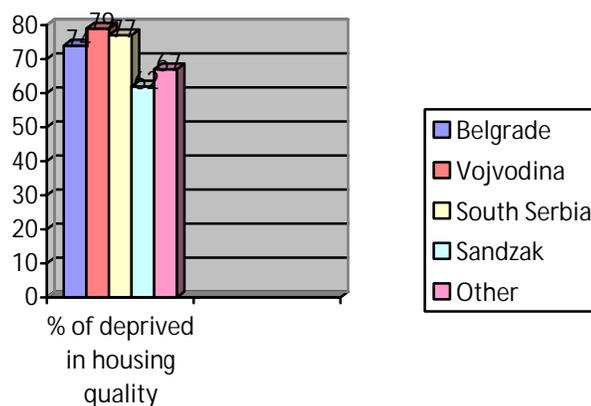
Graph 6. Deprivation in terms of the infrastructural equipment index, %



⁷ The maximum score for each index is 6; classified as deprived were households that lacked 3 or more units at the infrastructural equipment index and that reported more than 2 problems relating to the housing quality index.



Graph 7. Deprivation in terms of the housing quality index, %



It can be seen from the previous tables that returnees from Belgrade, although they own most housing space, have reported a low quality of that space. Based on these indicators, Sandžak is ranked the best, i.e. it has the lowest number of deprived returnee households.

Respondents would accept various forms of support for solving their housing problems. Figures for those living in their own space and those who are subtenants (whether they are paying the rent or not) are shown separately here. The table shows which form of housing support they chose as the best solution.

Table 9. The best form of housing support, owners of housing space and subtenants, %

Type of support	Housing status	
	Owners	Subtenants
Social welfare housing	0	26
Aid in the form of construction material	85	32
Prefabricated house (if they already own land)	10	20
Loan under favourable conditions	4	2
Purchase of the household with farmstead	1	18
Other	0	2

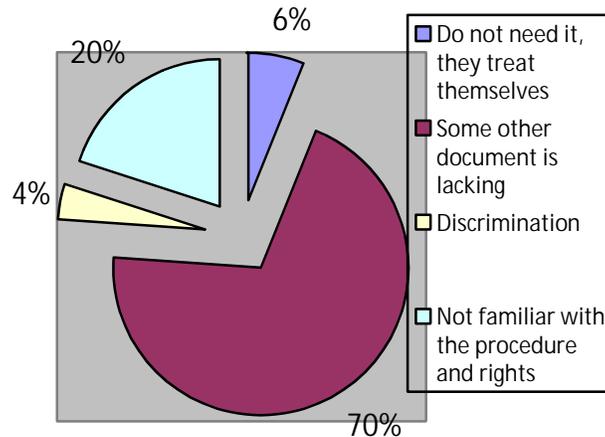


Healthcare

As for the indicators of exclusion from health care, it should first be noted that the main indicator, which is the rate of health insurance coverage, is similar to the respective indicator at the national level: our sample shows that about 11% of members of returnee households have no health insurance. This problem appeared in 18% of households, and 12% have more than one member without health insurance.

The main reason why returnees under the readmission agreement do not have health insurance is that they lack some other document that they need in order to obtain the health card.

Graph 8. The main reason for not having health insurance, %



In line with the above mentioned, our respondents believe that the most important support they need in order to be eligible for health insurance concerns obtaining of documents (46%) and explanation of procedures (30%).

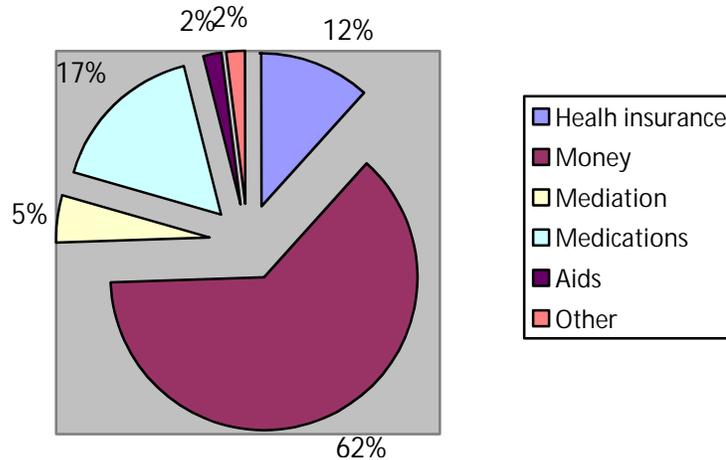
Given that the population represented by our sample is fairly young, it is a surprising fact that one quarter of households has a member with a health impairment that requires constant assistance of others in everyday activities. This gives a number of 145 persons, or 8% at the individual level, which is already a better picture than the one provided by the assessment of the share of persons with disabilities at the national level (10%). The numbers showing officially verified disability are approximately twice as low and, according to those numbers, there are 13% of households that have persons with disabilities and some 4% of persons with disabilities are among the returnees.

Household members who have serious health impairments are mostly lacking money, medications are somewhat important as well, whereas health insurance, mediation in



exercising their right to treatment, aids and home assistance are mentioned considerably less often.

Graph 9. The most important assistance for members with serious health impairments, %



Education

We have monitored two indicators in this field: the coverage related to the pre-school education and the coverage related to the primary and secondary education. We have done the survey related to the number of households with children not attending kindergarten or school asking their families what were the main reasons for their absence, as well as what type of support is the most needed to achieve the regularity in attending kindergarten and school.

According to the sample, there were 31% of households having children at the age of six not attending kindergarten. That is 218 children or 74% of all the children at that age, indicating a rather weak coverage relating to pre-school education. The most significant reason for that, according to our respondents, is the lack of financial resources. Another important reason is that some people look after their children at home, whilst the ignorance of procedures and the remoteness of a kindergarten are rarely stated as a reason.

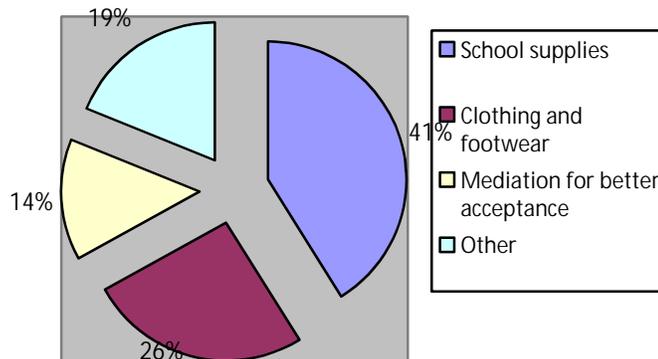
The termination of education prior to acquiring qualifications is fairly frequent with regard to the households of returnees. Up to 28% of children at the age of 7-18 do not attend school. This is the case with regard to 17% of children. The main obstacle for larger involvement here is also money. Another reason is related to the lack of certain documents needed for the enrolment and attending of school, whilst other reasons are almost completely



insignificant. For instance, the fact of not being familiar with the Serbian language is presented in solely 5% of households.

When indicating what type of support they need the most so that children may attend school regularly (apart from financial support), respondents pointed out mostly school supplies, clothing items and footwear.

Graph 10. The most needed support relating to regular school attending, %



Social protection

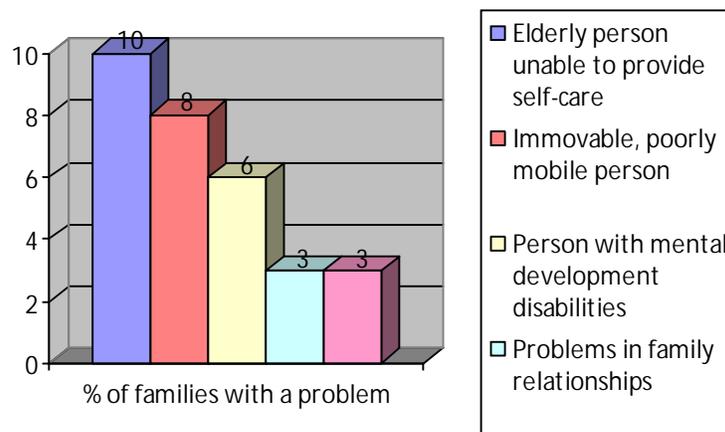
As for the right to financial assistance, the situation corresponds to the economic status referring to the poverty of returnees under the readmission agreement. Therefore, it is not surprising that this group realises the larger share of social transfers than the general population of Serbia. The compensation for home care and assistance was received by 3% of households, financial assistance to the family was provided to as much as 26% of households, children's allowance to 38%, maternity allowance to 4%, one-off assistance to 14% and eating in the soup kitchen to 9%.

Through the example of financial assistance provided to the family, we can see what the main problems of returnees are relating to better access to financial forms of social assistance. Namely, the largest number of families not having realised the right to the financial assistance (46%) have been disqualified either owing to the fact that they have not passed the financial threshold or owing to other reasons. 10% of the respondents claim that they do not need financial family assistance. However, 18% are not acquainted with the programme, 10% do not know where to apply, whereas 15% do not have all the needed documents.



According to the previous findings, the necessity for the assistance of the community regarding returnees following the readmission agreement is rather high. In addition to already described problems related to the bad financial situation, high unemployment and miserable housing conditions there are several specific social problems requiring the assistance of expert services. The frequency of the occurrence of these problems is shown in the following graph.

Graph 11. The frequency of the occurrence of social problems, % of families

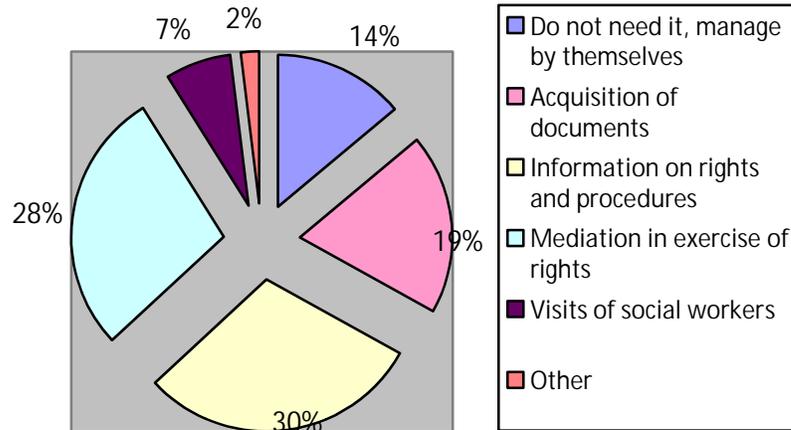


Out of all of the stated problems the social vulnerability index has been construed, relating to which every household having more than one problem is considered endangered. There were 7% of the above-mentioned households in the sample; however, they are regionally unbalanced. Again the problem was the largest amongst the families living in the area of Western, Central and Eastern Serbia. In these areas there were 15% of vulnerable families, whereas there were 3% of vulnerable families on the territory of Sandžak, 4% in Vojvodina, 6% in the South and 10% in Belgrade. An extremely low number of households obtained financial assistance with regard to the stated problem (less than 10 regarding all of the problems), regardless of the fact whether they originate from public institutions or civil society organisations. The most stated reasons for not obtaining assistance was that it was not asked for, and also that the competent institution was rather remote. In some rare situations, the lack of adequate documentation was stated.

The questions asked regarding the necessary support for the realisation of the right to social welfare service were responded by respondents eagerly and massively. The replies on the most needed support were versatile and are shown in the following graph.



Graph 12. The most needed form of support relating to the provision of social welfare, % of households



Social activism

At the end of the questionnaire, we asked several questions related to the readiness of returnees to jointly engage in the improvement of their social status. Rather interesting answers were provided. Firstly, only in 16% of households there is a member holding a membership in the association representing the interests of returnees, Roma etc. This is in accordance with the attitude of respondents regarding the possibility that they or their family members have an impact on the decisions of municipal or state bodies relating to the problems of returnees, with 16% of them saying that they felt they were provided with this possibility. However, 64% of respondents said that they should participate in the activities of organisations representing the interests of returnees.

This image is rather unbalanced when observing different regions. Generally speaking, activism is the least presented in Belgrade, which is followed by Sandžak, and the most presented in Vojvodina and in the areas where returnees are rarely settling. The readiness for the participation in the activities of organisations representing the interests of returnees was expressed in Sandžak as well.



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Results of the survey on service providers

Perception of returnees and their problems

In this part of the research we wanted to establish whether respondents actually noticed the problem of returnees in their municipality and what the volume of the said problem was in their opinion. We also requested from respondents to individually assess the main problems which we detected during the surveys performed with regard to returnees, as well as certain problems that are stereotypically connected to this population (for instance, begging and crime).

The basic question is whether the respondents have noticed that there were returnees under the readmission agreement living in their municipality. The analysis based on the density of the concentration of returnees provides interesting results. If maybe we could say that the fact that there are solely 60% of respondents from the stratum with a low concentration of returnees who noticed that these individuals were present in their municipality was an expected result, the fact that this phenomenon was noticed by 75% of respondents from the medium concentration stratum and (solely) 78% respondents from the high concentration stratum, is worrying. In the high concentration stratum, 12% of respondents replied that there were no returnees in their municipality, while 10% responded that they did not know whether there were any returnees. *If we add that only the employees from the municipal administration and centres for social work replied with „No”, the problem of not being informed becomes even more significant* and it cannot be justified by the fact that employees with executive responsibilities who do not have direct contact with returnees are somewhat more represented in the group of wrongly informed individuals. Employees in centres for social work are the least aware of the presence of returnees at the level of the entire sample (54%). This phenomenon has been noticed to the largest extent by the police (82%) and the municipal administration (80%).

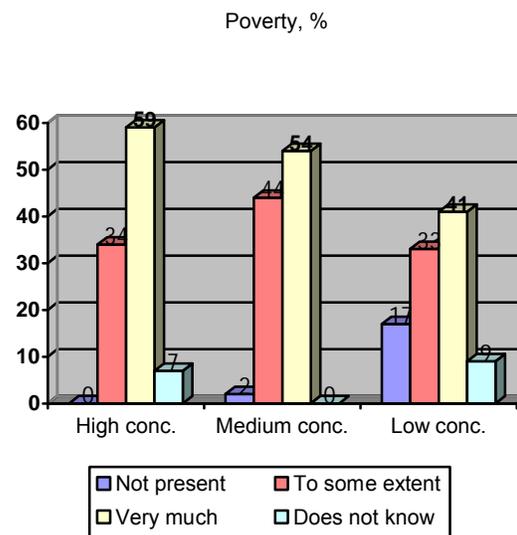
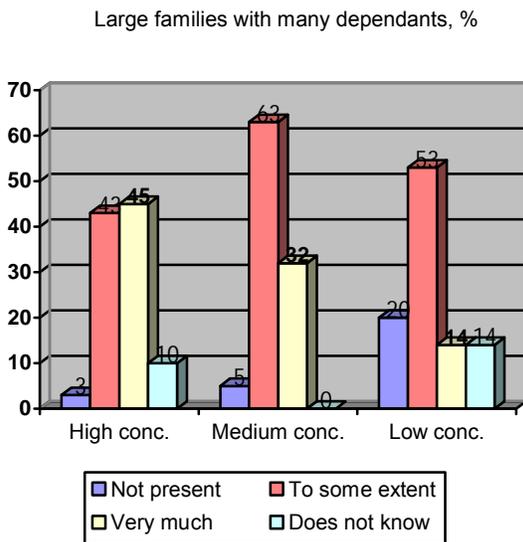
The estimation of the problems of returnees will be considered as reliable in the continuation of the analysis by respondents confirming that there are returnees under the readmission agreement in their municipality (n=194). Respondents were primarily asked to estimate how big the problem of returnees was in their municipality. Generally speaking, this problem was estimated as rather large (47% of the total subsample). A more important finding is that this estimation has, as expected, shown significant correlation with the density of the concentration of returnees according to stratum. In the stratum where the density of returnees is the largest, 26% respondents estimated the problem as huge; whilst as for two other stratum this value amounts to 10% and 5%. On the other hand, the problem has been estimated as non-significant by 41% of respondents from the stratum with the low density of returnees, whilst as for two other stratum this value is twice lower.





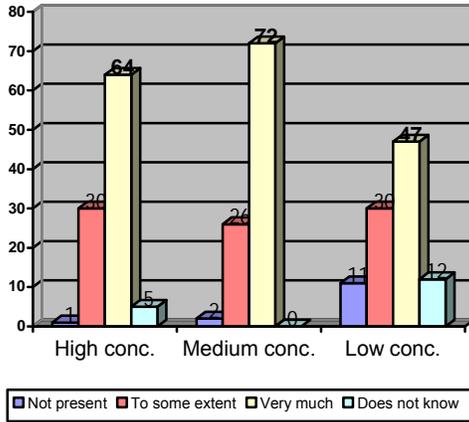
The distribution of the estimation of the scope of the problem of returnees according to the institution in which respondents are employed provides a less clear image. Only several deviations are worth commenting. The estimation according to which the problem of returnees is large was given more frequently by employees in the National Employment Service (20%) than by employees in municipal administrations, centres for social work and the police. On the other side of the scale, the employees in municipal administrations registered most frequently (17%) that there were not any problems related to returnees (even though they have confirmed their presence in the municipality premises). This is the finding which requires further attention relating to the planning of the activities with regard to the reintegration of returnees.

Respondents were also asked to estimate the intensity of the presence of individual problems of returnees. The findings related to this analysis have been presented in the tables below and have been subsequently briefly commented.

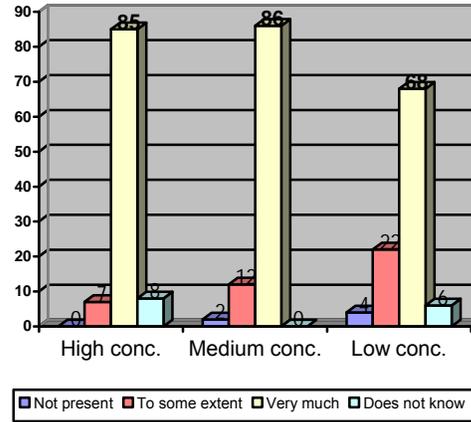




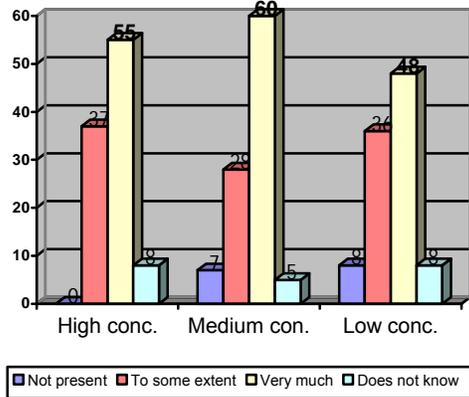
Poor education, %



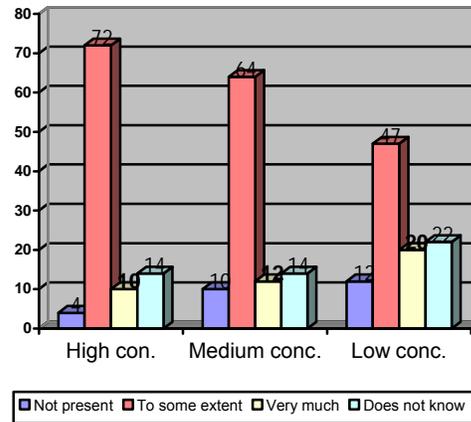
Unemployment, %



Passiveness, dependence on institutions, %

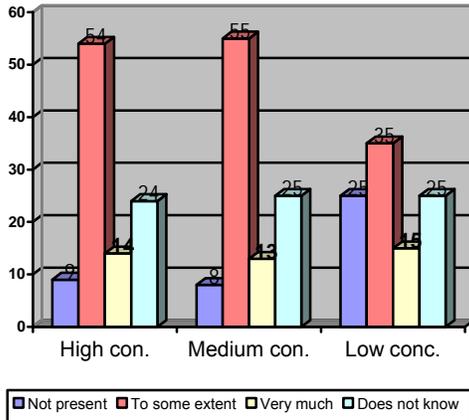


Health problems, %

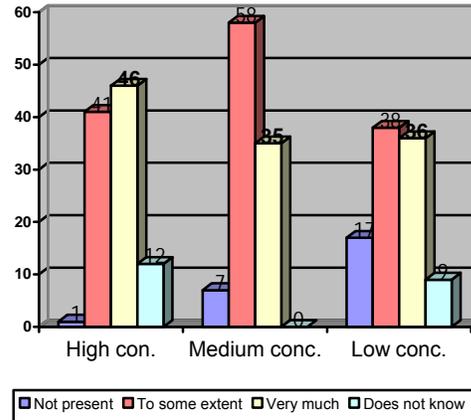




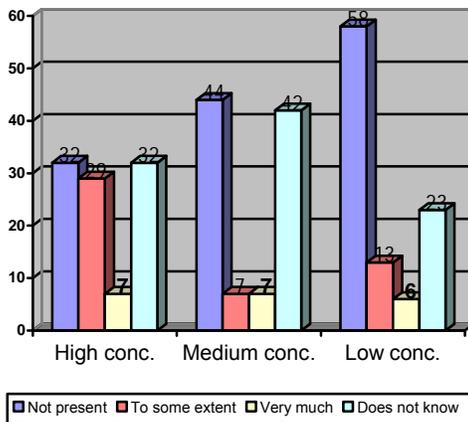
Social problems, %



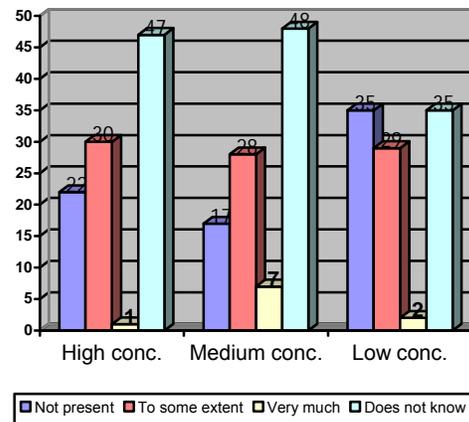
Poor housing conditions, %



Beggary, %



Inclination to crime, %



Several significant conclusions can be reached upon the analysis of the tables above:

1. Respondents from the areas with the lower concentration of density of returnees under the readmission agreement estimate the listed problems as very represented among returnees in their municipalities rather rarely, whereas, on the other hand, they reported the non-existence of these problems or the lack of awareness of their existence more frequently.



2. The most represented were the problems related to unemployment, poor education and poverty. This perception is entirely corresponding to the reality presented by the survey carried out with the returnees. The problem of miserable housing conditions has been adequately observed (equally often as much represented and somewhat represented). We can also add the perception of health problems of returnees, which is rather often estimated as somewhat present (but not very present), which corresponds to the findings relating to the survey done with returnees.
3. There are several significant wrong perceptions. Firstly, the problem related to the passiveness of returnees and expecting assistance from the institutions has been noticed almost as often as the poverty. This does not correspond to the image provided by the survey done with the returnees. Namely, travelling to EU countries in order to improve the financial status is not only the proactive strategy, but also the level of inactivity on the labour market relating to this category of citizens is lower than it is usually considered and than it can be measured in the surveys performed to estimate the status of Roma on the labour market. The number of replies „I don't know” to the question whether returnees have social problems is rather surprising. This datum shows that institutions and organisations, which should comprise the safety network during the reintegration of returnees, still are not familiar enough with the social status of this category of citizens. Finally, the ignorance of social problems of returnees is especially critical in the areas where they are least represented. We would like to point out once again that the survey done with the returnees has shown that in these areas returnees reported the presence of social problems in the family most often (individuals in need of another person's assistance, bad relations in the family, etc.). On the other hand, respondents employed in the institutions and organisations in these areas replied most frequently that these problems do not exist or that they were not aware of them.
4. Finally, it is interesting to say that two typical prejudices that might be related to returnees have not been mentioned, owing to the significant presence of Roma in this population, or at least not visibly, amongst respondents employed in the institutions and organisations having participated in the survey. Namely, 2/3 or even more respondents said there was no street begging or inclination to crime amongst returnees, or they replied that they were not aware of it. The proportion of those having estimated these problems as very much present is extremely low.

When the perception of the mentioned problems is analysed through the institution where the respondent is employed, it should first be pointed out that dispersal of the sample due to unawareness of the presence of returnees in their local environment still leaves a sufficient number of questionnaires to be analysed, namely those from local self-governments and centres for social work. However, there are not any significant variations between these two



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categories of respondents. Both types of respondents noticed correctly that poverty, unemployment and poor education presented the largest problems of returnees. Neither group showed obvious prejudices towards returnees related to begging in the street and inclination to crime. The only visible moment is that employees in local self-governments somewhat more frequently observed that housing conditions of returnees were rather miserable compared to the employed in centres for social work, who observed this problem as present to some extent.

When asked to state one of the listed problems as the most urgent to be solved, respondents did not provide different answers according to the density of the concentration of returnees. In all three stratum unemployment was emphasised most frequently (up to 40%), followed by poverty (20-30%). However, it is important to point out a smaller difference which is observed when analysis is performed according to the institution in which the respondent is employed. In this part of the analysis unemployment was stated as the most urgent for resolving (over 40%). However, as for the respondents from the local self-administration, the poverty follows (37%), whilst as for the respondents from centres for social work the replies were divided between passiveness of returnees (17%) and poverty (13%). Having these findings, it would be advisable to perform additional qualitative research in order to establish why those that have the most frequent direct contact with returnees have this sort of an attitude: because of the fact that they understand differently the causal and consequential relationship related to establishing the chain of social exclusion or because of the fact that the greatest number of obligations related to the implementation of measures concerning social inclusion become their responsibility.

At the end of this part of analysis it should be pointed out that over 80% of respondents from institutions and organisations hold the view that returnees under the readmission agreement do not jeopardise harmonious relations in their municipality, or present a threat to safety. Those who consider that this is not the case, are often situated in the areas with greater or medium density of returnees and they consider that this jeopardising is moderate, rather than big. Apart from this, this type of respondents is represented more frequently in local self-governments than in other surveyed institutions.

Resolving the problems of returnees under the readmission agreement

This part of the analysis should show the way respondents observe the approach towards resolving problems in their municipality, the role of different actors and their mutual communication.

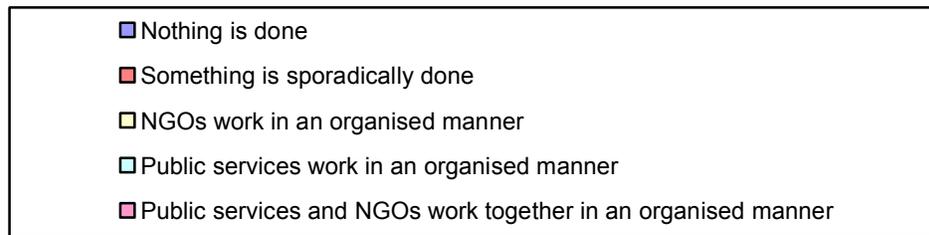
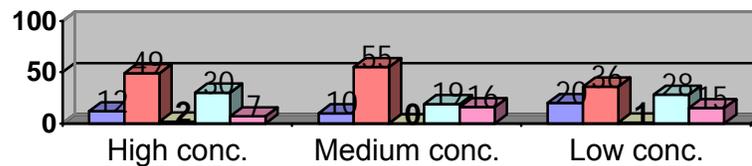
The basic issue is whether the municipal authorities are trying to resolve this issue. A small number of respondents replied that they thought that nothing was done to resolve the issue. However, it should be emphasised that their proportion is twice as great in the areas with a



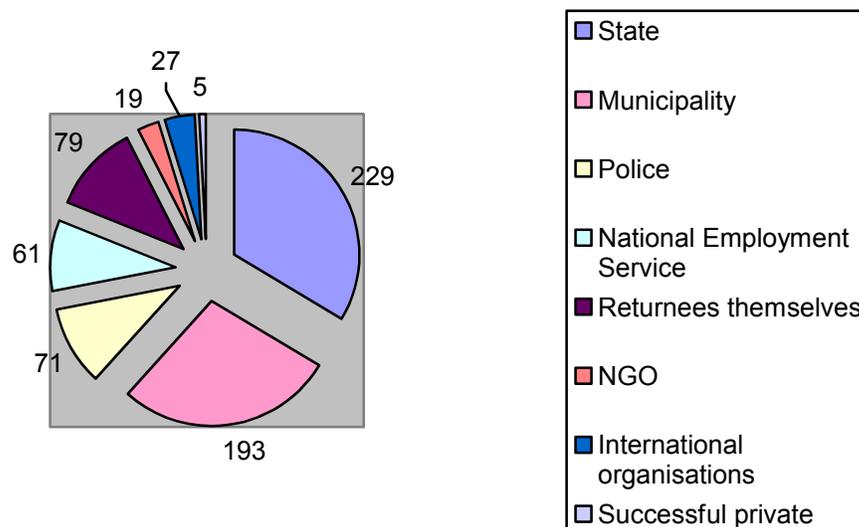


low concentration of returnees (20%), compared to the areas with a medium or rather high concentration (around 10%, that is 11%). Nevertheless, if one pays attention to the quality of that approach, the answer according to which the resolving of this problem is performed sporadically is dominant. The replies to this question have been somewhat differentiated according to the density of the concentration of returnees within the territory. In the areas with the highest concentration of returnees, the cooperation between public institutions and NGOs is insufficient, whilst in the areas with a medium concentration the organised work of public institutions is observed more rarely than in the other two stratum.

Is the municipality working on solving the problems of returnees, %



Then, the respondents were asked to state three of the most important actors regarding the problem of reintegration of returnees. The results relating to all three positions are shown in the following graph.



The general concept of the state presenting an actor for the resolving of the problem concerning the reintegration of returnees was mentioned most frequently by respondents. In this respect, the state is followed by the municipality (also as a general term). Institutions, such as the National Employment Service or the police are not that frequent as a reply. It is important to point out that returnees, as the main actors of reintegration, occur as often as the police or the National Employment Service.

The most frequent combination of replies is that the state is holding the first position (as the most important actor in the process of reintegration); the municipality holds the second position, whereas the police, National Employment Service or returnees themselves hold the third position. This sequence does not show significant variations regarding the density of the concentration of returnees or the institution/organisation in which the respondent is employed.

In order to check the fulfilment of institutional suppositions relating to the planning and implementing of measures related to the reintegration of returnees, we asked whether the problems of returnees presented a part of a strategic document in the municipality and whether the institution competent for these problems had been defined. Placing the problem of returnees in strategic documents is related to the intensity of this problem presented through the density of the concentration of refugees. In areas with returnees more represented, the answer that they are mentioned in certain strategies or an action plan is more frequent (43% of respondents), whereas this percentage in the areas with the moderate concentration of returnees is 17%, and with the lowest concentration 13%. The mentioning of the problem of returnees in strategic documents is somewhat more observed

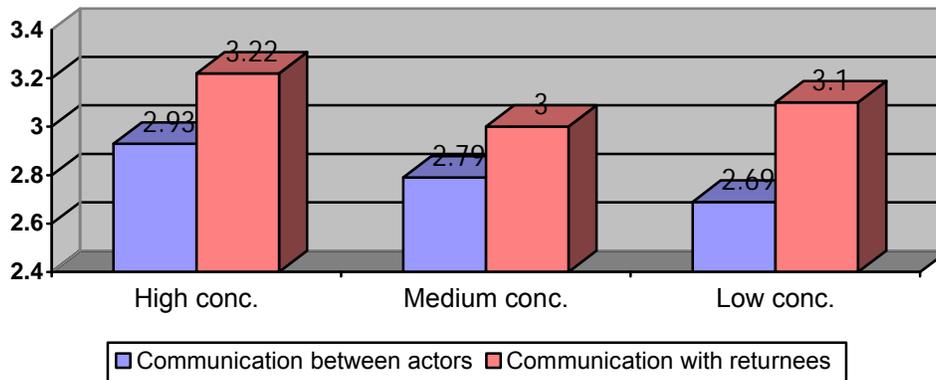


by employees in local self-governments than those employed in the centre for social work (31% compared to 20%).

The competence of a certain institution (most often the competence is divided amongst several institutions) is recognised by 62% of respondents from the stratum with a high concentration of returnees, 54% from the stratum with a medium and 55% from the stratum with a low concentration of returnees. Employees in the local self-governments recognised the competence of a certain institution more frequently than those employed in centres for social work (66% compared to 47%).

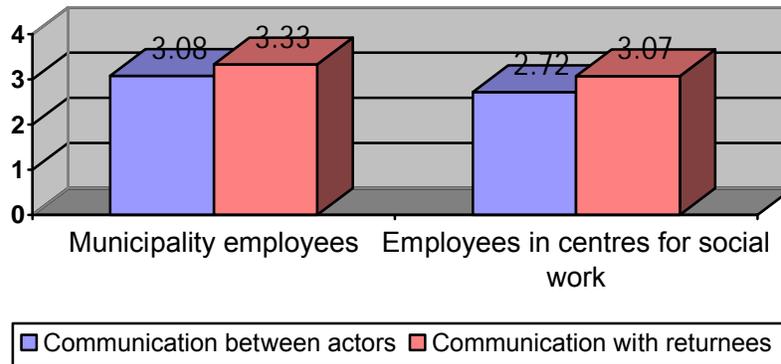
In this context it is interesting to observe how respondents estimated the communication between actors in the process of resolving the problem of reintegration of returnees. Respondents were asked firstly to estimate the communication between actors, and then to estimate the communication between their institution/organisation and returnees. Their assessments could be marked on a scale from one to five, so that they are presented here as an average grade.

Communication in solving the problems of returnees, according to the concentration of returnees, average on a scale from 1 to 5





Communication in solving the problems of returnees, according to the institution of employment, average on a scale from 1 to 5



Several important conclusions may be reached from the graph:

- Communication gets better grades where the problem is greater (higher concentration of returnees)
- Communication with returnees gets better grades than communication between actors

Employees in centres for social work estimate the communication with both, the returnees and other actors with somewhat lower grades than employees in municipal administrations; this is in accordance with the previously stated differences regarding the recognition of the presence of the problem of returnees in strategic documents and in the competences of certain institutions.



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Conclusion

Owing to the realisation of the survey performed with returnees and service providers at the local level the data enabling basic conclusions on the real needs of returnees regarding the support and the perception of those needs by those who ought to provide the said support have been collected. These findings at the empirical level and in the domain of the surveyed target group (returnees under the readmission agreement) confirm the basic conclusions of the report *'Towards Developing a Policy of Labour Migration in the Republic of Serbia'* (so called White Paper), which served as the basic study for the improvement of migration management in the Republic of Serbia. However, the findings reflect the real needs of returnees and obstacles for their successful social inclusion.

It is important to state firstly that the perception of basic problems and needs of returnees is correct: respondents from local self-governments and organisations pointed out the same that was emphasised by the survey performed with returnees: this is a poorly educated social group having a high rate of unemployment and detrimental economic status. However, it should be emphasised that returnees have been active on the labour market: they are trying to find a job. In Belgrade, which is economically a more vivid area, they are more successful in this respect than in other regions. Returnees are more oriented towards finding a job, than towards obtaining social assistance. They are ready to accept various forms of support related to the creation of employment. It is especially important to emphasise that the largest number of returnees prefers self-employment support.

On the one hand, returnees emphasise unemployment as a great problem, whereas, on the other hand, local providers of services point out the creation of employment for this category of citizens as their primary goal. However, there is a wide gap between the perception of the problem and it's resolving. Surveyed representatives of local institutions hold the view that the state and municipalities should play the leading role in this respect. If one bears in mind that the serious engagement of local self-governments is required for the realisation of active measures at the local level in the field of creation of employment, and considerable funds from the state budget as well, it cannot be concluded that there are favourable conditions for improvement in this area. New measures stipulated by relevant strategic documents (National Employment Strategy 2011-2020, Strategy on Reintegration of Returnees under the Readmission Agreement), with some of them having been piloted through the Fund for the Employment of Youth, present a step forward with regard to the resolution of this problem.

The problem of unemployment owing to low qualifications is threatening to exist in the next generations as well, given that the percentage of children terminating their education prior to completing the secondary education is rather high. Owing to this, the support in this area is equally urgent as the support in finding employment.





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Another problem demands more attention and supportive measures, and this is the quality of housing conditions. This problem refers to the quality of housing more than to the ownership status, even though according to the second indicator as well, the status of returnees is worse than the average for Serbia. In this case, returnees would accept various forms of support, and the problem is correctly observed also by the providers of services.

Local institutions are relatively familiar with the problems of returnees. However, it can be said that the information on this phenomenon should be disseminated by individuals and institutions obligated to deal with this problem to as many service providers as possible. It is necessary to connect different actors when developing and implementing supportive measures. This conclusion especially refers to municipalities in which the concentration of returnees is low: the perception of the problems and interconnection between the actors in the support network in these areas are insufficient, pushing returnees in these municipalities to the margins of the society. One should bear in mind that almost 1/3 of returnees live in these municipalities.

The special target group in the campaign of raising awareness to the problems related to the reintegration of returnees should be composed of the employees in centres for social work. The research has shown that they do not observe returnees as a separate social group. On the other hand, centres for social work present the place of intersection of the flow of information of this kind towards other institutions on the needs of returnees, and to returnees themselves regarding the possibility to use various social services and supportive measures.

At the very end we would like to point out one more finding of the survey. During the analysis of the survey with returnees the respondents were classified in four groups depending on the year of their last journey abroad. The first group was composed of individuals leaving following the visa liberalisation (2010 and later), the second group of those leaving following the political changes in Serbia (2001-2009), the third group was composed of individuals leaving following the break-up of former Yugoslavia and the commencement of armed conflicts (1991-2000) and the fourth of individuals who left before 1990. According to the analysis, there is no significant difference amongst the first three groups regarding socio-economic status and needs. However, the fourth group, which is composed of individuals who left earlier and stayed the longest abroad, shows more serious social and economic vulnerability. Unfortunately, the sample included only 21 people belonging to this category, so the findings related to them cannot be observed as statistically significant. Nevertheless, the fact that within this group there are more households without any employed family members compared to other groups, that there are significantly less households without salary income and consequently more households generating income from social assistance, that there is a large number of individuals not having the ID card or passport, and that their households are even more badly equipped compared to other returnees, indicates that this category ought to be additionally examined and analysed and that more serious supportive measures should be undertaken with regard to the said group.

