

This master thesis deals with activities of the international community concerning the refugee question and their impact on the process and current state of the post-war returns of refugees as well as internally displaced persons (IDPs) on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the period 1995-2010. The author analyzes and critically assesses the overall strategy of international organizations and particular implemented programs, whose conception was changing over time. The aim is to determine causes of such strategic changes and their interconnectedness with the return. Fifteen years after the end of the war, the author attempts to examine the socioeconomic situation of the returnees and the qualitative aspect of the return process. The main argument of the thesis is that the international community did not succeed in fulfilling the goals stipulated in Annex 7 of the Dayton Peace Agreement. Although over one million of refugees and IDPs returned to their places of origin, the physical return has not been accompanied by a “harmonious reintegration” within the local societies. The international community focused on the issues of property legislation, restitution and reconstruction that have – despite their importance – only partly tackled the complex process of returns. The unsatisfactory conditions in the areas of return resulted in a build-up of parallel structures of the local minority returnees and their move to areas inhabited by “their” ethnic community, or emigration. In the light of these findings, the author concludes that fifteen years after the war, the international community was conspicuously unsuccessful in its endeavor to ethnically (re)mix the Bosnian society and to take up on its pre-war multicultural, multireligious and tolerant nature.