

# HOW DO NURSES IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA FEEL ABOUT THEIR PROFESSION?

## - The results of the survey on nurses' profession and migration -

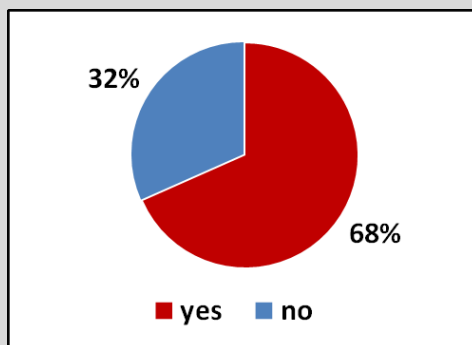
Even more than before, nurses throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina are playing an instrumental role in giving professional contribution to the health of BiH population, fighting the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Strengthening Nursing in BiH Project (ProSes) conducted a survey in order to find out how nurses perceive the status of the nursing profession in BiH and what are the ways to respond to their legitimate expectations for improvement. The questionnaire was sent to 300 email addresses of nurses and 93 of them responded.

As in any survey, there are potential limitations to the results obtained:

- (i) a selection bias (respondents were previously aware of the project and therefore more likely to be informed about its objectives and activities),
- (ii) a demographic bias with a high number of respondents over the age of 35 (84%) which does not accurately reflect the age distribution in the nursing profession,
- (iii) a high number of respondents occupying management positions (63%) rather than clinical positions,
- (iv) a higher response rate from nurses in primary healthcare (61%) rather than secondary or tertiary levels.

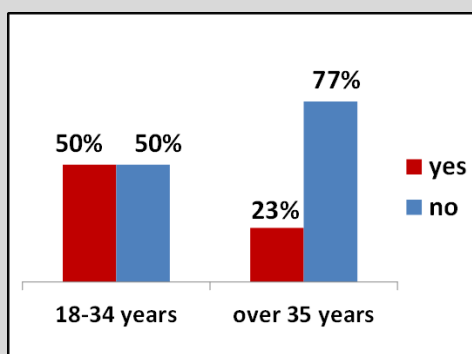
Therefore, the results do not necessary reflect the positions of all nurses in BiH.



### Migration thoughts

Like estimates show from the general population in BiH, many nurses are tempted to leave the country.

However, in reality, only a smaller number of nurses are willing to take that step. This might show certain frustration with the system but other reasons are refraining nurses from taking the decision to migrate.



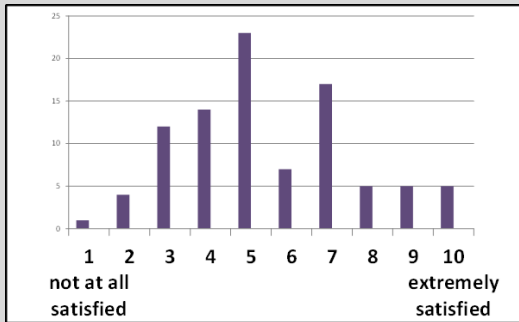
### Plans to migrate

Those who are determined to leave the country and migrate abroad are found mostly among respondents aged 18-34. It is important to underline that as many as half of them have such plans.

Also, nurses who work directly with patients are more likely to have plans to leave than those in management positions.

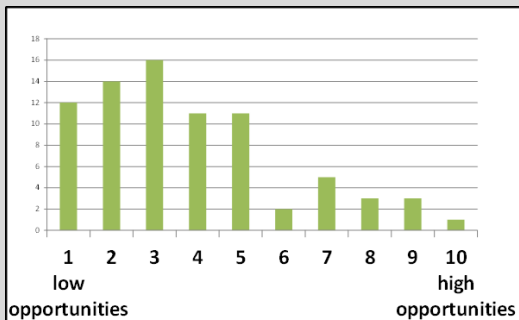
The most common reasons for planning to leave the country are:

1. the lack of recognition for the nursing profession
2. a too modest and not competitive salary
3. the lack of career development opportunities



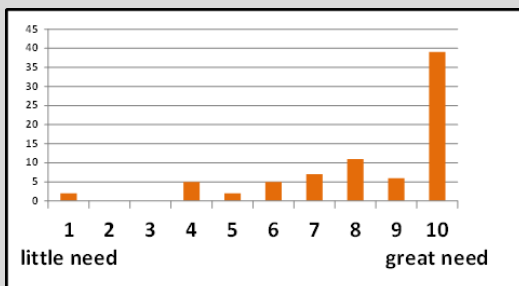
## Satisfaction with profession

On a scale from 1 to 10, more than half of the respondents rated their satisfaction with the nursing profession with 5 or less, which leads us to the conclusion that most nurses are not satisfied with their working conditions in the country.



## Participation in policy creation and decision-making

Most respondents, including nurses in managerial and teaching positions, believe that there are only a few opportunities for them to participate in decisions making.



## Need for nurse specialists

Almost all respondents believe there is a need for nurses specialists and therefore for specialization trainings.

These results correspond to the previously collected opinions from directors, head nurses or heads of personnel departments of health institutions.

At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were given the opportunity to give suggestions on what needs to be improved or changed in the nursing profession in BIH.

The very fact that 99% of respondents gave their suggestions tells us that further efforts and work are still needed to support and strengthen the nursing profession in BIH.

We single out some of them.

### ► strengthen nurse competencies

- improve nurse education regulation
- reform secondary education in line with international standards
- promote professional development

### ► systematize nurse profession

- reduce the number of administrative obligations
- ensure adequate salary
- increase the number of nurses

### ► involve nurses in the decision making processes

### ► promote the nursing profession in the society

*"Due to the lack of recognition of nursing, i.e. lack of recognition of the acquired level of education of a graduate nurse, I have no desire to stay in the country, and therefore no longer want to think about possible changes that should occur for this profession in BIH."*