



VOLUNTARY REVIEW

**Implementation of Agenda 2030 and
the Sustainable Development Goals
in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

April 2019

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FOREWORD

After achieving relatively modest results in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, Bosnia and Herzegovina began preparations for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Agenda 2030 in a far more comprehensive manner. Over the past 30 months, enormous efforts have been made to engage all levels of government and as many stakeholders as possible in the process. Extremely fruitful cooperation with the United Nations Country Team has led to a streamlining of the activities and the goals and targets of Agenda 2030 have been incorporated into many strategic documents that deal with development in accordance with the national priorities.

Bosnia and Herzegovina recognizes the inherent potential behind implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2030 and sees it as an opportunity to improve social, economic and environmental aspects of life within the country and for enhancing regional cooperation significantly. A working group for creating the SDG framework and the Voluntary Review that is to be presented at a high-level political forum in 2019 was established at the beginning of the process. The members of the working group comprise representatives from the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Directorate for Economic Planning and the governments of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and Brčko District. A Private Sector Group established with respect to the SDGs and several other stakeholders from civil society and the academia were very active.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is seeing the creation of its first Voluntary Review and this will provide impetus to the entire process of the implementation of Agenda 2030, which presents an opportunity for Bosnia and Herzegovina to share with the rest of the world the best practices, lessons learned and experiences related to many issues that are so important to the lives of the people and that have a value beyond measure.



KEY MESSAGES

Bosnia and Herzegovina is fully committed to Agenda 2030, which is the most comprehensive global sustainable and transformational development agreement for all United Nations Member States and has the Sustainable Development Goals at its core. It helps countries commit, align and measure their respective contribution to such an ambitious yet crucial endeavor.

Bosnia and Herzegovina embarked on its participatory and exploratory 2030 journey in 2016. It will present the way it has implemented the process thus far and the results to date at a high-level political forum to be held in New York in July 2019. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Agenda 2030 is equally about peace as it is about development. Given the country's governance structure, it is more about the connective and collaborative process that Agenda 2030 has helped unlock than about the end destination itself.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is committed to becoming a member of the European Union (EU) family. EU accession, Agenda 2030 and the SDGs are perceived as mutually reinforcing and complimentary processes that encourage institutions and citizens to strive for a better society and a future where no one is left behind and where people, prosperity, peace, partnership and care for our planet are at the core of a better and common future.

At the heart of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Agenda 2030 efforts is the elaboration and adoption of the SDG Framework in Bosnia

and Herzegovina, which is being developed through an extensive and reiterative consultative process with various institutions, CSOs, the private sector, academia and citizens at large. This document will inform all strategic planning processes that the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Brčko District embarking upon in 2019. This Voluntary Review informs on the process undertaken in the country, which to date has engaged thousands of people.

Agenda 2030 is a change maker in so many ways for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Its timing and universality offers a unique opportunity to approach development holistically and its connectivity enables the governments to work together, learn from each other and develop strong and open partnerships. This is a priceless process.

The 'Imagine2030' initiative provided an opportunity for citizens across the country to co-create the future. Their perspectives helped shape Vision 2030 and the development pathways that the country is to embrace. Through dedicated data analysis, we developed a better understanding of the country's baseline position. This allows us to focus and increase efforts to improve the quality of life and prosperity for all, including future generations, but not at the expense of the nature world and the environment.

We are learning by doing. Agenda 2030 calls for introspection, conversation and dialogue, adaptation, innovation, creative and adaptive business and above all collective action and efforts by every individual and every form of human organization, ranging from families and communities to the private sector, government and global networks.

We anticipate change and the use of our collective foresight to find solutions to the most pressing issues that the world and each of our countries are facing. We are transforming our systems, our perspectives and ourselves in order to change our possibilities. It is an exciting time that offers a lifetime opportunity to change the course of development so that it becomes sustainable and to the benefit of all.

It is our great honor to be part of this amazing transformative agenda and a member of the global family. We are obliged for the sake of future generations to do something today and therefore must choose the path less travelled on this journey of discovery. We do not have all the answers, but we are striving to get to them in time and at scale that really matters.



INTRODUCTION

Bosnia and Herzegovina is both a sovereign and internationally recognized country and a developing country, just like most of the countries of the South East Europe region. It is located in the western Balkan Peninsula and borders the Republic of Serbia to the northeast, the Republic of Montenegro to the southeast and the Republic of Croatia to the north, west and south. The country has a specific internal set-up. It is divided administratively into two entities (the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska) and the autonomous region of Brčko District. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is divided administratively into 10 cantons, which in turn are divided into municipalities. There are 79 municipalities and cities in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Republika Srpska is divided administratively into 62 municipalities. Brčko District is a separate administrative unit under the sovereignty of Bosnia and Herzegovina. With slightly more than 3.5 million people, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country with pronounced cultural diversity. It consists of three constituent peoples, Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats, while human rights are guaranteed to all other peoples and citizens living in the country.

The EU membership aspirations of Bosnia and Herzegovina started at the 2003 Thessaloniki Summit, where the European Council declared that the future of the Western Balkans is within the EU. Bosnia and Herzegovina is on the road to accession, with potential candidate country status. The Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) was signed in 2008 and has been in force since June 2015. In 2016, Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted a formal application to join the European Union and in 2018 submitted its answers in response to the EU Questionnaire, to assess the readiness of the country to open accession negotiations to the EU.

The country has made significant progress on its transition from a fragile post-war economy to an upper middle-income country in recent years. In mid-2015, all levels of government agreed on the Reform Agenda 2015–2018 and this generated positive progress in initiating important reforms and unlocking the country's integration into the European Union (EU). The political leaders are currently in the process of negotiating Reform Agenda 2.0.

Upon the request of the regional governments and with the support of the European Commission (EC) back in 2011, the Regional Cooperation Council, together with the national administrations of the Western Balkans, regional bodies and relevant initiatives, engaged in a collaborative process to prepare the Regional Competitiveness and Growth Strategy 2020, which is inspired by the European Union's Europe 2020 Strategy. The rationale behind the development of this strategy is grounded in the region's profound need to boost prosperity and create jobs, while underscoring the European perspective of the region's future.

It is of utmost importance, given the country's strong commitment to its EU future, that Bosnia and Herzegovina brings EU perspectives, Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals together, since they are complementary and reinforce each other.

THE PROCESS OF THE REVIEW



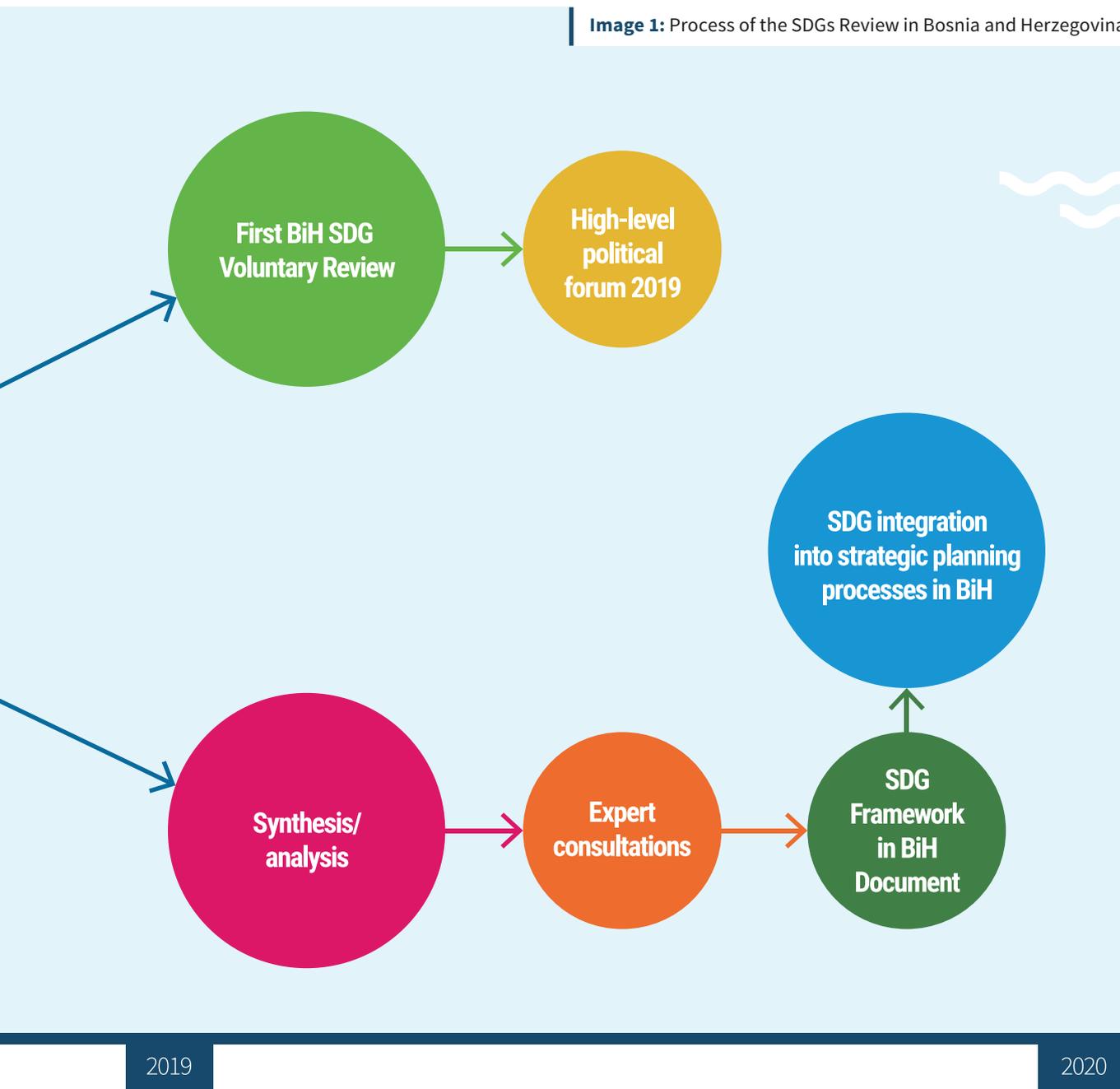
Broad stakeholder citizen focused consultations on Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were initiated in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2016 under the umbrella of the 'Imagine2030' initiative. This was conceptualized by the United Nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has to date informed and engaged over 3,000 people and continues to be the main force of advocacy and engagement in the country. The official launch of Agenda 2030/SDGs was in April 2017. A high-level conference on Agenda

2030 was organized under the auspices of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, followed by the official nomination of the institutions responsible for spearheading Agenda 2030 at the state, entity and Brčko District level. Based on the nominations, an intergovernmental Rollout Working Group on the SDGs was established, the terms of reference for the Group elaborated and the SDG Rollout Roadmap document developed.

Comprehensive support for the SDG process in the country is provided primarily by the United Nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and through the wider United Nations system through Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) engagement.¹

¹ With, among others, the generous support of the Swedish Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina/Sida and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the German Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Image 1: Process of the SDGs Review in Bosnia and Herzegovina



2019

2020

Most of 2018 was devoted to further broad stakeholder consultation (In May 2018 consultations involved more than 250 people and a SDG and private sector conference was held in June 2018 and attended by more than 400 participants) and analytical and technical work (RIA, Dashboards, Complexity Analysis, etc.). This was aimed at two key documents of Bosnia and Herzegovina, namely the first Voluntary Review and the SDG Framework document in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The latter is a key document that will define

Vision 2030 for the country as well as the development pathways and accelerators for development that will in turn inform all key strategic planning processes in the country at the state, entity and Brčko District level.

In 2019, the finalization of the Voluntary Review (VNR) and its presentation at a high level political forum to be held in July 2019 is foreseen along with the finalization of the SDG Framework document in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Once

drafted, the latter will be the subject of further consultation both with experts and policymakers and even more importantly with CSOs, the private sector, the academia and the general public. It is foreseen that the SDG Framework document in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be finalized in 2019 in order to allow for its proper integration into the strategic planning processes initiated by different levels of government in 2019.

Ownership of the SDGs

Institutional ownership

In the complex administrative set-up of Bosnia and Herzegovina institutional ownership remains a work in progress. Given that the country has over 160 ministries and hundreds of specialized institutions at different administrative levels and 145 local administrations, the work done to date is considerable; however, a lot of advocacy work on the engagement and integration of Agenda 2030 into the regular institutional processes remains to be done. The status of institutional ownership is described in the Voluntary Review sections **Integration of the SDGs into countrywide frameworks and institutional mechanisms.**

Localization of the SDGs

Several local administrations, such as Tuzla, Zivinice and Sarajevo, have started to consider the localization of Agenda 2030 into their everyday work and strategic planning at the local level. Among them, the City Administration of Bijeljina has advanced furthest in the localization process. To date, it has conducted awareness raising training sessions with partner groups at the City of Bijeljina level (the private, public and civil sectors and the academia) through 18 training sessions attended by 190 representatives, including those from the banking sector, private companies, NGOs, entrepreneurs, the municipal/city administrations, the Association of Municipalities and Cities of Republika Srpska, social welfare centers, the police and public institutions from 26 cities/municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2018, a systematic approach to the localization of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs began

with the inclusion of SDGs into the revised Development Strategy of the City of Bijeljina for the period 2019–2023. The City of Bijeljina is the first city/municipality in Bosnia and Herzegovina to adjust and include relevant SDG targets and indicators into its development strategy. In partnership with the local NGO ‘Centre for Promotion of Sustainable Development’ (CePSuD), the City of Bijeljina has raised awareness on SDGs in the private and banking sectors as well as in the media and the public sector. It emphasizes partnership and mutual support in future actions as the only successful formula for a more human and sustainable way of life.

Private sector ownership

As of March 2018, a SDG and private sector working group has been tasked with mobilizing interest among private sector actors to engage in the SDGs implementation as well as to streamline and magnify the importance of sustainable development for the private sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The working group was formed to mobilize and engage actors in the private sector and other stakeholders, including government institutions catering to the private sector, in SDG implementation. It works to identify the specific needs of and opportunities for private sector engagement in the SDGs within the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It promotes good business both in the country and abroad and works to steer private sector interest toward pushing forward the SDG agenda. As such, the working group is closely linked with the broader SDGs Rollout Working Group responsible for the overall



planning of the implementation of SDGs in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The SDG and private sector working group proved to be instrumental in preparing the concept for private sector engagement in the implementation of the SDGs in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as in the development and organization of the SDG Business Conference. The working group was also utilized to promote the SDG Business Conference through the business networks established or managed by the members of the working group.

Other interest groups were formed (mostly associated with support for the SDGs rollout and the private sector engagement project) such as an informal advisory body attached to the SDG rollout that gathering more than twenty business leaders from Bosnia and Herzegovina who showed interest in sustainable development and agreed to act as a sounding board and critical friend during the implementation of SDG projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The advisory body helps collect information on what the private sector is doing in the field of sustainable development and identifies key initiatives that empower SDG implementation. It is a group of like-minded businesses ready to champion the implementation of the SDGs.

A high-level SDG business conference was organized to promote the SDGs, raise awareness and promote good practice and the critical role that businesses can play in delivering on the promise of sustainable and inclusive development. More information on the event is provided below.

In October 2018, 25 trainers were trained to coach private sector companies on how to include the SDGs into their business models and over 20 private sector companies underwent the training on integrating SDGs into their business models. A call for the first SDGs Business Pioneers Award was issued inviting businesses to apply for the award in two categories: 'People and Resources' and 'Environment'. The

mapping of over 120 businesses from three potent industries in Bosnia and Herzegovina (wood, IT and automotive) through 'SDGs based B2B cooperation opportunities' was also completed in 2018.

Ownership by CSOs and other partners

In 2018, the main emphasis was on engaging the private sector in Agenda 2030, as described in the preceding chapter. The work to date with CSOs and other partners on Agenda 2030 was done through the 'Imagine2030' initiative and the SDG consultations that took place in May 2018; both are described in more detail further in this review. It is decided that 2019 will be the year when extensive focus will be given to ensuring that CSOs are better engaged and the network on Agenda 2030 improved. Wide consultations on the SDG Framework document in Bosnia and Herzegovina are foreseen during 2019, which will also be an opportunity to initiate a dialogue on platform solutions for CSO engagement as well as platform solutions for comprehensive and continuous multi-stakeholder engagement.



The 'Imagine2030' initiative in Bosnia and Herzegovina



The adoption of the all-encompassing Agenda 2030 with its 17 goals and 169 targets by 193 United Nations Member States, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, was a landmark commitment, but one without a 'user manual' or 'blueprint' instruction as to how to **initiate meaningful dialogue and the engagement of multiple stakeholders**. This allows for **creativity and innovation** across these countries and throughout the United Nations system, including Bosnia and Herzegovina. Starting from a very low knowledge base and level of awareness concerning the MDGs and only limited post-2015 discourse within the country, the United Nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina recognized that **innovative business is required in order to get Agenda 2030 and the SDGs into the focus of policymakers, CSOs, the private sector and citizens at large**. How to communicate and how to engage stakeholders meaningfully in such a complex agenda was a key question that led to the conclusion that thinking outside of the box and doing something different and authentic and something truly engaging is the only way forward. **Bringing the voices of citizens into official debates on Agenda 2030 and the SDGs was the central aim of the initiative**.

Most of 2016 was spent conceptualizing, designing and initiating an 'Imagine2030' advocacy

and engagement initiative. This was done using innovative workshops and online engagement and competitions with the support of the United Nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The dedicated webpage www.zamisli2030.ba and an 'Imagine2030' Facebook page were also created. The initiative began in October 2016 and the tools and approaches that were developed are used continually to engage stakeholders in SDGs, with particular focus on youth and local communities. **To date, workshops and presentations across the country have reached over 3,000 people directly, including representatives from institutions from all levels of government, CSOs, the academia, the private sector and citizens in general.**

Central to effective advocacy for and engagement workshops on the SDGs was the use of the **innovative SDG Consultation Tool**. The SDG Consultation Tool **instigates awareness, dialogue and teamwork problem solving** centered on burning issues in society in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The tool is also a qualitative data gathering method that explores the **positive and negative associations of citizens with both the past and present, their vision of the future, the way they see the future in terms of what values, actions and structures need to be in place and what threats and/or opportunities need to be addressed across the**

SDGs/targets. The ultimate aim of the tool is to identify solutions/ideas on how to address or accelerate achievement of the SDGs/targets within the local context. The tool also enables participants to priorities targets for each of the SDGs.

The voices of citizens gathered through the SDG Consultation tool were analyzed and presented during the two-day multi-stakeholder consultations on the SDGs that took place in May 2018 (see page 13) and formed the key input for the creation of Vision 2030 and the SDG Framework document in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Seen from the analysis of the collected voices of citizens it is evident that there is a **clear correlation between the SDGs and burning societal priorities. They eloquently and clearly define the needs, problems and solutions and demonstrate that citizens want an opportunity to co-create the future and want to take an active role in ensuring the required changes**. In light of this, the 'Imagine2030' initiative continued to engage and shifted emphasis from the initial advocacy and awareness to instigating ownership, accountability and action with the aim of empowering citizens and communities to hold their governments accountable and to generate citizen calls for action.

High level SDG Conference aimed at kick-starting Agenda 2030 in the country in 2017

The high-level SDG Conference took place in the building of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Sarajevo on 3 April 2017 and was organized under the auspices of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The dialogue platform format was established through the Dialogue on the future work of the United Nations and the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dr Mladen Ivanic, and the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sezin Sinanoglu, opened the Conference. A number of distinguished guests and key speakers² participated in the conference and delivered engaging presentations that stimulated meaningful discussion on Agenda 2030 and the way forward.

The conference had several key objectives:

- advocate for the SDGs, promote the importance of comprehensive national ownership over the SDGs, emphasize the importance of the global agenda and the commitment by all Member States to contribute to the achievement of the agenda;
- explain that Agenda 2030 is complimentary to the reform agenda and the EU accession process;
- provide information on what SDG localization entails, that the localization process needs to be participatory and inclusive and that tools and technical support for this are available;

- present the voice of the people on the SDGs, what priorities they identify, what solutions they offer and what future they desire by 2030;
- explain the concept of ‘leaving no one behind’;
- present the experiences of Switzerland, Sweden and Montenegro and their work on the SDGs to date, including their respective roadmaps;
- present the understanding of the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina of the elements of the roadmap ahead;
- provide information on the political and technical bodies responsible for the advancement of the SDGs in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- provide inform on follow-up technical work and the road ahead.

² Addresses and presentations focused on the importance of the SDGs to Bosnia and Herzegovina and all countries of the world. They were delivered by the Head of the EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ambassador Lars Gunnar Wigemark, the EU Special Representative to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Christiane Constanze Hohmann, the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ambassador Michael Gerber, the Swiss Special Envoy for Global Sustainable Development, Sinisa Sesum, the Head of the UNESCO Antenna Office in Sarajevo, Victor Olsavsky, the Head of the WHO Country Office in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jelena Knezevic, the Head of the Department for Sustainable Development and Integrated Coastal Zone Management of the Ministry of Montenegro, Envesa Hodzic-Kovac, a development, research and M&E specialist

from the United Nations RCO in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Igor Radojicic, the Mayor of Banja Luka, Amer Kapetanovic, the Assistant Minister for Bilateral Relations and Economic Diplomacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Prof. Dr. Elvir Cizmic, the Vice Dean for Research, Doctoral Studies and Projects at the School of Economics and Business of the University of Sarajevo, Velimir Jukic, the Director of the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Edin Mehic, the Co-Founder of Networks, Zoran Zeljko, the Director of the Directorate for Economic Planning of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jovana Bjelakovic, the Deputy Director of the Smart Office in Banja Luka, Armin Talic, the General Manager of BIT Alliance and CEO of the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Knowledge Management of the Faculty of Economics of the University of Sarajevo and the Programme Manager of the association Infohouse, Emina Becic.





Policy review using the Rapid Integrated Assessment tool

As an initial step, the United Nations Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) Rapid Integrated Assessment³ (RIA) tool was used to assess the state of alignment of the SDGs with the priorities in the country. A comprehensive policy review was undertaken in order to assess the level of preparedness for implementation and monitoring of the SDGs. Yet given the hundreds of sectorial strategies that have been developed across the various administrative levels in the country and the fact that no fully-fledged development strategies were in place, a policy review of all of them was a technically impossible task. Therefore, in consultation with key institutional partners engaged in the SDGs, a list of 69 strategic documents was agreed as the subject of the review.

One of the main objectives of this assessment was to identify detailed linkages between the preselected key strategies and action plans in Bosnia and Herzegovina (69 documents in total that were agreed to be the subject of the review with state and entity counterparts/members of the SDG WG) and to identify the extent of alignment with the SDGs at the SDG target and indicator level. The assessment mapped the existing policy landscape across different levels of governance. This provided a basis from which to guide the provisions regarding vertical and horizontal policy integration and coherence. The RIA analysis provided comments and recommendations on the measures required to guide the incorporation of the SDGs adapted for Bosnia and Herzegovina into government policy at all administrative levels (state, entity, Brčko District, cantonal and municipal) and for informing international partners supporting the implementation of reforms and SDGs in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The sector documents were selected according to the following criteria: type of document (strategy, program, plan, etc.), the level of strategic action (state, entity, cantonal, municipal, intra-sectorial or sectorial), the validity of the document (existing program or draft document), the timeframe (medium or long-term) and the measurability of the goals and coverage of SDG related areas. The final list of strategies for the RIA was agreed at the state and entity level and by the institutional partners represented in the SDGs Rollout Working Group.

The development strategies reviewed through RIA show that sustainable development in Bosnia and Herzegovina is generally well covered. The strategic documents, programs and action plans reflect all 17 SDGs from Agenda 2030. Yet while some SDG targets and referent strategic documents, such as SDG 8 on 'decent work and economic growth', are well matched and mentioned in 49 out of the 69 strategies reviewed other SDG targets were rarely matched, such as SDG 5 on 'gender equality' that is mentioned in just 16 out of the 69 strategies. The assessment revealed 93 % coverage of the SDGs Means of Implementation (MoI) in the current strategic development set-up in Bosnia and Herzegovina. More specifically, 39 out of 42 MoI targets are mainstreamed into the revised strategic documents.

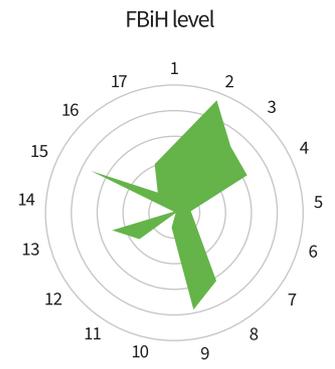
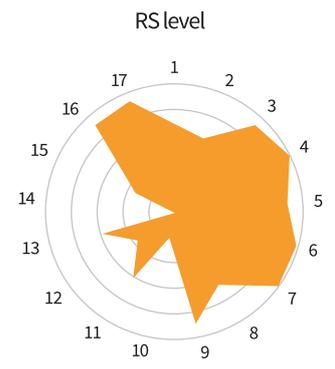
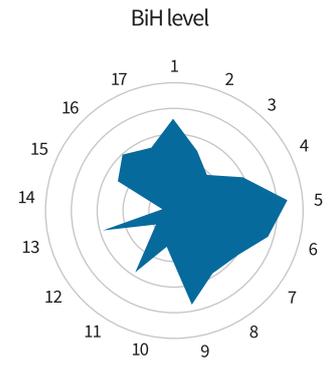
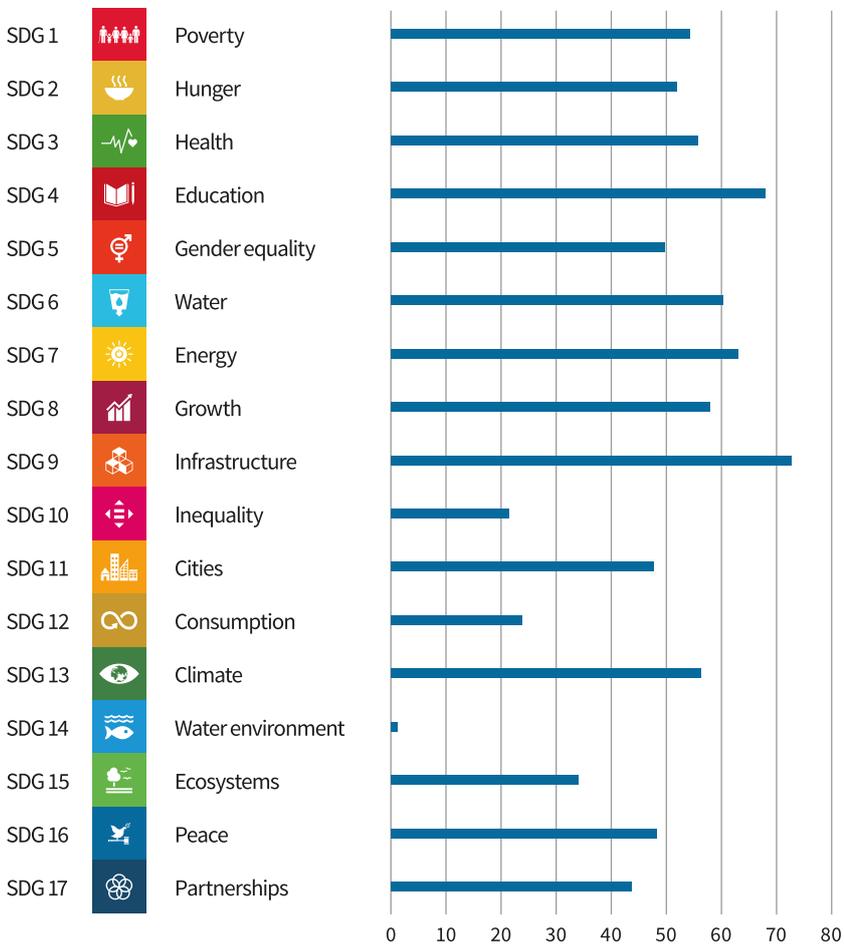
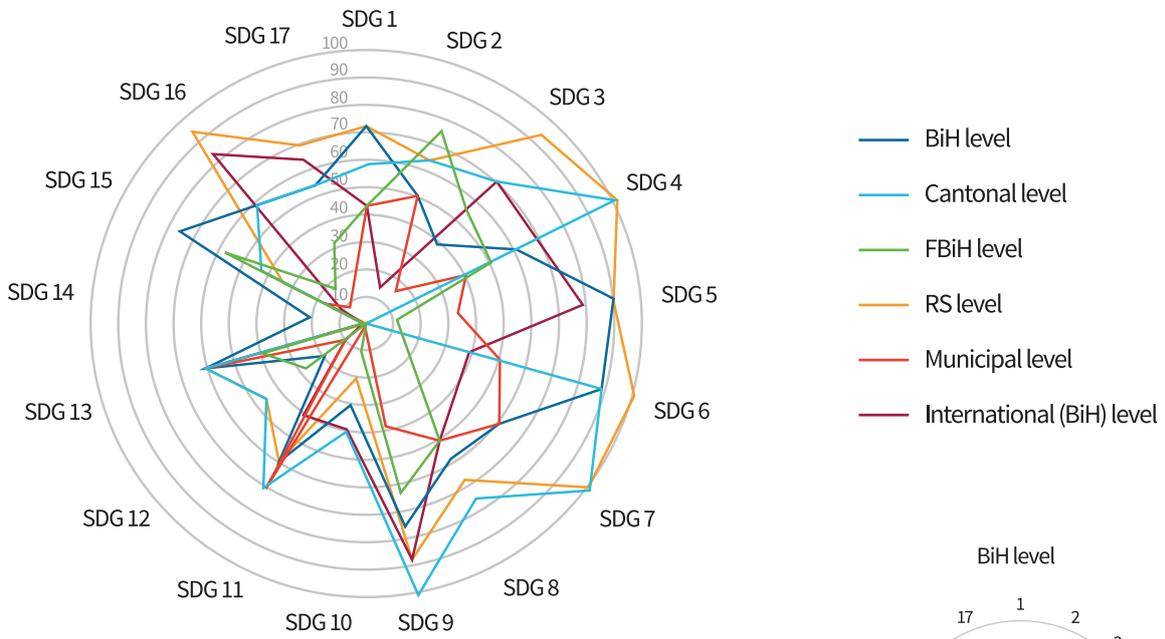
The assessment considered the SDG targets linked to the five 'P's (people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership) of the 2030 Agenda. In total, 69 strategic documents calculated a score of 93 % alignment for people, 51 % for planet, 87 % for prosperity, 58 % for peace and 67 % for partnership.

Some of the bottlenecks identified through RIA that required attention included the lack of a unique approach/methodology to strategic planning across levels of government, the frequent lack of indicators in strategic documents and incomplete budgeting, monitoring and evaluation for strategy implementation. Implementation and oversight mechanisms were unclear, there was a lack of horizontal and vertical coordination in many policy areas and the general level of participation of civil society and the private sector during strategic design and implementation/oversight was low.

The RIA analysis and recommendations were advantageous, given the timing of the initiation of the new cycle of strategic planning at different governance levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the preparation of the SDG Framework document in the country; all of the bottlenecks identified above are to be addressed during the creation of the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

3 Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) is a study that supports countries in mainstreaming the SDGs into planning across governance levels and determining their relevance in terms of the country context, different levels of governance and interlinkages across targets. The methodology determines development priorities and the mapping of SDG targets aligned to development and sectorial plans. Details on the methodology and approach to undertaking this study are contained in Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA), Facilitating Mainstreaming of SDGs into National and Local Plans, UNDP 2017.

Image 2:
Policy analysis of
key observations



SDG Dashboards and data and complexity analysis

Data and statistics are paramount in relation to the adequate planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting on the SDGs. Considering the administrative arrangement in the country with the particular jurisdictions and mandates of different governance levels, it was important to start developing the capacities and tools for each level. SDG Dashboards were created for the state and entity level and a dashboard initiated for Brčko District. United Nations support under the MAPS approach was instrumental in this respect. Information dashboards are tools at the tip of the iceberg in a system that produces and utilizes information. Dashboards support the adaptation of SDG targets and indicators within a particular country context. The process behind the creation of SDG dashboards initiates a review of the systems and capacities that are available, improves interoperability between different data systems and better integrates data from external sources. Effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires the whole-of-government approach and leveraging to ensure the actual engagement of stakeholders in the parliaments, civil society and the private sector.

Dashboards are versatile and multipurpose with several interconnected modules. The basic module can be used as a long-term platform for monitoring progress: it contains all of the SDG indicators and values for different time periods and the indicator target values. The overview module pulls all of the information on the indicators into one place and presents the totality of progress of all relevant indicators against all 17 SDGs using a simple color coding system (green, yellow, red and grey). An additional module allows for the selection of key indicators and comparison with any country or region in order to observe changes and trends.

Based on the dashboard data, a complexity analysis was conducted for the country, SDG complexity maps produced for Bosnia and Herzegovina and a network of SDG targets and their mutual influence identified. This was done using the Mans-Nilsson scale. An initial set of relationships that looked at the connections between the SDGs was developed using the literature. It provided for a calculation of the level of influence and interlinkage between different SDG targets, assigning each SDG target a particular influence value in order to recognize and assess the priority targets that can act as catalysts and accelerators for development. The use of RIA and the SDG dashboards provided an insight into the current situation and potential of the achievement of SDGs and for setting a foundation for sustainable development going forward.

SDG multi-stakeholder consultations in May 2018

Two-day multi-stakeholder consultations, organized under the auspices of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, were held in Sarajevo on the 29 and 30 May 2018. A total of **250 representatives** from all levels of government, CSOs and the private sector attended. The United Nations MAPS mission team that consisted of eleven experts from eight agencies of the United Nations supported this process. Dr Dragan Covic, the (then) Chairman of the Presidency, and Sezin Sinanoglu, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Bosnia and Herzegovina, opened the consultations.

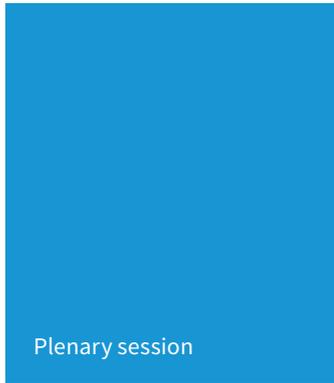
The consultations were designed to build on all of the previous SDG efforts up until that point. This included the findings of the 'Imagine2030' initiative encompassing the views, priorities and visions of more than 1,200 citizens consulted about the SDGs as well as the findings of RIA, SDG Dashboard data and complexity analysis and target influence analysis.



The key objectives of the consultations were as follows:

- utilization of the results of all pre-MAPS tools, including 'Imagine2030', RIA, SDG Dashboards and complexity analysis;
- vision 2030 in Bosnia and Herzegovina in relation to the 5 'P's of the SDGs that form the basis of a shared vision of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2030;
- focus on the key opportunities and constraints of the 5 'P's to be reviewed in the workshops;
- clarify the accelerators, enablers and bottlenecks and how and where investment would have the largest overall impact on the different dimensions of development;
- provide elements/input for the SDG Framework document in Bosnia and Herzegovina by focusing on the SDG targets;
- clarify the areas that require further follow-up in terms of technical work and the groups that need to be established and engaged in this technical work.

To organize effective consultations and considering the breadth of the Agenda, there were four theme groups, following the 5 'P's of Sustainable Development supported by facilitators from United Nations agencies. The participants were then divided in smaller working groups, up to 10 people in each, focusing on certain aspects of the Agenda. The participants included representatives of institutions, civil society and the private sector from the Republika Srpska, Brčko District, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as state level representatives. Each group was asked to come up with a vision statement, constraints and opportunities to reach the vision and suggest priority targets from the SDG Agenda to achieve progress toward the vision. To support these consultations, the RIA and complexity analysis were used to help participants understand the current policy context and key interactions between the SDGs for each theme. This enriched the discussions but also provided an additional base through which to review key policy objectives.



Plenary session

Then Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Dragan Covic



Group work and discussion on each of the 5 'P's resulted in some **common issues and priorities across the 5 'P's**. It was clear from the discussions that some dimensions do not fall strictly within the targets and the SDGs. This included primarily the need to ensure **long-lasting reconciliation, social cohesion and peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina**.

The following **crosscutting issues** arose during the consultations.

Democratic governance and peace: Many of the constraints listed by all of the groups reflected on the need for more coherent and transparent governance institutions that are free from corruption. Clearly, concerns over the impact of effective governance and administrative arrangements emerged from all groups. Specific reference was made to the need for much greater transparency, the rule of law, creating effective administrative arrangements in the complex governance system in the country and promoting a more just and stable society in Bosnia and Herzegovina. All of the groups emphasized the **opportunity that future EU accession would offer in terms of sustainable development** and saw this as providing the momentum to strengthen effective institutions and foster better governance, peace and the rule of law and to meet potential EU benchmarks going forward.

Education: This was mentioned by every group for all types of education needs ranging from addressing segregation among ethnic groups in schools and through different curricula, improving compulsory education (both access and quality), including early childhood education, to more opportunities for vocational education and skills development and improving knowledge on sustainable development and natural resources management. In the planet theme, education was also envisaged from the perspective of increasing awareness on the effects on human health of urban air pollution. **The education system as the foundation to support sustainable development was clear.**



SDG Working Group and members of the United Nations MAPS team after the two-day consultations

Work in groups according to the 5 'P's of the SDGs



Economic potential: While this was mentioned in various ways, the potential of certain sectors, such as agriculture and tourism (tying into effective natural resource management), the need for additional financing to meet development needs and the **untapped potential of creative young people and the existing human capacity** were highlighted across the groups. In respect to the challenges, **inequality of opportunity, segregation in the labor market and insufficient economic development emerged strongly**. This area was also seen as one where broader policies that influence sustainable development are important, especially when it came to fiscal and monetary policy. Incentives (or disincentives) play a role in relation to promoting economic growth and investment in different sectors and can therefore influence the ability to meet the SDG targets.

Natural resources: The abundance and the quality of natural resources was mentioned across the groups, including the need for sustainable use of these resources. While human capital was often highlighted, all groups emphasized natural resources as an asset to support sustainable development in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This would require the development of an entire national strategy to support this **vision of a clean and green Bosnia and Herzegovina, which could be in the form of a commitment to greener growth** principles in economic development and sectorial strategies.

Work in the 5 'P's' theme groups brought together the draft Vision 2030 statements, priority areas for attention and key obstacles and opportunities. Through this process, **48 out of a total of 169 SDG targets were identified as priority targets spread across the 17 SDGs**. Further work, analysis and review of the material from the consultations was instigated in the next stage of the SDG review process in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

'Business Community and Sustainable Development Goals' Conference in June 2018



The Business Community and Sustainable Development Goals Conference was held in Sarajevo on 12 June 2018 with the aim of raising awareness on the role of businesses in delivering on the promise of sustainable and inclusive development. A particular focus of the Conference was the Swedish experience of sustainable development. More than 400 representatives from all levels of government, the business sector and academia gathered at the Conference and had an opportunity

to discuss global topics within the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This included, among others, responsible resource management and environmental protection, ethical businesses and the opening of quality work places and its effect on the image and competitiveness of a business. A live web-stream was organized that drew more than 3,500 views in the 24 hours of the Conference, including significant interest from within the region (Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro).



Ms. Sezin Sinanoglu,
the United Nations
Resident Coordinator
in Bosnia and
Herzegovina

Mr. Mirko Sarovic,
The Minister of Foreign Trade
and Economic Relations of
Bosnia and Herzegovina



The Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Bosnia and Herzegovina opened the Conference. The Swedish Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina/Sida supported the organization of the Conference and the honorary guest of the Conference was Johannes Oljelund, General Director for International Development Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden.

Mr. Johannes Oljelund,
General Director for
International Development
Cooperation at the Ministry of
Foreign Affairs of Sweden



Discussions were held with 19 representatives of the business community in Bosnia and Herzegovina on a number of topics.

Panel 1. Do more with less – The efficient use and sustainable management of natural resources.

Panel 2. Responsible consumption for sustainable production.

Panel 3. Chances offered by the ethical business model.

Panel 4. Quality jobs make companies more competitive.



At the Conference, representatives of 20 businesses from Bosnia and Herzegovina shared best practices in the areas of sustainable development. The Conference focused on three broader SDG themes, including responsible resource management and environmental protection, ethical business conduct and economic growth and quality employment (SDGs 8, 12 and 16). Discussion topics also covered the issues of corporate social responsibility, equal opportunity and gender equality. Keynote speakers included, among



Mr. Ola Rosling,
President and Co-
Founder of the
Gapminder Foundation

Ms. Susanne Sweet,
Associate Professor at
the Stockholm School
of Economics



Mr. Sasa Beslic,
Head of Group
Sustainable Finance at
Nordea Bank



others, Ola Rosling, President and Co-Founder of the Gapminder Foundation, Sasa Beslic, Head of Group Sustainable Finance at Nordea Bank, and Susanne Sweet, Associate Professor at the Stockholm School of Economics. The Conference was an opportunity for businesses to show their joint commitment to sustainable development as part of their business models and to contribute to Agenda 2030 in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Daniel Paska,
Ericsson's
sustainability and
corporate
responsibility
Program Manager



Drafting of the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the first Bosnia and Herzegovina Voluntary Review and the consultation and validation process for the key SDG documents

In order to engage in and inform all institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina about Agenda 2030 and the process of the Voluntary Review (VNR) and the creation of the SDG Framework document in Bosnia and Herzegovina, dedicated sessions were organized for state level institutions in March 2018, for the Republika Srpska institutions in September 2018, for Brčko District in January 2019 and for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in June 2018. Promotion of the SDGs by the institutions was also done through dedicated SDG bulletins produced by the Directorate for Economic Planning of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 and 2018, the dedicated SDG statistical bulletin developed by the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the dedicated SDG statistical bulletin produced by the Institute of Statistics of Republika Srpska in 2018.

The SDGs Rollout Working Group formed three subgroups in September 2018, each responsible for leading the process of 1) crafting the Bosnia and Herzegovina Voluntary Review, 2) drafting the SDG Framework document in Bosnia and Herzegovina and 3) dedicated work on data/statistics for the SDGs.

The approach to VNR in Bosnia and Herzegovina includes the citizens' perspectives on the goals of sustainable development in BiH, relying heavily on the collective knowledge gained through a participatory approach in order to see what needs to be done in the country from the perspective

of citizens. In 2019, the focus is on collecting the perspective of experts and policymakers who, with the citizens' perspective, will formulate the SDG Framework, as well as options and pathways for accelerated development. The draft document will be open to extensive consultations and comments. Both the Voluntary Review of the SDG's in BiH and the SDG Framework in BiH will be submitted to the BiH, FBiH, RS and Brcko District Governments for adoption.

Discussions on the 'leave no one behind' concept have also been initiated with the aim that the SDG Framework explores options that will bring forward the needs and perspectives of those furthest behind and benefiting least from the 'business as usual' development process.

Agenda 2030 and SDG domestication in the country has proven to be a steep learning curve for all involved, institutions, the private sector, CSOs, academia and the international community. We are learning through doing, aware of the importance of the iterative process and the need to open up and ensure maximum participation in decision-making. Through this process, we also strengthen and improve regular strategic planning processes, explore new modalities of working together and recognize the great value of the shift that Agenda 2030 initiates from common development discourse to multi-sectorial inclusive and forward-looking discourse.



INTEGRATING THE SDGS INTO THE COUNTRYWIDE FRAMEWORKS

Having in mind that the SDG Framework document in Bosnia and Herzegovina defines key priority areas and targets for reaching Agenda 2030, as such it does not contain mechanisms for its practical operationalization. Given the complex administrative system in the country and the nature of the SDG Framework and the need to respect the constitutional

competencies, attainment of the agreed targets will be ensured through their incorporation into strategic documents at all levels of government.

Below is a short description of how the governments will operationalize SDGs through their strategic documents.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Strategic Framework for the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be made at the institutional level and in accordance with their scope of responsibilities. The Strategic Framework will be based on the key principle of sustainable development, which will enable the inclusion of the SDGs into the Strategic Framework for Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The legal framework for planning the work of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina foresees the preparation of two planning documents: a mid-term (three years 1+2) and an annual work program of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and

Herzegovina and the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

These planning documents will be created, among other things, on the basis of the strategic framework, which will contain strategic/operational objectives that will be defined on the basis of the priority areas of the SDG framework. Furthermore, these documents represent the foundation for making three-year and annual budgets. In this way, the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina will contribute to the implementation of the sustainable development goals in accordance with their respective powers.



Brčko District

Brčko District plans to initiate the process of designing its Development Strategy 2020–2027 in early 2019. The planning processes will be highly participatory and guided by the principle of sustainable development, thus enabling direct incorporation of the SDGs into the development strategy of Brčko District. More specifically, the Brčko District development strategy will reflect the vision, priority areas, targets and indicators defined commonly within the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the same time, the Government of Brčko District will have the possibility to add additional targets and indicators tailored to the specific needs of the District.

The timing for aligning the strategic planning process in Brčko District with the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina is suitable, because programming of the strategic goals and priorities of Brčko District based on the strategic SDG framework for Bosnia and Herzegovina is not expected to start until June 2019. The strategic goals and priorities will be elaborated further through specific measures that also contain projects and activities to implement such measures.

Baselines and target values will be defined at the level of the strategic goals, priorities and measures and are to be aligned, wherever relevant, with the target values defined within the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the same time, the use of the indicators defined within the SDG Framework will be ensured.

Moreover, the Government of Brčko District is to adopt a decision on introducing mid-term and annual planning and reporting within the entire administration and it is through these mid-term and annual plans that the measures defined in the development strategy will be implemented. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the targets and indicators defined in the Brčko District development strategy are incorporated into these mid-term and annual plans. This would enable easier and systemic monitoring and reporting on the level of attainment of the SDGs. It is of utmost importance to establish effective linkages between strategic, mid-term and annual planning and financial planning in order to ensure that SDG implementation is linked directly with the mid-term and annual budget of Brčko District.

It is important that any additional sectorial strategy designed in Brčko District will need to be aligned with the development strategy and consequently with the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Similar to the Brčko District, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is about to launch its planning process (in late 2018/early 2019). The planning process in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its alignment with the SDGs Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be more complex having in mind the three tiers of government and the need to ensure effective vertical coordination and integration.

There is the legal obligation in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to align its strategic documents with Agenda 2030 and the relevant strategic documents at the state level. Consequently, the design of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Development Strategy 2020–2027 will be structured around the four pillars of sustainable development and the five ‘P’s, namely people, prosperity, planet, peace and partnership. The planning process will be a consultative one that engages a broad spectrum of stakeholders (institutions, cantons and local government and socioeconomic stakeholders).

In terms of its methodological alignment, the goals and priorities that will be defined in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina development strategy will, as much as possible, mirror the priorities

and targets defined within the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Specific interventions to achieve the goals, targets and priorities will be programmed within specific measures and strategic projects.

Baselines and target values will be defined at the level of the strategic goals, while priorities and measures are to be aligned, where relevant, with the target values defined in the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the same time, the use of indicators set within the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be ensured and thus enable easier monitoring of the progress made toward attainment of the SDGs.

Importantly, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Development Strategy 2020–2027 will serve as a platform for the design of the development strategies of the cantons and local government in the entity. Therefore, subsequent planning processes at the cantonal and local level will follow the same approach, logic and principles and thus ensure that all levels of government in the entity will contribute cumulatively to the achievement of the SDGs.

Actual implementation of the SDGs at the Federation of Bosnia and

Herzegovina, cantonal and local level will be realized through the mid-term and annual work plans of institutions and closely aligned with mid-term and annual budget planning. These planning processes, which can be considered as ‘infrastructure’ to implement the SDGs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, stem from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Law on Development Planning and Management. This Law was to be further reinforced through a set of bylaws that were expected to be adopted by the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in December 2018. Institutions at all three levels of government in the entity will be responsible for monitoring progress, which is to be captured annually through ‘development reports’ prepared by the respective coordinating institutions (the Development Planning Institute at the level of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and development management units at the cantonal and local level).

It is important that any additional sectorial strategy designed in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina be aligned with the entity Development Strategy and consequently with the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Republika Srpska



Republika Srpska recently initiated a policy dialogue on its future strategic planning and development management system. More specifically, the Government of Republika Srpska created a working group in July 2018 consisting of representatives of institutions at the entity level and local government that was tasked with proposing improvements to its current system. This included the regulatory, methodological and institutional frameworks. The working group has defined the vision and guiding principles for the future system, including sustainable development, the vertical and horizontal policy and priority alignment and social inclusion/equal opportunity for all. Although these system building efforts are ongoing, the aforementioned principles set a solid group for implementation of the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the development planning and management system in Republika Srpska. Concretely, linkages to Agenda 2030 and the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be, possibly by mid-2019, ensured through the reinforcement of the regulatory and methodological framework for development planning in Republika Srpska.

Republika Srpska does not have an overarching development strategy in place that could define the development priorities for this entity and serve as the key platform for designing sectorial strategies at the entity level and local development strategies. Recognizing this limitation, the Government of Republika Srpska is considering initiating the design of a sustainable development strategy 2030. This would enable the incorporation of priority areas, targets and indicators from the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina into the goals, priorities and measures of the Government of Republika Srpska. At the same time, the strategy would serve as the key reference document for local government in the entity and would therefore require, wherever relevant, the alignment of their development strategies with the Republika Srpska sustainable development strategy and thus directly addressing the corresponding targets and indicators.

Implementation of the measures defined to address the relevant SDG priority areas and targets would happen as part of the existing mid-term and annual planning processes of the institutions at the entity and local level. Clear linkages with mid-term and annual budget

planning would need to be ensured so that measures contributing to the implementation of the SDGs are budgeted systemically.

Similarly, annual reporting on the level of attainment of the SDGs would be part of the reporting mechanism within the overall strategic planning and development management system, where relevant indicators from the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina are taken over at the entity and local level. In addition, the entity institutions and local government would be able to add additional indicators as per their specific needs.

It is important that any additional sectorial strategy be designed with the development strategy of Republika Srpska and consequently with the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the event of a delay in the design of the planned sustainable development strategy in Republika Srpska, the Government of Republika Srpska could consider aligning its other key strategic documents with the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina, such as the Economic Reform Program, so as to provide strategic guidance on SDG implementation to institutions in the medium term.

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

The concept of ‘Leaving no one behind’ is aimed at eliminating the multidimensional causes of poverty, inequality and discrimination and reducing the intersecting and multiple vulnerabilities of the most marginalized people. These include women, children, refugees, internally displaced persons, migrants, minorities, stateless persons, people living with disabilities, the elderly and populations affected by conflict, natural disasters and health emergencies. It implies strengthening national systems and processes of accountability to monitor progress and provide remedies.⁴

Putting this concept into practice requires governance and accountability mechanisms at the local, national and international level. It also means having measures that allow progress on realizing this concept to be visible through stepping stone equality targets. Attaining the SDGs will not be possible if the poorest and most vulnerable people continue to be left behind and are unable to benefit from the progress and advancements in society. It is important to look beyond averages and identify **who** is left behind, **where** they are, **why** they are being left behind and **what** they need in order to advance and enjoy the same quality of life as the majority of the population.

The ‘leave no one behind’ concept has been partly explored previously in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the prism of social inclusion and social protection. Yet this concept probes deeper than previous approaches and calls for fresh perspectives and new interventions to help those left behind by providing opportunities to elevate them from their current position.

The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is in the process of drafting a development strategy that will incorporate the SDGs and their implementation in accordance with the socioeconomic context in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the cantons and municipalities of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The drafting process for the development strategy foresees the creation of four thematic groups with twelve subgroups covering all aspects of socioeconomic development (for example, competitiveness and smart specialization, human resources, food production, social inclusion, etc.). Activities of all subgroups will be based on the ‘leave no one behind’ principle. This means that each thematic group will implement this principle giving special attention to marginalized groups and will make decisions to ensure their equal participation in socioeconomic processes in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Brčko District is also starting the process of drafting a development strategy. The new development strategy will be harmonized with the new approaches applied in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region and will serve as a clear starting point for developing all operational and work plans for the Government of Brčko District. The development strategy of Brčko District should serve as a platform for implementation of the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This framework will make it possible to translate the global goals and Agenda 2030 into specific objectives and activities in the field in Bosnia and Herzegovina, whilst taking care of marginalized groups through the ‘leave no one behind’ principle.

The relevant institutions in Republika Srpska are implementing numerous program for the protection of the rights and satisfying the needs of vulnerable groups of the population. Since Republika Srpska does not have a comprehensive long-term development strategy in place, these programs are envisaged under the applicable legislation and elaborated through numerous strategic papers and action plans. However, the four-year Work Program of the Government of Republika Srpska that sets priorities, such as increased competitiveness of the economy and higher salaries, improved efficiency in the public sector, the sustainability of the health system, improvement of the demographic picture of Republika Srpska and the digitalization of the economy, also defines a series of measures within all priorities related to the protection of marginalized and vulnerable groups.

⁴ The UNSDG Operational Guide for UNCTs on ‘Leaving no one behind’ supports resident coordinators and UNCTs in integrating this principle.

INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

The SDGs Rollout Working Group in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Joint activities of all institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina related to the SDGs began in 2018 with the creation of the SDGs Rollout Working Group. To reflect the territorial organization of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the SDGs Rollout Working Group was comprised of members from the following institutions and organizations.

- **Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina** members are from the Directorate for Economic Planning (as the chief coordinator), the Foreign Ministry of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- **Government of Republika Srpska** members are from the Ministry for Economic Relations and Regional Cooperation, the Department for Strategic Planning of the Secretariat General of the Government of Republika Srpska Institute of Statistics.
- **Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina** members are from the Institute for Development Programming (as the chief coordinator on behalf of the entity), the Office of the Prime Minister of the Federation of Bosnia

and Herzegovina and the Federal Institute of Statistics.

- **The Government of Brčko District** members are from the Office of the Mayor of Brčko District, the Office of the Brčko District Coordinator on the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Department for Economic Development, Sports and Culture and the Brčko District Office of the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- **United Nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.**

Chief coordinators for implementation of the SDGs were designated at the level of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Government of Republika Srpska and the Government of Brčko District. They are responsible for coordinating, on behalf of their respective governments, all activities undertaken by the ministries and other institutions, the development of a sustainable development strategy and a plan to implement the strategy at their respective level of government, to assist the ministries, other institutions, local authorities,

non-governmental organizations, the academic community and the private sector in implementing the SDGs at the entity, cantonal and local level.

Because of the large number of SDGs and their targets as well as the division of responsibilities between the entities, the SDGs Rollout Working Group in Bosnia and Herzegovina was formed to plan and coordinate joint activities of government institutions at all levels in the country and for the purposes of regional and international activities and reporting supported by the United Nations. The working group collects and consolidates the views of the governments of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska, Brčko District and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina; it holds consultations with the ministries, parliaments, the private sector, the academic community, non-governmental organizations and all other stakeholders. The members of the working group provide expert support and advice to their respective governments through the relevant institutions, coordinate the activities of international and domestic experts in Bosnia and Herzegovina and prepare various documents that may be of use to

decision makers at the state, entity, district, cantonal and local level.

The SDGs Rollout Working Group coordinates all activities related to the SDGs in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the institutions represented in the working group. Its members are tasked with preparing voluntary reviews for the high-level political forum until 2030 on the basis of the input they receive from their respective institutions, reporting to regional and international institutions on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and coordinating regular annual reporting on sustainable development in the country with a view to improving coordination and creating the preconditions for funding implementation of the SDGs.

The SDGs Rollout Working Group is not linked to the political processes in the country and functions on a regular basis, regardless of the political issues. It makes all decisions by consensus. Final approval of all key conclusions and the implementation of all decisions are issued at the sub-national government level and that of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The members of the SDGs Rollout Working Group from all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina report to their respective governments on a regular basis and receive input and opinions from their respective governments on all pending issues discussed during SDGs Rollout Working Group meetings.

The SDGs Rollout Working Group organizes regularly joint workshops and conferences for all citizens, institutions, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, the academic community and other stakeholders. Joint activities take place in the major cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina during which knowledge and good practice from the international level are transferred to the level of institutions and the public sphere in order for Bosnia and Herzegovina to achieve sustainable development as quickly as possible in all areas.

The subgroups of the SDGs Rollout Working Group

The SDGs Rollout Working Group formed three specialized subgroups for the purpose of better coordination of work and activities related to issues that require more attention and stronger commitment:

- **subgroup for crafting a National Voluntary Review (VNR),**
- **subgroup for SDG Indicators in Bosnia and Herzegovina,**
- **subgroup for drafting an SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina.**

These subgroups are comprised of representatives of the relevant institutions that conduct coordination on behalf of the governments and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

A Conclusion was approved at the 53rd special session of the Presidency Bosnia and Herzegovina following the discussion on the implementation of the United Nations Resolution A/RES/70/1, requesting that the Council of Ministers, in cooperation with the institutions of the entities and Brčko District, designate an institution to be responsible for developing an Action Plan and a Road Map for achieving the SDGs, monitoring activities in all areas and conducting analyses into the level of achievement of the SDGs. The Directorate for Economic Planning of Bosnia and Herzegovina is responsible for implementation of the Conclusion.

Republika Srpska

The Government of Republika Srpska confirmed through its September 2017 Conclusion the commitment of Republika Srpska to achieving the United Nations SDGs and to mainstreaming the SDGs into its strategic documents. The same Conclusion tasked the Ministry for Economic Relations and Regional Cooperation with developing, jointly with the Strategic Planning and Monitoring Unit of the Secretariat General of the Government of Republika Srpska and the Republika

Srpska Institute of Statistics, an Action Plan to implement the SDGs in the entity. As a result, the Government of Republika Srpska formed a working group to promote and implement the SDGs in the entity. The task of the working group is to participate in the activities of the working bodies formed within the United Nations system in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to coordinate both the monitoring and implementation of SDGs in Republika Srpska.

Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

On the basis of the Conclusions of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina relating to implementation of the SDGs in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina expressed its commitment to implementing Agenda 2030. In this regard, in September 2017, the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, through its Secretariat General, tasked the Federal Institute for Development Programming with coordinating, in line with its legally defined mandate and authority, all activities relating to implementation of the SDGs in the entity.

Brčko District

A Decision of the Mayor of Brčko District made in June 2018 appointed coordinators of the Government of Brčko District to participate in the drafting of an Action Plan and a Road Map for implementation of the SDGs and to monitor the related activities in all areas and develop analyses on the level of achievement of the SDGs.

Local level

At the local level, SDGs are to be implemented in accordance with internal organization through the chief coordinator, who will maintain direct communication with the ministries responsible for local authorities, the associations of municipalities and cities in the entities and local departments.

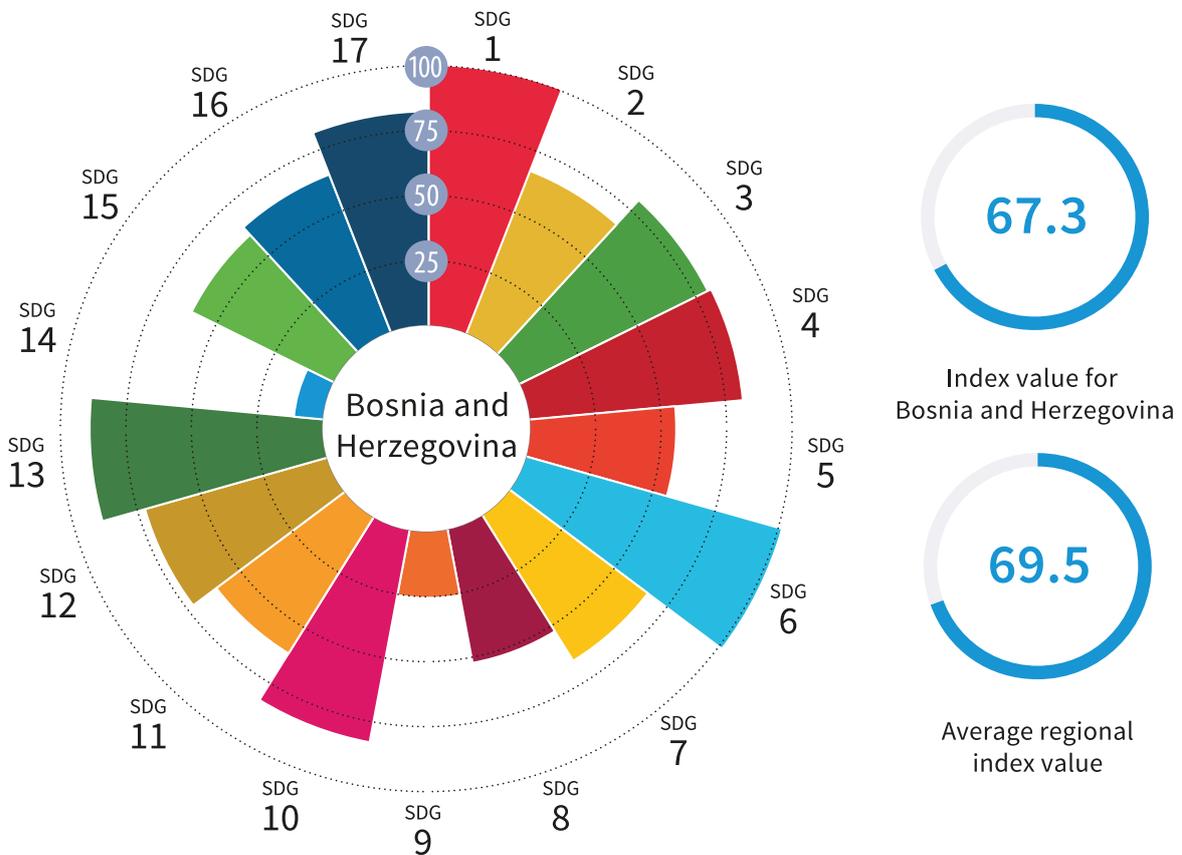
GOALS AND TARGETS

According to the **2018 SDG Index⁵ and Dashboards Report** produced by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and the Bertelsmann Stiftung, Bosnia and Herzegovina ranks 71st out of 156 countries reviewed with a total score of 67.3. The score for Bosnia and Herzegovina is somewhat below the average score of 69.5 for Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

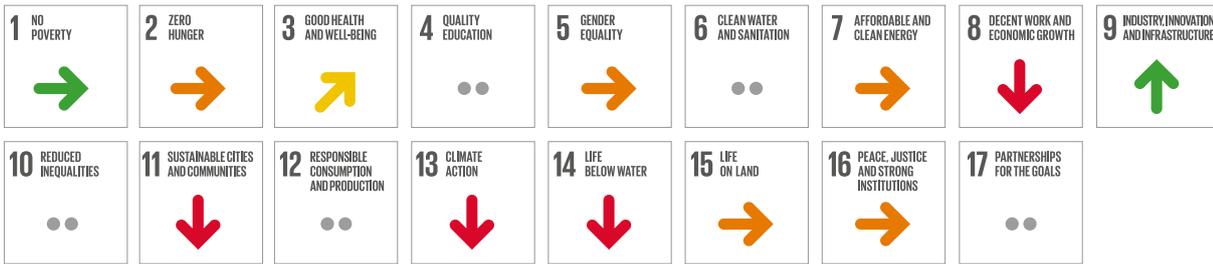
The index rank and score (71st/67.3) of Bosnia and Herzegovina is below that of the countries in the region, Slovenia (8th/80.0), Croatia (21st/76.5), Serbia (40th/72.1) and slightly below the scores of Republic of North Macedonia (61st/69.0), Albania (62nd/68.9) and Montenegro (69th/67.6).

According to the 2018 SDG Index Report, most countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia score well on addressing poverty, improving health and education outcomes and on providing access to key infrastructure; however, trend data suggests that some are regressing on the central dimensions of human development. The report also stresses that all countries in the region require greater effort to decouple economic growth from negative environmental impact.

Image 3:
SDG index for BiH



⁵ The SDG Index score signifies a country's position between the worst (0) and the best (100) or target outcomes. According to this index, the highest-ranking country is Sweden with an overall index score of 85 (the country is on average 85% of the way toward achieving the best possible outcome across all 17 SDGs).



The SDG consultations that took place in May were set around the 5 ‘P’s of sustainable development (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership) and so is the section of this report addressing SDG goals and targets.



Image 4:
5 SDG chapters

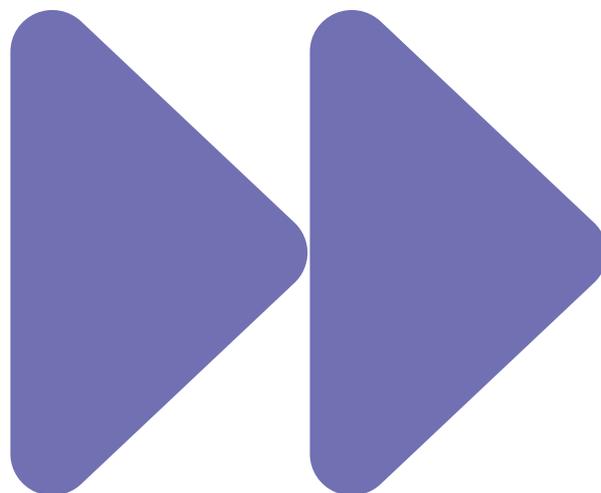


People

End poverty and hunger and ensure dignity and equality for all in a healthy environment

The overarching theme of 'People' is to ensure a life with dignity and equality in a healthy environment for all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, while leaving no one behind. This is to be achieved by investing directly in effective policies that will strengthen the economy and have the potential

to be expanded to include other dimensions of human wellbeing, such as poverty and the improvement of the position of vulnerable groups and their increased inclusion in addressing economic, societal and environmental changes in society.





SDG 1

End poverty in all of its forms everywhere

Poverty is a multidimensional problem that affects and cuts across almost all of the SDGs. Poverty reduction is often a result of progress made in the implementation of other SDGs. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the poverty rate is measured using the relative poverty line and household consumption expenditure. The multidimensional character of poverty is analyzed through health, education, employment and access to social protection.

The latest data from 2015⁶ shows that the poverty rate has fallen from 17.9 % to 16.9 %. One of the structural problems in Bosnia and Herzegovina is certainly the difference between the rural and urban population. This is reflected in the huge difference in the poverty rate: 11.3 % for the urban population and 20.5 % for the rural population. Regarding the employment status of the head of the household, those households where the head of the household is incapacitated for work were at

greatest risk of poverty (38.5%) and those households where the head of the household is employed were at the lowest risk of poverty (11.6%). One in six households in Bosnia and Herzegovina is poor.

Almost all housing units in Bosnia and Herzegovina are connected to electricity and water supply. It is interesting to note that only 2.8 % of households in Bosnia and Herzegovina live in rental homes. In 2015, the housing units in which households live were improved and this resulted in an increase in home ownership. The largest improvement made was in the heating of the housing units in which households live.

Based on the data provided by the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the poverty rate for senior citizens (65+) and children (<15) exceeds the average poverty rate in the country. The poverty rate for the elderly was 19.6 % and 18.7



An example of good practice

The RS Ministry of Health and Social Welfare funded projects for the provision of support to households in social need through the revenue obtained through the tax on games of chance in 2015 and in 2017. It funded projects for the support of single parents of children with developmental difficulties and other socially vulnerable families with children with developmental difficulties, in accordance with the goals defined in the Strategy for Improving the Social Position of People with Disabilities in Republika Srpska 2017–2026.

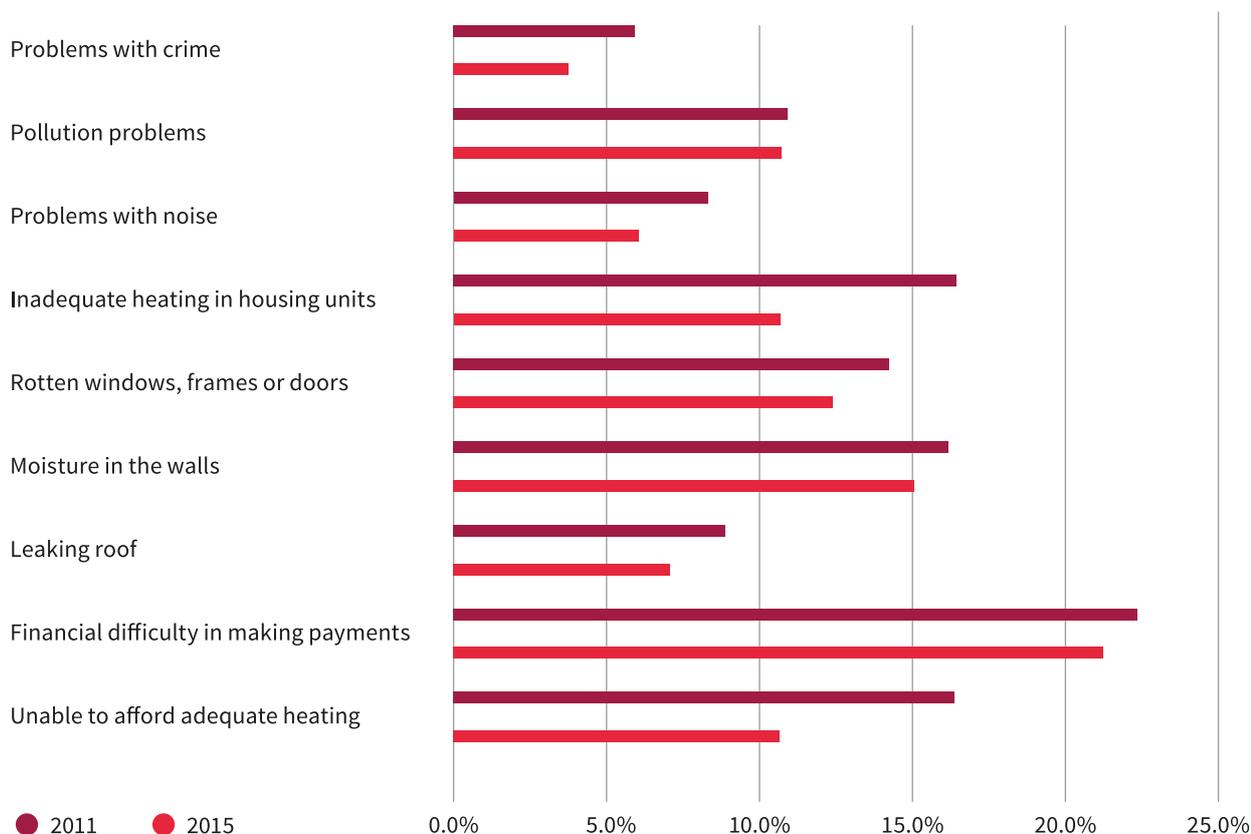
% of children lived in relatively poor households.

The Roma minority is among the most vulnerable groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although it is difficult to establish the exact number of Roma people in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are, according to the 2013 census, 12,583⁷ Roma; however, according to the estimates of the municipalities and the Roma associations, their number ranges between 35,000 and 45,000.⁸ The social situation of Roma is characterized by poor living conditions, obstacles to education and a lack of income generation opportunities.

⁶ The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina Household Budget Survey, 2011 and 2015.

⁷ www.mhrr.gov.ba/PDF/djeca/Narativni%20Izvjestaj_usvojen%20na%20Vijecu%20ministara.pdf.

⁸ www.mhrr.gov.ba/ljudska_prava/Akcioni%20plan%20BiH%20za%20rjesavanje%20problema%20Roma%202017-2020%20%20BOS.pdf.



Graph 1: Indicators of the material deprivation of households and housing problems faced by households

Source: The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina Household Budget Survey 2011 and 2015.



An example of good practice

By joining the global initiative ‘The Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015’, Bosnia and Herzegovina has made progress on improving the situation of Roma in the country. Bosnia and Herzegovina set the directions in addressing the main problems faced by the Roma population, focusing on education, housing, employment and healthcare. During the period 2009–2016, all levels of government made financial contributions to the implementation of the Roma Action Plan (Council of Ministers, the entities, Brčko District and the cantons). The largest portion of these funds was spent on housing for 3,900 Roma. In 2017–2020, according to the plan, an additional 560 housing units for 560 Roma families will be constructed or reconstructed. During the period 2009–2016, a total amount of BAM 1,722,000 was spent on improving healthcare services for the Roma population. Over the period 2017–2020 an additional 3,700 Roma families in need of some form of intervention in healthcare will be supported and, in this way, provided with better living conditions. In 2009–2016, a total of BAM 4,777,000 of the funds allocated for employment and self-employment was invested in programs for co-financing employment and self-employment for 688 Roma. Co-financing is planned for 628 more Roma people over the period 2017–2020.



SDG 2

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

According to the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (the first results for GDP in 2017), agriculture, forestry and fishery accounted for 5.6 % of GDP. The share of agricultural and food products within the foreign trade of Bosnia and Herzegovina is significant and the available data shows that the agriculture sector deficit is going down and that in 2017 the export-to-import ratio was 35 %.⁹ Around 1,000 legal entities and around 360,000 rural households in Bosnia and Herzegovina are involved in agricultural production, of which one third is registered as agricultural holdings. A pilot census on agriculture conducted in 2010 (by the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Federal Institute of Statistics and the Republika Srpska Institute of Statistics) shows that the average utilization of agricultural land per

holding consists of on average of four parcels or 1.97 ha per farm, which is far below the EU-27 average of 14.3 ha (EUROSTAT). The data indicates one of the key problems in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is the large number of agricultural holdings and the consequent small size of such holdings and their economic and production power. If you combine the small average size of these holdings with the fragmentation of agricultural land and dual production, then it becomes an important problem and a strategic priority that requires addressing in the future.

Although long-term trends indicate a decreasing number of people engaged in agriculture in Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to the International Labor Organization (ILO), 15.7 %¹⁰ of people are employed

5.6 %

of GDP stems from agriculture, forestry and fishing

in agriculture, of whom 38 % are women. Over the last 10 years, the land area where the most common types of crops are grown, and the level of production have remained almost unchanged. There are 2.2 million hectares of agricultural land in Bosnia and Herzegovina of which 1.6 million hectares is arable land and 600,000 hectares pasture.¹¹ The size of the land best suited to agricultural production (land capability classes I and II) in Bosnia and Herzegovina is small at just 300,000 hectares.

According to the data provided by the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre (BHMACE) for 2016, the total mine-suspected area in the country is 1,145 km² (2.3% of the total area of Bosnia and Herzegovina) with agricultural land accounting for the largest share.



1.97 ha **14.3 ha**

average area of land used per farm

Climate change in Bosnia and Herzegovina is characterized by an increase in the mean temperature. Over the past one hundred years, temperature has increased by an average of 0.8 °C (which corresponds to global trends) showing an accelerated trend in warming. As a result, the mean temperature over the last decade (2000–2010) was the highest in the past 120 years. It is expected that the length of dry periods, the frequency of flash floods and the intensity of soil erosion will increase over the course of this century.

The Strategic Plan for Rural Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2018–2021) envisages support to rural development and its implementation would result in reduced inequality between rural and urban populations. Development policies and analyses will focus on sustainable planning, management, conservation and utilization of agricultural land in order to expand the discourse from standard land planning to more complex long-term and sustainable programming. This program needs to be implemented in particular in the northern parts

of Bosnia and Herzegovina because of the strong pressure of non-agricultural activities on agricultural land. EU and state grants should aim to protect agricultural complexes and to decrease soil degradation in order to achieve food safety.

Bosnia and Herzegovina does not face the challenge of the undernutrition of its population. The findings of Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) IV for 2011 show that 2 % of children under the age of five were underweight and less than 1 % of children under the age of five were severely underweight. Over the past several years, there has been an increasing trend in overweight children in Bosnia and Herzegovina and MICS IV (from 2011) estimates that nearly every sixth child under five years of age in Bosnia and Herzegovina is overweight (17%), which is an increase of 2.6 % compared to the findings of MICS III in 2006. When it came to Roma, 9 % of Roma children under the age of five in Bosnia and Herzegovina were underweight (four times the rate for their non-Roma peers).



⁹ The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnia and Herzegovina's Foreign Trade in Goods in 2017, October 2018.

¹⁰ The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Labor Force Survey, 2018.

¹¹ The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the entity institutes of statistics, 2016.



SDG 3

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all and at all ages

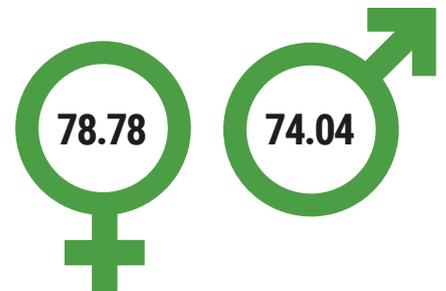
Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages and the enjoyment of a high health standard is important in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Life expectancy is increasing: estimated life expectancy for women is 78.78 years and for men 74.04 years in 2016.¹² Regarding mortality, cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death (51.8% of all deaths¹³). The next leading causes of death are malign, endocrine and metabolic diseases (predominantly diabetes) and eating disorders. The most common causes of cardiovascular disease are unhealthy lifestyle habits, cigarette smoking and in particular alcohol consumption. According to the 2011 Household Budget Survey, only 22

% of adults said that they had not consumed alcohol over the past seven days.

According to the findings of the 2015 Household Budget Survey, 5.1 % of people needed but did not receive medical treatment. The main reason for not receiving medical treatment was unaffordability (41%). However, an improvement in patient waiting lists was noticeable: down from 31.5 % to 23.5 %. According to their own opinion, five in seven persons felt 'very well' or 'well', while 10.3 % felt 'bad' or 'very bad'.

Infant deaths are one of the best indicators of the health of a population and primarily of children. The infant mortality rate¹⁴ in Bosnia and Herzegovina is decreasing, down



life expectancy at birth

from 7.5 for every 1,000 live births in 2006 to 5.9 permille in 2016, while in the Republika Srpska it was reduced to 4.8 per-mille (2006) to 2.4 per-mille in 2016.¹⁵, and in the Federation of BiH in 2016, this rate was 4.8 per-mille, while in 2017 it amounted to 4.2 per-mille¹⁶. MICS IV from 2011 estimates that the infant mortality rate for Roma children in Bosnia and Herzegovina at 24 for every 1,000 live births, which is nearly 8 times the average in the country.

The 2011 household budget survey shows 95 % public health insurance coverage and 1 % private insurance coverage in Bosnia and Herzegovina. On the other hand, of the total health care spending in BiH for 2016 (most recent data), 71% is public consumption and 29% is private

51.8 %

**mortality
connected to
cardiovascular
diseases**



5.9 %

**infant mortality
rate**



consumption. In the Republika Srpska in the same year, 73.9% of total consumption is spent on public and 26.1% on private consumption and in the Federation of BiH in the same period, 70% was public and 30% was private consumption¹⁷. The size of medical staff compared with the overall size of the population is significantly smaller than the EU-28 average, which makes the adequate provision and timely access to healthcare services difficult.

Long-term care services, preventive healthcare services and health administration are covered almost entirely through public funding, while medical devices for outpatients are financed largely by household out-of-pocket payments. Most of the health funding in Bosnia and Herzegovina

is allocated for inpatient hospital treatment and medical devices for outpatients. Around 3.7 % is spent on the administration and management of the health systems in BiH, which is an increase over the previous year when the share was 3 % and overall expenses were smaller. Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to find a way to reduce the cost of inpatient hospital care. One of the ways to do this is through preventive healthcare, which accounts for just 1.8 % of total healthcare expenses (in Republika Srpska 2.6%, and in the Federation BiH 1.1%). The average length of inpatient stay in 2015¹⁸ was 7.2 days, which represents a decrease from 8.3 days in 2009.

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- ¹² An estimate by the World Health Organization.
 - ¹³ The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2016 Demography.
 - ¹⁴ The infant mortality rate shows the ratio between the deaths of children under one-year age per every 1,000 live births over a one-year period.
 - ¹⁵ The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2016 Demography; RS data Institute for Statistics of Republika Srpska, Statistical Bulletin, 5 demography, 2016.
 - ¹⁶ <http://fzs.ba/index.php/publikacije/godisnji-bilteni/stanovnistvo-i-registar/>
 - ¹⁷ Agency for statistics BiH, Ministry of Health Republika Srpska, for FBiH: <http://fzs.ba/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/12.7.pdf>
 - ¹⁸ The latest data from the HFA database.



SDG 4

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities

Education makes it possible for every individual to engage in the labor market and this in turn enables his or her financial and economic independence. Primary education is free and provided for all children in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is most commonly implemented under the social status criterion in order to ensure full and equal access to the regular education system. According to the findings of MICS IV in 2011, nearly all children of the appropriate school age in Bosnia and Herzegovina attend primary school and the percentage of illiterate people is relatively low. The education system in Bosnia and Herzegovina is highly decentralized and its structure reflects the complex structure of the state.

Preschool education provided during the year prior to primary education is important in terms of reducing

the initial differences among pupils in terms of their pre-knowledge and preparedness for primary education, which contributes to creating equal opportunities for achieving success in primary education for all children. Pre-school education in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is conducted in public and private institutions. In the last academic 2018/19 year, of the total number of preschool institutions, 58% are public and 42% are private. Coverage of children by pre-school education and education in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the same year, aged 3 years to the beginning of elementary school, was 21%. According to the estimates of the Federal Ministry of Education and Science, about 57% of children in the year prior to going to elementary school are covered by some type of preschool education (complete development program of

preschool education in kindergartens or certain shorter programs). The coverage of children by preschool education prior to beginning primary education in Brčko District over the past nine years has been 100%. Preschool educators prepare children for primary school using the curriculum proposed by the relevant pedagogical institute and under the approval of the head of the respective department of education.

Preschool education is an activity of general interest that includes the education, care and protection of preschool children carried out in accordance with the Law on Preschool Education in RS. This Law regulates the organized preschool education of children aged between six months and primary school age provided through the implementation of the preschool curricula.

The percentage of children covered by preschool education in Republika Srpska is increasing year by year (see Table 1). In 2018, out of 51,662 preschool children 11,638 or 22.5% of the total preschool population attended preschool.

Table 1.
Number of children attending
preschool education since 2011

School year	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
RS	6,732	7,369	7,599	8,166	9,093	9,953	10,240	12,156
FBiH	10,179	10,969	11,808	12,737	13,268	14,405	15,093	15,722

As awareness of the importance and relevance of early childhood education increases among communities and parents' new preschools are established in both the public and private sectors. This has resulted in an increased number of children attending preschool and a large increase in the percentage of children covered by preschool education. However, the fact that the number of live births has decreased each year should be taken into consideration as one of the reasons for this increase.

The number of preschools in Republika Srpska:

- 42 preschools in the public sector (established by the municipal authorities),
- 70 preschools in the private sector (67 established by legal entities or individuals and 3 established by religious communities).

The Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska has since 2011 organized a three-month preschool education program for those children who do not attend kindergarten. The program is implemented in

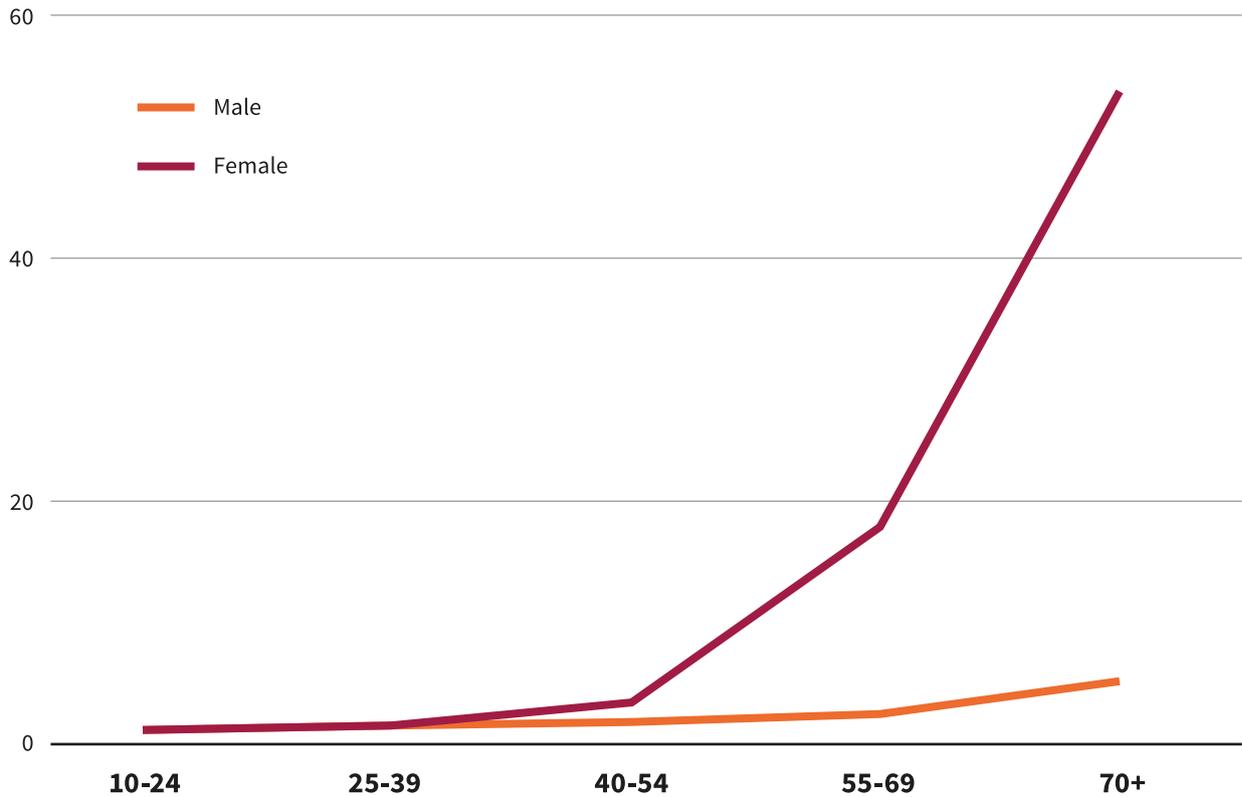
preschools or in primary schools in those communities where there is no preschool. The program is funded through the Republika Srpska budget and other sources. It is implemented for three hours a day (180 minutes) two days a week from March through May. Over the past eight years, 33,280 children have gone through this program at a cost of BAM 2,553,442.06. UNICEF and Save the Children have been involved in the implementation of the program over the past several years and contributed to a large increase in the coverage of children by the preschool program. As a result, the percentage of children covered by this program ranges on average between 35 and 45 % of the total number of children enrolling in the first grade.

In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, nine-year compulsory education was introduced in the 2004/2005 school year in the Una-Sana, Tuzla, Zenica-Doboj, Gorazde and Sarajevo cantons and in the 2009/2010 school year in all other cantons in the entity. The entity Ministry of Education and Science in cooperation with the cantonal ministries implements a project for the procurement of textbooks for

children from socially vulnerable families.

The Republika Srpska Strategy for Education Development for the period 2016–2021 includes a set of measures aimed at improving preschool, primary, secondary and higher education. This strategy sets the goal for all levels of education to increase and improve the efficiency and create a better education system and the coverage of children and adults by all forms of education based on lifelong learning and entrepreneurship. The strategy focuses on increased quality standards for textbooks, teaching and learning materials and harmonizing education with the demographic, economic and social changes that have taken place in society. The goal to improve higher education focuses on research oriented higher education, the internationalization of higher education and improved standards for student. In the 2018/2019 school year, the coverage of children by secondary education is 97.30 %.

Nine-year primary education is compulsory in Brčko District. Under the Law on Primary and Secondary



Graph 2.
Illiteracy rate by age group and gender

Source: The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Men and Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Education, the Department of Education of Brčko District provides textbooks for primary school children free of charge and free transportation for pupils who live at least three kilometers from the school and for all pupils with special needs regardless of where they live. Over 50 assistants with degrees in different fields of study are engaged in 15 primary schools in order to provide support to inclusive education. Over the past nine years, the percentage of children covered by the primary school preparatory program in the year preceding the first year of primary school education has been 100 %.

Secondary education is not compulsory in Bosnia and Herzegovina. According to the Progress towards Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Report for 2013, only 22.6 % of Roma children attended secondary school education out of a secondary school enrolment rate of 92 %. At present, the enrolment rate in tertiary education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is over 38 %.

According to the 2013 census, the overall illiteracy rate in Bosnia and Herzegovina is 2.82 %. The illiteracy rate for males is 0.79 % but is as high as 4.76 % for females. The illiteracy rate is highest for older women aged 55 to 69 at 5.29 %, while for women aged 70 or above it is as high as 25.85 %. The latter means that one out of every four women aged 70 or above in Bosnia and Herzegovina is illiterate. The reason for this can be attributed to the fact that primary education only became compulsory after World War Two.

The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA 2018) was implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2018 for a sample of 236 schools. Internationally comparable results will be available by the end of 2019.

The Labor Force Survey indicates a decrease in the number of early school leavers among both females and males over the past several years. According to the latest data, 5.4 % of women and 4.4 % of men are early leavers from education.¹⁹ According to the findings of MICS 2011-2012 (UNICEF), the secondary school enrolment rate in Bosnia and Herzegovina was 76.2 %. Around 54 % of students completed their secondary education within the standard completion time and 24 % after graduating from secondary school or a postsecondary institution and continued their education.

The reform implies the development of key competences focused on entrepreneurial, innovative and digital competences in secondary and higher education, the development of new qualifications based on learning outcomes and the harmonization of vocational qualification standards with the demands of the labor market. This is seen as a way to accelerate economic development and thereby increase employability. Under the programmatic economic reforms that are being developed jointly by the state, the entities and Brčko District it is necessary to reform the education system in order to establish a closer link between education and the labor market, focused on vocational training and higher education and inclusion in the labor market. One of the priorities is the development and introduction of key competences for lifelong learning at all levels of education, focused on entrepreneurial and digital competences.

Regarding adults (aged 25 to 64) and all forms of lifelong learning – formal, non-formal and informal learning – the Adult Education Survey for 2018²⁰ shows that 8.7 % of respondents had participated in some form of formal and/or informal education, while 91.3 % of respondents had not participated in formal or non-formal education.



An example of good practice

The Republika Srpska Education Development Strategy for the period 2016–2021 recognizes persons with disabilities. The number of pupils with developmental difficulties is increasing each year: currently there are 1,484 (1.61%) pupils with developmental difficulties in primary education and 369 (0.93%) in secondary education. Since 2010, the Government of Republika Srpska has financed assistants for autistic children in education (4 in 2010 and 205 in 2017/2018). Scholarships are awarded to pupils with disabilities (12 in 2015, 10 in 2016, 11 in 2017 and 9 in 2018).

When it comes to learning the Roma language in primary school, the possibility of using textbooks from Serbia is under consideration for the education of Roma pupils. The legislation in Republika Srpska allows Roma children to enroll in primary school even without all of the necessary documents. Early leaving from education is not a big problem: annually, around 30 pupils leave school for the reason of moving elsewhere. The activities of the Roma associations play a very important role in raising awareness about the importance of education.

¹⁹ Labor Force Survey 2018.

²⁰ The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Adult Education Survey, 2018.



SDG 5

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



Bosnia and Herzegovina has signed all of the main international conventions on gender equality and on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, of which the most important is certainly the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The Electoral Act Amendments Act of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its harmonization with the Gender Equality Act from 2013 ensure a 40 % quota for the underrepresented gender on political party lists. Yet despite this, women continued remain underrepresented in politics. According to the Central Electoral Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina data on the gender structure of elected officials in legislative authorities, as of April 16, 2015, women held 20.1 % of all seats in the House of Representatives and

at the levels of BiH, the FBiH, the RS and the cantons.

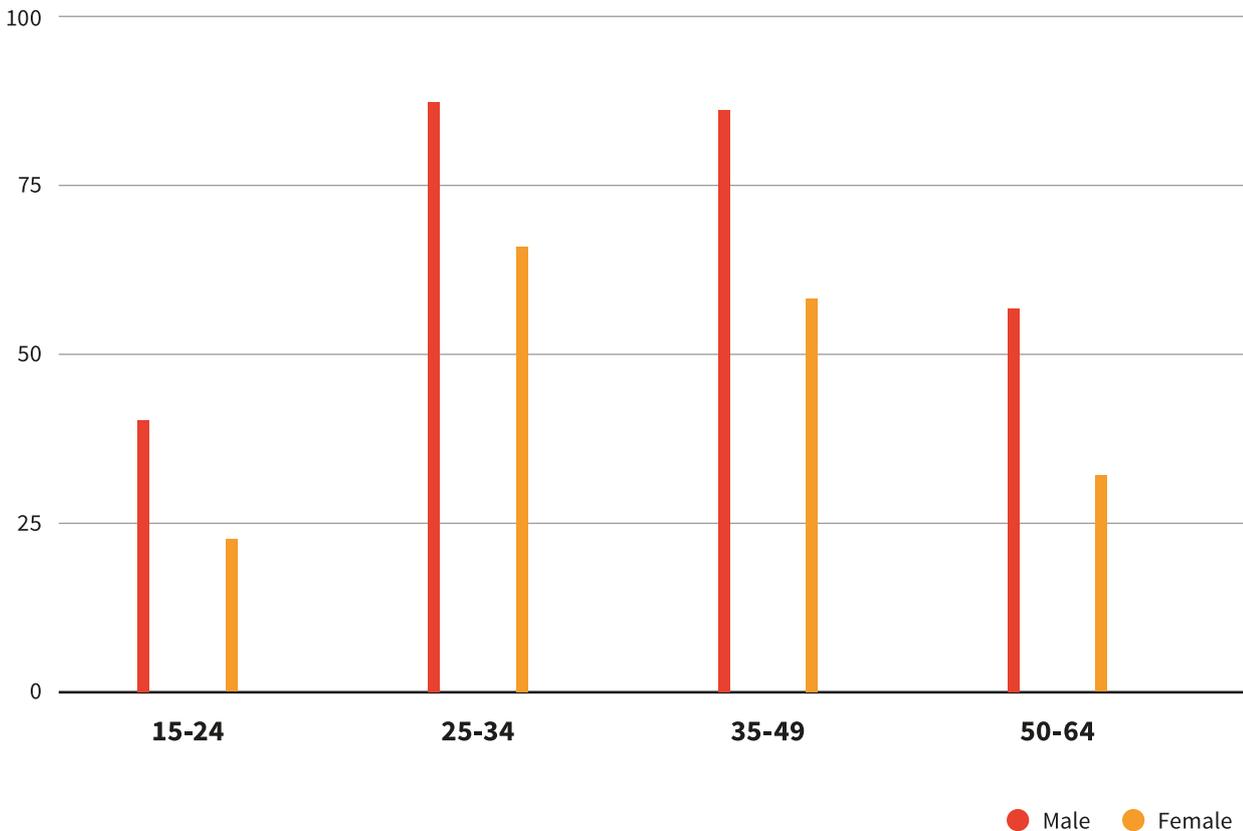
It is evident in all age groups that labor market activity for females is lower than for men. By their own admission, one of the reasons for inactivity among women is their role as a housewife (38.4%). The most common reason for inactivity among men is retirement (59.3%).

Employment policies implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina are divided among the entities, Brčko District and the cantons. The measures implemented in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Federal Employment Office relate directly to women, such as the employment of women, women's start-ups and the many training programs implemented, and motivational lectures delivered

20.1 %

participation of women in representative houses





Graph 3. Activity rate by gender and age group

Source: The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Labour Force Survey, 2018.

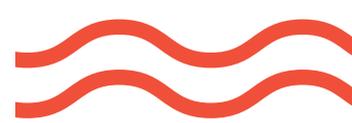
with the aim of including women in the labor market. Moreover, measures are being implemented in both entities, Brčko District and the cantons to support unemployed people by providing equal access for men and women and vulnerable groups, such as young people, Roma and people with disabilities, etc. Also, the Federal Ministry of Education and Science implements programs of training, vocational training and training of adults with a focus on women, in order to facilitate their integration into the labor market.

The amount of BAM 3,215,570 has been spent on self-employment programs in Brčko District since 2014 involving a total of 742 program beneficiaries of which 500 or 67.3 % are men and 242 or 32.7 % women. In 2018, the share of women increased to 39.34 % of the total number of applicants. The majority

of businesses supported through the self-employment program (88.51%) continue to be active and 34 more people have been employed thanks to the innovative ideas of the program beneficiaries.

The Public Employment Institute of Republika Srpska is implementing the 'Program for Employment and Self-Employment of Target Groups in the Economy in 2018'. The Republika Srpska Employment Office funds the program to a total value of BAM 500,000 (EUR 259,000). The Program envisages the employment or self-employment of 115 individuals from the target group of the Program, which consists of female victims of domestic violence, rural women and individuals who lack up to three years of insurance coverage in order to become eligible for old-age retirement.

Regarding the rights of the LGBTI population, the Centre for Gender Equality of the Government of Republika Srpska is implementing all of the necessary activities to protect the rights of this population. Activities will be undertaken in the near future to improve the position of LGBTI persons in Republika Srpska by incorporating adequate measures and activities into the annual operational plans developed under the Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2018–2022. The Gender Centre of Republika Srpska coordinates its implementation.





Prosperity

Prosperous and fulfilling lives, economic, social and technological progress in harmony with nature

People in Bosnia and Herzegovina aspire to achieving economic, social and technological progress in harmony with nature. Planning for our further economic development should include the minimum negative impact on the environment and a rational cycle

of production and consumption. As a middle-income country, Bosnia and Herzegovina is still learning whilst moving along this path. It continues to face the challenges of socioeconomic transition and yet continues to achieve progress.

In 2017, Bosnia and Herzegovina retained the same trend of GDP growth of 3 % as in the previous three years; however, this is not sufficient to achieve the average standard of living in the European Union, which in Bosnia and Herzegovina is 32 % of the EU-27 average. A single economic area within the country has yet to be established. It is necessary to improve the country's competitive position in the European and global markets and to increase the living standards of citizens in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



2017



2016



2015



0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.5 3 3.5 4

Under the Global Competitiveness Index 2018–2019 ranking (World Economic Forum - WEF), Bosnia and Herzegovina is ranked 91st out of 140 countries and under the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index 2018 it is ranked 89th out of 190 countries. Administrative obstacles at different levels of government continue to burden the business environment and the lack of a unified business registration system in the country continues to pose an obstacle to potential investors.

Graph 4.

Real GDP growth rate in Bosnia and Herzegovina (%) for the period 2015–2017

Source:

Economic Trends, Directorate for Economic Planning BiH.



SDG 7

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

The energy sector is one of the strongest economic sectors in Bosnia and Herzegovina with a long tradition and significant potential for further development since the country has a comparative advantage in this sector and particularly in the area of hydropower.

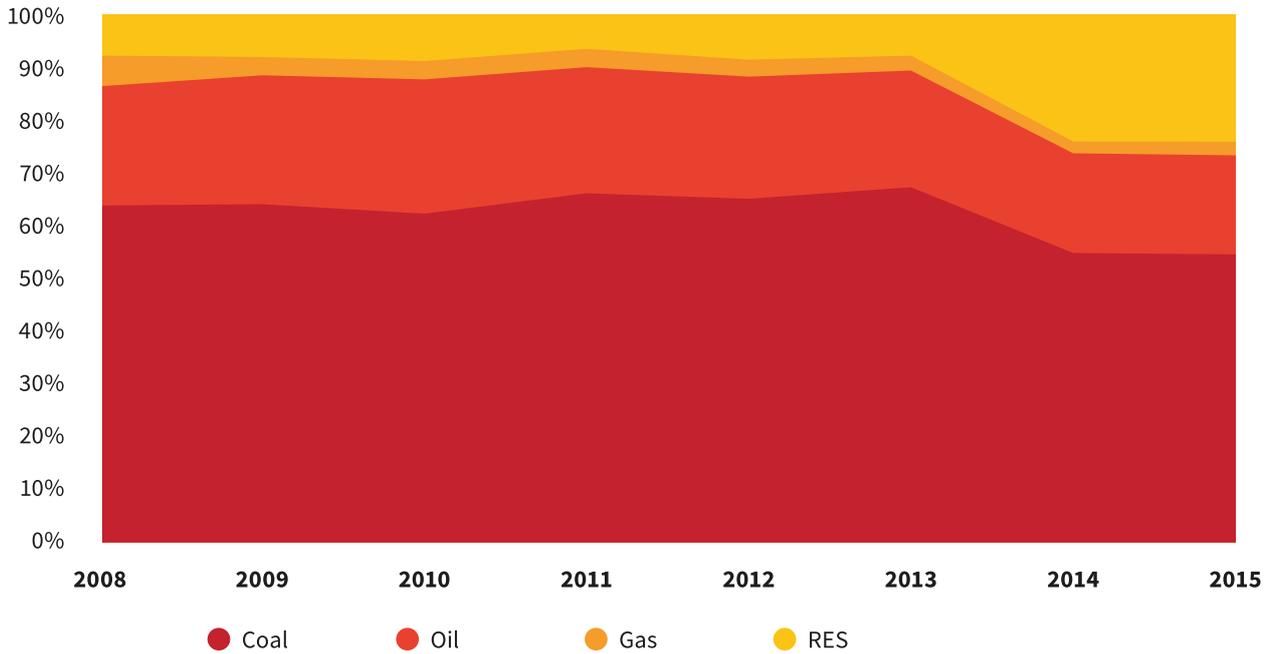
As party to the Treaty Establishing the Energy Community, Bosnia and Herzegovina committed itself to liberalizing the energy market and passing a set of laws on gas, oil and electricity that will enable the creation of a competitive and integrated energy market and set the conditions for increased investment in energy in order to ensure security and sustainability of energy supply. However, the key public companies continue to dominate the country's electricity and gas markets. Investors are interested in power generation

through renewable energy sources, from large hydro power generation, mini-hydro power generation, solar generation, wind power generation as well as biomass efficient cogeneration. During 2018, a Working group on renewable energy sources in Bosnia and Herzegovina was established as an umbrella platform for the exchange of practices in this field, with a specific task of monitoring and reporting on the progress of fulfillment of obligations under the Treaty establishing the Energy Community.

The Working group also deals with the coordination of the preparation of recommendations and proposals related to the drafting of the National Action Plan for Renewable Energy Sources (NREAP), as well as the entity action plans.

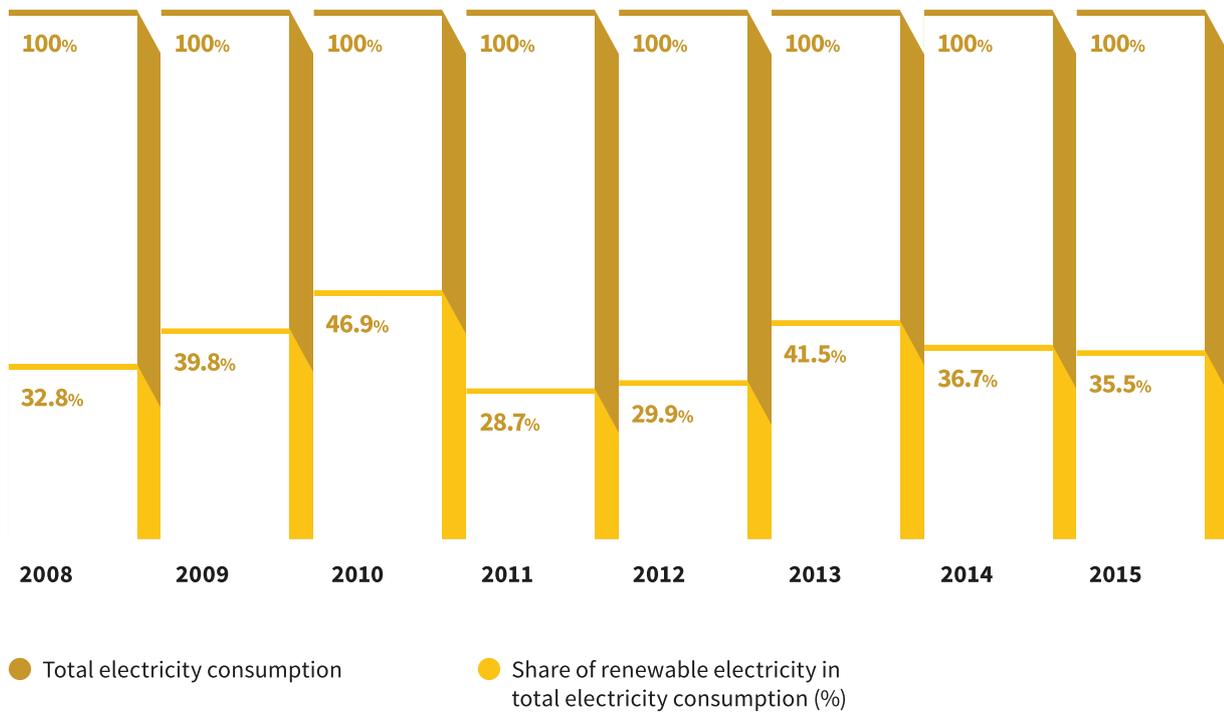
The Framework Energy Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina until 2035, which was approved by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2018, envisages the implementation of reforms aimed at achieving the more efficient use of energy and resources, improved security of the energy supply and responsibility toward the environment.

The South East Europe (SEE) 2020 Strategy sets the goal for each country in the region in terms of the share of total final energy consumption achieved through renewable sources. Bosnia and Herzegovina has been set a high goal of achieving a 40 % share of total final energy consumption through renewable sources compared to its current share of 28.9 %.



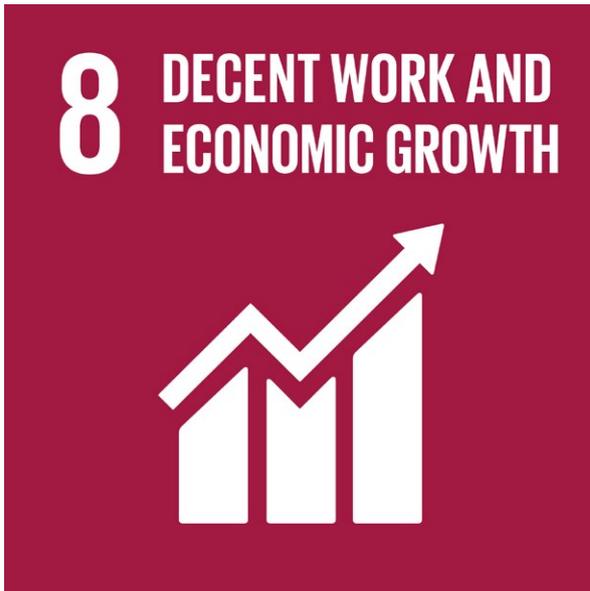
Graph 5. Share of renewables in gross energy consumption in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Source: Energy Balances of Non-OECD Countries, IEA, 2015 Edition BHAS



Graph 6. Electricity generated from renewable energy sources

Source: Energy Balances of Non-OECD Countries, IEA, 2015 Edition BHAS



SDG 8

Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

The problem of the low youth employment rate in Bosnia and Herzegovina relates to the lack of skills acquired through education, the lack of harmony between the education system and the demands of the modern labor market and the insufficient level of support available to young people for setting up and running a business. The structure of university enrolment does not follow the labor market in the country or EU and global trends. In 2018, people with secondary vocational degrees accounted for 68.2 % of the total number of employees and people with a university degree (bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree) accounted for 16.9 %, while

people with primary education or incomplete primary education accounted for 14.8 %.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is faced with the growing phenomenon of qualified young people emigrating in search of better lives and employment opportunities abroad, which significantly reduces the quality of the human resources in the country.

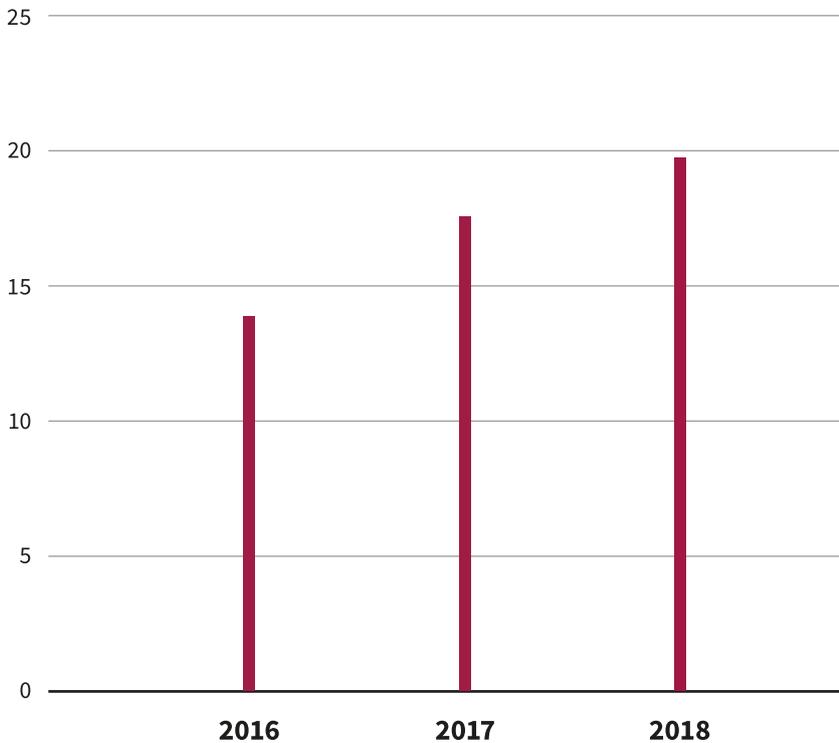
Labor legislation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is assigned to the entities and Brčko District. In 2015, both entities adopted new labor laws that provide a good framework for the regulation of the labor

market and address the current bad practices that deprive workers of their right to decent work.

The labor market in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been characterized over the past decade by a high inactivity and unemployment rate, particularly long-term unemployment. The unemployment rate in 2018 was 18.4 %. The unemployment rate is higher among women at 20.3 % compared to men at 17.2 %. The biggest problem is that those people that have been unemployed for more than a year account for the largest share. People with secondary education have the highest unemployment rate

Graph 7.
Youth employment rate in
Bosnia and Herzegovina (%)

Source: Labor Force Survey and the
Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and
Herzegovina



An example of good practice through partnership

Wishing to support job creation, the Government of Switzerland supported a project for the construction of a logistical center for craftsmen and for small and medium-sized agribusiness entrepreneurs in the Osrdak business building in Posusje in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was implemented by UNDP. The center was established in order to develop small entrepreneurship and to assist craftsmen and agricultural entrepreneurs in performing technological processing and in the storage of their products, using energy from renewable sources for their own needs. In cooperation with the Association for Economic Development READAH (a regional development agency), the center provides extension services to agricultural entrepreneurs and marketing advisory services to start-up entrepreneurs.





An example of good practice

The Innovation Centre in Banja Luka (ICBL) is the first combined center with state-of-the-art equipment for the support and development of entrepreneurship in Republika Srpska. It is firmly resolved to support the development of companies capable of offering advanced commercial solutions to a wide market in the form of products, services, job opportunities and improved business processes based on knowledge and the application of innovative and advanced technologies. While providing support to entrepreneurs to develop successful businesses, ICBL offers its beneficiaries considering starting up a business or who want to develop a business story through incubation all of the necessary elements for their successful professional development and innovation. In cooperation with accredited companies, institutions of education and experts with extensive experience in economy and from the academic community, ICBL offers professional development services through the delivery of internationally certified and nationally recognized training courses. The founders of ICBL are the Ministry for Scientific and Technological Development, the Higher Education and Information Society of Republika Srpska and the City of Banja Luka.



at 71.8%. Based on the education structure, those people with primary education or incomplete primary education account for the largest number of economically inactive people followed by those with secondary school qualifications. Those people with an associate bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree account for the smallest share of economically inactive people.



An example of good practice

The Ministry for the Development of Entrepreneurship and Crafts of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina awarded grants within the project 'Building Entrepreneurial Zones in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina' in 2018 aimed at incentivizing entrepreneurship and crafts in seven local government units in the entity: Visoko, Vitez, Maglaj, Gracanica, Posusje, Zenica and Livno. Local authorities co-financed the project to a minimum rate of 30 %. The goal of the project is to encourage the construction of infrastructure of entrepreneurial zones in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a prerequisite for economic growth and employment at the local level. Grants were awarded for the second time in 2018 for entrepreneurial zones in 27 local government units and it is expected that these grants will encourage projects that will employ 1,336 people in 95 new companies.



An example of good practice

The Municipality of Stari Grad (Old Town) in Sarajevo has announced, for the second year running, a call for business proposals from young unemployed people under the age of 35 to be financed or co-financed by the Municipality. These financial awards cover start-up costs: business registration, labor, rental, revolving funds, social contributions and other such costs.

In 2018, the employment rate for young people (aged 15 to 24) in Bosnia and Herzegovina was 19.7 % and the employment rate for people aged 25 to 49 was 58.9 % and growing. Based on the employment structure by industry, 15.7 % were employed in agriculture, 32.1 % in non-agricultural (the industrial sector) and the highest percentage at 52.1 % was employed in the service industry in 2018.





SDG 9

Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Mining, power generation and food account for nearly one half of the industrial sector of the economy in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their share of exports in GDP is 30 % and the share of imports of GDP is around 60 %. One of the reasons for the low export rate is the low innovation capacity and modest level of investment in research and development. Under the Global Innovation Index 2018, Bosnia and Herzegovina is ranked 77th out of 126 countries. Research and development centers are virtually non-existent in businesses and the share of researchers within companies is below 2 % whereas in developed countries 60 % of all researchers work in companies.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, investment in research and development accounts for 0.2 % of GDP whereas the EU average is 2.4 %. Over the course of 2017, the largest portion of the budget allocated to research and development was 77.7 % spent on higher education. Own funds account for the largest share of all sources of funding for research and development at 41.5 %, followed by public administration and other levels of administration at 30.08 %, funds from abroad at 26.3 %, private and public companies at 1.6 %, non-profit institutions at 0.02 % and other sources of funding at 0.34 %.

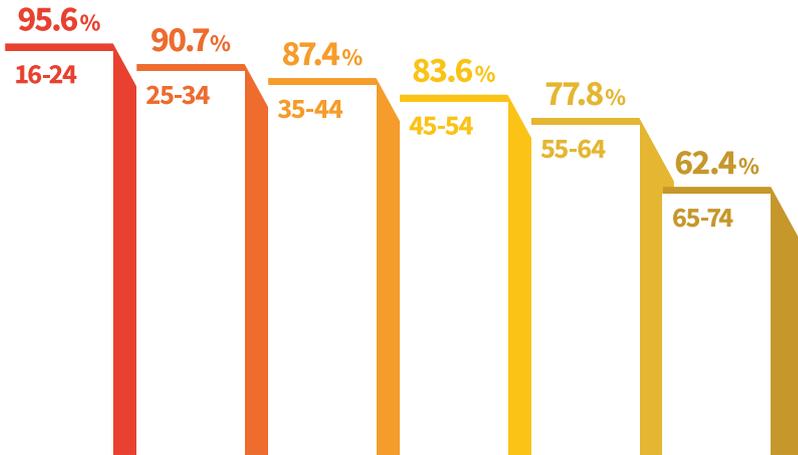
Policies on the development of the information society in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2017–2021

aim to accelerate the development of information and communication technology, the next-generation network, introduction of a 4G network, new investment, increased competitiveness and lower prices for end users.

The total number of fixed Internet subscriptions in 2017 was 663,913. The number of standard mobile broadband internet subscriptions in 2017 was 1,421,817, which represents an increase of 7.5 % compared to the previous year. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, 99.5 % of companies use computers in their business operations. The number of internet users is constantly increasing in Bosnia and Herzegovina, rising from 55 % in 2011 to 86.8 % in 2017.

Tourism is a global integration process and today it is one of the world's largest economic sectors. Because of its impact on other economic sectors, such as agriculture, the food industry, construction, transport and communications, and as a labor intensive industry, tourism plays a strategic role in the development of many of the less developed countries in the world. The World Economic Forum (WEF) ranks Bosnia and Herzegovina as the 20th most naturally beautiful country (out of 140 countries) but 90th on the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index. In this regard, tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a prosperous economic sector that needs to be developed continually and systemically in order to establish the infrastructure and ensure that tourists stay for more than one night instead of just transiting through the country.

Under the UNESCO indicators, the contribution of cultural industries to the Gross Domestic Product of Bosnia and Herzegovina is 5.72 %. During the period January to November 2018, there were 1,378,542 visits and 2,871,004 overnight stays, which represents an increase of 12.6 % and 13.8 % respectively compared with the same period in 2017. Interestingly, during the same period in 2008 (January to November), there were 568,400



Graph 8:
Computer users by age
(2016)

Source:
The Agency for Statistics of
Bosnia and Herzegovina

visits (266,700 domestic and 301,700 foreign) and 1,310,000 overnights. Tourism accounts for more than one half of the revenue from the services industry in the country. In order to develop tourism further, Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to increase its competitiveness.

The current trend of an increasing number of tourists and a disproportionate increase in the number of overnight stays shows that tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina is mainly transient and much less destinational. Because of the underdeveloped tourism infrastructure and the fragmented tourism supply many travelers stay less than three days. In order for tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina to make a larger contribution toward GDP it is necessary to focus on these deficiencies.

The Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the entity governments adopted an Economic Reform Program for 2018–2020 with a medium-term macro-economic and fiscal framework, including fiscal measures and a comprehensive structural reform program aimed at improving the economic growth and competitiveness of the country. The program envisages an improvement of the business environment along with the creation of a single economic area and suppression of the grey economy.

There is a strong need to improve the general transportation infrastructure in the country. The reform of the transport market is a measure from the Economic Reform Program. It is to be implemented through synergy and based on the activities of all institutions at different levels of government. The Excise Tax Act Amendments Act should help raise funds for investment in infrastructure. The Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina passed the Framework Transport

Policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2015–2030 as the framework for the development of the transportation infrastructure and the foundation for drafting a Framework Transport Strategy 2016–2030, which was approved by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



An example of good practice

In order to attach more importance to research and development, the Government of Republika Srpska formed the Ministry for Scientific and Technological Development and the Higher Education and Information Society. The Ministry deals, among other things, with the coordination of technological and IT projects in the public sector, the promotion of new technologies and technological development, improvement of higher education and the development of the information society in Republika Srpska as well as the development and monitoring of the relevant strategies. One of the key activities of this Ministry is to improve and encourage fundamental applied development-oriented research, innovativeness and economic growth driven by new technologies.



SDG 10

Reduce inequality within and among countries

Reducing inequality within the country implies improvement of the position of vulnerable groups comprising of persons with disabilities, Roma, returnees and internally displaced persons, families with two or more children, the elderly, unemployed, low-skilled workers, women, young people and children.

According to data obtained from the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 16.9 % of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina lived in relative poverty in 2015. The richest fifth of the population spent 4.9 times more than the poorest fifth. The poverty rate among the elderly was 19.6 % and the share of children in households living in relative poverty was 18.7 %.

Although the Gender Equality Law guarantees full gender equality, women are more often exposed to discrimination in employment and

more often than men fired following reorganization or reform and it is harder for them to find a new job. The most vulnerable group of women are single mothers or women who provide for their families. The level of education of women affects their position, which is worse than that of men: according to the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina,²¹ 8 % of women have no education compared with 1.7 % of men and over 90 % of illiterate women are over 55 years of age.

Responsibility for policies on vulnerable groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina is assigned to the entities and Brčko District. In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2017 support was provided for active employment policies that targeted groups of unemployed people classified as hard-to-employ, especially young people and women. The implementation of active



An example of good practice

For the purposes of employment, professional rehabilitation and achieving the more complete labor and social integration of persons with disabilities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted the Law on Professional Rehabilitation, Training and Employment of Persons with Disabilities and established the Fund for Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities in 2010. Over the period 2010–2015, the Fund supported the employment of 652 persons; since 2015, it has supported the employment of 2,706 persons with disabilities. In compliance with its legal obligation, the Fund refunds allowances and salaries for more than 1,950 employees with disabilities.

employment policy measures aimed at finding jobs for as many socially or gender sensitive people as possible registered as unemployed in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was aimed at increasing their competitiveness in the labor market, preventing long-term unemployment and creating the conditions for them to acquire labor skills.²²

Republika Srpska recognizes elderly people as a particularly vulnerable group most vulnerable to social exclusion, particularly those who are not eligible for a retirement pension and those with minimum pay and limited possibilities to participate in the labor market and who are therefore more vulnerable to the risk of poverty. Other groups are also recognized as vulnerable, in particular youth, and dedicated programmes in support of their employment are being implemented through Employment Action Plan of



An example of good practice

The Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina supports returnee projects each year in order to help ensure sustainable return. A number of public calls for project proposals supporting returnees were announced in 2017 within the continuing process of finding employment for internally displaced persons and returnees. A total of 745 projects assisting over 1,000 returnee households were implemented in both entities through programs of support to employment and self-employment for returnees through small business and agriculture and projects for professional training of young highly educated returnees.



An example of good practice

The program for transformation of institutional care and prevention of separation of children in Republika Srpska is being implemented together with an operational plan and a plan for the transformation of the public residential childcare institution for children without parental care 'Rada Vranjesevic' in Banja Luka, which is the only such institution in Republika Srpska. The goal of the program is to reduce the number of children without parental care in residential institutions and to introduce new services and provide support aimed at reuniting children with their biological parents. New services include the establishment of kindergartens, respite care services, a resource center with counselling services, a reception center, a day care center, supported housing and a family support unit.

Republika Srpska every year. Both entities will soon adopt strategies on improving the status of elderly people up until 2028. Their aim is to implement a vision under which elderly people are respected and all of their capacities and qualities used as a resource within their communities. Alongside this, a sustainable system of integrated services that will support healthy and active ageing and improve the quality of life for elderly people will further enhance their lives. The entity strategies are based on the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and the revised European Social Charter that requires states respect the rights of elderly people.

Apart from the rights to health, social protection and education, the right to work and employment of internally displaced persons and returnees remains one of the largest obstacles to sustainable return in

Bosnia and Herzegovina. The high unemployment rate persists and there is no reliable mechanism to meet the needs of the working age population, including returnees and internally displaced persons.

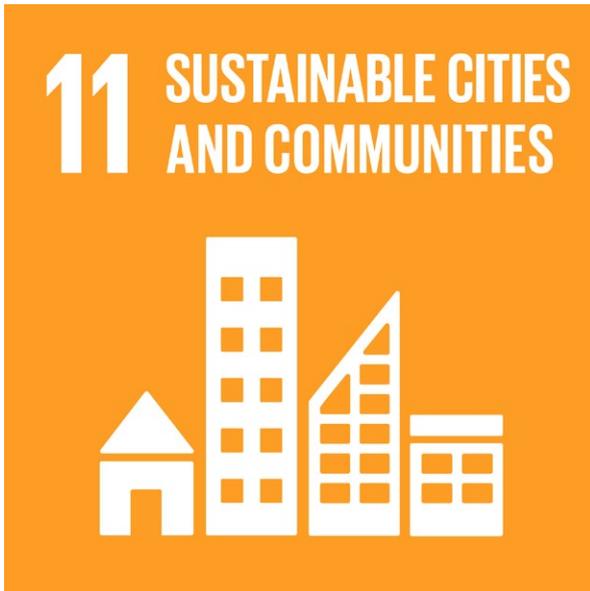
Under the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Labor Law, women are entitled to take up to a year of maternity leave; the relevant cantonal law defines the amount of maternity pay. The mothers of newborns that work in the public sector in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina are paid 100 % of their average salary, while mothers of newborns that work in the real and private sector are paid between 50 and 90 % of their average salary or receive no payment. The Law on Child Protection in Republika Srpska that was adopted at the end of 2017 increased the 12-month maternity payment for new mothers who were unemployed at least six months prior to giving birth, regardless of

their financial status. The same Law defines a pro-natality benefit for a third and a fourth child as one of the child protection rights.

Civilians with disabilities are entitled to special rights in both entities. Recently a personal disability allowance for civilians with disabilities and the right to day care, as a mandatory right, have been introduced. In addition, children and youth with disabilities are entitled to attendance allowance, increased child benefit and the right to equal opportunities all of which provides them with support in education.

²¹ http://www.bhas.ba/tematskibilteni/FAM_00_2017_TB_0_BS.pdf

²² Employment Institute of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2017.



SDG 11

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Bosnia and Herzegovina has the potential to reduce CO₂ emissions as its large forest area has a huge carbon absorption capacity and thereby the potential to contribute to climate change mitigation. The largest source of CO₂ emissions is the energy sector (74%), followed by agriculture (12%), industrial processes (11%) and waste (3%). However, urban areas, particularly in the winter, are also faced with poor air quality and air pollution.

Households are the largest water consumers and accounted for 76 % of the total public water supplied in 2017. The total quantity of wastewater and treated wastewater in 2017 was reduced compared to the previous year and the quantity of contaminated water released by industry directly into the environment was reduced.

It is estimated that the floods of 2014 in Bosnia and Herzegovina caused damage and losses amounting to nearly 15 % of GDP, of which 9.3 % was damage and 5.6 % losses. Huge damage was caused to 52 municipalities (30 municipalities in RS, 22 municipalities in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Brčko District). Around 70,000 hectares of crop and arable land were affected by the floods. Crops were damaged in different phases of growth and 25,000 households suffered long-term loss of income. The housing sector suffered huge damage caused by flooding in urban and rural areas as well as by landslides that devastated a large number of housing units. Apart from the physical damage caused to buildings, households suffered huge losses in the form of property inside the

buildings. Over 43,000 houses and apartments were flooded and a further 1,952 houses were destroyed by landslides.

The total damage caused by the floods and subsequent landslides that occurred in 2014 in Brčko District in terms of the economy, agriculture, forestry, roads, the utility infrastructure and the housing stock is estimated at BAM 54 million. Most of the recovery efforts were funded through the budget of Brčko District and through loans, while only a small portion has been covered by donations. In 2014 and 2015, the amount of BAM 18.5 million was allocated from the budget and a further BAM 11 million through loans. There is no solidarity fund in Brčko District to help citizens and the economy recover from the floods. Instead, funds are secured through



An example of good practice

The Canton of Sarajevo has the best developed air quality monitoring network in Bosnia and Herzegovina, consisting of six reference AQ monitoring stations which send real-time data to regularly updated websites for public information. Sarajevo is also the only canton that has an active peak pollution days intervention plan.

the local budget and loans. In Republika Srpska, the Solidarity Fund of Republika Srpska was formed and the Fund to Support the Areas Affected by the Natural Disaster was formed in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As of 10 October 2016, the Solidarity Fund of Republika Srpska has provided assistance to the regions and inhabitants affected by the 2014 floods to a total amount of BAM 15,970,309.94. According to the plan, the Solidarity Fund will continue to operate up until 31 December 2021.



Image 5: Flooding in Brčko District in 2014: The River Sava, which is the natural border between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, and the River Brka, which flows through Brčko, overflowed their banks

The Fund to Support the Areas Affected by the Natural Disaster in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina provided assistance amounting to BAM 17 million in 2014. The Fund shut down in May 2018.

In 2017, the quantity of communal waste produced in Bosnia and

Herzegovina was 353 kg per capita on an annual basis, which is below the EU average. Mixed communal waste accounted for 91 % of the total quantity of collected waste, followed by separately collected communal waste at 4 %, garden and park waste at 3 % and packaging waste at 2 %.



An example of good practice through partnerships

The institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the continued support of the international community, have been engaged in the reconstruction of the water supply infrastructure during the post-war period. One example is the project for the reconstruction of the water tower Zeravice in the Municipality of Gradiska in Republika Srpska, which is vital for water supply to the municipality. The water tower was constructed in 1965 and prior to the project had not been reconstructed. The European Union funds the project with co-financing from the Municipality of Gradiska and it is implemented by UNDP. The project will ensure higher quality water supply to 46,000 beneficiaries, including all vulnerable groups.



An example of good practice through partnerships

In order to create the preconditions for environmentally friendly waste management in the municipalities of Bosanska Krupa, Buzim and Cazin in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina through the separation of secondary raw material and the disposal of useless waste, UNDP supported the 'Sustainable Waste Management Project'. The project encompasses the development of technical, investment and environmental documents in support of the rehabilitation and gradual closure of the Mezdre-Vlaski Do landfill site, pending the creation of a regional landfill site and construction of a recycling center for the three municipalities. The Government of Switzerland funds the project.



Planet

Protection from degradation, changes in consumption and production patterns, the sustainable management of natural resources and urgent action on climate change

Bosnia and Herzegovina is characterized by a unique wealth of biological, geological and landscape diversity. The country is a party to numerous international treaties for the protection of the environment, which includes, among others, the Vienna Convention, the Montreal Protocol on the Gradual Phase-out of Hydro chlorofluorocarbons, the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, the International Energy Charter,

the Treaty establishing the Energy Community, and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

All issues related to environmental protection are regulated at the state, entity and Brčko District level. The Law on the Protection of the Environment in Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina regulate environmental protection in the entities. The Ministry of Foreign

Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina (MoFTER) has a coordinating role in the area of environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The laws on environmental protection in Republika Srpska, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Brčko District require an environmental impact assessment as well as a strategic environmental assessment for the issuance of a work license, in accordance with the Directive EU 2008/99/EC on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law.

Agriculture, forestry and water management in Bosnia and Herzegovina have to function within natural boundaries, having in mind global climate change. Conservation of biodiversity, protection of water and soil quality must be incorporated into policies relating to agriculture and environmental protection in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The



development of urban areas and infrastructure must comply with environmental standards and contribute to maintaining and strengthening the protection of the ecosystems.

Sustainable development implies primarily the sustainable use of the natural resources of our planet, most of which are not renewable and are affected by human activity and thus under threat. Bosnia and Herzegovina aims to maintain genetically diverse populations of autochthonous species and to restore natural habitats. In order to achieve the biodiversity targets, it will be necessary to prevent the spread of invasive species.

Climate change and strong exposure to natural and human made hazards make the socioeconomic development of the country even more difficult. **The World Bank 2017 report Tracking Risks ranked Bosnia and Herzegovina among**

those countries at high risk of natural disaster. Furthermore, recent results and projections based on the Global Risk Index 2018²³ rank Bosnia and Herzegovina among those countries exposed to a very high risk of flooding (INFORM Global Risk Index score 7.3-10). According to the findings of the World Bank/ Global Facility for Disaster Reduction, **over 20 % of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina is susceptible to flooding.** This affects around 100,000 people and represents potential losses of around USD 600 million of GDP on an annual basis. **Out of 145 local authorities in the country, 91 are believed to be at very high risk of flooding and/or landslide and 27 are thought to be at high risk.**²⁴ The mountainous topography of the country, the ageing infrastructure and the high rate of urbanization underlie its seismic (8.7 out of 10) and causal susceptibility to landslide.

Over the past decade, Bosnia and Herzegovina has faced a number

of significant extreme climate and weather events manifested through **disasters that are more frequent.** Of the past twelve years, six were marked by extreme drought (2003, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2012 and 2013). Years with massive and catastrophic floods were also very frequent (2001, 2002, 2009, 2010 and 2014).²⁵

²³ The INFORM model uses 50 different indicators to measure hazards, the level of exposure of people, vulnerability and the resources available that help provide a response for each country separately.

²⁴ UNDP, Flood and Landslide Risk Assessment for the Housing Sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNDP 2015. Available from www.ba.undp.org/content/bosnia_and_herzegovina/bs/home/library/response-to-floods/flood-and-landslide-risk-assessment-for-the-housing-sector-in-bi.html.

²⁵ The Third National Communication of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2017.



SDG 6

Ensure sanitation and the availability of water for all

Bosnia and Herzegovina is rich in water resources. Geomorphological and hydro-geological factors have a strong impact on the hydrological conditions. The barrier effect of the Dinarides intersecting the moist air masses from the Mediterranean basin causes air lift, rapid air cooling and precipitation. Hence, precipitation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is most intense at the foot of the Dinarides. The way precipitation develops is also linked to the position of the karst area, which has huge underground retention hydrological potential. Under these circumstances and with a favorable boundary contact zone with hydro-geological insulators, all springs of the significant watercourses emerge within the river basins.

Yet the volume of pollutants in urban and industrial wastewater, applied practices in agricultural production, excessive groundwater abstraction, the manner in which waters are

used and the evident impact of climate change pose the greatest challenge to conservation and the improvement of the current water situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Aware that the water resources are not inexhaustible, institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina are working toward their protection and sustainable usage in order to ensure that drinking water is accessible to all. Activities are carried out simultaneously in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the rest of the region through various forms of cooperation with a view to carrying out commitments such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the EU Association and Stabilization Agreement and fulfilling the requirements of United Nations and other conventions and treaties that Bosnia and Herzegovina has ratified.

Further development of the water sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina requires that we continue to implement strategic papers and plans, improve the legal framework and achieve a very high level of harmony with the EU Law. Most of the laws have already been harmonized with the EU Law. The main strategies/plans for water management are the Action Plan for Protection against Floods and River Management in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2014–2017, the Strategy for Integrated Water Management of Republika Srpska for the period 2015–2024 and the Strategy for Water Management in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2010–2022. Brčko District also participates in the implementation of the Action Plan for Protection against Floods and River Management in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2014–2017 but does not have its own strategy.

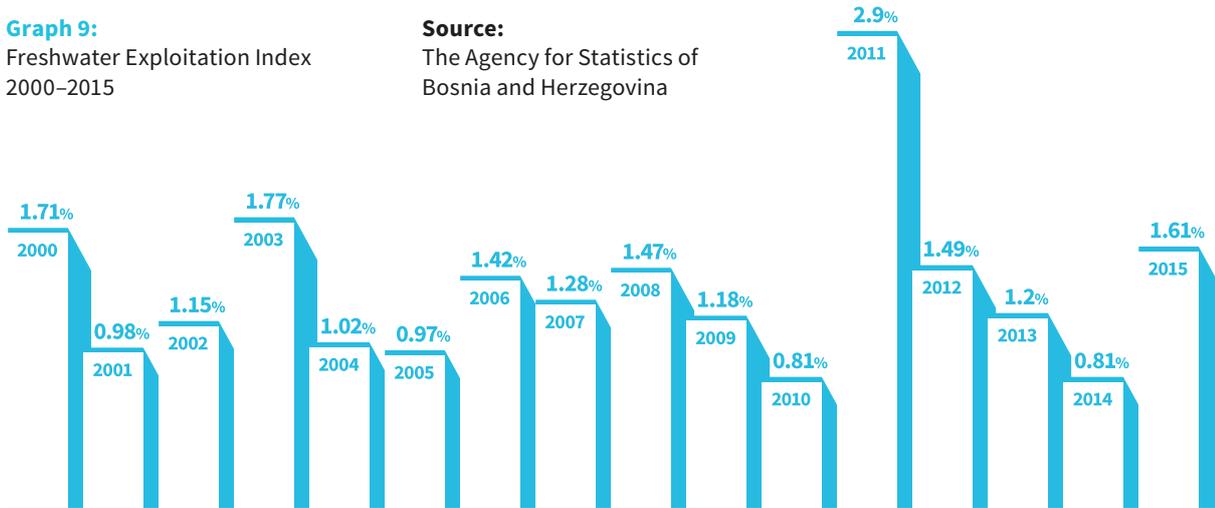
The hydrological map of Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of rivers, natural and artificial lakes and groundwater. Waters flow in the direction of the Danube river basin/ the Black Sea (75.7%) and the Adriatic Sea (24.3%). There are a number of natural and artificial lakes in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is estimated that there are around 30 mountain lakes across the whole of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 12 artificial lakes on the major rivers (the Drina, Vrbas, Neretva and the Trebisnjica) and in the karst fields (Livno Field and Popovo Field).

Total water abstraction in 2017 was 331,550,000 m³. Water abstracted from underground sources accounted for 47.4 %, surface sources accounted for 35 %, rivers and streams 14.6 %, reservoirs 0.8 % and from lakes 1.2 %. Households were the largest water consumers of water accounting for 76.1 % of total public water supply. Bosnia and Herzegovina suffers huge loss of water through leakage in the existing water supply systems.

The total quantity of wastewater in 2017 was 116,916,000 m³. Most wastewater is released directly into rivers and streams (58.5% untreated and 40.6% treated wastewater).

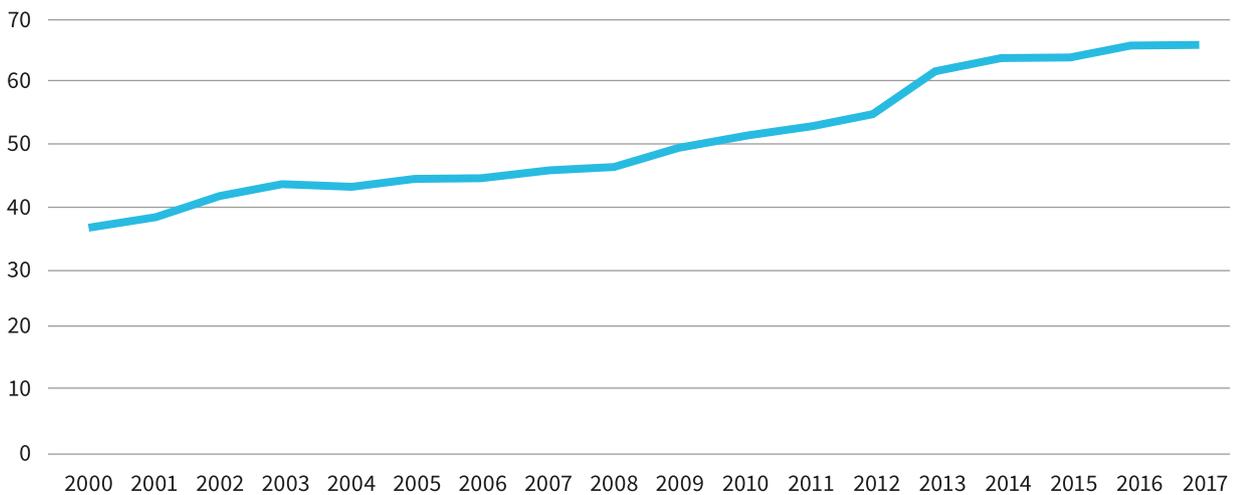
Graph 9:
Freshwater Exploitation Index
2000–2015

Source:
The Agency for Statistics of
Bosnia and Herzegovina



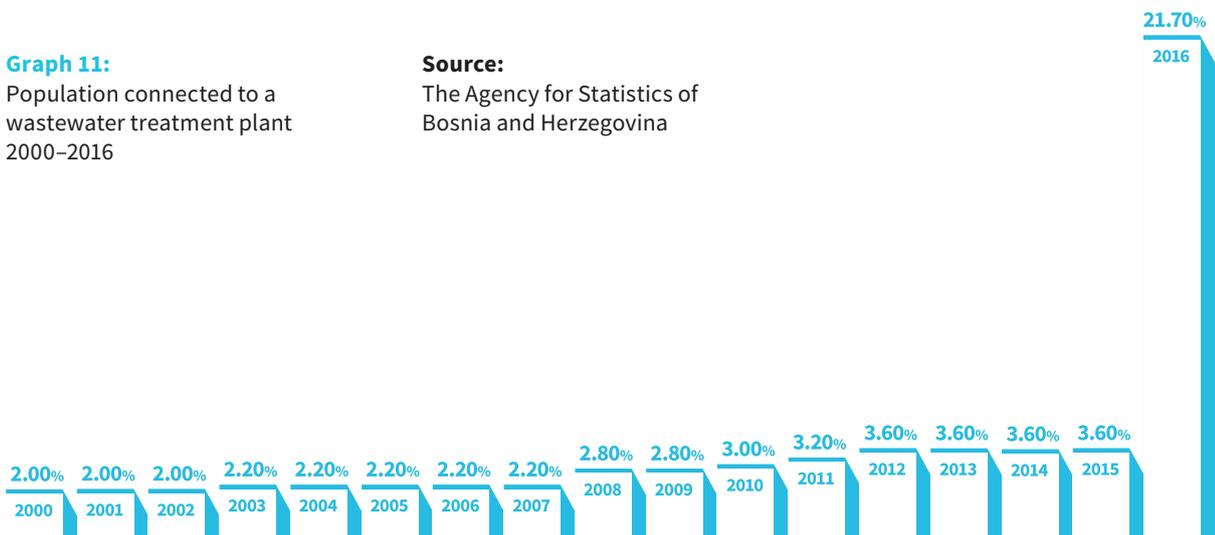
Graph 10:
Proportion of the population using
safely managed drinking water
services

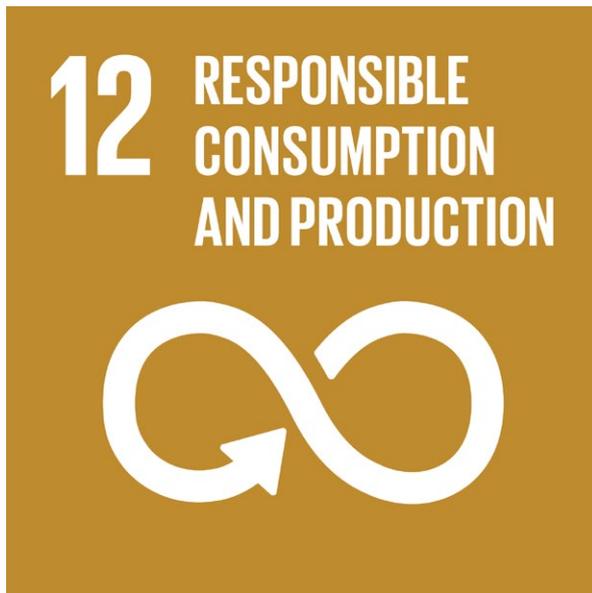
Source:
The Agency for Statistics of
Bosnia and Herzegovina



Graph 11:
Population connected to a
wastewater treatment plant
2000–2016

Source:
The Agency for Statistics of
Bosnia and Herzegovina





An example of good practice

The Republika Srpska Strategy for the Development of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises 2016–2020 includes a program for **support to small and medium-sized enterprises in preserving the environment**, which envisages activities focused on the better use of environmental principles in business operations and respect for the principle of energy efficiency.

SDG 12

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

According to the Strategy for the Protection of Biological Diversity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, “The future and prosperity of Bosnia and Herzegovina are closely related to sustainable use and conservation of its overall natural resources”.

The Strategy provides direction in the areas of the management of species and ecosystems, biodiversity security and the fair distribution of benefits of ecosystem services and the use of genetic resources.

The Strategy for the Approximation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Law with the EU Environmental Acquis is a step forward that creates conditions for improving the protection of the environment and supports sustainable development. The EU environmental acquis consists of

eight sets of legislative instruments: horizontal, water, waste, air quality and climate change, industrial pollution, chemicals, nature protection, and environmental noise.

The current situation in the environmental protection sector is the result of economic development based over many years on heavy industry and the exploitation of natural resources, war related devastation, post-war uncontrolled exploitation, the use of obsolete technologies and the insufficiently developed legislative and regulatory frameworks. There is a lack of awareness concerning the importance of ensuring the rational

use of natural resources, respect for nature and the need to keep the environment clean and unpolluted for future generations.

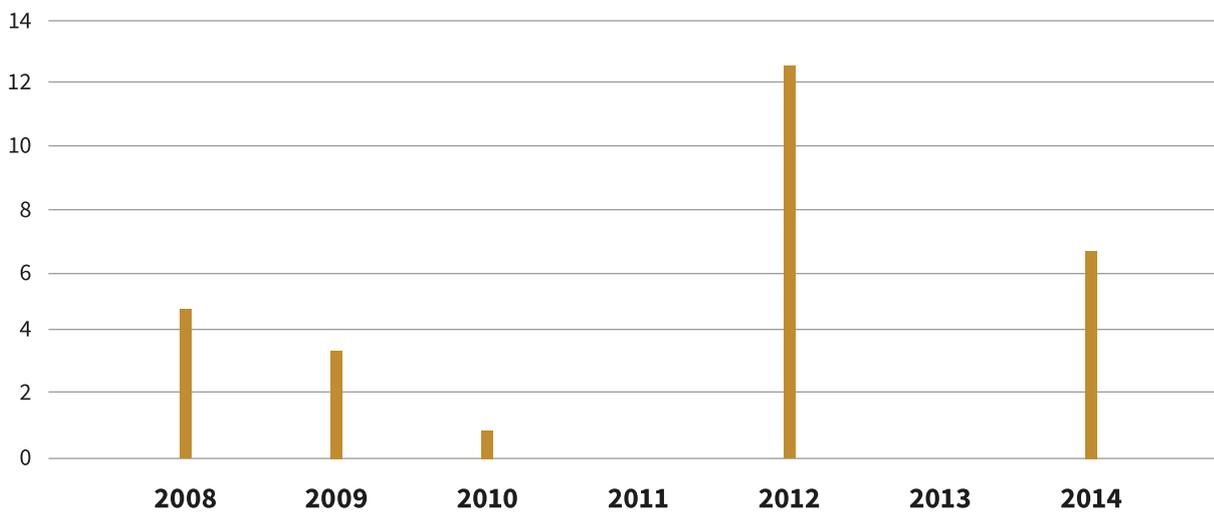
There are numerous illegal dumping sites across Bosnia and Herzegovina, many of which are not registered. Several tens of new illegal dump sites appear each year, some of which are closed and then rehabilitated by the utility companies. Almost all types of waste at such sites are dumped illegally, most commonly organic waste, construction waste, bulky household waste, glass, etc.

Graph 12:

Hazardous waste generated per capita and the proportion of treated hazardous waste according to the type of treatment

Source:

The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina

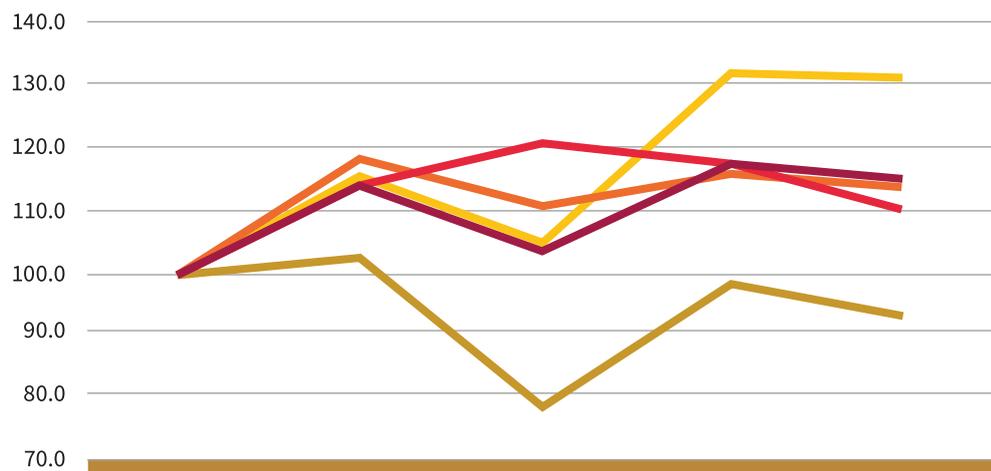


Graph 13:

Domestic material consumption

Source:

The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Biomass	100.0	102.1	78.3	97.9	92.8
Metal ores	100	113.7	120.9	117.1	109.8
Non-metals	100	115.2	104.7	131.7	130.9
Fossil fuels	100	117.9	110.6	115.5	113.4
TOTAL	100	113.7	103.3	117.3	114.5



SDG 13

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact

The unprecedented flood event that hit the country in 2014 revealed the extent to which Bosnia and Herzegovina is exposed to climate change and natural hazards. Around a quarter of the territory of the country and one million people or around 27 % of the population were affected including vulnerable groups, more precisely, 78,564 unemployed people, 60,000 children and 10 % of people with disabilities. The total damage was estimated at around USD 1.7 billion, while economic losses were in excess of USD 1.5 billion. Rural households, small and medium-sized enterprises and farmers as well as vulnerable groups of the population were most affected. The floods had a detrimental effect on around 15 % of the country's GDP and 70,000 hectares of arable land and over 50

local government units experienced nearly complete devastation of the service infrastructure, including hospitals, schools and administrative centers.

According to the UNDP Human Development Report 'Risk-Proofing the Western Balkans: Empowering People to Prevent Disasters', the disturbing experience of the floods had a far deeper and longer-term development effect on Bosnia and Herzegovina. It caused was equivalent to a five-year setback in terms of achieving the goals of an increased gender equality, lower poverty rates, reduced marginalization and more equality for minority groups and persons with disabilities.

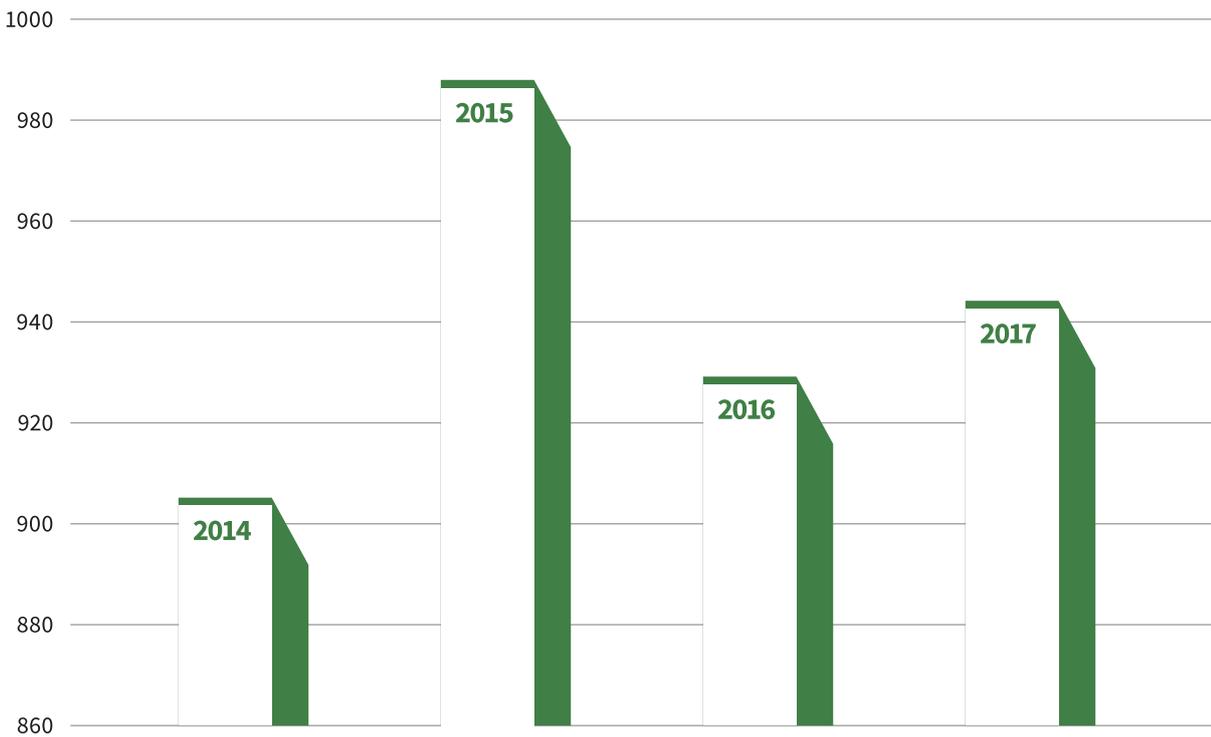
After the floods in 2014, the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina asked the United Nations to coordinate international assistance in disaster situations and to conduct a recovery needs assessment together with the EU and the World Bank. Jointly with the EU and authorities at all levels of government and other donors, the United Nations implemented the largest ever flood recovery program in the history of the country and ensured a change in the quality of the lives of more than half a million people. Through its rapid recovery assistance focused on people, the United Nations helped put the country back on the road to socioeconomic development. Despite these commendable results, the traditional approach to responding to an emergency and civil

Graph 14:

Greenhouse gas emissions from waste disposal in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Gg CO₂ equivalent, 2014–2017

Source:

The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina



protection response mechanisms proved insufficient. This was because they were not linked to relevant efforts made in other sectors, which would otherwise have provided a response to the needs of vulnerable populations.

The Fourth Report of Bosnia and Herzegovina under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is currently at the drafted stage. As part of this effort, the Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change and Low Emission Development and the Bosnia and Herzegovina Report on Intended Nationally Determined Contributions will be updated and an Action Plan for the Implementation of Determined Contributions for the period 2020–2030 drafted.

27 %

of population were affected by floods in May 2014





SDG 14

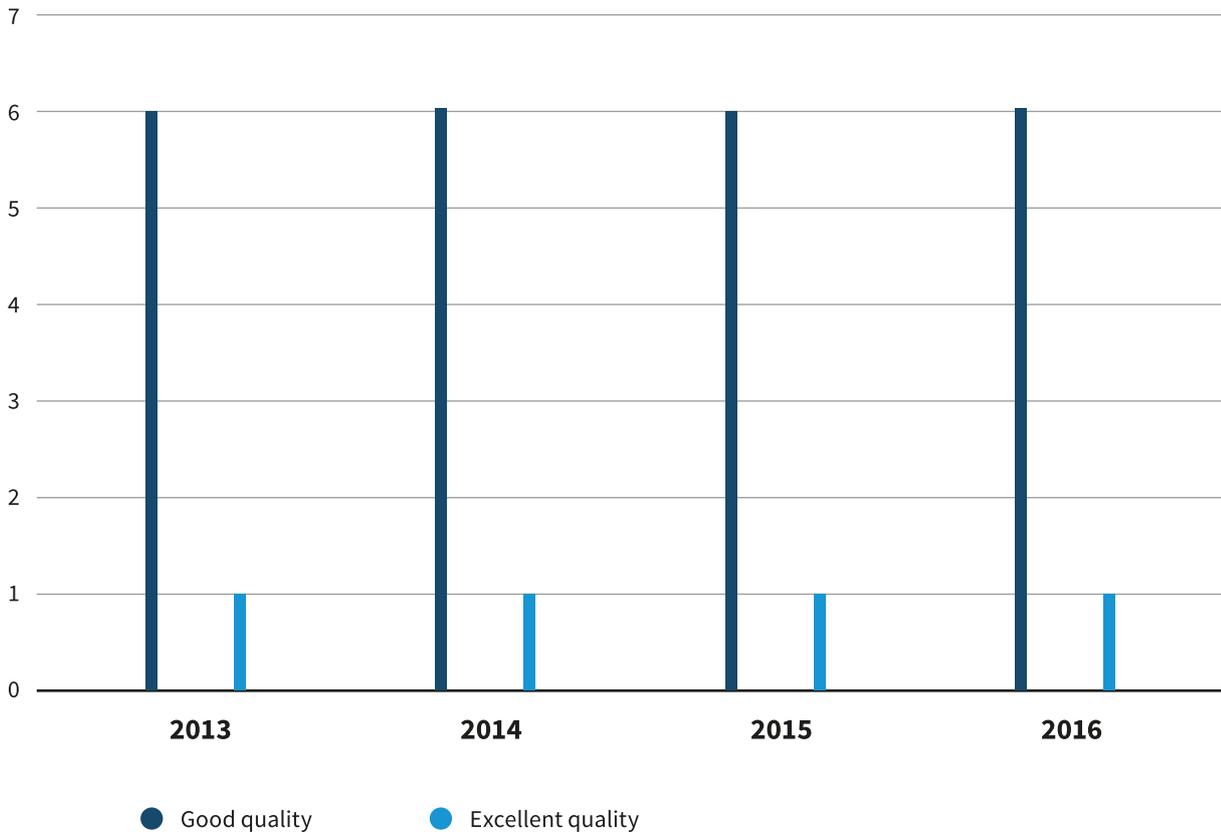
Conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources

The Bosnia and Herzegovina part of the Adriatic Sea is still one of the best-preserved regions in the Mediterranean. The country has a short (12.2 km) coastline along the Adriatic Sea around the town of Neum. Generally, the marine environment of Bosnia and Herzegovina is in good condition; however, the elaboration of the current state of the investigated marine water body indicates its exposure to significant anthropogenic influence that requires further assessment. Illegal construction without any wastewater treatment system represents a potentially significant threat to the coastal area.

Coastal tourism, which is the major activity both currently and in the future in Neum, has become a major impact threat since the town has 4,000 inhabitants and receives more than 20,000 tourists per day in the summer. This level of tourism corresponds to the maximum capacity of the local infrastructure, especially sewage. Because of the karstic nature of the terrain, leachates from waste dumping sites are quickly released into the sea adding to the increasing health risks for the local population and endangering activities linked to tourism.

The main regional challenge is the issue of ballast waters from maritime transport, which are recognized as the main vectors for the spread of invasive species in the Adriatic Sea. The introduction of invasive species and the loss of biodiversity further threaten tourism and fishing activities, including in the coastal area of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Currently no declared marine protected area exists along the coast of Bosnia and Herzegovina, however, there are ongoing efforts to establish the first marine protected area in BiH, the botanical reserve “Mediterranetum” and its aquatic area on the territory of



Graph 15:

Index of coastal eutrophication and the density of floating plastic debris (EEA CSI 022 Bathing water quality)

Source:

Adriatic sea watershed agency

Neum municipality. By succession, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a party to UNCLOS. UNCLOS is seen as the ‘sea constitution’ and is supported by a number of conventions in all sectors (such as the International Maritime Organization, the Barcelona Convention and the Convention on Biological Diversity), which means that any ratification contributes to the implementation of UNCLOS. In this regard, the ratification of the 1995 Amendments to the Barcelona Convention and its protocols will help Bosnia and Herzegovina to make progress toward achieving Target 14.c.





SDG 15

Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

The share of forests in Bosnia and Herzegovina is over 50% of the overall territory. The lack of protected natural habitats that provide conditions for the permanent existence of various species and their typical communities together with the spread of invasive species pose a serious threat to biodiversity in the country. Due to its specific geographical position, Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the richest countries in Europe in terms of biodiversity.

Over the next period, it will be necessary to continue to implement activities aimed at reducing/limiting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in order for Bosnia and Herzegovina to transpose the European Union acquis communautaire, particularly the EU

Emissions Trading System, and to join the EU effort to reduce emissions. It is for this reason that Republika Srpska, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Brčko District, as constituent parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, will make additional efforts to improve environmental protection. This will require the available resources and international financial support and expertise adjusted to the development context in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but not at the expense of the requirements that could cause a slowdown in economic growth and/or encourage impoverishment and emigration among the population.

In early 2011, there were only 3 protected areas in Republika Srpska whereas today there are 23. The

size of the total protected area is 32,001.12 hectares or 1.3 % of the territory of Republika Srpska. There are three national parks in Republika Srpska: Sutjeska, Kozara and Drina.

In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina there are 12 protected areas covering over 84,624.41 hectares, including one national park 'Una' that covers 19,800 hectares.

The protected area of the Federation accounts for 3.24 % of its territory. There are 3 important bird areas and 3 Ramsar sites in BiH. There are ongoing efforts to expand the protected area network in BiH aby at least 10 new protected areas to better safeguard rich biodiversity and reach BiH biodiversity targets set in the revised Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan of BiH.

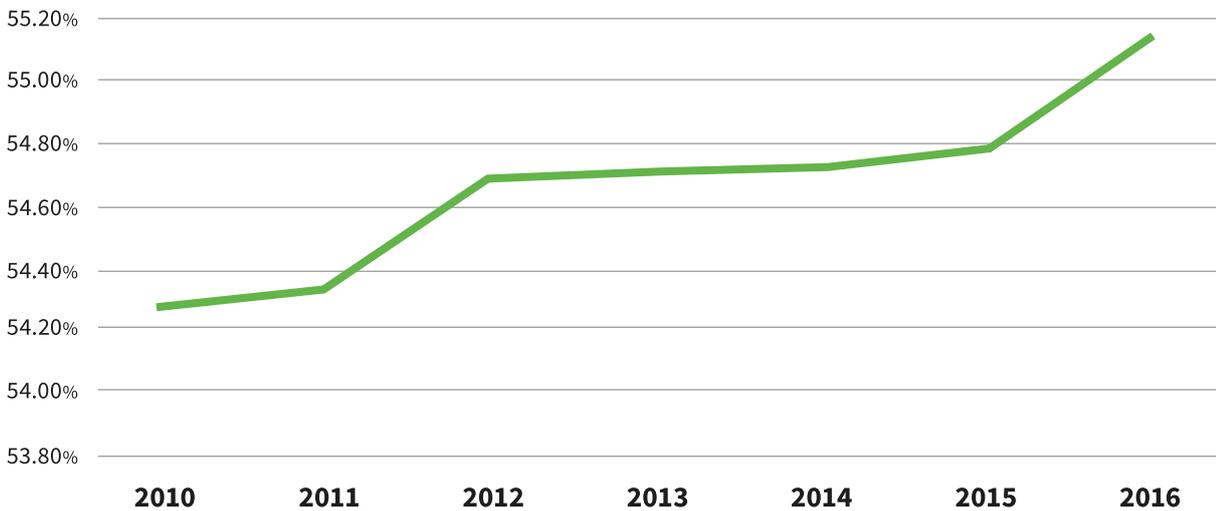
Hutovo Blato is the last remnant of the former wetlands in the Neretva river basin. Within the area of this park, there is a famous bird reserve for migratory species. Hutovo Blato is included on the List of Mediterranean Special Protected Areas and the List of Internationally Important Bird Areas.

Graph 16:

Forest area as a proportion of the total land area

Source:

The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina

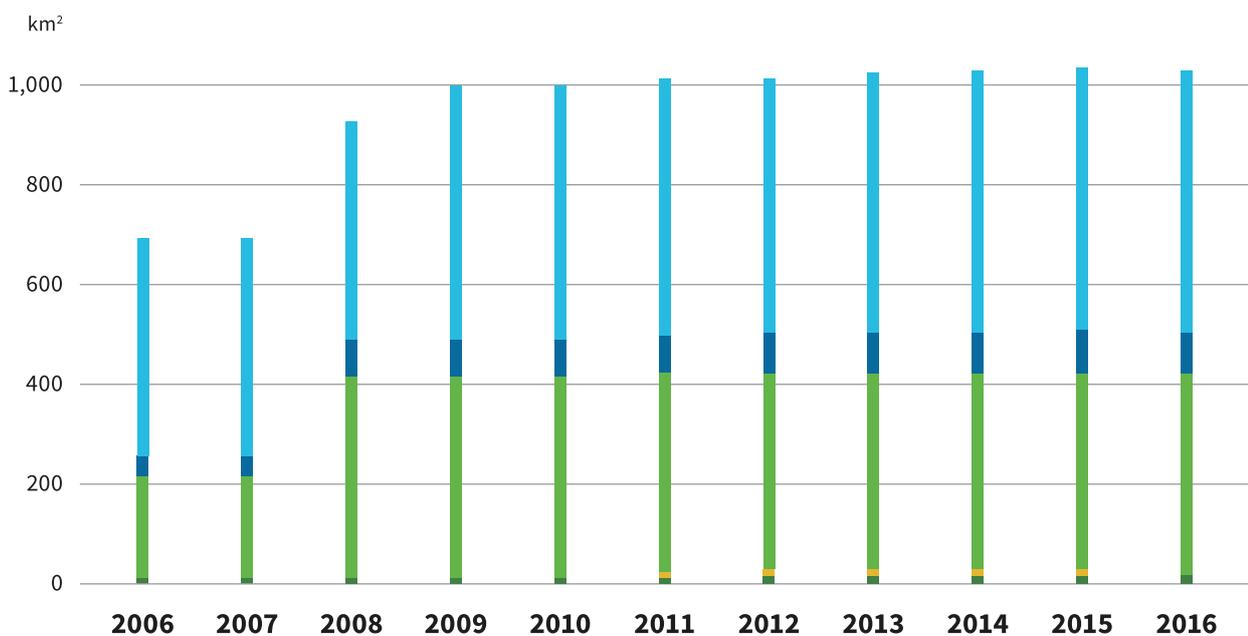


Graph 17:

IUCN protected area categories 2006–2016 in km²

Izvor:

EIONET National Reference Center for biodiversity, National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina



- Category Ia (Strict nature reserve)
- Category Ib (Wilderness area)
- Category II (National park)
- Category III (National monument or feature)
- Category V (Protected landscape / seascape)
- Category VI (Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources)



An example of good practice

The Perucica primeval forest located within the Sutjeska National Park is the largest and best conserved old growth forest in Europe and is declared as a strict natural reserve. This resulted in the inclusion of Perucica on the Tentative List of Bosnia and Herzegovina registered with the World Heritage Centre of UNESCO in 2017.

Within the process of developing a strategic framework for the **protection of the environment and climate change mitigation**, Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted a **Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and a Low Emissions Strategy** in 2013. Thus far, the country has submitted the initial, second and **third national reports** as well as the required annual update reports on greenhouse gas emissions under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the Paris Agreement and developed its **nationally determined contribution (NDC)**, which explicitly recognizes the potential within the public sector for reduced greenhouse gas emissions. The management of chemicals, particularly mercury contamination and the related hazards, have yet to be addressed appropriately.



An example of good practice through partnership

Via Dinarica is a regional project funded by UNDP and USAID. It is a Platform for Sustainable Tourism Development and Local Economic Growth. The aim of the project is to connect the countries and local communities along the Via Dinarica Trails through the creation of a single and diverse tourism asset. The Via Dinarica project promotes tourism for the purpose of economic development of the region, along with the protection of the environment and respect for the socio-cultural diversity and authenticity of local communities. Phase II of the project covers the period 2018–2021 and places emphasis on strengthening the project as an internationally recognized platform for local economic growth and the increased participation of location communities in maintaining and developing the platform. Mountain trails have been mapped and accommodation capacities built. The project has received significant international recognition.

In 2017, the country adopted the **Strategy for Approximation of the EU Environmental Acquis** that deals with several sub-sets of the EU acquis (water management, waste management, air quality and climate change, industrial pollution, chemicals, environmental protection, and environmental noise). Other sub-sectorial strategies were developed, such as a **revised strategy and an Action Plan for Biological and Landscape Diversity in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2015–2020**.

Over the coming period, the harmonization of primary and secondary legislation in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the EU directives will set the foundation for establishing an appropriate waste treatment system throughout the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina in accordance with the principles of **sustainable** development and the protection of the environment.



An example of good practice through partnership

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP), in cooperation with the Environmental Protection Fund of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund of Republika Srpska, is implementing a five-year 'Green Economic Development' project in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The goal of the project is to reduce public expenditure on energy and water supply and to create favorable conditions for investing in infrastructure and energy efficiency measures whilst at the same time creating green jobs.

In February 2017, Brčko District adopted the ten-year Environmental Protection Strategy for 2016–2026. The Environmental Protection Strategy consists of four sectorial strategies: the Environmental Protection Strategy, the Nature Protection Strategy, the Air Protection Strategy and the Waste Management Strategy. An environmental protection fund has not been formed in Brčko District.



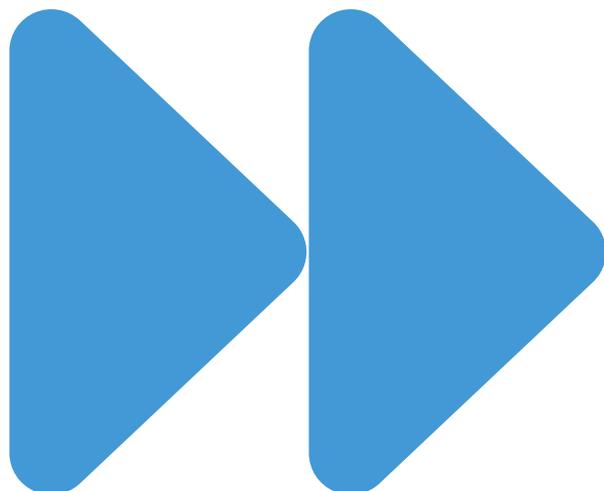
An example of good practice

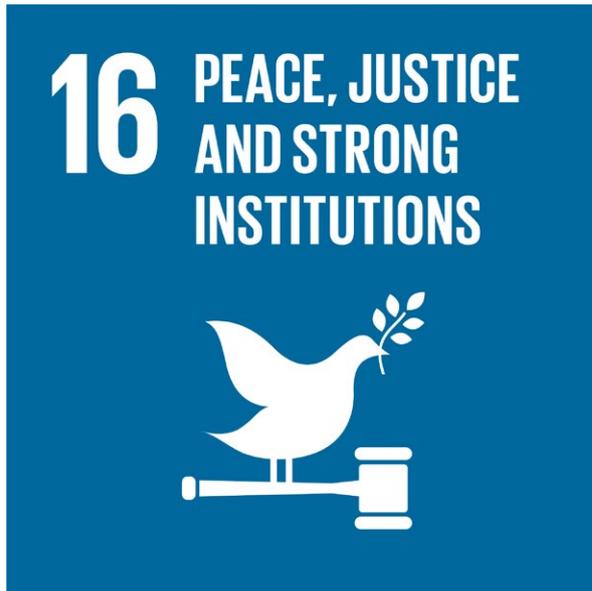
The Environmental Protection Fund of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund of Republika Srpska carry out activities related to fund raising, financing the purchase of equipment, implementing and developing programs and projects in the areas of conservation, sustainable usage, improved protection of the environment and energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. The approved projects were implemented mainly at the local level by the municipalities and local institutions, private businesses and civil society organizations. Of the 71 projects approved by the Environmental Protection Fund of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the end of 2018 a total of 8 projects were devoted to raising awareness about the conservation of nature and were implemented by privately owned media outlets and non-governmental organizations. As of the end of 2017, the Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund of Republika Srpska had signed a total of 107 contracts on investment in programs, projects and other activities related to the development of the system of integrated management of packaging waste in local self-government units and utility companies as well as on the protection of water sources, watercourses and coastal areas.



Peace

**Peaceful, just and
inclusive societies**





SDG 16

Promote peaceful, inclusive and just societies

Peace

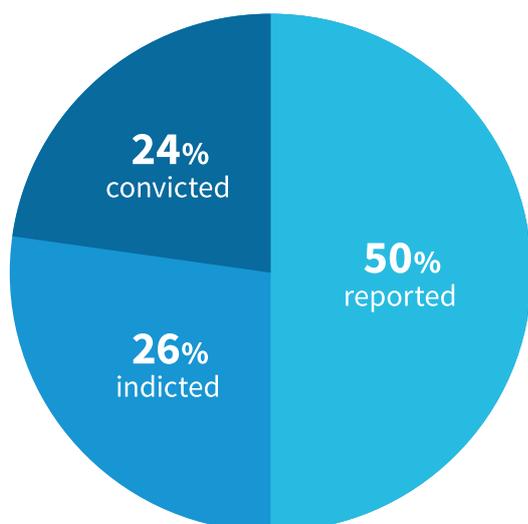
After the tragic conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which ended almost a quarter of a century ago, the country has made enormous progress in many fields. The post-conflict peace building process facilitated fruitfully by the international community and representatives from various intergovernmental organizations, including the United Nations agencies, the EU, the United States etc., has led to significant advancements. Simultaneous reconstruction activities, rapid economic growth and reforms, especially after the European integration process began, have resulted in manifold GDP growth in the country. The reconciliation process is gaining ground and frank dialogue among the communities will continue to contribute toward strengthening peace and enhancing mutual cooperation in the country.

With the engagement of various international institutions, organizations and individuals, especially during the years following the conflict, Bosnia and Herzegovina has had an opportunity to develop best practice, draw from the lessons learned and evaluate certain gaps and bottlenecks within the post-conflict peace building process. Considering its enormous experience in that field, Bosnia and Herzegovina decided to present its candidature to fill a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. The country has since served its two-year term (in 2010 and 2011). After this positive engagement, Bosnia and Herzegovina served as an elected member in the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission in 2014 and 2015. Furthermore, it should be underlined that Bosnia and Herzegovina has participated in many United Nations peacekeeping operations

worldwide in the last two decades. These engagements included the deployment of military, police and medical personnel and various types of experts.

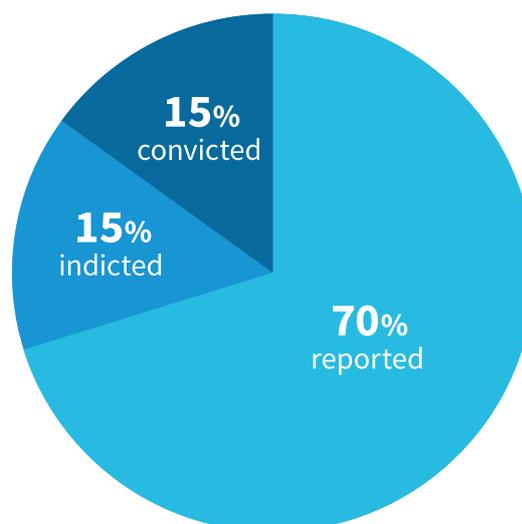
The full potential of the SDGs plays a central role in furthering social cohesion in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially in fostering peace and building trust. In a reality where local communities find themselves in silos, enabling an environment conducive to inter-community dialogue on development is crucial for a prosperous and sustainable future. This could include a two-tier multi-sector approach (as devised, for example, within the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina initiative that resulted in the United Nations joint program Dialogue for the Future) that emphasizes the priorities identified by citizens themselves, works across ethnic lines in order to generate such priorities and (through vertical dialogue platforms) compels the leadership to listen to and help address these priorities. These processes serve to break down barriers among different groups and leaders.

Only tighter integration between peace building, conflict prevention and sustainable development can bring about a durable and shared vision. Applying a peace building lens to Agenda 2030 in Bosnia and Herzegovina (i.e. ensure that the core focus is on common priorities and that there is a joint commitment to implementation and accountability) would allow both citizens and local authorities to use the implementation of the SDGs to ensure that their local communities are less susceptible to instability and therefore better able to forge a sustainable peace. The ultimate aim would be to secure higher levels of engagement around these priorities, thus ensuring 'healthier, stronger connective tissue' between all of the segments of society in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The peace dimension will feature strongly in the forthcoming SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina Document.



Graph 18: Adult offenders reported, indicted and convicted by the criminal offence group in 2016

Source: The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina



Graph 19: Juvenile offenders in Bosnia and Herzegovina reported, indicted or convicted in 2016

Source: The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Table 2: Juvenile offenders in Bosnia and Herzegovina reported, indicted or convicted in 2016

	Reported		Indicted		Convicted	
	total	female	total	female	total	female
Total	630	37	139	7	132	5

The rule of law and fundamental rights

The fundamental values in Bosnia and Herzegovina include the rule of law and respect for human rights. Adequate functioning of the judiciary and the effective fight against corruption are extremely important just like respect for fundamental rights in law and practice. Bosnia and Herzegovina is party to numerous international conventions, has harmonized its legislation with international and European standards and is making a huge effort to implement them in practice.

Progress has been made through the adoption of the Action Plan to Implement the Justice Reform 2014–2018 and a monitoring and reporting structure has been established. The High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina (HJPC) adopted the detailed Action Plan to Implement the European Commission’s Recommendations that fall under the mandate of the HJPC, including the strengthening of disciplinary proceedings. However, most of the measures need to be addressed through the legislature. Reducing the backlog of utility cases in the courts and the reform of enforcement procedures continue to be a problem. It is still necessary to strengthen judicial independence, especially independence from political influence. In March 2017, the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina approved the Action Plan to Implement the Bosnia and Herzegovina Justice Reform Strategy

for the period 2014–2018 along with new adjusted deadlines for its implementation. The performance of the courts and the prosecutors’ offices is monitored on a daily basis and measured through the case management system through which the performance of judges is appraised on the basis of their annual volume of work.

In 2017, the length of judicial proceedings was only somewhat shorter (474 days) than in 2016 (476 days) and the percentage of cases resolved was slightly lower: 105 % compared to 109 % in 2016. Further progress has been made in the prosecution and trial of war crime cases.

Of the 630 reported juvenile offenders, 139 were indicted and 132 convicted as shown in the Table and Figure below.²⁶

²⁶ Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnia and Herzegovina in numbers for 2017. Available from www.bhas.ba/tematskibilteni/NUM_00_2017_TB_0_BS.pdf.

The fight against corruption

Corruption²⁷ poses a particular threat to countries in transition in which the democratic, institutional and values systems are not fully developed. Bosnia and Herzegovina as country in transition has as of late undertaken certain systemic activities aimed at combating corruption. The World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators ranking places Bosnia and Herzegovina beneath the middle section of the list of over 200 countries and territories. Bosnia and Herzegovina is ranked similarly under the Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index that ranks nearly 180 countries around the world.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has adopted a number of anti-corruption strategy papers at the national, entity, Brčko District and lower levels of government; however, the strategies in place have not been fully implemented.

²⁷ Bosnia and Herzegovina – Anti-Corruption Strategy 2015–2019 and the Action Plan to Implement the Anti-Corruption Strategy 2015–2019, published by the Agency for Prevention of Corruption and Coordination of the Fight against Corruption, 2014.



An example of good practice

In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Asset Forfeiture Act has been in force since 2014. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina owns permanently forfeited assets and the income received from their sale or rental. The Federation Forfeited Assets Management Agency manages forfeited cash, shares, real estate and movable property worth around BAM 15 million (EUR 7.5 million equivalent). Cash accounts for 52 % of the total value of forfeited assets. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina transferred the first cash seized to the account of the Parental House in Sarajevo, which provides a second home for children with cancer and their parents that offers a family atmosphere and a place where they can take time-out to relax away from the hospital setting.



An example of good practice

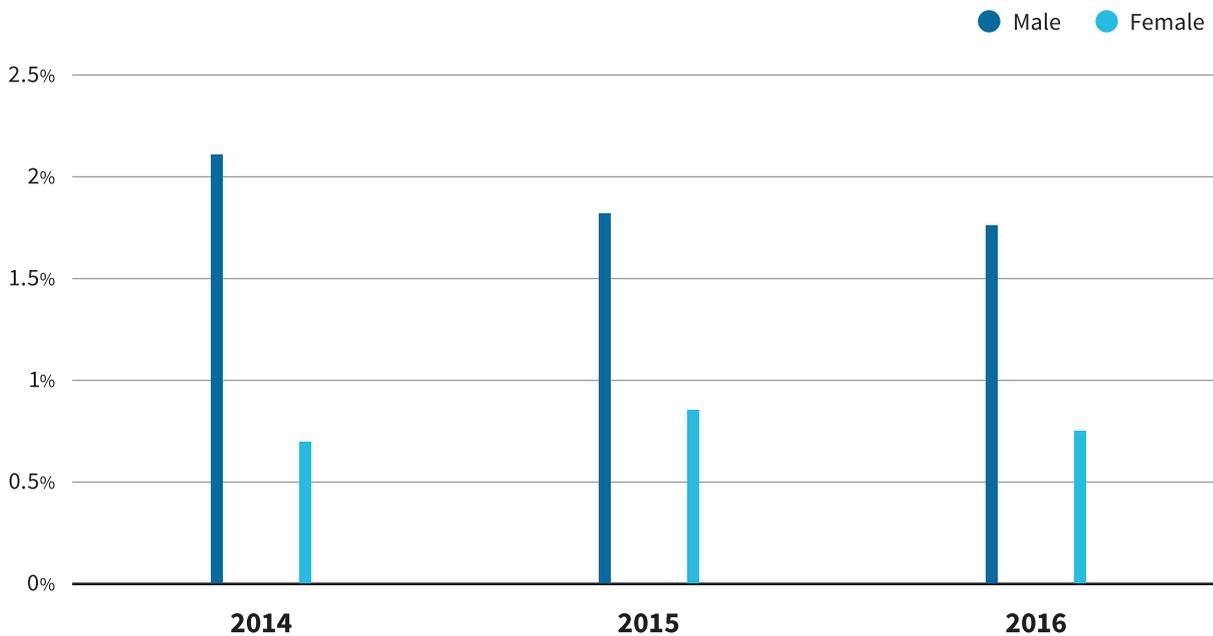
In Republika Srpska, a total amount of BAM 22 million (EUR 11 million) has been seized of which BAM 1,440,000 (around 750,000) was permanently forfeited since 2010 when the Asset Forfeiture Act came into force and the Forfeited Asset Management Agency was established.

Graph 20:

The murder-cause mortality rate per 100,000 inhabitants

Source:

The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina

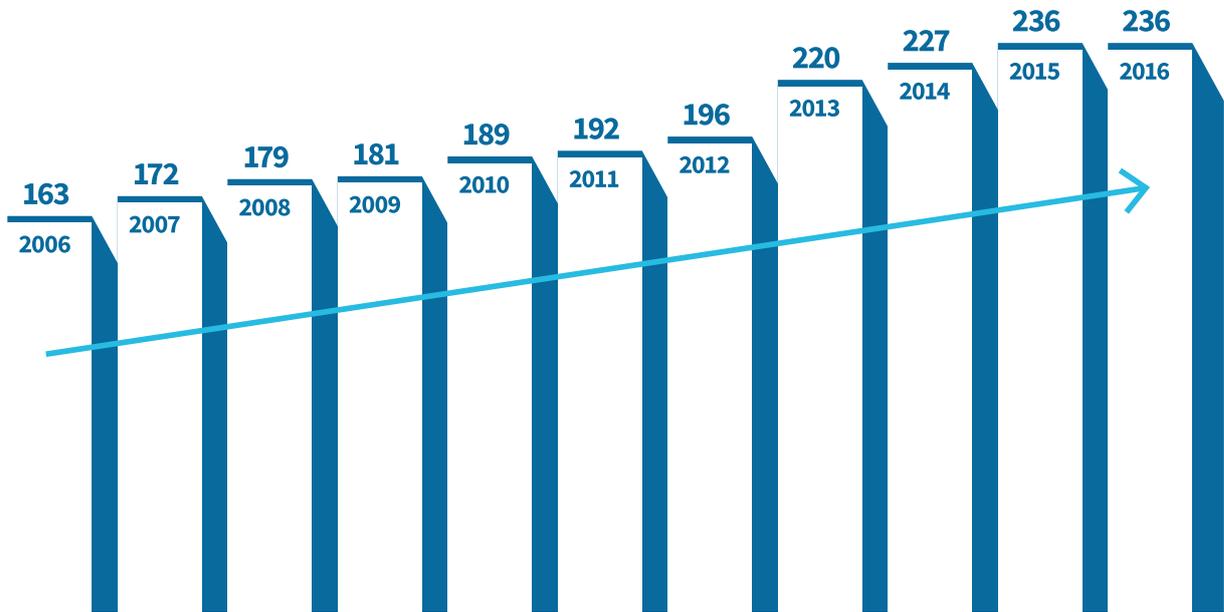


An example of good practice through partnership

In cooperation with the International Financial Corporation, which is a member of the World Bank group, Bosnia and Herzegovina has implemented a project on business registration reform in the entities and in Brčko District, in several separate phases. The reform requires drafting new laws or amending the existing set of laws in order to reduce the financial burden on businesses and to remove unnecessary administrative steps that inhibit the competitiveness of businesses and investments. Republika Srpska has gone farthest in the reform and is now creating opportunities for online business registration. In addition to setting up one-stop-shop for business registration, Republika Srpska has formed a single business register. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Brčko District are in the initial phase of the business registration reform and are working toward setting up a one-stop-shop business registration center as a precondition for online business registration.

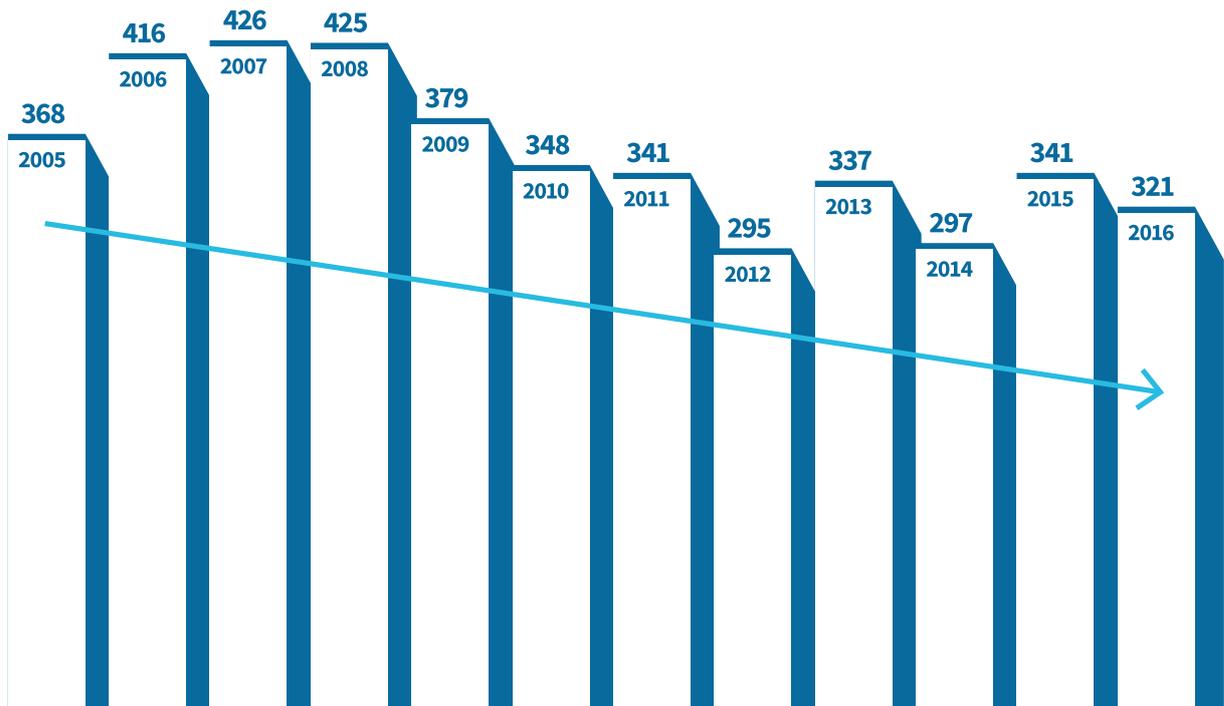
Graph 21:
Motorization rate

Source:
The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina



Graph 22:
Traffic-related death rate

Source:
The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina



Trafficking in human beings

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a source, destination and transit country for women, children and men that fall victim to human trafficking. The Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2016–2019 aims to improve the support system, the effective prosecution of the perpetrators of human trafficking and related crimes, prevention of human trafficking through risk reduction, efficient protection of and assistance to the victims of human trafficking and to strengthen partnerships and cooperation among stakeholders

involved in combating human trafficking. The relevant authorities at the state, entity, cantonal and Brčko District level implemented the Action Plan. It is harmonized with national and international gender equality standards. The number of registered criminal offences of human trafficking declined in 2016. The number of the criminal offences of the smuggling of people and trafficking in human beings, including the solicitation of prostitution, declined from 35 in 2015 to 26 in 2016 or by 25.71 %.

Human rights and the protection of minorities and justice, freedom and security

Bosnia and Herzegovina has ratified all of the main European and international human rights instruments and is making a strong effort to harmonize its human rights legislation and its implementation with the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review. On 7 November 2013, Bosnia and Herzegovina was the sixth Council of Europe member State to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention).

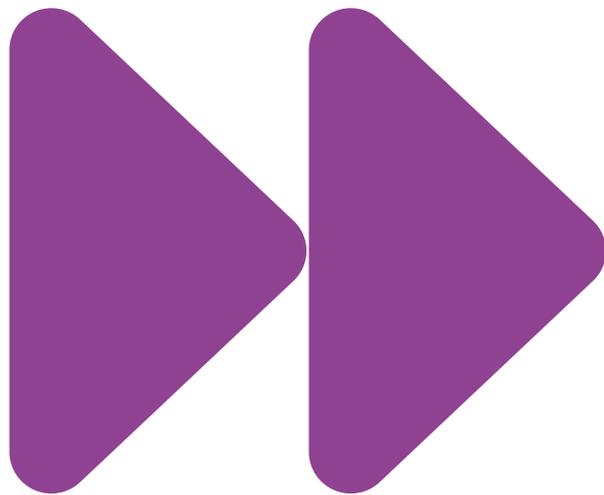
In October 2017, the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina approved the Strategy to Combat Organized Crime 2017–2020. It is expected that the relevant institutions will develop their respective action plans to implement this strategy. The Action Plan to address Strategic deficiencies in the anti-Money Laundering System in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been implemented in compliance with the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Following the FATF's field visit in January 2018, Bosnia and Herzegovina was removed from the FATF list of *“high-risk third countries with structural deficiencies in the fight against money laundering and terror financing.”*





Partnership

Mobilise the means for implementation of the agenda through strengthened global solidarity, focusing on the poorest and most vulnerable and the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people





SDG 17

Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

One of the most important partnerships for Bosnia and Herzegovina has developed over the years of the country's accession process to the European Union. There is a consensus among all domestic stakeholders that EU membership is the main strategic goal for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The country expects to gain official candidate status before the end of this year.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has from the very beginning maintained successful cooperation with the United Nations system and thus this can be defined as its longest partnership. Joint activities implemented with a whole range of United Nations bodies and agencies have made an enormous contribution to virtually every aspect of life in the country. Among them are the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Refugee

Agency (UNHCR), United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Women, United Nations Volunteers (UNV), International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Labor Organization (ILO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), just to name a few.

The country is a member of the most important United Nations bodies, such as the Security Council, the ECOSOC, Peace building Commission and the Human Rights Council, and is currently a member of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. In all of these United Nations bodies, Bosnia and Herzegovina has actively participated using its own experience and lessons learned. In view of the fact that at the 2014 Universal Periodic Review Bosnia and Herzegovina accepted all of the recommendations in various aspects

given by other states in order to further improve the quality of human rights in the country before the Human Rights Council, the country's openness is also clear in the field of human rights.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is also very active in the field of regional cooperation and is a member of many intergovernmental organizations, such as the Central European Initiative, Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, Union for the Mediterranean, Berlin Process WB6, South East Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP), etc. Bosnia and Herzegovina also has very fruitful partnerships a number of countries, including the USA (for example, USAID has been present in the country for almost a quarter of a century), China (especially on the Silk Road Project in the 16+1 format), Turkey, the Russian Federation and a number of Arab states. The country is developing a very open society.

The very important partnership between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), European Investment Bank (EIB), development agencies from several Arab states as well as other international financial institutions should be underlined.

Finance

The system of taxation is the most efficient instrument through which the state levies funds necessary for financing the state (the state administration, education, social benefits, infrastructure projects, incentives and subsidies, etc.). The system of taxation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is in accordance with the constitutional set-up of the country and therefore its fiscal structure is complex and divided between national and sub-national governments.

The Indirect Taxation Authority (ITA) is responsible for collecting indirect taxes at the national level. The entity tax authorities in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska levy direct taxes in the entities, while Brčko District has its own tax authority that levies direct taxes.

By signing the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union in mid-2008, Bosnia and Herzegovina confirmed its commitment to European integration. Bearing in mind the implications of the fiscal sector on EU membership, new member states have a duty to run a fiscal policy that is consistent with the harmonization and coordination-based rules under the Maastricht convergence criteria and the Stability and Growth Pact.

Indirect taxes in Bosnia and Herzegovina are levied at the national level and are almost entirely harmonized with the EU Directives. Since its establishment in 2003, the Indirect Taxation Authority has seen a continuous increase in revenue. Of the envisaged 20,000 VAT payers it is expected, under the initial data provided by the entity level tax authorities, that the ITA now controls the legality of business operations of more than 55,000 VAT payers and their payment of indirect taxes.

Table 3.

General government fiscal framework²⁸ in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2017–2021

Fiscal indicators (% GDP)	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total revenue	37.8	39.2	37.3	36.0	34.9
Total expenditure	36.8	40.0	37.3	35.7	34.1
<i>Fiscal balance</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>-0.8</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>0.8</i>
Interest expenses	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.8
<i>Primary fiscal balance</i>	<i>1.8</i>	<i>0.1</i>	<i>0.8</i>	<i>1.2</i>	<i>1.6</i>

The main characteristics of the fiscal sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina over the past three years include an increase in overall tax revenue. In 2017, Bosnia and Herzegovina levied a total of around BAM 14.2 billion in public revenue from indirect and direct taxes, social contributions, etc. Revenue in 2017 increased by 7.4 % compared with the previous year. Foreign direct investment in 2017 was BAM 758.4 million (net financial liabilities), which was 57.3 % higher than in 2016. Total public debt in 2017 declined by 6.1 % compared with the previous year.

Trade

Bosnia and Herzegovina is fully committed to building a liberal economy based on market principles and the freedom of movement of people, capital, goods and services. The country was granted observer status to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1999 and negotiations on Bosnia and Herzegovina joining the WTO have reached the final stage. It is expected that a final meeting of the working group will be held in the first half of 2019, after which Bosnia and Herzegovina will become the 165th member of the World Trade Organization.

Exports from Bosnia and Herzegovina have increased continuously since 2005. In 2005, exports were worth BAM 3,783 billion but grew to BAM 11,900 billion in 2018. Compared to 2017 alone, exports increased by 7.6 %. In 2018, the import-to-export ratio was 61.8 % and the foreign trade deficit was BAM 7,370 billion. Last year's exports to the Central European Free Trade Association countries (CEFTA) was worth BAM 1,948 billion, which represents an increase of 8.8 % compared to 2017. The import-to-export ratio with CEFTA countries was 83.6 %. Exports to the EU in 2018 were worth BAM 8,682 billion, which was an increase of 10.3 % compared to 2017, and import-to-export ratio with the EU member states was 74.5 %.²⁹

²⁸ The general government fiscal framework at the state level was produced based on input provided by the entities (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska), Brčko District and state institutions.

²⁹ http://bhas.gov.ba/data/Publikacije/Saopštenja/2019/ETR_01_2018_12_0_HR.pdf.

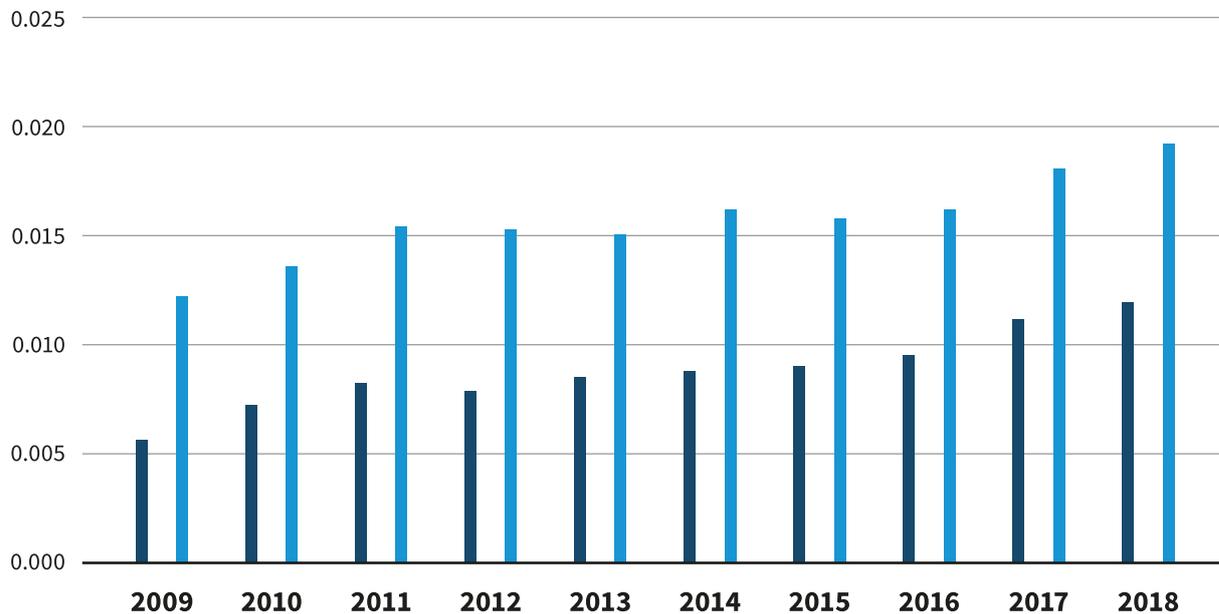
Graph 23:

Bosnia and Herzegovina export and import over the period 2009–2018 (in billion BAM)

Source:

The Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina

● Export ● Import



An example of good practice

Republika Srpska has reformed business registration process by introducing a one-stop-shop and online system for business registration as one of the parameters important for doing business. The results include reduced costs, shorter procedures and fewer days required for business registration and an increased number of newly registered businesses. These results are not visible in the Doing Business 2018 Report because the report only monitors the situation in one (the largest) city in a country (Sarajevo in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina).

The Doing Business report analyses laws that contribute to improving or limiting business activities. The report provides an ease of doing business ranking for 190 global economies. Bosnia and Herzegovina was ranked 86th in 2018. Of the ten indicator sets used to calculate the rankings for Doing Business 2018, Bosnia and Herzegovina scored best on trading across borders indicator and scored lowest on the starting a business indicator.

Efforts to improve the business environment in the country are taken at different levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina (at the level of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and at the sub-national level in the entities and in Brčko District). A new system of taxation law is being drafted in Republika Srpska in order to create a register of parafiscal charges, which is a precondition for abolishing unjustified charges. In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, efforts to improve the business environment focus on several aspects: reducing fiscal and parafiscal charges through a set of measures, simplifying the business registration procedure, including the procurement of new software, shortening deadlines and





An example of good practice through partnership

The ECA program, managed by the International Financial Corporation (IFC) and funded by the Swiss Government, provides transaction advisory services on public sector infrastructure and capacity building projects for the purpose of promoting public-private partnership in South East Europe and Central Asia. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the plan is to develop public transport in Sarajevo, develop the Sarajevo airport, the public lighting system and district heating in Travnik and the use of renewable energy sources instead of mazut at the Clinical Centre in Banja Luka.



simplifying procedures to obtain licenses or permits.

Having joined the Bologna process, Bosnia and Herzegovina began developing education in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) in order for higher its diplomas and qualifications to be recognized within the European area. This will allow student and teacher mobility, the exchange of ideas and practices and eventually a free flow of labor force as one of the basic elements of the EU internal market. Providers of higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina participate in the Erasmus+ program (16 projects in 2017) and the Central European Exchange Program for University Students (CEEPUS) and the country has joined the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML). Bosnia and Herzegovina is a member of the South East European Centre for Entrepreneurial Learning (SEECCEL), an initiative for the development of a life-long entrepreneurial learning system, the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe (ERI SEE) and the Pan-European Network for Market-Oriented Industrial Research and Development Projects (EUREKA).



An example of good practice through partnership

Having recognized the role of small and medium-sized enterprises in boosting economic growth, the country joined EU COSME 2014-2020 (the EU program for the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises). This program helps SMEs gain access to international markets. The development and consolidation funds within the Program are available to existing enterprises and start-ups and in particular for young people and women facing difficulties in starting a business.

NEXT STEPS

The SDG Framework document in BiH is a framework document that will inform through broad strokes on development pathways and acceleration options for the country. Operationalization of the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina is foreseen to be conducted by each level of governance during the integration of the SDGs into regular strategic planning processes, in full respect of the authority and mandates of the state, entity and Brčko District governments.

Because of the different levels of development, statistical data and the functionality of institutions at the state, entity and Brčko District level, public consultations on the strategic development documents will be conducted by each level in such a way that the needs, prospects, priorities and specificities are harmonized in more detail with the needs of citizens. The results of these consultations will be consolidated and used in the development of strategic framework documents in Bosnia and Herzegovina and for raising international funds and for international reporting on the progress the country achieves in implementing the SDGs.

The entity governments and the Government of Brčko District are committed to developing sustainable development strategies, while the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina is committed to developing a strategic framework for the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina that is harmonized with the SDGs and other sustainable development priorities in the country and recognized in the SDGs Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This will be elaborated further during the public

consultations in relation to the necessary levels of government or local authorities. Sustainable development strategies that are consistent with the SDGs and any additional specific priorities related to sustainable development will be adopted on the basis of the specific development needs at the cantonal, municipal and cities level. The SDGs will be implemented in accordance with the available budgets and international financial support for development.

Reporting to the governments and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be done on a periodic basis in the form of the information prepared at each level of government by the BiH members of the SDGs Rollout Working Group and the detailed reporting on the situation in the country done by the Voluntary Review (VNR) at the High Level Political Forum in New York every three or four years. The SDGs Rollout Working Group in Bosnia and Herzegovina will prepare the VNRs and the SDGs Rollout Working Group will meet periodically.

Sustainable Development Goals and the private sector

The private sector, supported by the United Nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, have embarked on a mapping exercise of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) against existing value chains in the furniture and automotive sectors in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The existing value chain was analyzed in relation to the application of the SDGs (based on specific targets and indicators) against each stage in the value chain in order to identify the SDG indicators that have an impact on individual parts of the selected value chain.

The SDGs with the highest impact on the value chains will be determined based on the mapping and indicators (baselines and targets) identified to set general and specific goals aimed at reducing the gap between the current business practices within the targeted value chains and the principles and targets of the SDGs. Thus, the analysis will provide the grounds for embedding the SDGs into growing industries in the country and at the same time set in place a basic monitoring framework for monitoring their performance against the SDG targets. Finally, the scope of the analysis includes a sustainable business report that will provide an insight into good sustainability practices in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These identified practices will inspire other companies to contribute to Agenda 2030. The approach and analysis are to be finalized during the course of 2019 and as such can then be scaled up in relation to the needs of other industries in the country.

In the summer of 2019, the SDG Business Week is envisaged for a number of individual activities that will focus on the promotion of the SDGs in the private sector and among future business leaders as well as other key stakeholders in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The SDG Business Week agenda will consist of webinars, partnership events, an awards ceremony and a B2B event. During the SDG Business Week, the SDG Business Pioneers Award ceremony will be organized to announce the winners of the 2019 competition among small, medium and large private sector companies competing in two segments: 'creation of decent jobs', companies that excel in 'reducing the ecological footprint and in innovation'.

SDG 18. Bosnia and Herzegovina mine free by 2030

SDG 18 in Bosnia and Herzegovina could bring demining to the center of the development agenda. This will be proposed during the course of 2019 to policymakers in order for them to consider adding this important SDG within this country context to Agenda 2030. Bosnia and Herzegovina is not yet a mine free country and there is still considerable demining work ahead. Demining releases land and has a direct impact on reducing violence and fear (SDG16), but also contributes to addressing SDG1 (Poverty), SDG2 (Hunger), SDG3 (Healthy Lives), SDG8 (Inclusive Growth), SDG9 (Infrastructure), SDG11 (Human Settlements) and SDG15 (Ecosystems).

Financing for development

Over the forthcoming period, new business models that could unlock investment potential and attract an inflow of development investment will be in focus and explored in collaboration with international financial institutions and international organizations as well as with the private sector and domestic financial institutions.

Sustainable development in education

How sustainable development can be introduced into the education system, including the creation of an interdisciplinary master's course on sustainable development, is an interesting question and due process will be initiated in this regard at the earliest opportunity.

SDG platforms and networks

Perhaps most importantly, we need to help establish durable solutions and platforms that will allow for better networking, participation, exchange and action on the SDGs and the creation of enabling spaces for dialogue, collaboration and collective action. In particular, focus will be on those organizations that cater for those left behind, such as youth and women's organizations, citizen initiatives and platforms that will enable continuous dialogue and feedback among and from institutions and citizens on Agenda 2030.





April 2019