

MUSEUMS' POPULARITY IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, WITH ITS CAPITAL (SARAJEVO) AS THE LEADING MUSEUM DESTINATION

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Abstract: Museum development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially in the capital (Sarajevo), is an accompanying phenomenon of the overall tourism development. The paper aims to identify and valorise top museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to comprehend tourism and museums growth features, including the tourist perceptions, which are important for sustainable museum and tourism planning. Tourism and museum expansion were investigated concurrently, with over 30,000 visitor reviews. The top museums were identified by analysing and evaluating reviews on popular travel information websites, taking into account the highest frequency and rating, and relying on the GIS mapping for their spatial visualisation. Statistical analysis and cartographic demonstration were conducted to determine the trends in museum and tourism development. The popularity of museums provides understanding visitors' interests since reviews are a vital component of destination marketing and planning for long-term development. Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly its capital Sarajevo, exemplifies the cohesion of tourism and cultural (museum) evolution. Key attributes of popular national museums enhance comprehension of the cultural dimensions of tourism development. The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina and war museums (Tunnel of Hope and Gallery 11/07/95) account for 50-90% of total excellent reviews, making them top museums in the country. Dark history (1992–1995) has a significant impact on museum settings, contributing to the building and preservation of the country's cultural identity while also promoting Sarajevo as a famous European city under the former longest siege in modern European history and today's leading tourism and museum destination.

Keywords: museums, tourism, cohesion, identification, valorisation, reviews, popularity, dark history, planning, promotion

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INTRODUCTION

Museum development in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been intensified in the last two to three decades, along with the country's steady tourism development, which is particularly prominent in the area of Sarajevo (capital), leading in terms of its share in the museum sector. Museums are the most representative and touristically visited cultural, educational, and scientific institutions and one of the key elements of the tourist infrastructure primarily in urban areas. The identification and evaluation of top museums provide comprehension of the characteristics of museum growth and their contribution in the cultural and tourism development of the country, thus clarifying trends for further museum planning and destination culture promotion. „Museums are one of the most important socio-cultural benefits of tourism because they preserve and present heritage, improve science, education, and cultural profiling, encourage employment and visitation, provide a better stay, generate income, and contribute to environmental urbanization and higher living standards“ (Žunić et al., 2023:131). “A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Museums foster diversity and sustainability. They offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing” (ICOM, 2022). Mitrić et al. (2021) highlighted museums as an important component of anthropogenic sustainable tourist resources. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, where tourism is the fastest-growing strategic branch of the economy, the positive tourism impact on museum development has been recognised. “In 2019, Bosnia and Herzegovina had the third-highest tourism growth rate in the world, and tourism contributed more than \$456 million to the economy” (USAID Fact Sheet, 2019). Based on the state tourism data analysis, Sarajevo is the most visited destination in Bosnia and Herzegovina, accounting for nearly 42% of total tourist arrivals in 2023 (Bosnia and Herzegovina: 1.733.071; Sarajevo: 716.293), as seen in the Fig.5. Museums, as the basic component of cultural and tourism infrastructure, particularly in urban destinations, are among the most popular attractions in the country. Mitrić et al. (2018) presented emphasised urban areas as the most popular for museum visits. Accompanied by the tourism growth during the last three decades, „approximately thirty museums of a predominantly thematic character have been established, particularly in the country's most visited destination (Sarajevo“ (Žunić et al., 2023, p.131). Tourist impressions are among the essential promotional aspects of tourist sites, and evaluating tourist experiences and satisfaction is a key principle and a required component of the sustainable monitoring of a tourist destination. The WTO's key goals for sustainable tourism include evaluating the quality of tourist products, services and experiences, or tourist satisfaction, that are critical in order to improve the tourist offer and promote sustainable tourism development. „Tourist satisfaction measures the subjective impressions of tourists. Asking tourists whether they are satisfied can be very helpful when identifying lacks of quality and possibilities of

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improvement“ (UNESCO, 2009). Therefore, tourist satisfaction can be understood through the visitors' feedback on particular tourist products, e.g., museums. „Feedback on tourism products provided by tourists in structured and unstructured ways, e.g. in the form of customer ratings, comments or product reviews“ (Höpken et al., 2018). For the purpose of this paper, Bosnian museums' reviews were observed to identify the top museums in the country. Sarajevo, the capital and a well-known „European Jerusalem“ (home to Muslims, Orthodox and Catholic Christians, Jews, and other ethnicities), as the most popular Bosnian destination, leads in terms of museum density and museum popularity as well. The most numerous and highest internet ratings (e.g., Tripadvisor, and other platforms reviews observed in the paper) are not only a tool to promote a museum, but they are also a draw factor for tourism destinations, as they encourage new arrivals and increase museum attendance.

METHODOLOGY

The paper aims to identify and promote Sarajevo as a leading museum destination in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The role of the country's capital in promoting tourism and utilising museums as the most significant cultural and educational tourist sites will be determined by analysing museum development in the country and evaluating their tourist popularity. Phases of the research are as follows: I. spatial development of museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with Sarajevo as the most prominent area; II. tourism valorisation of the most popular museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the capital (Sarajevo) as the leading museum destination; III. cultural and tourism-geographical identification of Sarajevo's top museums along with their cartographic extension. The methods of the research include: a) the spatial, tourism and attributive museums' identification and valorisation; b) statistical analysis of official data on culture and art at national level, along with their Excel processing and graphics presentation; c) fieldwork across the country, but mostly based in the capital (observations, interviews); e) spatial and cartographic analysis based on Google Earth Maps, which represents an important tool for the geographical objects (museums) identification by orthophoto images; f) data archiving and GIS mapping along with the creation of thematic museum maps for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and for Sarajevo Canton, as the leading tourism and museum destination in the country. Statistical national and the capital tourism & cultural (museum) data partially relies on the results from the previous study of museum development in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Žunić et al., 2023), as well as on the updated field observations and findings from the interview with museum' workers (5), including a massive data collected on the internet related to the Bosnia and Herzegovina museums' promotion; together they were analysed to identify the museums' development. The reviews of 33,348 visitors, which are transparent on famous travel and cartographic portals (Tripadvisor, Top-Rated.online, Safarway, Things to Do- Sarajevo Navigator, Google My Maps, Google Earth Maps, and Google reviews), were analysed for the tourism valorisation of the popularity of museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For the threshold of leading popularity, the reference of an average rating of 4.5–5 stars and a contingent of 1000+ reviews by BiH museum visitors from across the world at the level of summarised reviews is established, while 500+ per individual sample (due to the uneven number of reviews on different portals). Based on the evaluation model established in this way, the most important museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been ranked and selected, and the Sarajevo museums have been placed at the top of the list, marketing the capital as the leading museum destination in the country. Since the selected museums have been identified for their international significance, they are explored more closely in the paper, guided by the attributive tourist-geographical identification of cultural attractions and supplemented with thematic and orthophoto maps. The research will determine the top museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina according to tourist impressions, but will also explore the key role of Sarajevo museums in the country. Tourism and museum statistical and spatial analysis at the national and capital city levels will highlight the cohesion of tourism and museum development, as well as the major cultural and tourism functions of Sarajevo as a leading destination in the country. The paper will also promote top Bosnian and Sarajevo museums, including their attributive features; thus, it will help to understand the impact of tourist impressions on the museums and destination popularity as well, but it will also highlight the role of national history in its cultural image formation.

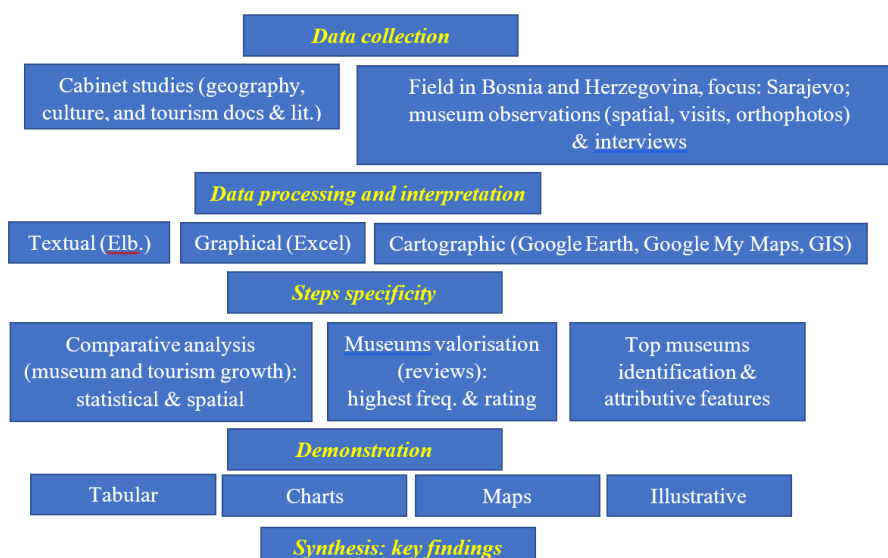


Figure 1. Methodology flowchart (Source: Author, 2024)

The flowchart of methodology is presented in Figure 1, demonstrating the phases of the research and the methods applied in the paper: data collection, data processing and interpretation, specificity of steps, demonstration, and synthesis. Data collection included both cabinet and fieldwork. Data processing implemented textual, graphical, and cartographic interpretations. Steps specificity relies on the comparative analysis of museums and tourism growth and museums identification and valorisation. Demonstration of the results appears as tabular, charts, maps, and real object photo illustrations. Synthesis reflects in key findings that Sarajevo is the largest home to the most popular museums in the country and the Bosnian leading museum destination.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Spatial development of museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina, focusing on Sarajevo as the most prominent area of museum blooming

Bosnia and Herzegovina is the western Balkan country with a total population of 3.531.159 and a multiethnic composition (Bosniaks 50.1%; Serbs 30.8%; Croats 15.4%; others 3.7%: Jewish, Romi, Albanians, etc.).

Figure 2 illustrates the ethnic composition of Bosnia and Herzegovina based on the 2013 Census, representing the three major constituent ethnic groups: Bosniaks (Muslims), Serbs (Orthodox Christians), and Croats (Catholics), making up 96.3 percent of the total population. It's a developing region with tourism as one of its strategic activities. Sarajevo (capital) is popular as "the European Jerusalem", as well as the most visited area in the country- it's a leading tourism destination. Museum development of Bosnia and Herzegovina has begun during 19.ct. with the first (National) museum established in 1888 in its capital (Sarajevo) during Austrian-Hungarian occupation. "The Museum of National Liberation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1945), the Art Gallery of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1946), and the Museum of Sarajevo (1949) were among the first museums in the country, followed by numerous other museums, resulting in a relatively large and extensive network of museums in the country. The museum's progress was halted by the war (1992–1995). Bosnia and Herzegovina has recorded a positive trend of establishing new museums, primarily thematic ones, in the past three decades (since independence in 1992); Sarajevo, the capital and the country's most important cultural and tourist destination, leads in terms of total number" (Žunić et al., 2023). "Tourism development in Bosnia and Herzegovina encouraged the establishment and building of numerous cultural and educational institutions, particularly museums of various themes, which remain an important part of the tourism supply" (Žunić, 2022).

According to Žunić et al. (2023), the period of 2009–2019 has been recognised as the "golden" decade of museums and tourism blossoming in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while their highest density is in the area of Sarajevo. The study explored the identification table of new museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina established during the mentioned decade; according to the table, at least 60% of all museums developed during this stage. According to the World Tourism Organisation (2021), there has been a continuous rise in the global tourism from 2009 to 2019, which includes Bosnia and Herzegovina. In terms of total tourism and museum development, Sarajevo leads the nation in museum expansion. The study by Žunić et al. (2023) examined the relationship between tourism and cultural cohesiveness, given the significance of museums in the tourism industry. Figure 3 represents an exponential growth of tourist arrivals in Bosnia and Herzegovina over nearly the last two to three decades, or precisely from 1998 to 2023 year. Figure 4 shows continuous growth in visitor arrivals in Sarajevo, accompanying a positive trend in the country.

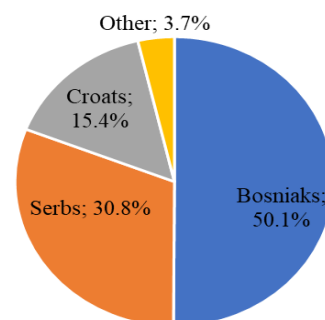


Figure 2. Ethnic composition of Bosnia and Herzegovina according to Census 2013 (Source: Author, adopted data from Federal Bureau of Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina)

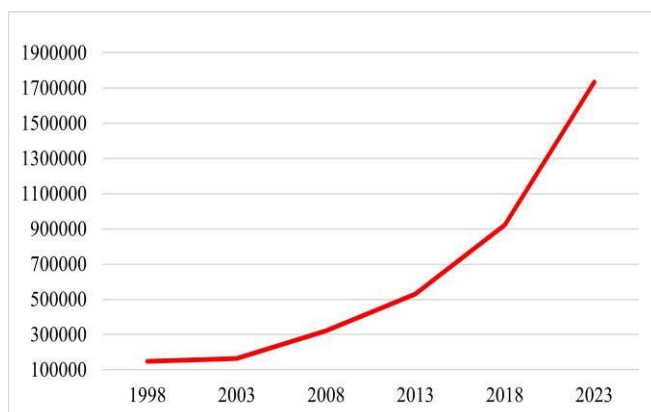


Figure 3. Growth of total tourist arrivals in Bosnia and Herzegovina during 1998–2023 (Source: Author, adopted data from Republic of Croatia Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and The European Commission Platform of „Worlddata.info“)

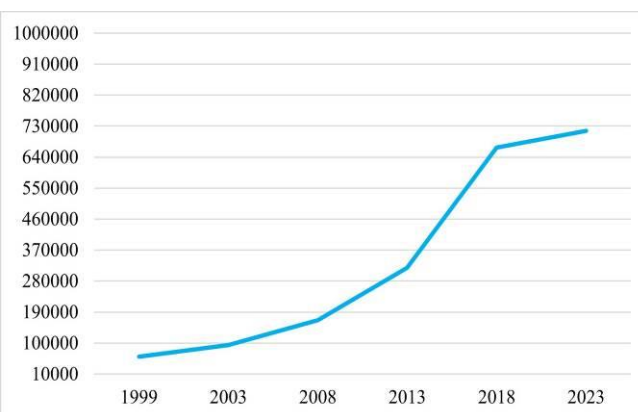


Figure 4. Growth of total tourist arrivals in Sarajevo Canton during 1999–2023 (Source: Author, adopted data from Development Planning Institute of the Sarajevo Canton and Institute for Informatics and Statistics of Sarajevo Canton0)

Figure 5 demonstrates Sarajevo's predominant proportion of Bosnia and Herzegovina's total arrivals, accounting for 41.33 percent. The national and its capital tourism blooming has stimulated museum development. Figure 6 demonstrates a positive trend in the number of museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the past decade.

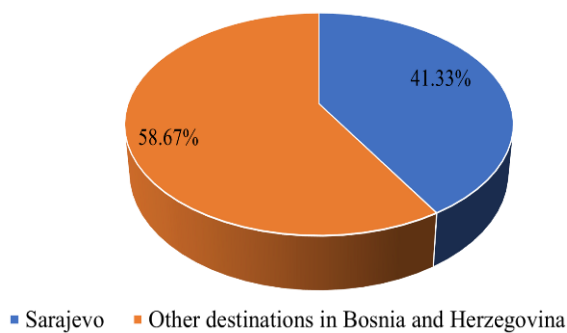


Figure 5. Sarajevo's proportion to Bosnia and Herzegovina's total arrivals in 2023. (Author, based on the statistical data from Institute for Informatics and Statistics of Sarajevo Canton and Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia)

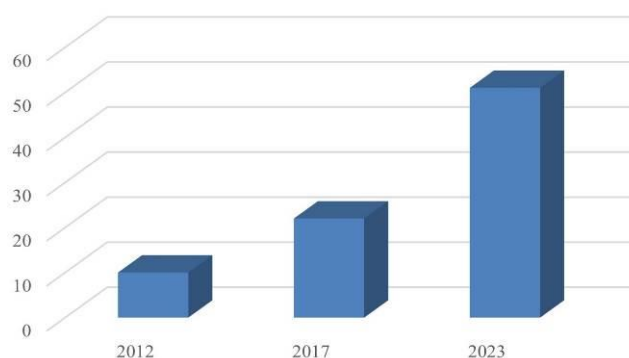


Figure 6. Growth in the number of Bosnia and Herzegovina's museums from 2012 to 2023 (Source: Author, adopted values from statistical bulletins "Culture & Art" of Federal Statistical Office and Republic Institute of Statistics, and supplemented by own field and internet research data)

According to Figure 6, two stages in the museum development can be classified within the observed decade from 2012 to 2023: a) moderate but continuous increase (2012–2017), and b) exponential growth (2017–2023). The moderate stage demonstrates lower investment in museum activity development, which was confirmed in an interview with several museum employees in Sarajevo, as well as in the results of the study by Žunić et al. (2023). Namely, the key problems of museum development in Bosnia and Herzegovina are: small size and poor facilities; a lack of experts; divergent political interests; financial obstacles; property negotiations between entities and districts; the museum's name reorganisation; low salary; poor statistical monitoring; etc. This stage, however, still indicates efforts to improve the museum network due to the growing tourism in the country, as museums are an important part of the tourism industry and "some of tourists' favourite choices" (FMI, 2023). The stage of exponential growth is a relevant indicator of rising awareness and more effective efforts to improve the cultural (museum) image of the country, particularly because museums provide controlled entry and significant fees, which contribute to the total tourism revenues. This stage could also be recognised as the battle to revitalise national tourism after COVID-19, including more significant investing in museums to enhance tourism supply.

Figure 7 shows museum spatial distribution across the country, with the densest concentration in the focal point of Sarajevo. The light red polygon on the map indicates that the majority of Bosnia and Herzegovina's museums are located in the country's capital. Consequently, the cartographic extract on the right represents the most important museums in Sarajevo. The majority of these museums were established in the years that followed the war, and their main focus has been on specific themes, the war memorials for example, and others.

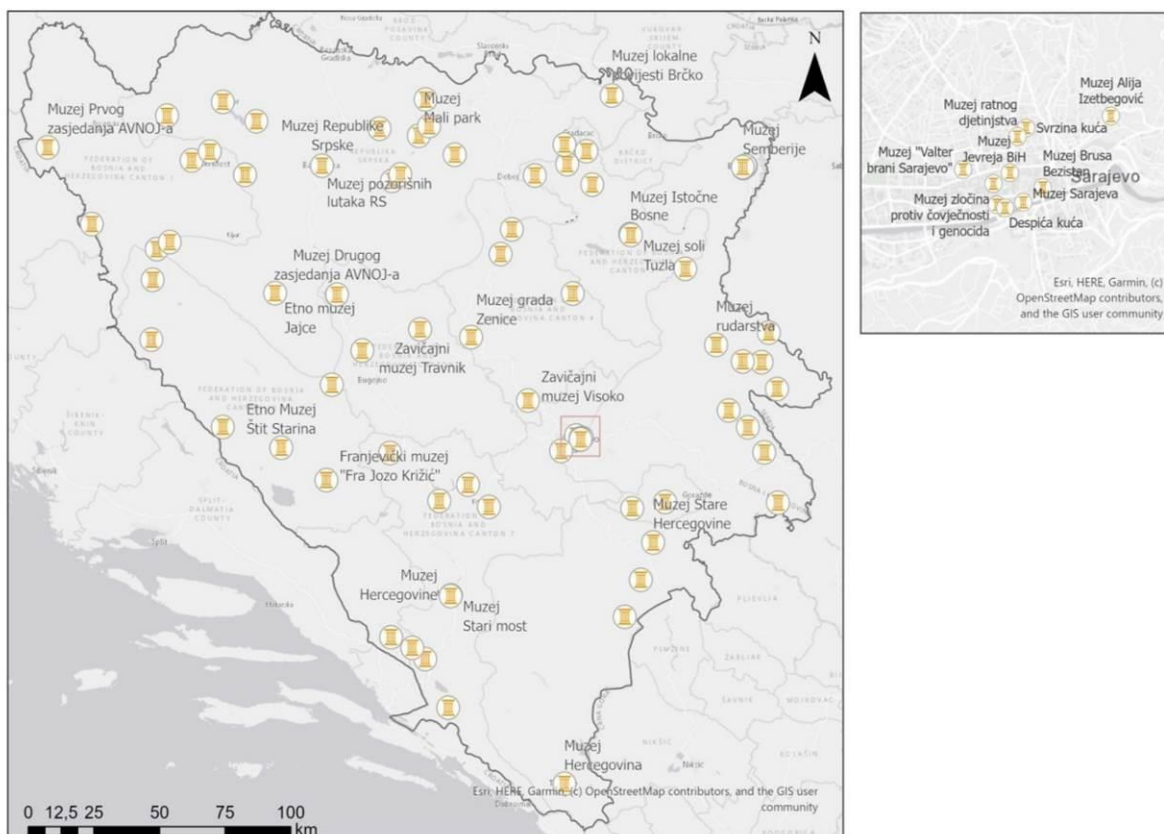


Figure 7. Spatial dispersion of Bosnia and Herzegovina's museums (Source: Žunić et al., 2023)

Figure 8 demonstrates that Sarajevo is home to the majority of the country's museums, accounting for 60% of the total. Comparing the data from the terrain observations and the museum data from official statistics, it's evident that the number of museums in the country is actually higher than in the statistical books, particularly in the area of Sarajevo.

This was discussed in one of the previous studies (Žunić et al., 2023), while the main reasons for this situation are: grouping museums, statistical errors, and the desintegrity of data on the national level due to the country's complicated governmental structure (two entities and one district). However, Sarajevo is steadily expanding its network of museums, as evidenced not only by the percentage of the city's museums in the total country's museums, but also by the fact that any traveller may observe the museums' notable presence in the area. According to the most recent observation period (2012–2022), the national museum collections had been expanding at an average annual rate of 2.02% (author's calculation based on the data from both Institutes of Statistics in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska), suggesting a modest but encouraging improvement in this area. The museum collections are diverse despite museum institutions being generally small in size; many of the youngest museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly in the capital, evoke dark memories of the country's recent war, siege, and sad childhood. According to Figure 9, four categories comprise nearly two-thirds (71%) of the national museum collection in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

These categories are ethnological, archaeological, natural, and historical. Collections from historical and archaeological museums comprise a vast array of artefacts from dark history, evidence from excavations, and materials related to war; these kinds of collections are constantly enhancing connections with recently discovered mass graves, new war traces, and other noteworthy war artefacts. Observing the data from 2021 at the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2022), the country's national museum's national heritage comprises more than 3.1 million artefacts. The natural museum collection is the richest with artefacts, with about 2.5 million pieces, accounting for approximately 81% of all museum items. The literary collection comes in second with over 360 thousand artefacts, while the combined or gathered historical, archaeological, and ethnological collections account for 250 thousand artefacts, etc.

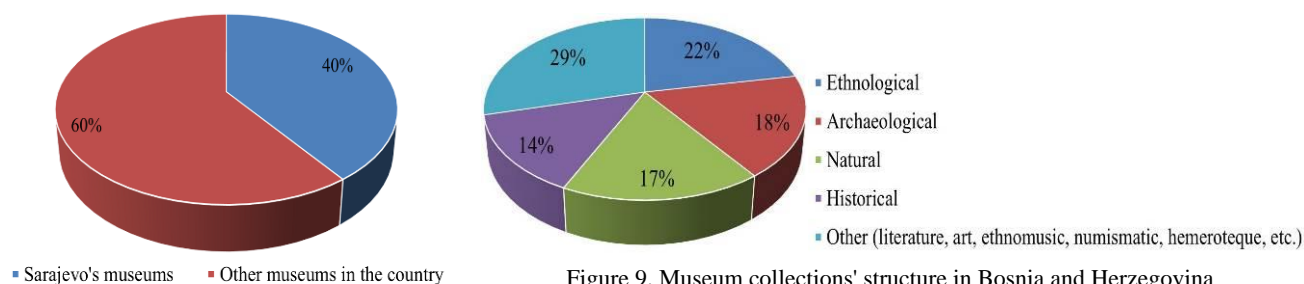


Figure 9. Museum collections' structure in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Source: Author, adopted data from Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina data)

2. Tourism valorisation of the Bosnia and Herzegovina museums: Sarajevo museums are leading in terms of their touristic popularity in the country

Under the category of "Best museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina," an online search conducted through the readily available tourist and information portals (Trip Advisor, Google Reviews, Google My Maps and Google Earth Maps, Top-Rated.online, Things to Do- Sarajevo Navigator, Safar Way) revealed that Sarajevo is promoted as the leading museum tourist destination in the country. The reason for this is that all the top-ranked and most frequently reviewed museums in the country are located in Sarajevo (Federation of BiH, Bosnia and Herzegovina). However, as the required 500 reviews were not received by all museums in the country, those in the Brčko District and the region of a smaller entity (RS, Bosnia and Herzegovina), for example, did not even meet the requirements for short selection.

Table 1 identifies the museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the highest and most numerous reviews, as determined by the work methodology (1000+ reviews with a rating of 4.5–5 per museum at the level of summarised evaluations from multiple portals, i.e., 500+ per individual evaluation source). Since every one of the chosen museums is housed in Bosnia and Herzegovina's capital, Sarajevo museums have the highest level of popularity among visitors to the country.

Table 1. Growth in tourism flows in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the 2017-2022 period (Source: Author own research - based on summarised internet reviews of Bosnia and Herzegovina museums)

Museum	Source/ Portal	AM 4.5-5*	Reviews 1000+
Gallery 11/07/95	Tripadvisor, Google & Maps, Top-Rated.online, Things to Do- Sarajevo Navigator	4.8	4.662
Museum of Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide (MCHG)	Tripadvisor, Google & Maps, Top-Rated.online	4.8	3.253
War Childhood Museum (WCM)	Tripadvisor, Google & Maps, Top-Rated.online	4.8	2.388
Sarajevo Tunnel of Hope (STH)	Tripadvisor, Safarway	4.7	8.639
The National Museum of BiH (NM BiH)	Google & Maps, Top-Rated.online	4.7	6.841
Sarajevo City Hall (SCH)	Top-Rated.online	4.7	4.500
Museum of Optical Illusions (MOI)	Google & Maps, Top-Rated.online	4.7	1.965
Sevdah Art House (SAH)	Top-Rated.online	4.7	1.100
Total Reviews:			33.348
AM:		4.74	

According to Figure 10, the most well-represented museums in the overall structure of reviews are: Sarajevo Tunnel of Hope (STH), the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina (NM BiH), and Gallery (11/07/95), etc. The share of the aforementioned museums in the total reviews by const. grade 5 is about 50–90%. The reasons for the tourist popularity of the selected museums are: the highest number of visitors; location in the capital; the capital as the leading tourist destination in the country; museum accessibility; the most powerful propaganda (which is also growing in popularity thanks to positive reviews on the Internet); theme and content of the museum (for example, two of the first three museums are war-themed: the Sarajevo Tunnel and the Gallery, while one is of a general type and is the oldest - the first founded museum in the country: National); the visitors' most profound impressions - a more potent experience prompted by the arousal of intense

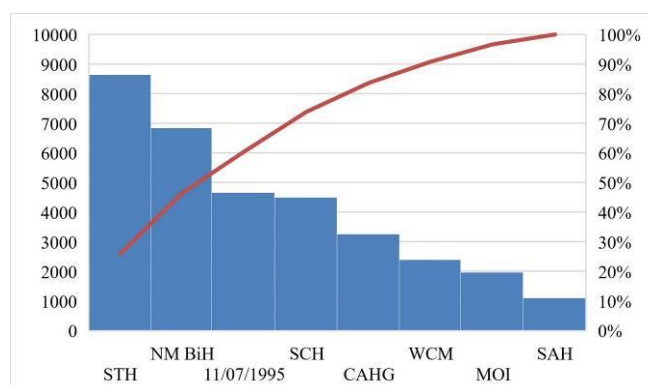


Figure 10. Top-museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina (const. 5*) according to the number of reviews. Abbreviations for the museum's name correspond to its full name, shown in Table 1 (Source: Author's own research)

emotions like sorrow, agony, and compassion—that emerge, for example, when visiting a museum with a wartime subject.

Table 2.¹ Top Bosnia and Herzegovina's museums - all located in Sarajevo destination - typological and tourism overview (Source: Author)

Museum	Birth	Area (sq m)	Location	Acomodation	Visitors
Gallery 11/07/95	2012	300	Sarajevo downtown (Old town) (E-NE)	Adapted section in the Austro-Hungarian residential building	ND
Museum of Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide	2016	ND	Sarajevo downtown (Old town) (E-NE)	Adapted section in the Austro-Hungarian residential building	300.000 (2016-2023)
War Childhood Museum	2017	ND	Old town (NE)	Ground-floor object from 1960s of the last century (former Logavina cultural centre "Home of Culture")	20.000 (annual average)
Memorial Complex with Tunnel of Hope	1993	52.000	In the common area of two municipalities: Novi Grad & Ilidza (SW)	Authentic underground object beneath the International Sarajevo Airport	160.000 (2023)
The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina	1888	27.922	Sarajevo City centre (E)	Renaissance-style Austro-Hungarian building complex with four pavilions	100.000 (2022)
Sarajevo City Hall	1896, 1995, 2014	ND	Old town (E)	Authentic Pseudo-Moorish building with the museum in its basement	ND
Museum of Optical Illusions	2020	300	Sarajevo City centre (E-SE)		
Sevdah Art House (Big Daire)	1776, 2008	270	Bascarsija, Old town (E)	Adapted object from 18.ct. (former merchant warehouse, "Hadžimuratovic or Hajji-Ibrahim big daire")	ND

Figure 11 demonstrates the spatial distribution of the leading (top) museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina based on the results of valorisation presented in the paper—all of them are situated in its capital of Sarajevo, with the densest concentration in downtown (mostly in the historic core of the Old Town—Stari Grad).

3. Tourism-geographical and cultural identification of the country's (Sarajevo) top museums

Memorial complex tunnel D-B (total area of 52.000 sq m), the Sarajevo War Tunnel of Hope (length: 720 m, width: 50 m, height: 1.5-2 m) was established during Bosnia and Herzegovina's war (1992–1995), thus it represents an authentic war and memorial site related to Sarajevo's contemporary dark history. The underground tunnel beneath Sarajevo Airport was built in 1993 under challenging war conditions and constant shelling, and it was used to transfer people and goods (food, weapons, medicine, and wounded), first on the back and hands, and later on a narrow railway and small waggons, but also to establish a telephone connection between Sarajevo and the free territory.

The museum's international tourist significance is ascending due to „its strong emotional impact and high tourist experience" (Žunić, 2022), best propaganda (the largest representation on tourist information portals), and highest value according to tourist impressions, as indicated by the largest number of reviews that are continuously growing with a constant of excellent rating (currently close to 9,000). A visit to the museum elicits the most profound human emotions: sorrow and compassion, but also pride in human strength and the struggle for survival. "The symbolic tunnel museum, which represents the true story of Sarajevo's siege not long ago, evokes strong emotions and produces the deepest impression on visitors. The fact that war accounts for 60–70% of the overall image of the Sarajevo destination arouses great interest in visiting this location" (Žunić, 2018). According to FENA, the Tunnel of Hope is among the most interesting and mostly popular museum sites in Sarajevo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, with an estimated over 160,000 visitors in 2023. The preserved part of the tunnel, as well as the exhibits in the accompanying museum, preserve the memory of the Sarajevo residents' courage and their struggle for survival in besieged Sarajevo (1992–1955).

¹ No national bulletin for the visitors' museum statistics; data presented in the last column are collected from first or from second-hand sources (interviews with museum representatives: author own research, or media releases)

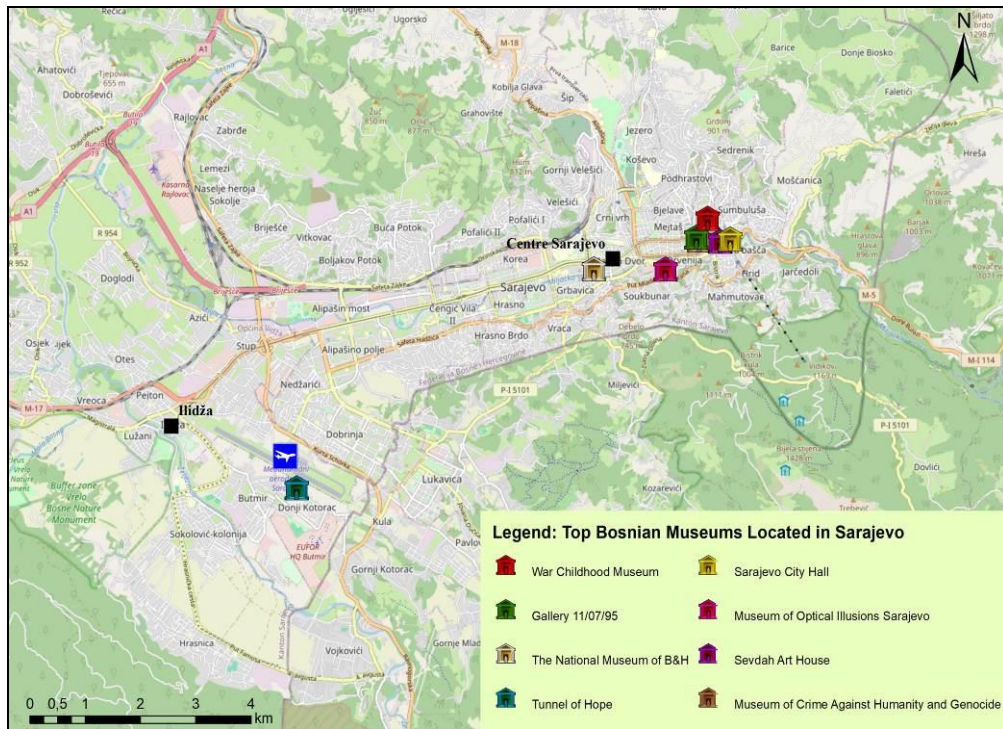


Figure 11. Spatial distribution of the top museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Source: Author, supported by GIS)



Figure 12. Urbanistic plan of the Memorial Complex Tunnel D-B (Tunnel of Hope) (Source: Development Planning Institute of the Sarajevo Canton, 2018b)

The museum testifies to the hazardous war conditions, the strength of the Bosnian spirit, and the creativity of the Bosnian man to survive like underground moles, establishing existential connections (telecommunications and transport, exchange of goods and people) under the Sarajevo airport. The tunnel played one of the key roles in the defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its capital. According to the Commission to Preserve of National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is part of the list of petitions for national monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2003), and "since 2015, it's been a protected heritage asset of the category II in Sarajevo Canton" (Development Planning Institute of the Sarajevo Canton, 2018b).

Figure 12 illustrates the urbanistic composition of the Memorial Complex Tunnel D-B (Tunnel of Hope) in Sarajevo with its topographic and museum environment, green areas, and airport runway with an underground tunnel built during the war conditions (1992-1995). The complex is made of two connected zones of Ilidža and Dobrinja, and its tourist exploitation will increase with the improvement of the contents shown in the Urbanistic plan.

Figure 13 represents the Sarajevo War Tunnel of Hope, with its 120 m long tunnel, as the unique dark memorial site with international tourism representativeness. *The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina* (27.922 square metres) was founded in Sarajevo in 1888 as the country's oldest cultural and scientific research institution. The museum's first director was Kosta Hörmann, a high official of the Austro-Hungarian government; his residence in Sarajevo currently serves as the headquarters for the Directorate of Sarajevo Museums and the Commission for the Preservation of Bosnia and Herzegovina National Monuments. In Figure 4 is the villa of Kosta Hörmann residence in Sarajevo, known as the headquarters for the Directorate of Sarajevo Museums, as well as for the Commission for the Preservation of Bosnia and Herzegovina National Monuments, among other institutions located in its building.

The museum's nowadays appearance dates back to 1913 and was designed by the famous Austro-Hungarian architect Karl Paržik in the Renaissance style; the museum complex of buildings contains four pavilions (archaeology, ethnology, nature, and a library with management). The National Museum represents the national monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is home to "nearly four million exhibits that are preserved, scientifically processed, and presented to the public" (Leka, 2017). The "Bulletin of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina" is the oldest scientific publication in the country, having been published continuously since 1889; it disseminates the most recent findings from scientific investigations conducted in the natural and social sciences, history, archaeology, ethnology, etc. According to FENA (2024), the National Museum received approximately 100,000 visits in 2022.



Figure 13. Sarajevo War Tunnel of Hope (Source: Author)



Figure 14. Villa of Kosta Hörmann in Sarajevo (Source: Author)



Figure 15. The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Source: Author)



Figure 16. Gallery 11/07/95 in Sarajevo (Source: Author)

In Figure 15 is the the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in its neo-renaissance style with classicist elements. *Gallery 11/07/95* (area of 300 sq m) is Bosnia and Herzegovina's first memorial gallery-museum (2012), located

in the heart of Sarajevo in an adapted part of an Austro-Hungarian residential building. „The exhibition space aims to preserve the memory of the Srebrenica tragedy and the 8372 persons who perished in the massacres. The permanent exhibition provides documentary scenes of what was left of Srebrenica in the wake of this genocide. Through a wide range of multimedia content – images, maps, audio and video materials, the Gallery offers documentary and artistic interpretation of the events that took place in this small town in Eastern Bosnia during the month of July 1995“ (Gallery 11/07/95 Official Portal). The interpretations asks visitors „that they not be simply passive observers of the items on display, but living witnesses to the horror and injustice“ (Sarajevo Navigator Foundation, 2024a). The gallery aspires to be part of the collective memory – both as a testimony and a condemnation of the aggression.

Figure 16 shows the Gallery of 11/07/95 situated in the Austria-Hungary building located in central Fra Grge Martić Square in the old town of Sarajevo. *The Museum of Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide 1992-1995* is a history museum (founded in 2016) with rich archival material and a multidisciplinary approach to the research of crimes committed in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina during the war (1992-1995); it preserves the memory of all war victims. The museum archive contains more than 8,000 exhibits and stories. Its unique concept is built on personal belongings and stories, testimonies, letters, pieces of art, simulations, authentic photo and video materials, and so on. The museum investigates all aspects of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide (crimes against children and women, torture, concentration camps, enforced disappearances and mass graves, missing persons, etc.). In order to make the visit more authentic and realistic, the museum presents simulations of a mass grave and solitary confinement.

In Figure 17 is the Sarajevo Museum of Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide 1992-1995 situated in the Austro-Hungarian residential-commercial building in the old town of Sarajevo. Figure 18 represents the Sarajevo Museum of Crimes Humanity & Genocide permanent exhibition with the sniper warning (“Pazi snajper”) and map of the Siege of Sarajevo (from April 5, 1992, to February 29, 1996), accounted for “the longest siege in modern European history” (Swift, 2024).



Figure 17. The Sarajevo Museum of Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide 1992-1995



Figure 18. The permanent exhibition of the *Siege of Sarajevo* in the Sarajevo Museum of Crimes Against Humanity and Genocide (Source: Author)

The War Childhood Museum (2017) has a permanent exhibition of the personal stories of the participants, i.e., a collection of personal items (e.g. clothe, toys, wooden rifle), stories, audio and video testimonies, photographs, letters, drawings, and other documents that evoke the unique experience of growing up in the war. The importance of the museum is “not only for permanent preservation of memories of war childhood, but also because it documents the experience of those who played no role in the start of the war, and still suffered multiple consequences” (War Childhood Museum, 2024). The exhibition features 50 personal stories which reveal the meaning and sentimental value of the exhibited personal items. As the museum represents “the world’s largest archive dedicated to the experience of growing up during the war” (War Childhood Museum, 2024), the 2018 Council of Europe Museum Prize—one of the most prestigious awards in the museum industry—was awarded to the War Childhood Museum as part of the European Museum of the Year Awards.

The Figure 19 represents the War Childhood Museum permanent exhibition of children personal items such as clothe and wooden rifle from the war time in Bosnia (1992-1995). *Sarajevo City Hall* (founded in 1896; reconstructed in 1995; reopened in 2014) is the most representative part of the Austro-Hungarian cultural heritage, created in a pseudo-Moorish style with a dominant influence of Islamic art from Egypt and Spain. „The basis for this outstandingly fine building was the detailed studies by the late architect Alexandar Wittek, who worked in line with the Sultan Hassan mosque in Cairo and the 15th century tomb mosque of Sultan Qaytbay, also in Cairo“ (The Commission to Preserve National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina). It stands out for the unique architectural „fusion“ of muslim Oriental “East” and christian central European “West”; thus, it „serves as a symbol of the meeting of world civilizations“ (Sarajevo Navigator Foundation, 2024c).

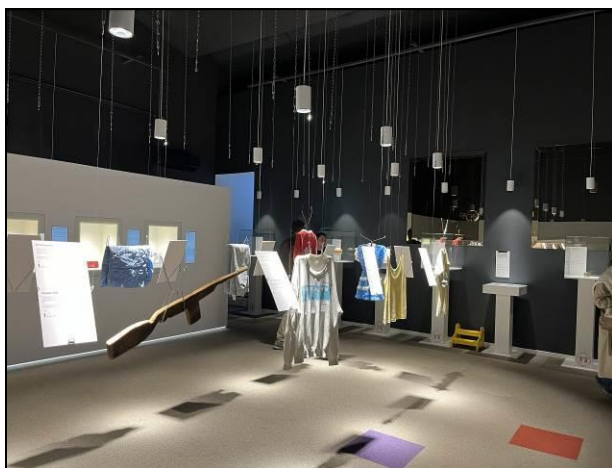


Figure 19. The War Childhood Museum exhibition of children's clothing and wooden rifle; Figure 20. Sarajevo City Hall in Sarajevo (Source: Author)

In Figure 20 is presented Sarajevo City Hall, popularly known as the national monument to the multiculturalism of Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to its Austro-Hungarian building made in the pseudo-Moorish style with Cairo motives. As the city hall and the national monument, and even more so as the decades-old seat of the National and University Library of Bosnia and Herzegovina, it has been the focus of all important political and cultural events in Sarajevo and Bosnia and Herzegovina for nearly two centuries. It witnessed the change of several state systems, the Sarajevo assassination, the terrible challenges of the two world wars, the unique rise of the city during the XIV Winter Olympic Games in 1984 and finally, in the form of a National Library, it was exposed to a barbaric attack, burning and destruction; in nights of August 25-26, 1992 during the last war, nearly 90% of the library's collection (or 2 million units) went up in flames and the building became a symbol of the Siege and tragedy of Sarajevo. It has thus become a modern metaphor for urbiicide and culturicide. Today, it is used in festive occasions at the state and city level to promote events from culture, art and economy, with constant and occasional museum settings, and regular sessions of the City Council. In the various offer of the City Hall building, several permanent thematic exhibitions have been set up about history of the city and City Hall itself, such as „Portret of Mayors“, „Contemporaries“, „National Day“, „Franz and Sofie“, „Sarajevo 1914-2014“, and „the City Hall- again“.

The Museum of Optical Illusions offers a fun excursion into the world of illusion for all generations and provides a sensory and educational experience in addition to the visual. It differs from similar museums in the world in that it nurtures the tradition, history, and culture of Bosnia and Herzegovina through installations provided as part of the museum exhibition. It's the largest museum of its kind in the region, with hundreds of exhibits that also include works by young Sarajevo artists and those that promote national culture and traditions, such as 3D Vučko (the wolfy mascot of the World Olympic Games held in Sarajevo in 1984), the tradition of sipping Bosnian coffee, a 3D walk along the streets of Sarajevo, etc. Some of the museum's famous illusions were done by foreigner artists, such as A. Kitaoka, a Japanese professor of psychology and a leading illusion maker, or Slovenian designer J. Trobec, etc.

Figure 21 demonstrates the zigzag of the mediaeval queen Katarina and the Ottoman Bosnian “Dragon of Bosnia” (refers to Husein-captain Gradaščević) in the Museum of Optical Illusions in Sarajevo. They represent some of the most remarkable figures in Bosnian history. Queen Katarina reflects the period of the mediaeval Bosnian kingdom (15th century), while the Dragon of Bosnia (Husein-captain Gradaščević, an Ottoman Bosnian military commander and political reformer) reflects the four centuries later Ottoman Empire in Bosnia and Herzegovina (19th century).



Figure 21. The Zig Zag of queen Katarina and Dragon of Bosnia in the Museum of Optical Illusions in Sarajevo



Figure 22. The Sevdah Art House Museum in Sarajevo (Source: Author)

The Sevdah Art House is part of the Ottoman architectural ensemble “Velike Daire” or Hadžimuratovića Large Daira (Arabic “daira”—circle, ring), which is a national monument in Bosnia and Herzegovina, representing a group of twelve storehouses in the old town, of which ten were built in 1776 by Sarajevo merchant Ibrahim Hadžimuratović on land that belonged to the Isa Bey Vakuf (endowment “vakif” and the founder of Sarajevo), and later two storehouses were added, including the Sevdah Art House Museum in the renovated section since 2008. The museum is dedicated to the traditional urban lyrical poem – sevdalinka and famous sevdah performers. The Bosnian-Herzegovinian urban song „sevdalinka“ (turkish, arabic: sevdah – love) is a poem of extraordinary poetic, musical and historical value, with continuity of performance from the 15th century (Ottoman era in Bosnia) until today and it represents a well established cultural tradition. “Emina,” written by Bosnian academic poet A. Šantić in 1903 (during the Austro-Hungarian period in Bosnia), is the country's most popular sevdalinka. The song is about a young man who, despite his love not being returned, longs for the girl the song is named for. The museum space of the former warehouse is arranged as 11 interconnected rooms, displaying exhibits of 36 great performers of sevdalinka, composers, arrangers and songwriters who left an indelible mark and were the greatest promoters of sevdalinka as we know it today. As a traditional urban folk song, sevdalinka is currently nominated for the UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Figure 22 depicts the Sevdah Art House Museum as one of twelve distinguishable parts of the Ottoman architectural ensemble “Velike Daire” in Sarajevo's old town.

CONCLUSION

The research findings demonstrated the cohesiveness of tourism and museum development, as well as the key role of capital in the country's tourism and cultural (museum) image. Sarajevo museums are the most popular in Bosnia and Herzegovina, having the most reviews and highest ratings. One of the most effective marketing strategies is the favourable feedback that tourists receive from others (often known as “word of mouth”); in the case of Sarajevo's museums, this feedback is continuously growing. Top museums in Sarajevo and Bosnia are primarily themed, and the war theme has a particularly strong psychological impact on visitors, creating an unforgettable tourist experience and enhancing the museum's popularity and resonance (such as Sarajevo Tunnel of Hope). The museum's war themes are gaining popularity as Sarajevo becomes more aware of its recent dark history, which has greatly influenced its wartime tourism image. This is now being turned into an advantage by establishing unique war museum collections and so on; according to Žunić (2018), the last war in Bosnia contributed to Sarajevo's destination image by 66%. In addition to dark attractions (considering they include museums dedicated to war), the interest and satisfaction of tourists are maintained by museums that unite the national cultural heritage (e.g., the National Museum), then museums with relaxing cultural content in the spirit of traditional music and gastronomy (e.g., Sevdah Art), as well as museums of an entertaining nature (e.g., the Museum of Optical Illusions). The evolution of museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina is challenging to assess exclusively through official statistical data due to the inconsistency of data integration at the state level (resulting from complicated political-administrative disintegration into two entities and one district) and accounting for other statistical errors; according to Žunić et al. (2023), data errors in different bulletin volumes, mismatches between summarised data at the state level and data from, for example, entity bulletins, inconsistent museum classification, a lack of transparency regarding visitors, and a lack of continuous annual monitoring of museum development activity are all examples of how museum statistics don't accurately reflect the real terrain situation. However, field and satellite observations, among other methods, helped to fill in the gaps and provided a better understanding of the evolution of Bosnian museums and their current popularity. As a result, the study findings reveal a considerably more favourable development environment for museum activities than what is portrayed in bulletins, particularly in the case of the country's capital, as Sarajevo is at the forefront of Bosnia and Herzegovina's tourism and cultural (museum) development and demand.

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