ISMET KUMALIĆ

Traditional Home Slaughtering of Animals in the Framework of EU Legislation. Evidence from Bosnia and Herzegovina

Abstract. Traditional home slaughtering of animals is a widespread social practice in the Western Balkans, bringing together families, neighbours, and friends, and contributing to the rise of social capital. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a multicultural country where traditional home slaughtering of animals is mostly practised as seasonal slaughtering by Christian communities and as religious slaughtering by Muslim communities. In the framework of existing EU legislation, meat that comes from home slaughtering can be used for private consumption only. However, these rules are not fully aligned with the practices existing on the ground. This article argues that the Western Balkans' integration into the EU can affect the sustainability of these practices, and it is therefore necessary to amend the relevant legislation and policies to ensure the implementation of EU regulations while respecting the traditional way of communal meat sharing.

Ismet Kumalić is an Assistant Professor of International Finance and EU Monetary Policy at the University of Business Engineering and Management in Banja Luka.

Introduction

Traditional slaughter of animals in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is identified with different practices and customs. The most frequent are the seasonal slaughter of pigs (*svinjokolj*) among the Christian populations, Muslim religious slaughter of sheep or cows (*Qurban*/Festival of Sacrifice), and the slaughtering mainly of lambs during civic holidays, such as 1 May, the International Labour Day, which are celebrated across a wide spectrum of society and across all ethnic and religious groups. In addition to the slaughtering of animals, the practice of traditional production of smoked meat products (prosciutto ham, sausages), as well as other animal products (milk, cheese), is widespread.

Traditional slaughter of animals is a good example of an informal practice that is on the one hand subject to new EU rules, and on the other linked to local traditions and values. Observed from the perspective of institutions, the

tradition resonates with strong informal institutions that are governed by social norms, which originate and are implemented through informal channels, and, in contrast, with formal institutions that are governed by rules and procedures that are created and implemented through official channels and authorities. These include state institutions (courts, legislation, administration) and rules that are implemented at state level (constitutions, laws, regulations). Informal and formal institutions should not be understood as two separate and unrelated units. They interact, complement or oppose one another, depending on actors in a particular institutional context.¹

Traditional slaughter is an important cultural component of social life, as it creates and strengthens solidarity in the community. Knowledge created through the process of socialization, transmitted through social norms and rituals, is important in rural development as it helps to strengthen informal social networks and relationships in promoting social cohesion.² In times of unstable social conditions and change, individuals are able to develop and activate different forms of capital in order to adapt to new situations and times of hardship.³ The overlapping of social spheres allows for increased reflexivity of activity, and thus produces new creativity and innovation. It can be said that change creates new actions, and modifies and creates new behaviour in a slightly different way.⁴ Changes in formal rules regarding slaughter cause changes in the behaviour of individuals and groups in the effort to adapt to the new circumstances. Depending on the strength and size of cultural and social capital, adaptation will occur at a faster or slower pace.⁵ Cultural capital accumulated in tradition will slow down changes, but change will inevitably happen.

Traditional slaughter of animals is generally performed within the household, or outside registered slaughter facilities (abattoirs). According to EU standards, domestic (traditional) slaughter of animals is not acceptable, except in cases where such meat is intended for personal consumption. It is precisely because of the above limitations that there are misunderstandings and differences in field practices and formal regulations. This article aims to determine, on the

¹ Steven Levitsky / Gretchen Helmke, *Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics. A Research Agenda, Perspectives on Politics* 2, no. 4 (2004), 725-740, DOI: 10.1017/S1537592704040472. All internet references were accessed on 27 September 2018.

² Maria Fonte, Knowledge, Food and Place. A Way of Producing, a Way of Knowing, *Sociologia Ruralis* 48, no. 3 (2008), 200-222, DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9523.2008.00462.x; John Q. Patton, Meat Sharing for Coalitional Support, *Evolution and Human Behavior* 26, no. 2 (2005), 137-157, DOI: 10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2004.08.008.

³ Pierre Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*, Stanford/CA 2000; Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, Stanford/CA 1990.

⁴ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, London 1962; Claire Laurier Decoteau, The Reflexive Habitus. Critical Realist and Bourdieusian Social Action, *European Journal of Social Theory* 19, no. 3 (2016), 303-321, DOI: 10.1177/1368431015590700.

⁵ Levitsky / Helmke, *Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics*.

basis of the research conducted, the differences between formal regulations and present practice, and seeks to propose measures to overcome misalignments, with reference to the differences between formal and informal institutions. It focuses on pig slaughter and on religious slaughter, as these are the two most common practices in BiH.

After describing the research method, I offer a brief overview of the relevant literature with a theoretical view of the research problem. This is followed by an analysis of the EU legislative framework and harmonized BiH regulations. The next section explains the practices of traditional animal slaughter in BiH, while the two final sections describe the impact of traditional slaughter on social and cultural capital and explain the attitude towards the EU. This is followed by a conclusion involving recommendations for policy makers in the EU and BiH.

A Note on Method

The methodological approach applied in this article is based on the model of Europeanization, whereby the initial research questions were structured according to the basic stages of the process: EU rules → adoption of EU rules → harmonized regulations → limitations → application of rules → behaviour change.⁶ Studies dealing with the issue of Europeanization through the implementation of EU rules focus mostly on the formal transposition of EU rules into domestic legislation but tend not to deal with actual effects of these rules on the ground, that is, whether and how these rules function in people's everyday lives.⁷ This article combines the exploration of EU and domestic regulations governing the slaughter of animals with the restrictions arising from EU directives and domestic legislation, as well as discussing how these restrictions reflect on everyday life and tradition.

Using qualitative analysis, I first review the EU directives and regulations that are relevant for the investigation of the home slaughtering of animals. In the next stage, I analyse these legal contents regarding the regulation of the stunning of animals before slaughtering, in addition to the regulation of donating and selling meat. In the third stage, I evaluate relevant legal documents at the national level and compare national regulations with EU directives. Finally,

⁶ Cf. the report on the research project on which this article is based, 'Closing the Gap between Formal and Informal Institutions in the Balkans' (Horizon 2020 grant agreement no. 693537, INFORM, 2016-2019), Miran Lavrič et al., Partial Enforcement of EU Rules in Five Countries of Southeast Europe. The Case of Pig and Sheep Home Slaughter, September 2017, http://www.formal-informal.eu/files/news/2017/Deliverables%20and%20Milestones%202017/Partial%20enforcement_Home%20slaughter_Final%20EVFIN.pdf, 8.

⁷ Antoaneta L. Dimitrova, The New Member States of the EU in the Aftermath of Enlargement. Do New European Rules Remain Empty Shells?, *Journal of European Public Policy* 17, no. 1 (2010), 137-148, DOI: 10.1080/13501760903464929.

I examine the regulations and harmonizations of rules of religious slaughter and meat division.

The data on the examined practices that are identified on the ground were collected through semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted during the period from October to November 2016 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Different locations, religious communities, and societal strata were taken into account to capture the heterogeneity of the country in focus. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and stored in the project database.

The study was conducted with a sample of fourteen respondents, including the following: seven small farmers (F_06, F_07, F_10, F_11, F_20, F_21, and F_22); two veterinarian experts (E_08 vet inspector and E_09 vet expert of welfare and protection of animals); one religious authority (E_17); one certified butcher (E_19); one controller for halal slaughter (E_23); and two consumers (C_14 and C_18). The codes are used here to preserve the anonymity of the interviewees. Analysis of the interviews identified the field practices as well as the mismatch between formal and informal institutions.

Review of the Literature and Research Problem

There is still a widespread practice of home slaughter of animals during religious and seasonal holidays in BiH. Many people view these events and the sharing of meat with a feeling of nostalgia. One of the interviewees describes this:

‘The time I remember is not that long ago, but it still affects the period of the former state [i.e. Yugoslavia], and it was traditionally related to the Statehood Day of the former state on 29 November. People worked everywhere in the field, and for various companies. There were two, three days off for those holidays, which were in the winter, an ideal period for slaughter because temperatures are low so meat and fat and other products can be easily disposed of. And it was the ideal moment for family, neighbours, and friends to gather. It had a social character, when people would spend time together. But above all these benefits, it has always been in people’s mind that it’s a cheaper way to get better quality food.’ (C_14)

Existing research on the implementation of EU regulations concerning the traditional slaughter of animals (pigs and sheep) indicates the complexity of relationships in everyday practices, that is cultural rooting and communal solidarity. The social phenomena arising from the practices differ in certain aspects and in their impact on society, culture, the economy, and politics.⁸ Local food production establishes direct contact between farmers and consumers and creates a bond of trust and mutual benefits among them. Exchanging food is as

⁸ Florence Bergeaud-Blackler / Johan Fischer / John Lever, eds, *Halal Matters. Islam, Politics and Markets in Global Perspective*, London, New York 2016.

old as humanity itself and continues to play an important role in the social life of local communities across the world.⁹

Jewish and Muslim communities have specific requirements when it comes to religious slaughter of animals. Kosher and halal slaughter (*Qurban*) are carried out without stunning of the animal. Both religions emphasize the necessity of humane treatment of animals, with the slaughtering process as the most responsible act. The animal slaughtering system in accordance with Islamic regulations is widespread and is known as halal slaughter. The halal food market exceeds the value of 632 billion US dollars, with the tendency for further growth.¹⁰ Kosher and halal slaughter use similar methods and procedures, with halal slaughter having a more liberal attitude when it comes to stunning. The fatwa of the Mufti of Delhi from 1935 said that stunning does not violate the religious law, because stunning does not kill animals. The latter would be contrary to Islamic slaughter rules, while 'stunning' without killing was found to be acceptable. Another authoritative Islamic statement referring to religious slaughter is the pronouncement of the rector of the Al-Azhar University in Cairo in 1982, according to which stunning is not contrary to Islam.¹¹ In some parts of the world (New Zealand, Australia) there is a growing number of slaughterhouses using methods of electric stunning of livestock (cattle and sheep). The meat from these slaughterhouses is exported to countries in the Middle East, countries in which the original Islamic tradition continues to exist.¹² Research has shown that the practice of slaughtering without stunning causes problems related to the welfare of animals, such as stress, pain, or suffering before and during slaughter. To reduce the suffering of animals, some countries (for example Australia) prescribe the obligation of stunning immediately after the act of slaughter.¹³

The legal prohibition of religious slaughter without stunning animals before slaughter is a significant challenge for international law in relation to the freedom of religion.¹⁴ This prohibition is not only important for the EU, as it involves the legal status of minority religious communities in other countries as well.¹⁵ The

⁹ Fonte, Knowledge, Food and Place.

¹⁰ Florence Bergeaud-Blackler / Johan Fischer / John Lever, Introduction. Studying the Politics of Modern Halal Markets, in: Bergeaud-Blackler / Fischer / Lever, eds, *Halal Matters*, 1-18, 1.

¹¹ Carla M. Zoethout, Ritual Slaughter and the Freedom of Religion. Some Reflections on a Stunning Matter, *Human Rights Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (2013), 651-672, DOI: 10.1353/hrq.2013.0040.

¹² Temple Grandin / Joe M. Regenstein, Religious Slaughter and Animal Welfare. A Discussion for Meat Scientists, *Meat Focus International* 3, no. 1 (1994), 115-123.

¹³ Grandin / Regenstein, Religious Slaughter and Animal Welfare.

¹⁴ Jonathan Cohen, Kosher Slaughter, State Regulation of Religious Organizations, and the European Court of Human Rights, *Intercultural Human Rights Law Review* 4 (2009), 355-386.

¹⁵ Pablo Lerner / Alfredo M. Rabello, The Prohibition of Ritual Slaughtering (Kosher Shechita and Halal) and Freedom of Religion of Minorities, *Journal of Law and Religion* 22, no. 1

EU legislation, guided by the Convention on the Protection of Human Rights (minority groups), has opted for a balanced approach between religious freedom and the welfare of animals.¹⁶ The solution is found in providing the option for individual countries to prescribe stricter rules than those valid in the EU. Advocates for animal welfare have succeeded in codifying their beliefs into laws in many European countries, for example in Switzerland in 1893, in Norway in 1930, and in Sweden in 1938.¹⁷ In any case, it is uncertain which religious interpretation is considered to be correct and how much change is permitted in order to improve the welfare of animals. Nonetheless, religious slaughter can be significantly improved through the use of 'Total Quality Management', as well as continuous and gradual improvements in the slaughter process through new knowledge and technological innovation.¹⁸

The prohibition of domestic slaughter and the closure of small slaughterhouses and processing facilities, as well as the elimination of income for rural households, has increased the risk of unemployment and poverty among the rural population.¹⁹ Eliminating not just one but several important sources of livelihood for rural residents, the rigorous application of these regulations would jeopardize the long-term survival of people in their homes.²⁰ For example, in the case of Slovenia, the cost of slaughtering increased more than four times when compared to the cost of previously practised farm slaughter.²¹ On the other hand, the presence of infectious diseases in the Western Balkan countries requires compliance with regulations or hygiene packages. Trichinosis, caused by *Trichinella spiralis*, is a parasitic disease that is often fatal for the infected persons. In domestic animals and humans, the disease has been reported in Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Romania, BiH, and Croatia. From 2001 to 2010, 1,353 cases of animal trichinosis were reported in BiH at 1,242 sites. The percentage of reported cases for domestic pigs among the entities that compose this country was 94.6% in the Republika Srpska and 5.4% in the Federation of BiH (FBiH).²² This disproportion is explained by the fact that most of the population in the FBiH do not include pig meat in their diet. The unfavourable epidemio-

(2006), 1-62, DOI: 10.1017/S0748081400003210.

¹⁶ Zoethout, *Ritual Slaughter and the Freedom of Religion*, 660.

¹⁷ Lerner / Rabello, *The Prohibition of Ritual Slaughtering*.

¹⁸ Grandin / Regenstien, *Religious Slaughter and Animal Welfare*.

¹⁹ Elizabeth C. Dunn, *Trojan Pig. Paradoxes of Food Safety Regulation*, *Environment and Planning* 35, no. 8 (2003), 1493-1511, DOI: 10.1068/2Fa35169.

²⁰ Sharon Roseman, *Bioregulation and Comida Caseira in Rural Galicia, Spain*, *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 11, no. 1 (2004), 9-37, DOI: 10.1080/725289017.

²¹ Ana Larsen Frelj, *Semi-Subsistence Producers and Biosecurity in the Slovenian Alps*, *Sociologia Ruralis* 49, no. 4 (2009), 330-343, DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9523.2009.00481.x.

²² Darko Despotović et al., *Epizootiološke karakteristike trihineloze domaćih svinja na području republike Srpske*, *Arhiv veterinarske medicine* 6, no. 1 (2013), 89-101, UDC: 616.995.1:636.4(497.15).

logical situation is a consequence of the widespread culinary customs and non-implementation of valid inspections of meat and meat products in households, as well as illegal sales.²³ Yet the occurrence of trichinosis is a consequence not only of culinary habits and poor veterinary control, but also of the economic conditions as well as the demographic and political changes in the Western Balkan countries. The regulatory potential of legal interventions in everyday life proved to be crucial in the process of Europeanization, as it was confirmed that earlier regulations had not been sufficiently secure.²⁴

The harmonization of standards creates an environment in which domestic and foreign competitors are equal, an explicit aim of the EU policies. However, there are opinions that standards often create new barriers that effectively favour multinational capital at the expense of local producers. The creation of an informal market and political organization to counter such barriers may provide an answer. Personal connections to farmers, producers, and suppliers can create an informal network in order to avoid the EU-imposed standards and taxes: 'In food and other products regulated by standards, grey markets may be arising as a direct result of standardization.'²⁵

Opponents of the introduction of EU regulations use cultural and social complexity as an argument against a 'technocratic' European policy. They suspect an 'intentional' suppression of food production, in order to import and sell products of suspicious quality and poor taste.²⁶ A large number of the population in BiH live in the countryside, with many aspects of life still being conducted in the 'old way'. With the favouring of multinational companies, domestic agricultural production on individual and small farms is endangered. The neglect of family farms will also contribute to increasing informal market activity.²⁷

In the formerly communist countries of the Western Balkans, small farms are commonplace, and agricultural work is a means of survival for many families. A mixed structure of production, a combination of trade and agriculture, has

²³ Zorica Šeguljev et al., Epidemije trihineloze u AP Vojvodini u periodu 2000-2009. godine, *Veterinarski glasnik* 65, no. 5-6 (2011), 409-417, DOI: 10.2298/VETGL1106409S.

²⁴ Maja S. Đorđević et al., Social, Political, and Economic Factors Responsible for the Reemergence of Trichinellosis in Serbia. A Case Study, *Journal of Parasitology* 89, no. 2 (2003), 226-231, DOI: 10.1645/0022-3395(2003)089[0226:SPAEFR]2.0.CO;2; Kosta Čuperlović / Maja S. Djordjević / Sonya Pavlović, Re-Emergence of Trichinellosis in Southeastern Europe due to Political and Economic Changes, *Veterinary Parasitology* 132, no. 1 (2005), 159-166, DOI: 10.1016/j.vetpar.2005.05.047.

²⁵ Dunn, Trojan Pig, 1504.

²⁶ Robert Zobel, Tko i zašto sustavno uništava hrvatsku poljoprivredu?, *Veterina portal*, 22 October 2011, <http://veterina.com.hr/?p=6348>.

²⁷ Wiebke Wellbrock, Pig Welfare in Croatia. A Critical Reflection on the EU Pig Welfare Directives, MSc thesis, Wageningen University, Wageningen 2008.

allowed the population to survive the economic and political changes.²⁸ There is no doubt that they offer a smaller part of their production to the informal market and thus provide additional income for their family.²⁹ Unlike large farms, on small farms a farmer can pay more attention to each animal, and the animal spends more time in the open space, which contributes to their well-being.

In order to overcome the problem of 'inequality' and to ensure the application of standards, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) was formed.³⁰ Access to funding is conditioned by the existence of a national strategy for rural development. One of the ways to support rural development policy is the employment of the rural population outside agriculture.³¹ BiH used a similar model, setting up industrial plants in rural areas and thus allowing the population to remain in their place of residence. During the conflicts in the 1990s, many facilities were destroyed and the population was left unemployed. Today, BiH should learn from its previous experiences and develop a rural development strategy that ensures the survival and development of the villages and reduces the emigration of the rural population as well as the pressure on urban areas.

EU Legislative Framework for Domestic Animal Slaughter

Within the EU, animal slaughter is subject to regulations relating to the welfare of animals and to food hygiene (hygiene package). EU Directive 1099/2009,³² which came into force on 1 January 2013, prescribes the principles and rules of the EU legislature governing the protection of animals during slaughter. Directive 1099/2009 replaced an earlier directive, 93/119/EC from 22 December 1993.³³ Directive 1099/2009 treats not only animal slaughter (excluding poultry, hares, and rabbits) but also other procedures that are carried out by the own-

²⁸ Imre Kovách, Subsistence and Semi-Subsistence Farming in Hungary. From Modernisation to Ecological and Social Sustainability, in: Thomas Aenis et al., eds, *Farming Systems Facing Global Challenges. Capacities and Strategies. Proceedings, 11th European IFSA Symposium 1-4 April 2014 in Berlin, Germany, Vienna, Müncheberg, Berlin 2014*, http://ifsa.boku.ac.at/cms/fileadmin/Proceeding2014/WS_2_11_Kovach.pdf, 1788-1800; Nemanja Krstić et al., Small Farmers in Four Southeast European Countries. A Qualitative Analysis of Life Strategies in Twenty-Five Agricultural Households, *Štúdosteuropa. Journal of Politics and Society* 65, no. 3 (2017), 565-588.

²⁹ Ismet Kumalić, Položaj domaćinstava u društvima južno-istočnih zemalja – strategija preživljavanja, *Anali Poslovne Ekonomije* 7, no. 13 (2015), 32-43, DOI: 10.7251/APE1315032K.

³⁰ Cf. the website of the European Commission on its Rural Development Policy 2014-2020, https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rural-development-2014-2020_en.

³¹ Fonte, Knowledge, Food and Place.

³² Council of the European Union, Council Regulation (EC) no. 1099/2009, 18 November 2009, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:303:0001:0030:EN:PDF>.

³³ Council of the European Union, Council Directive 93/119/EC, 31 December 1993, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31993L0119&from=EN>.

ers of animals, or people responsible for them, as well as controls outside the slaughterhouse for meat that is used only for private household consumption (Article 10). Directive 1099/2009 prescribes that the following articles must be observed during slaughter:

‘Article 3(1): Animals shall be spared any avoidable pain, distress or suffering during their killing and related operations. [...]

Article 4(1): Animals shall only be killed after stunning in accordance with the methods and specific requirements related to the application of those methods set out in Annex I. The loss of consciousness and sensibility shall be maintained until the death of the animal. [...]

Article 4(4): In the case of animals subject to particular methods of slaughter prescribed by religious rites, the requirements of paragraph (1) shall not apply provided that the slaughter takes place in a slaughterhouse. [...]

Article 7(1): Killing and related operations shall only be carried out by persons with the appropriate level of competence to do so without causing the animals any avoidable pain, distress or suffering.’³⁴

As outlined above, the method of stunning animals must be applied before a home slaughter. The obligation to apply the stunning procedure is excluded when slaughter is carried out for religious reasons, as long as the slaughter is performed in a slaughterhouse. Application of Article 4(4) of the directive implies that slaughtering outside the slaughterhouse shall not be carried out without a prior stunning procedure. In addition, the EU hygiene package covers all processes for breeding, production, distribution, and marketing of foods for human consumption. The hygiene package is regulated by Directive 852/2004, which provides general food hygiene rules and requirements for registered food business operators.³⁵ An operator (entity) in food business is a natural or legal person registered to perform certain activities related to food business in a responsible manner to ensure the smooth implementation of the provisions of the food regulations. Directive 853/2004 lays out specific rules for the hygiene of animal origin food, relating to the specific requirements for business suppliers for products of animal origin.³⁶ Directive 854/2004 sets out specific rules for the organization of official controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption.³⁷ Directive 2004/41/EC abolished the earlier directive con-

³⁴ Council of the European Union, Council Regulation (EC) no. 1099/2009.

³⁵ European Parliament / Council of the European Union, Regulation (EC) no. 852/2004, 20 April 2009, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02004R0852-20090420&from=EN>.

³⁶ European Parliament / Council of the European Union, Regulation (EC) no. 853/2004, 17 November 2014, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02004R0853-20141117&from=EN>.

³⁷ European Parliament / Council of the European Union, Regulation (EC) no. 854/2004, 1 January 2015, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:02004R0854->

cerning hygiene and conditions for production as well as placing on the market of certain products of animal origin intended for human consumption, along with the amendments to Directives 89/662/EEC, 92/118/EEC, and 95/408/EC.³⁸

As the hygiene package sets out the rules for food business operators, private consumption is excluded.³⁹ Therefore, EU Directive 853/2004 indicates that meat used for human consumption must originate from a licensed slaughterhouse. Thus, only meat originating from registered entities can be marketed, if placing on the market means 'the holding of food for the purpose of sale, including offering for sale, or any other form of transfer, whether free of charge or not, and the sale, distribution, and other forms of transfer themselves'.⁴⁰ Hence, due to the increased risks of food safety arising from home slaughter, only the owners and members of their family living in the same household can consume the meat; such meat cannot be sold or donated.

Harmonization of the Regulations in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Article 3 of the Bosnian Law on the Protection and Welfare of Animals states that 'it is forbidden to kill an animal without causative reason, to inflict pain, suffering and harm, to abuse or intentionally expose it to stress and fear'.⁴¹ The same law (Article 16) regulates that an animal must not be slaughtered if it has not been appropriately stunned first. Article 17 then prescribes that the animal shall not be slaughtered before a veterinary inspection is carried out, and if the animal is not previously stunned in the prescribed and professional manner. Moreover, slaughter can only be performed by a licensed person. If the stated conditions are not met, the veterinary inspector will prohibit the slaughter (Article 38, 1f).

BiH decided to practise milder conditions for religious slaughter, as in such cases the stunning of animals is not mandatory. The BiH Veterinary Office has the authority to prescribe the procedure and manner of religious slaughter. Article 2(2) of the Ordinance on the Protection of Animals at Killing or Slaugh-

20150101&from=EN.

³⁸ European Parliament / Council of the European Union, Directive 2004/41/EC, 30 April 2004, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32004L0041&from=EN>.

³⁹ European Parliament / Council of the European Union, Regulation (EC) no. 852/2004, Article 1, 2(a) and (b); European Parliament / Council of the European Union, Regulation (EC) no. 853/2004, Article 1, 3(a) and (b).

⁴⁰ Cf. the website of the European Commission on the EU Legislation on Food Hygiene, http://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/biosafety/food_hygiene/legislation_en.

⁴¹ Zakon o zaštiti i dobrobiti životinja, *Službeni glasnik BiH* (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina), no. 25/09, 26 February 2009, http://vfs.unsa.ba/web/images/dokumenti/Zako_o_zastiti_i_dobrobiti_zivotinja.pdf.

ter states that religious communities registered in BiH are responsible for the application and monitoring of the special provisions relating to slaughter in accordance with religious ceremonies.⁴² Article 3 of the ordinance provides that the owner or person responsible for the animals must ensure that animals in slaughterhouses, on farms, premises, or other places where they are placed during transfers, accommodation, restraint, stunning, slaughter, or killing must be spared any harassment, pain, or suffering. Article 4 stipulates that facilities and equipment must be designed and constructed so that animals are not exposed to any disturbance, pain, or suffering. All of the above implies that the legal regulations are in fact harmonized with EU Directive 1099/2009.

The Law on Food⁴³ and the Veterinary Law,⁴⁴ as the basic acts on the basis of which the implementation of regulations⁴⁵ has been adopted, harmonized the latter with the EU hygiene package. Article 27(1) of the Veterinary Law states:

'The production, placing on the market, and trade in products, raw materials, food products of animal origin, animal food, and waste are allowed only in registered

⁴² Pravilnik o zaštiti životinja pri klanju ili usmrćivanju, *Službeni glasnik BiH* (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina), no. 46/10, 10 May 2010, <http://www.sluzbenilist.ba/page/akt/N8mQFm2HRNQ=>.

⁴³ Zakon o hrani, *Službeni glasnik BiH* (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina), no. 50/04, 9 September 2004, <http://upoodz.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Zakon-o-hrani-u-BiH.pdf>.

⁴⁴ Zakon o veterinarstvu, *Službeni glasnik BiH* (Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina), no. 34/02, 4 October 2002, <http://www.vladahbz.com/sadrzaj/dokumenti/ministarstvo-poljoprivrede-vodoprivrede-i-sumarstva/Zakon%20o%20veterinarstvu%20u%20Bosni%20i%20Hercegovini.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Pravilnik o higijeni hrane, *Službeni glasnik BiH* (Ordinance on Food Hygiene, Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina), no. 4/13, 21 January 2013, [http://www.fuzip.gov.ba/bundles/websitenews/gallery/files/120/14966517668_Pravilnik_o_higijeni_hrane_\(%27%27Sl_glasnik_BiH%27%27_broj_4_13\).pdf](http://www.fuzip.gov.ba/bundles/websitenews/gallery/files/120/14966517668_Pravilnik_o_higijeni_hrane_(%27%27Sl_glasnik_BiH%27%27_broj_4_13).pdf); Pravilnik o higijeni hrane životinjskog porijekla, *Službeni glasnik BiH* (Ordinance on Food Hygiene of Animal Origin, Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina), no. 103/12, 25 December 2012, http://www.fsa.gov.ba/fsa/images/pravni-propisi/bs-Pravilnik_o_higijeni_hrane_zivotinjskog_porijekla_103-12.pdf; Pravilnik o organizaciji službenih kontrola proizvoda životinjskog porijekla namijenjenih ishrani ljudi, *Službeni glasnik BiH* (Ordinance on the Organization of Official Controls on Products of Animal Origin Intended for Human Consumption, Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina), no. 103/12, 25 December 2012, http://www.fsa.gov.ba/fsa/images/pravni-propisi/bs-Pravilnik_o_organizaciji_sluzbenih_kontrola_proizvoda_zivotinjskog_porijekla_namijenjenih_ishrani_ljudi_103-12.pdf; Pravilnik o načinu odobravanja objekata koji se bave uzgojem živih životinja, proizvodnjom, preradom, obradom i skladištenjem proizvoda životinjskog porijekla za izvoz na tržište Evropske Unije, *Službeni glasnik BiH* (Ordinance on the Approval of Facilities for the Cultivation of Live Animals, Production, Processing, and Storage of Products of Animal Origin for Export to the European Union Market, Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina), no. 102/12, 24 December 2012, <http://www.uip-zzh.com/files/zakoni/72/102-12b.pdf>; Pravilnik o mikrobiološkim kriterijima u hrani za životinje, *Službeni glasnik BiH* (Ordinance on Microbiological Criteria for Animal Food, Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina), no. 67/12, 28 August 2012, http://www.fsa.gov.ba/fsa/images/pravni-propisi/bs-Pravilnik_o_mikrobioloskim_kriterijima_u_hrani_za_zivotinje_67-12.pdf.

establishments that fulfil the prescribed conditions and are under constant veterinary control.⁴⁶

The Ordinance on Food Hygiene and the Ordinance on Food Hygiene of Animal Origin, Articles 2(1) (a) and (b), exclude the primary production and storage of food for use in the household, which indicates that home slaughter is allowed only for private consumption, provided that the rules on animal health and public health are respected, as well as the provisions of Article 2(6) (a) and (b) of the Law on the Protection and Welfare of Animals. Harmonization with EU Directive 882/2004 is implemented by the Ordinance on official controls carried out to verify compliance with the provisions of the regulations on food and animal health and welfare.⁴⁷

Religious Slaughter and Its Harmonization with EU Directives

Unlike other forms of traditional slaughter, there are established rules for religious slaughter that subjects should adhere to, in the sense that there are formal rules whose implementation is not regulated by state legislation. This means that these rules are not enforced through (the threat of) sanctions but are subject to voluntary consent to implement the prescribed religious law. Religious slaughter can be considered a 'semi-structured' institution, and hence I analyse its harmonization with EU directives and local regulations as a specific form of slaughter. Kosher slaughter is a less present practice in BiH in relation to the slaughter of *Qurban*, which has shown a tendency for growth. Hereinafter, therefore, I focus on the harmonization of regulations regarding the slaughtering of *Qurban*, as most commonly practised in BiH.

Slaughter of *Qurban* as a duty is prescribed to Muslims.⁴⁸ The act of slaughtering that the *Qurban* represents is the sacrificing of an animal with the aim of 'approaching God' to protect human life, with an emphasis on the social dimension.⁴⁹ Through the sacrifice of *Qurban* (certain animals), it is believed that human life is protected, but also that the poor and people in need are

⁴⁶ Zakon o veterinarstvu.

⁴⁷ Pravilnik o službenim kontrolama koje se provode radi verifikacije postupanja u skladu sa odredbama propisa o hrani i hrani za životinje te propisa o zdravlju i dobrobiti životinja, *Službeni glasnik BiH* (Ordinance on Official Controls Carried Out in Order to Verify Compliance with the Regulations on Provisions on Food as well as Animal Foodstuffs and on the Health and Welfare of Animals, *Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina*), no. 5/13, 22 January 2013, http://www.fsa.gov.ba/fsa/images/pravni-propisi/bs-Pravilnik_o_sluzbenim_kontrolama_koje_se_provode_radi_verifikacije_postupanja_5-13.pdf.

⁴⁸ Kur'an Časni, translated by Hafiz Muhamed Pandža and Džemaludin Čaušević, Zagreb 1990, 37:(105-107).

⁴⁹ Kur'an, 37:(105-107).

thereby enjoying the benefits.⁵⁰ The purpose of slaughtering the *Qurban* is to carry out a good deed that consists of giving the meat to help the poor and people in need.⁵¹ Unlike oblation, which is familiar to all religions, the *Qurban* is intended for the benefit of people. In the Islamic tradition, *Qurban* slaughter has a religious, moral, and social significance and serves a person in their moral and social upbringing. The slaughtering of *Qurban* does not happen only during the *Qurban Bayram* (Eid al-Adha), the 'Festival of Sacrifice', but also on other occasions, such as the birth of children, the foundation of a house, pilgrimage, vows, or wills that express gratitude to God. Slaughtering of the *Qurban* during *Qurban Bayram* is an obligation, while slaughter on other occasions is voluntary.

Animals must be treated with respect and kindness, and must be spared any pain.⁵² This is in accordance with Article 3 of EU Directive 1099/2009. The person performing the slaughter must be an expert (skilful) and must use a sharp tool,⁵³ which is in accordance with Article 7 of EU Directive 1099/2009. The animal must be healthy, without defects, and must not be exhausted or skinny.⁵⁴ Slaughter of camels under the age of five, cows under the age of two, and sheep below one year of age is not allowed.⁵⁵ In this way, biological reproduction is ensured. Strings, blood, and pork are forbidden.⁵⁶ The Ordinance on the Organization of Official Controls on Products of Animal Origin Intended for Human Consumption (Appendix C, point 1(c), (r), (u)) regulates that the meat originating from dead animals, skinny animals, or residual blood content must not be used for human consumption.⁵⁷ It can be concluded that there is a general compliance of religious slaughter with the hygiene package.

For other forms of traditional slaughter, such as pig slaughter, there is no prescribed formal procedure, but it takes place as an informal practice in accordance with traditional institutions. However, there is a move towards the adoption of norms and an approximation to EU standards for this informal institution as well. On the whole, there is a decline in traditional practices with regard to traditional slaughter due to urbanization, the constraints posed by local communities, the diminishing supply of cattle reared on individual farms, and an increased focus on the market centres. A more generally decreased interest in traditional social gatherings during holidays is a consequence.

⁵⁰ Enes Karić, *Žrtva, žrtvovanje, Qurban*, *Novi Muallim* 14, no. 4 (2013), 58-63.

⁵¹ Kur'an, 22:(35-36).

⁵² Kur'an, 5:(2).

⁵³ Ibn Kesir, *Tefsir*. Skraćeno izdanje, Sarajevo 2002, 873.

⁵⁴ Kur'an, 2:(71); Kesir, *Tefsir*, 871-873.

⁵⁵ Kesir, *Tefsir*, 874.

⁵⁶ Kur'an, 16:(115).

⁵⁷ Pravilnik o organizaciji službenih kontrola proizvoda životinjskog porijekla namijenjenih ishrani ljudi.

Traditional Slaughter. Practices in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Based on the above corroboration of perspectives and prescriptions, it can be concluded that both the regulator and the individual have a mutual interest in consuming quality meat and healthy food. However, when it comes to breeders and producers, other interests, such as profit, may play a role. There is always a potential danger of deviating from the rules and encountering adverse effects. The slaughter process must be observed in a series of activities that begin before the act of slaughter, including the treatment of animals, the selection of an animal, the slaughter procedure, and ultimately the division of the meat. Households that are engaged in cattle breeding are able to make animal selection much earlier than those who are not, thereby showing additional attention to a selected animal.

Interestingly, all respondents in the sample of this study preferred the consumption of meat derived from their own production to commercial procurement. In addition, a generally accepted view prevailed that meat coming from domestic breeding is better and healthier. The 'expert group' in the sample (veterinarians) agreed with this view too, because the breeder controls the animal and its diet, and will not use means that will affect the quality of the meat:

'The more delicious meat is the one you breed, you slaughter, you know about what the animal ate, and you know that it is natural meat without any of those medicines inside; I think it is better, a hundred times better.' (E_08)

'Always what is domestic, but controlled domestic, breeding, [...] I would be the happiest person if I could rear animals myself, but when I choose meat it is certainly of domestic, but controlled breeding.' (E_09)

Without laboratory analysis, it is difficult to determine the differences in meat quality. However, while cooking, one can notice differences in meat that contains certain unwanted components such as antibiotics or growth hormones. This kind of meat has a characteristic scent, a consequence of the method used to feed the animal. In addition to meat quality, respondents pointed out the economic importance of the traditional slaughter practices of households and cattle breeders:

'He has one or two animals; he slaughters as much as he needs, or maybe he needs the entire animal. But as he has nothing to live from, he will leave one half for himself, and the other half he will sell to me.' (E_09)

'If I did not sell those *Qurbans*, I would not have anything.' (F_11)

Animal Health Control

Despite the fact that all respondents preferred meat originating from their own production, they emphasized the importance that it derives from controlled breeding with evidence of health safety. Farmers are aware of the risk of illness and are obliged to keep livestock under veterinary supervision. The basic task for every farmer is to maintain and take care of the good health and well-being of their cattle. Farms that breed livestock and place them on the market are under control for preventive protection against infectious diseases:

‘My sheep are under the control of a veterinarian. For ten years now I have had my veterinarian who takes care of my sheep.’ (F_10)

‘However, business increases with the *Qurban* slaughter, as the inspection which I manage, that is to control the animals before *Qurban Bayram*, is much bigger then. In this way we wish to take all the necessary actions and measures not to trade with animals that do not have evidence of health and origin.’ (E_08)

The capacity of the inspection bodies is not such that they can carry out control of all the animals that are slaughtered outside of certified facilities. The situation is further complicated by the import of animals, for which the status of contagious diseases is not known. The issue of health safety remains open, especially when it comes to imports from countries that do not apply the EU directive and where the control of breeding is questionable. A person who slaughters an animal at their own home should follow the rules regarding the animal’s age and general condition. In addition to visual control, that is the fulfilment of religious conditions, each individual is asked to check whether the animal carries its identification mark and evidence of health status:

‘I usually go to the site and choose the animal myself. I generally take the rams, but I always look whether the horns are ok, whether there are any deformities in the legs, whether the tail is tidy, and whether the general body condition is good, because the *Qurban*, the sacrifice, cannot be a skinny animal.’ (E_08)

Religious slaughter without evidence of animal health, whether in individual or industrial slaughter, should not be considered. Precisely because animals are being slaughtered for religious reasons, there should be no doubt of the health and quality of the animal:

‘I do not think that anyone who does this for religious reasons would slaughter an animal that is sick, so we are almost 100% sure that the *Qurban* meat is right, regardless of the fact that it is home slaughtered.’ (C_18)

In addition to monitoring the cultivation and trade of animals, the practice of laboratory control of the health safety of meat after slaughter has been developed. This is especially emphasized in pig slaughter, where mandatory inspection of

meat for trichinosis is performed. In any case, this inspection after slaughter is about the use of meat for private needs, and people do not want take risks:

'At the time of pig slaughter, the necessary inspection is carried out, and people are already very familiar with this.' (E_09)

'When I speak to these professional butchers, they always tell me not to play with that issue, and that there are regular samples which are sent for analysis, and only when they get the results will they put the meat on the grill.' (F_21)

The biological waste remaining after slaughter is a hazardous material, and its disposal is also a key issue, as its improper handling can lead to the spread of infectious diseases. As one informant told me (F_10), if slaughter is not carried out in slaughterhouses, the waste is buried in the ground and covered with soil. Farmers who slaughter a number of animals also bury animal carcasses and provide for the disinfection. You 'pour lime over it and then cover it with 70 to 80 centimetres of soil' (F_06), or you engage a professional firm to deal with it in accordance with the regulations (E_23). The prior practice of treating the waste thermally and using it to feed dogs continues (F_21). There is also a practice of using the waste without thermal treatment for feeding dogs (F_20) or birds (F_21). When it comes to animal skin, this is sold to people who are engaged in its purchase and processing. *Qurban* skin is given to the Islamic community, which organizes its collection, storage, and dispatch for further processing. Despite the fact that home slaughter is not considered to have any impact in an ecological sense, the treatment of the waste should be formally regulated in order to avoid the risks of potentially spreading infection.

The Welfare and Humane Treatment of Animals

With its Animal Welfare Directive 1099/2009, the EU imposed humane treatment of animals as mandatory for all its members. Higher stress levels and inhumane treatment reduce meat quality. All participants in the fieldwork emphasized the importance of humane treatment of animals and their responsibilities:

'Our faith requires that we must not torture the animal. So, for this reason and for all the other humane reasons, everything we do has to be in accordance with religious regulations.' (F_07)

'These traditional values are enhanced with one general moral principle [...] you have seen our relationship with the sheep. I talk to them, if you can understand me. We take care of everything.' (F_21)

Humane treatment involves the entire chain of processes, from breeding to nutrition, treatment, transportation, accommodation, stunning, and slaughtering.

The act of slaughtering itself is carried out with one cut, regardless of whether it is small or large cattle.

'This is a religious regulation, [...] halal slaughter must be in one stroke, in one cut.' (E_23)

'So it is not a slaughter to tick him a little and just cut short, but it must be all the way from ear to ear, and only with one cut. It does not matter if it is a huge bull or a lamb, one move.' (E_19)

The biggest differences and discrepancies are expressed in terms of stunning. The purpose of stunning is to make an animal lose consciousness (sensitivity), similar to anaesthesia, so that the animal does not feel pain when being slaughtered. However, the stunning method is controversial. There are several types of stuns, including the penetrating and non-penetrating bolt, electric stunning, and other, less-used methods, such as banging on the forehead.

The bolt is highly controversial because it cannot be assessed how much the animal suffers at the moment of stunning. Penetrating bolts are generally no longer used due to the risk of bloodstream infection. The bolt penetrates the spinal cord, which carries a high risk of bacteriological blood infection (30 to 40%). The penetrating bolt was mostly used with large cattle (bulls, cows). In the case of electric stunning, cardiac arrest can occur because of heart fibrillation; at this moment the heart stops pumping, death occurs, and the bleeding stops. From the moment of stunning, slaughter must be performed in a period of less than thirty-five seconds to avoid death from the act of stunning, according to a veterinarian expert of welfare and protection of animals (E_09). In organized slaughterhouses where one person stuns and another slaughters, it is possible to perform the whole process within the allotted time, while with individual slaughter this is impossible. If death happens during stunning, the religious obligations are not fulfilled and hygiene regulations are not respected. Thus, stunning during home slaughter is risky and not recommended. There is also an opinion that in case of stunning there is no full bleeding. If the animal is properly stunned, it is under 'anaesthesia', and its heart works and pumps blood normally:

'It is definite that stunning leads to the loss of consciousness of the animal. It is like a short anaesthetic, in which the animal does not feel the act of slaughter itself. That is possible within the slaughterhouse, [...] as far as the individual in the household is concerned, it is not. Absolutely not.' (E_09)

'Every cattle I saw, which was slaughtered without stunning, bleeds faster and the blood is completely red, it is full of oxygen and the flesh is cleaner.' (E_19)

As for the act of slaughter outside registered slaughterhouses, different practices occur. Most respondents confirmed that they do not perform the act of slaughter, but engage a professional or experienced person to do it for them.

Others perform only the act of slaughter (cutting of the larynx) and leave the rest of the process to professionals. All respondents confirmed that they do not stun when conducting religious slaughter:

'I attend the slaughter, but professional butchers perform it.' (E_17)

'We perform the slaughter ourselves; we have a tradition.' (F_11)

'I heard about this stunning, but I do not use it, because I do not have these instruments and I do not know where to get them.' (F_20)

When slaughtering pigs, it is common practice to stun the animal with a pistol or to hit it on the head with a hard object (such as an axe or a sledgehammer). The animal is carried outside, hit strongly with an axe on the dull side of the forehead, and becomes unconscious. The classic slaughter then takes place, leaving the animal to bleed out. The act of stunning the pig is performed for easier manipulation, rather than for the humane treatment of the animal:

'The butcher comes and he performs the act of slaughtering the animal [...]. He usually has the instrument for stunning, whether it is a pistol or an axe. Chemicals are not so popular here, since it is a traditional way of slaughtering.' (F_22)

It can be concluded that there is a mismatch between the traditional practice of slaughtering, performed outside registered slaughterhouses, and the formal regulations of the practice of humane treatment by stunning.

Social and Cultural Capital

Traditional slaughter has an important cultural, social, and economic impact on families and communities. All respondents emphasized the importance of traditional slaughter for the strengthening of social capital. It is an occasion for family reunion and wider social gathering:

'It has a characteristic of tradition, and it is a very nice gathering [...] it is a social event that usually ends up late in the evening with singing and cheering.' (F_21)

'It is a true holiday where we enjoy the gathering; it is a sociological phenomenon, which, I think, is among the most beautiful.' (F_22)

'I look forward to that day for a simple reason, and this is because all our neighbours and friends gather together, and then of course, followed by a relaxed conversation, socializing, a glass of good wine or homemade brandy [...], and certainly this act of socializing is extremely important and significant.' (C_14)

The gathering of people during traditional slaughter remains a special memory for children as well, and thus is a cultural tradition passed on from an early age:

'I as a child, and now as an adult man, have been so happy on those days; it was not only I that felt this way but all the children from my village.' (F_22)

'The fact that small children go from door to door to congratulate Eid (Bayram) and to get some money or sweets is special. In fact, it shows that the children feel the charm of the holiday.' (C_18)

The division of the meat from the traditional slaughter also plays an important role in this strengthening of social capital:

'Naturally we give a part of the meat to the butcher who slaughtered, but we also share it with people in our neighbourhood. We would usually go and give them a piece of meat, because someone had brought us a piece of meat, a piece of bacon, or a piece of ham.' (F_22)

Unlike other traditions where the emphasis is on socializing and sharing, religious slaughter also has an enhanced social dimension. The sharing of the *Qurban* meat follows two primordial principles: it is shared among neighbours and the poor, and it is shared regardless of religion and nation. The act of sharing *Qurban* meat places a priority on helping the socially vulnerable. In addition to this emphasized social sensitivity, the sharing of *Qurban* meat positively contributes to the strengthening of neighbourly, friendly, and family relations. As the religious authority in my sample of respondents (E_17) observed, present-day society is characterized by greed, selfishness, ruthlessness, and recklessness. In the social sense, *Qurban* is precisely the opposite. It signals that all that is done is in the name of the Creator (God), and shall serve the people in their moral and social upbringing:

'The rules of the religion require that we leave one third for our family, one third for the relatives, one third for the poor [...], and if there are also members of another religion in the neighbourhood, then we share with them too, because this is a way of respecting other religions, but also an act of good neighbourly relations.' (F_07)

'People are definitely glad to be part of it, [...] those who do not need this, we do not share with them. But the ones who do are truly happy for it.' (F_20)

'I know a lot of people who sit and have a fine dinner when they get *Qurban* meat.' (C_18)

Thanks to the development of science and technology, it is possible to sort, process, and store meat for a longer period of time. In this way, it is possible to send and distribute *Qurban* meat around the world, thus extending the humanitarian impact to other countries in need. The practice has created humanitarian organizations that take on the responsibility of organizing the slaughter and distribution of *Qurban* meat to those in need:

'So, when this meat is sent, it is sent to the poorest parts of the world according to the UN criteria.' (E_17)

'They come, pay, and some part of this goes to Merhamet [a humanitarian organization], some for other public kitchens and so on.' (F_06)

'It happens that sometimes *Qurban* meat is sent to certain homes, orphanages, Merhamet, where there is a public kitchen. When we give the meat to these locations, there must be a test result confirming that the animal was healthy.' (F_07)

The commercial sale of *Qurban* meat is not allowed, otherwise the religious meaning and the purpose of slaughtering the *Qurban* is not fulfilled.

Attitudes to the EU and Its Regulations

As the interviews revealed, people are not sufficiently familiar with the regulations of slaughtering, and this can create problems on the ground. People struggle to follow the frequent changes in regulations and compliance with EU directives. On the other hand, the EU accession process requires adaptation in other areas as well, which increases the general awareness of the issues involved. Considering the complexity and also the inefficiency of both the EU and the local administration, the reasons why people are often not familiar with the regulations are quite clear. What is more, it is unclear who is responsible for monitoring and implementing the EU regulations. None of the respondents had ever been sanctioned or knew anyone who had been sanctioned for failing to comply with the regulations. Most respondents preferred to respect the traditional values rather than the regulations, although they did stress the importance of complying with the hygiene package because it concerns human health:

'I know very little about these laws and regulations, because they change every day and every year, and who would remember all of that?' (F_20)

'I told you that 70% of the people are unfamiliar with them, this is the main problem.' (E_09)

'We have a tradition of alternation; we are [...] always looking for a loophole somewhere.' (E_23)

'I mean, in this area, I am absolutely certain that these directives should be implemented, in order to introduce some order, but the traditional aspect cannot be eradicated, and I do not think it necessary to move in that direction.' (C_14)

Generally, respondents had a positive attitude towards the EU regulations. Some thought they were too complicated, and that previous regulations (in former Yugoslavia) were more concrete, simple, and reasonable (E_08; E_09). They perceived a practice of replicating legislation or 'pressuring' decision makers without prior analysis of what already exists. Consequently, harmonization with the existing situation can lead to misunderstandings in the application on the ground. Any short-term acceptance and implementation of EU legislation for countries in transition or in the accession phase seemed too complicated. Rather

than enforcing regulations in a rigorous ad hoc manner, gradual implementation seems more appropriate.

This is not least because the institutions of traditional slaughter differ in their practices, which are rooted in the respective communities. Religious slaughter is more deeply ingrained and less susceptible to change, while other practices may be more easily influenced. As noted, there is a positive shift in attitude towards the EU and an awareness of the need to implement EU directives to ensure food safety. However, solutions need to be found that are more in line with religious requirements and the preservation of tradition. Although there are differences between the two realms, it seems possible to overcome them by improving practice through the implementation of knowledge and technological innovation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the harmonization of traditional slaughter, including traditions based on religion, with the existing EU directives has largely been achieved, except in the matter of stunning and the distribution of meat that does not originate from registered slaughterhouses. My suggestion is that, for traditions rooted in different religions, the respective religious communities should prepare comprehensive documents (ordinances) in order to regulate and improve the practices of religious slaughter. This could be done, for example, through the inter-religious councils and in collaboration with the Veterinary Office of BiH. Such ordinances could eliminate ambiguities and incorporate new standards in animal welfare with the elimination of potential risks (waste treatment), so as not to undermine the basic goal of the hygiene package. This could also ensure safety and healthy food for human consumption. In traditional slaughter, the process of accepting general principles, that is formal rules, is hardly questioned, and the existing differences are in fact minimal.

Some progress in implementing the EU standards in Bosnia-Herzegovina is evident, as is a need for further development. The EU directives need to be better implemented to ensure the regulation of slaughter practices, but also to preserve traditional values and customs. Excessive regulatory practice, and as a consequence insufficient knowledge of the regulations as well as uncertain responsibilities in enforcing the regulations, have led to deviations in practice. As the fieldwork revealed, if there is a tension between formal institutions and informal practices, priority is usually given to the traditional values rather than the legal regulations.

Policy makers are advised to acknowledge citizens' positive approach towards the EU and intensify their efforts towards adopting unambiguous and realistic regulations. Furthermore, policy makers could be more proactive in supporting

the more general development of rural areas and the modernization of small farms, including a greater engagement in utilizing national and EU funds available for this purpose. In order to achieve substantial good practice, the process needs to respect the informal practices that have been operating well in Bosnian society. Last but not least, the evidence also suggests that nurturing traditions and social relationships contributes to the strengthening of social capital on the ground, and thereby to overall social stability.

Acknowledgement

This project has received funding from the European Union's 'Horizon 2020' research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 693537.

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR

Ismet Kumalić Center for Intradisciplinary Social Applied Research (CISAR), Fikreta Ploče 26, 71000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. E-mail: k.ismet@cisar.ba