

**MAPPING OF YOUTH POLICIES AND IDENTIFICATION
OF EXISTING SUPPORT AND GAPS IN FINANCING OF
YOUTH ACTIONS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS**

REPORT

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



Sarajevo, January 2021

Title: MAPPING OF YOUTH POLICIES AND IDENTIFICATION OF EXISTING SUPPORT AND GAPS IN FINANCING OF YOUTH ACTIONS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS –BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA REPORT

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The report is based on comprehensive research, organized and overseen by the Open Society Foundation in Albania, and involving six researchers, one in each Western Balkans six economies between September 2020 - January 2021 with Blerjana Bino as Research Team Leader and Klodjan Seferaj, Programme Manager for European Integration and Good Governance at OSFA.

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The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Regional Cooperation Council and the European Union.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report offers an overview and assessment of the existing youth policy framework, programs and mechanisms of youth participation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition, the report includes the identification of the existing support and gaps in financing youth actions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The report is drafted based on desk and empirical research through in-depth interviews with various stakeholders in the youth sector. The desk research consisted of analyzing policy documents, laws, strategies and other relevant official documents and reports. Statistics from various sources and most recent reports from local and international organizations are analyzed as essential sources of information on the youth sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The empirical research was carried out through in-depth interviews with various local and international institutions and organizations. In total, 9 stakeholders were interviewed for the purposes of this report.

According to the 2013 Census, there are 723,116 young people (age 15-29) in the overall population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which represents 20.47% of the total population. Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have official data on youth ethnicity but only offers overall divisions of ethnic groups. Overall youth unemployment in 2019 was 33.8% as per the Labor Force Survey. Bosnia and Herzegovina is facing an intensified process of emigration of young and highly educated people as noted by various reports, but no data is available. Also, there is an inconsistency in the definition of the youth category and data collection between different public institutions and other stakeholders.

The development of the youth sector started 15 years ago with significant international donor support. Youth policy development and implementation has been closely linked to the decision-makers and the political process in the economy due to the fragmentation of youth laws in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is a good chance that this approach can respond to the real needs of young people in the field if used properly. The process of the development of youth policy at all levels of governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina is challenging due to the limited coordination and inclusion of relevant stakeholders, limited resources and capacities of institutions dealing with youth, and inadequate monitoring and evaluation.

When it comes to the financial support of the youth sector, it is evident that financial aid is fragmented and not easy to follow. This is mainly caused by the lack of a single budget line that is entirely devoted to the youth sector. The lack of coordination between different governance levels results in financial overlapping and support to the same youth-related issues, programs, and projects from the municipality, cantonal, and entity resources.

The report indicates a noticeable link between a highly fragmented and inefficient youth policy system with the unequal conditions and opportunities for youth participation and empowerment within the economy. Aside from this, and while acknowledging the constitutional set-up of Bosnia and Herzegovina, whereby youth policy is created on three levels (the level of 10 cantons of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the entity level of the Republika Srpska, and the level of Brčko District), the report argues that such political complexity makes it extremely challenging to determine a unified or coordinated youth policy both in terms of financing and representation. These trends are maintained despite the fact that youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina make up more than 20% of the population. Nevertheless, the report also finds that many young people take an active part in youth

organizations to tackle ongoing and emerging youth issues. This is thanks to the work of entity and district Youth Councils, which work in close cooperation, although their degree of involvement is different. The primary activity of all three youth councils is youth participation, as well as education about youth rights and responsibilities of the governments towards this group. An increasing number of young people, however, are opting for migration as youth unemployment is high. Thus, there is ample room for improvement of the policy framework.

Although the policy framework recognized youth participation in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a key pillar in the youth sector, it is not fully operational in practice. Despite a set of valuable policies at all three levels of governance, youth participation mechanisms have not been adequately implemented.

While funding at the economy level and its sublevels of governance is fragmented and with limitations in terms of availability of data and transparency, international agency and donor funds have been instrumental in sustaining youth civil society activity at the time of low investment in the sector. The report concludes that a flexible, need-based analysis and a cross-sectorial approach is necessary in coordinating the current financing activities from the international community. It is also necessary to emphasize its long-term commitment and its potential to catalyze partnerships with local government institutions within the youth sector and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) working with youth, thus finding innovative ways of fostering opportunities for youth beyond the usual areas of youth employment and education. Focused attention must be given to some priority areas such as rural youth, culture and youth, security and youth (including organized crime and radicalization), and science and youth.

The report consists of six chapters. The first chapter presents general data on the youth population. The second chapter adds further context by providing an analysis of the legal and strategic youth policy framework as well as a description of all responsible institutions for youth policy implementation. The third chapter provides an analysis of the funding framework and its mechanisms. Chapter 4 focuses on studying the mechanisms and channels for the participation and the inclusion of youth in decision-making. A mapping of donor financing of projects on youth is widely described in chapter 5. The report concludes with chapter 6, offering an overall analysis of acceptable practices and gaps regarding youth policy financing and implementation. The current impact of COVID-19 on youth policy is also provided, and, finally, recommendations are made available for all the participants involved in the youth policymaking processes.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCYI	Commission for the coordination of youth issues
CSO	Civil society organizations
DCF	Donor Coordination Forum
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
HCA	Helsinki Citizen's Assembly
IPA	Instrument of Pre-accession Assistance
KOMS	National Youth Council of Serbia
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MoCA	The Ministry of Civil Affairs Bosnia and Herzegovina
MoFT	Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of Finance and Treasury
MP	Member of Parliament
NEET	Not in employment, education, training
NGO	Nongovernmental organizations
OKC	Youth Communication Centre Banja Luka
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
OSRS	Youth Council of the Republika Srpska
RYCO	Regional Youth Cooperation Office
SCIA	Sector for Coordination of International Economic Aid
SDC	The Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development
SDP	Social Democratic Party
STEM	Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WB6	Western Balkans (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia)
WBYCP	Western Balkans Youth Cooperation Platform
YEA	Young European Ambassadors
WFD	Westminster Foundation for Democracy

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo* declaration of independence.

CHAPTER 1: YOUTH POPULATION DATA

This chapter outlines the general data on the youth population, referring to official resources as per their availability. There is inconsistency in the definition of the category of youth in data collection between different public institutions and other stakeholders. Using different categories for youth data collection poses constraints to the comparability of the data and general analysis of youth trends in terms of demography, education, employment and migration.

1.1 Age and gender

The youth in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina are considered to be persons between the ages of 15 and 30.¹ In Republika Srpska, youth are persons between the ages of 16 and 30.² Despite the legal definition of youth, the age of 30 is not included in the statistics of youth and all persons up to the age of 30 are included. According, to the 2013 Census, there are 773.850 young people (age 15-29) in the overall population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which represents 20.47% of the total population. The ratio of young men in the youth population is 51.31%, compared to 48.69% of young women. Data presented here is from 2013, as this is the only available data from the Agency of Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Table 1: Bosnia and Herzegovina's Youth Population by Age Cohorts

Year	Age cohorts/ Gender	15-19	20-24	25-29	Youth population
2013	Male	124.900	116.883	155.577	357.360
	Female	117.842	111.173	147.475	376.490
	Total	242.742	228.056	303.052	773.850

1.2 Education and employment

1.2.1 Education

According to the last available data from the Agency of Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the academic year of 2018/2019 there were 356 pre-school institutions, which represents an increase of 6% compared to the 2016/2017 school year. While the number of children in pre-school institutions increased compared to previous years, the number of students in primary and secondary schools decreased (Table 2)³. When it comes to higher education, females generally enroll in higher numbers compared to males. The number of enrolled males has decreased significantly from 2012, with a drop in each year until the 2018/2019 academic year (Table 3).⁴

1 Law on Youth of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Law on Youth of Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina - ZAKON O MLADIMA FEDERACIJE BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE” 2010, Official Gazette of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina 36-10, available at: https://www.mladicentar.org/Zakon_o_mladima.Sl_novine_FBosnia_and_Herzegovina_36-10.pdf and “ZAKON O MLADIMA BRČKO DISTRIKTA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE” 2017, Assembly of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, available at: https://skupstinabd.ba/3-zakon/ba/Zakon%20o%20mladima%20Brc--ko%20distrikta%20Bosnia_and_Herzegovina/001%2018-17%20Zakon%20o%20mladima%20Brc--ko%20distrikta%20Bosnia_and_Herzegovina%20B.pdf (Accessed September 24, 2020).

2 Law on Youth Organization - “ZAKON O OMLADINSKOM ORGANIZOVANJU” 2004, Official Gazette of Republika Srpska, available at: <http://www.pm.rs.ba/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Zakon-o-omladinskom-organizovanju-RS.pdf> (Accessed September 24, 2020).

3 “BOSNA I HERCEGOVINA U BROJEVIMA 2019” 2019, Agency of Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, available at: http://www.bhas.ba/data/Publikacije/Bilteni/2020/NUM_00_2019_TB_0_BS.pdf (Accessed September 24, 2020).

4 Ibid.

Table 2: Education by level and gender 2012-2019

Year	Pre-school education		Primary education		Secondary education	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
2012/2013	8,958	9,859	148,585	156,296	82,242	84,420
2013/2014	9,383	10,497	147,238	154,895	77,468	78,882
2014/2015	10,290	11,200	144,456	152,363	71,786	72,095
2015/2016	10,983	11,918	141,454	149,888	66,520	66,708
2016/2017	11,832	13,086	139,479	148,250	63,592	63,232
2018/2019	13,656	14,855	136,181	143,837	58,654	58,821

Table 3: Students in Higher Education by Gender 2012-2019

Year	Gender	
	Females	Males
2012/2013	56,325	46,118
2013/2014	55,114	44,646
2014/2015	53,599	42,826
2015/2016	52,457	41,633
2016/2017	50,552	39,163
2018/2019	52,009	37,007

1.2.2 Neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET)

The latest data on NEET was published in 2018, when the rate of young persons in the NEET category was 21.1% for females and 22.1% for males.⁵ The Labor Force Survey in Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2019 does not contain data on NEET. According to the International Labor Organization, 21.2% is the share of youth not in education, employment or training in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2019.⁶ However, no official statistics are available for 2020.

1.2.3 Unemployment rate

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the youth unemployment ratio is defined as the number of unemployed persons aged 15-24. According to the Agency of Statistics, in 2019, 31.3% of males aged 15-24 were unemployed, while this number was even higher for females in the same age group, at 37.9%.⁷ The European Commission (EC) Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2020 notes that “*the labor market participation of women and the youth is still low, while the unemployment rates of those two groups are significantly higher than for men in core working-age cohorts.*”⁸ The overall youth unemployment in 2019 was 33.8%.⁹

⁵ “Share of youth not in education, employment or training, total (% of youth population)”, available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.UEM.NEET.ZS?locations=BA> (Accessed January 12, 2021).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ “Women and Men in Bosnia and Herzegovina”. Thematic Bulletin no.3. Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, available at http://www.bhas.ba/data/Publikacije/Bilteni/2020/FAM_00_2019_TB_0_BS.pdf (Accessed January 13, 2021).

⁸ European Commission Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2020, available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/bosnia_and_herzegovina_report_2020.pdf (Accessed January 13, 2021). p. 52.

⁹ Ibid. p. 53.

1.3 Youth migration

The official statistics on migration, conducted by the Statistics Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in cooperation with the entity offices (the Federal Statistics Office and the Republika Srpska Statistics Office), follow internal migration and immigration from abroad, but not emigration,¹⁰ so the data available does not offer relevant information on migration from Bosnia and Herzegovina, even on youth migration. Bosnia and Herzegovina is facing an intensive process of emigration of young and highly educated people as noted by various reports.¹¹ The Study on Young People in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018/2019 confirms this trend and identifies the economic motivation for youth migration. To the question of whether they want to emigrate, more than half of those surveyed gave affirmative answers: 14.7% had a very strong desire, 12.7% had a strong desire, and another 27.3% a moderate one. Around 40% of those who plan to leave the Bosnia and Herzegovina have no intention of ever coming back, almost 20% plan to stay abroad longer than 20 years, and 10% plan to return in 5 to 10 years.¹²

¹⁰ “The cost of youth migration in Bosnia and Herzegovina”, Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2020, available at https://www.wfd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Cost-of-Youth-Emigration-from-BH_official_version-1-1.pdf (Accessed January 11, 2021). p. 8.

¹¹ *ibid.* p. 48.

¹² Youth Study Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018/2019, 2020, available at <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/id-moe/15262.pdf> (Accessed January 11, 2021).

CHAPTER 2: NATIONAL YOUTH LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

This chapter analyzes the national youth policy, and its legal and institutional framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition to outlining the relevant strategic documents, action plans, laws, and bylaws, a critical assessment identifies achievements, challenges, and remaining gaps.

2.1 The Constitution

Bosnia and Herzegovina has a complex political and administrative organization that influences the development and implementation of youth policy in general. The Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina provides the allocation of jurisdiction among central and entity government levels and also provides that any competence, which is not explicitly vested in the central-level institution, rests with the entities and their subunits. Therefore, the jurisdiction for youth-related issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina is at the level of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (and ten cantons of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and municipalities of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), the Republika Srpska (and its cities and municipalities), and the Brčko District.

2.2 Law on Youth

There is no central-level law on youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Despite the lack of central-level youth law, all sub-central units have prepared and adopted their own youth laws. The applicable laws also provide for the establishment of youth organizations, of which at least 2/3 of their membership must consist of young people.¹³

The following laws are in force on two entity and district levels:

- The Law on Youth of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina¹⁴ regulates youth issues in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- The Law on Youth Organizing of the Republika Srpska¹⁵ defines general interest and programs in youth and their organizations. The Law defines youth organizations in the Republika Srpska. It is important to note that youth organizations participate in the Youth Council while organizations for youth issues cannot participate in the work of the Council.
- The Law on Youth of Brčko District¹⁶ describes the rights and obligations of youth and youth organizations.

Despite this, the situation in the field in terms of implementation of the existing laws is challenging. For example, although prescribed by the Law, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have a strategy on youth. The process has been in the status of “almost completed” since 2015. The reasons behind this stall are political and financial, as explained

11 The laws of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Brčko District define youth as persons between age 15 and 30.¹³ The Law on Youth Organizing in Republika Srpska provided for the age range from 16 to 30 prior to the amendments from 2011.

14 “ZAKON O MLADIMA FEDERACIJE BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE” 2010, Official Gazette of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, available at: https://www.mladicentar.org/Zakon_o_mladima,SI_novine_FBosnia_and_Herzegovina_36-10.pdf

15 “ZAKON O OMLADINSKOM ORGANIZOVANJU” 2004, Official Gazette of Republika Srpska, available at: <http://mladi.org/v2/phocadownload/Zakon-o-omladinskom-organizovanju-RS.pdf> (Accessed October 24, 2020).

16 “ZAKON O MLADIMA BRČKO DISTRIKTA BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE”, 2017, Assembly of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, available at: http://mladi.org/v2/phocadownload/Zakon%20o%20mladima%20Brčko%20distrikta%20Bosnia_and_Herzegovina.pdf (Accessed October 24, 2020).

by those interviewed. This is because political parties in the government do not place an equal value on youth issues. On the other hand, not all municipalities in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina have a youth strategy. An analysis of the implementation of Law on Youth of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina conducted in 2019, states that 51 municipalities in this entity do not have a youth strategy, while only 13 do.¹⁷

Likewise, the Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports of the Republika Srpska, although explicitly stating that government priority areas are, among other issues, the determination of a National Action Plan and Youth Policy, the documents have never been published and are not available to the public. The reasons for this remain, as stated by several interviewees, unclear.

2.3 National Strategy on Youth

2.3.1 Economy (central) level

Bosnia and Herzegovina does not have a youth strategy, a national action plan on youth, or any other similar document that strategically deals with youth on the central level.

2.3.2 Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

In accordance with the Youth Law of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Youth strategy of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina should be developed as a program-based document with clear strategic goals and measures and should be governed by different institutions of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Youth Law of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina states that youth strategies should be developed at both federal and cantonal levels. Further on, the Youth Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina defines that youth strategies have to be developed based on a needs analysis in the youth sector, where the youth sector includes formal and informal education, employment and youth entrepreneurship, social and health protection, housing, active participation in the civil society, information and counseling, youth tourism, recovery, rehabilitation, culture, sports, work with special needs persons, and other relevant matters.¹⁸

However, the Youth Strategy of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has neither been adopted nor implemented. Despite this, some activities for drafting the strategy have taken place in 2015 and then in 2019. As a result of the Youth Law in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 2015, a decision on establishing the working group for drafting the Youth Strategy of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina¹⁹ was adopted. The Working Group consists of 19 members, representatives from institutions from different Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina sectors,²⁰ and representatives from the NGO KULT, as an advising body in

17 Analiza Zakona o mladima FBosnia and Herzegovina 2019. Available at: https://www.vijecemladih.ba/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Analiza-Zakona-o-mladima-FBosnia-and-Herzegovina_2019.pdf (Accessed October 24, 2020).

16 Article 28 of the Law on Youth of FEDERATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA.

17 Decision on establishment of the working group for drafting the Youth Strategy of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina” 2015, Official Gazette no. 32, available at: <https://istinomjer.ba/app/uploads/2019/06/rjesenje.png> (Accessed October 24, 2020).

18 Federal Ministry of culture and sports (2 members) Federal Ministry of agriculture, waterworks and forestry (1 member) Federal Ministry of finances (1 member) Federal Ministry of internal affairs (1 member) Federal Police department (1 member) Federal Ministry of education and science (1 member) Federal Ministry of health (1 member) Federal Ministry of development, entrepreneurship and trade (1 member) Federal Ministry of labour and social policies (1 member) Federal Ministry of justice (1 member) Federal Ministry of soldiers and disabled persons from the homeland war (1 member) Federal Ministry of displaced persons and refugees (1 member) Federal Ministry of energy, mining and industry (1 member) Federal Ministry of environment and tourism (1 member) Federal institute for public health (1 member) Federal institute for retirement and disability insurance (1 member) Federal institute for health insurance and re-insurance (1 member) Federal employment institute (1 member) From : Article 1 of the “Decision on establishment of the working group for drafting the

the process.²¹ Drafting of the Strategy was supported by an EU funded project.²² The Strategy was drafted in autumn 2015, but this document has not been adopted yet. While there is no official explanation for why the Strategy has not been adopted, interviewees explained that the reason was a financial issue.²³ The budget for the strategy implementation has never been defined, which was the main obstacle for the adoption of the Strategy.

Since 2015, civil society organizations which have been active in the youth sector have advocated adopting youth policy documents on several different occasions.²⁴ Different initiatives for the adoption of a Youth Strategy of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including pressure from a Member of Parliament of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the Social Democratic Party (SDP), resulted in an *Initiative²⁵ for adopting the Youth Strategy Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina²⁶* that has been adopted by the Parliament of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina on June 24th, 2019. The Initiative defined that the future youth strategy document should cover 2021-2025, targeting young people 15-30 years old. However, due to the current technical mandate of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina government, the youth policy is not an immediate priority on the government's agenda.

On the positive side, it is essential to note that members of the working group for the development of the Strategy for Youth Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2015, have applied the measures from this Strategy when drafting support measures in their corresponding ministries (e.g., support for start-ups for youth, scholarship support for youth). From 2017-2019, three cantonal strategies were adopted: Una Sana Canton developed a Strategy for Youth and accompanied Action Plan, Zenica-Doboj Canton²⁷ is in the phase of implementation of the Action Plan, while in Canton Sarajevo,²⁸ the development of the Action Plan is underway. The other seven cantons have not drafted their youth strategies yet.

2.3.4 Republika Srpska

The strategic framework for youth in the Republika Srpska was adopted in 2016²⁹. Currently, this entity is implementing its third youth policy. The 3rd Youth Policy of the Republika Srpska 2016 – 2020 defines the main goals, tasks, and directions of the youth sector development. It develops specific programs and measures that secure better living conditions and enable creative expression and youth participation in the broader social environment. The

Youth Strategy of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina” 2015, Official Gazette no. 32, available at: <https://istinomjer.ba/app/uploads/2019/06/rjesenje.png> (Accessed October 24, 2020).

21 Institute for Youth Development KULT. Available at: <http://mladi.org/v2/en/> (Accessed October 24, 2020).

22 Based on the findings of the first research on youth: Towards a Youth Policy in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Survey on the Position and Needs of Youth in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2013.

23 Interview with a representative from KULT Institute, conducted on December 29, 2020.

24 Last advocacy campaign on youth brain drain #necudaidem is tackling this issue too.

25 “Predstavnički dom Parlamenta FBosnia and Herzegovina usvojio inicijativu za strategiju za mlade.” N1 info. Available at: http://ba.n1info.com/Vijesti/a352215/Predstavnicki-dom-Parlamenta-FBOSNIA_AND_HERZEGOVINA-usvojio-inicijativu-za-strategiju-za-mlade.html (Accessed October 24, 2020).

26 Please note that this is just an initiative, which does not guarantee the adoption of a Strategy. Until January 2021, the Strategy has still not been adopted.

27 Strategija omladinske politike na području Zeničko-dobojskog kantona za period 2018-2022.godine” 2018; Zeničko-dobojski kanton, Ministarstvo za obrazovanje, nauku, kulturu i sport; available at: <https://www.zdk.ba/ministarstvo-za-obrazovanje-nauku-kulturu-i-sport/item/7166-strategija-omladinske-politike-na-podrucju-zenicko-dobojskog-kantona-za-period-2018-2022-godine> (Accessed October 24, 2020).

28 “Prijedlog strategije prema mladima Kantona Sarajevo za period 2019.-2023. godina” 2019, Skupština Kantona Sarajevo, available at: <http://skupstina.ks.gov.ba/prijedlog-strategije-prema-mladima-kantona-sarajevo-za-period-2019-2023-godina> (Accessed October 24, 2020).

29 While the Youth Policy is adopted by the National Assembly of Republika Srpska the Action Plan for the implementation of the Youth Policy RS is adopted by the Government of Republika Srpska, upon proposal of the Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports of Republika Srpska.

Ministry of Family, Youth, and Sport of the Republika Srpska³⁰ is responsible for the overall implementation of the Strategy and coordination of other corresponding institutions important for the implementation of specific strategic measures. The Youth Policy of the Republika Srpska calls for an inter-sectoral approach for all youth-related issues that should be implemented for youth. A good example of this approach is the scholarship program for youth that has been implemented by the Ministry of Education and promoted by the Ministry of Culture. The major weakness of the strategy development process in the Republika Srpska is the monitoring and evaluating of youth policies.³¹

2.3.5 Brčko District Bosnia and Herzegovina

According to the Youth Law of the Brčko District, youth strategy should be based on youth need analyses and should include defined problems, strategic goals, and implementation measures. Strategy should be developed in the next five years. The Youth Strategy of the Brčko District is in the drafting process. The 2nd meeting of the Working Group was held in February 2020, and the expectation was to have the Strategy ready in May. However, the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19 has slowed down the process and no new developments have been reported as of January 2021. It is important to note that the youth sector development in Brčko District is not lagging behind compared to other entities. On the contrary, it has found itself in a healthier position compared to the rest of the economy. This situation is mainly due to the number of donors that invested in the Brčko District.

2.4 National Action Plan on Youth

A National Action Plan on youth at the Bosnia and Herzegovina level does not exist. Equally, no Action Plan exists on the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina level, while individual cantons, such as Tuzla Canton, have an action plan. In Republika Srpska, the Department for Youth is responsible for all activities relating to the determination and application of the National Action Plan and Youth Policy of Republika Srpska. Hence, the strategic frameworks in the form of strategies remain the most important multi-annual plans for the developments of youth policies on different levels.

2.5 Institutions dealing with Youth

The institutional setup for youth policy and the youth sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina is organized as follows:

- At the central level: The Ministry of Civil Affairs Bosnia and Herzegovina (MoCA) with its Department for Mobility and Youth, within the Education Sector.
- At the entity/district level: (i) The Federal Ministry for Culture and Sport and its Department for Youth, (ii) the Ministry of Family, Youth, and Sport of Republika Srpska, its Department for Youth and (iii) the Department for expert and administrative matters of Brčko District.
- At the level of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina: seven ministries have departments for youth or added jurisdiction for youth policy within the ministry authority. Three cantons (West Herzegovina Canton, Herzegovina-Neretva Canton and Canton 10) still do not have a Youth Department within any ministries.

27 “Department for Youth” n.d., Government of Republika Srpska, available at: <http://www.vladars.net/sr-SP-Cyrl/Vlada/Ministarstva/mpos/Oomladina/Pages/Splash.aspx#collapsible1> (Accessed October 24, 2020).

³¹ However, potential respondents from the relevant institutions who were contacted in the research process did not respond to interview invitations, hence making this a challenge for more concrete data.

The legislation of all subunits of government allows for the existence of Youth Councils and specifies their structure. All Councils for Youth are inter-sectorial bodies of representatives of ministries of the corresponding government level and include a certain number of youth representatives. The participation of youth within different levels of governance is secured through Youth Councils that are established at each level of Government: entity, cantonal, and municipal.

2.5.1 Economy (Central) Level

The Ministry of Civil Affairs Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the Department for Youth and Mobility,³² established two years ago as part of the Sector for Education, has broad authority to secure the implementation of the basic principles of coordination of activities and the exchange of information with national and international institutions responsible for youth and youth mobility. The Ministry also established the Commission for Coordination of Youth Issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

2.5.2 Republika Srpska

The Ministry of Family, Youth, and Sport of Republika Srpska is responsible for creating Youth Policy and the Action Plan. It ensures for all policy aspects related to youth.

The Youth Council of Republika Srpska - the Youth Council of the municipality/city is formed by a minimum of three youth organizations from that area. The Youth Council of the Republic of Srpska consists of organizations and associations of organizations registered in the Register of Youth Organizations of the RS, which is kept by the competent ministry. The Republika Srpska Government established the Council for Youth, which includes representatives of different ministries that jointly work on youth policy from various sectors. Therefore, following the Law on Youth RS, the Council has nine members: (1) Minister of Family, Youth, and Sports; (2) Minister of Education and Culture; (3) Minister of Health and Social Welfare; (4) Minister of Labor and Veteran-Invalids Protection; (5) Minister of Finance; (6) representative of the working body dealing with youth issues in the National Assembly of Republika Srpska; and (7) three representatives of the Youth Council of Republika Srpska.³³

The Parliament of Republika Srpska includes the Committee on Children, Youth, and Sports which also covers youth issues. Another body in Republika Srpska is the Youth Council of Republika Srpska (OSRS), established in 2002.

2.5.3 The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

At the level of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Department of Youth in the Federal Ministry for Culture and Sport is responsible for youth policy and the overall institutional mechanisms for youth-related issues and implementation of youth action programs under the Ministry's jurisdiction. The Youth Council in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is formed at the level of local communities, then at the level of cantons, and only then at the level of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The youth council of each municipality/city is established by uniting more than 50% of youth associations from the list kept by the competent department for youth in the municipality/city. The minimum number

²⁸ The website of the MOCA explains that the Sector for Education is, besides other issues, responsible for participation in European programs and projects in the field of education and youth mobility.

³³ Youth Council of Republika Srpska. Available at: http://www.omladinskisavjet.org/?page_id=95 (Accessed November 23, 2020).

of youth organizations that can establish a council is three. Youth councils of cantons are established by more than 50% of youth councils from municipalities/cities of that canton. The Youth Council of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina establishes more than 50% of cantonal youth councils (with a minimum of 6).

Cantonal Youth Councils are organized at cantonal levels and are established by youth organizations in municipalities in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the cantonal level, the Law on Youth of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina also defines that youth officers should be employed in every municipality and canton. The officer is entitled to direct communication with local/cantonal youth councils, coordination of municipal/cantonal youth strategy, and implementation. Unfortunately, not all municipalities and cantons have yet to employ a youth officer due to a lack of financial resources.

2.5.4 Brčko District

The Brčko District Department for Administrative Affairs is responsible for the implementation of Youth Law and youth policy. The Brčko District Assembly has established the Commission for Youth,³⁴ which includes five members of the Brčko District Assembly.

The Youth Council of Brčko District was formally established at the end of November 2018. The Youth Law of Brčko District envisions the Council, whose primary role is to participate in policy making and create programs and strategies for youth in cooperation with legislative institutions. The Youth Council of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina represents more than 50% of youth associations registered with the competent institution (Department for Professional and Administrative Affairs). Currently, there are 12 youth organizations as Council numbers that are officially listed in the Registry of Youth Organizations of the Department for Professional and Administrative Issues.

2.6 Other sectors impacting youth

There are central level framework documents in other sectors that directly address youth-related issues, such as education, sport, and culture.

The Ministry of Culture and Sports of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is responsible for coordinating working groups, collecting data, and drafting the youth policy. However, the other 15 ministries of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina have to be involved in implementing the measures and objectives of the adopted Strategy. Besides the Ministry of Culture and Sports Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a few other entities are responsible for youth issues as well.

The Commission for Youth Issues discusses drafts and proposals related to youth, provides guidelines and recommendations for developing youth policy in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and facilitates between different public institutions, youth organizations, informal groups, and individuals following its jurisdiction. The Commission also monitors the implementation of certain European documents and conventions in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina on youth.

31 “Commissions” 2019, Assembly of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, available at: <https://skupstinabd.ba/ba/komisije.html> (Accessed November 23, 2020).

Other governmental bodies also influence youth-related matters. As an illustration of this impact, it is worth mentioning that in October 2019, the House of Representatives of the Parliament of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina did not adopt the Strategy for the Employability of Youth in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period of 2018-2021, another critical document relating to youth policy of this entity. As the interviewees explained, the reasons are, again, financial and political. As stated by several of them, the explanation for this lies in the fact that in order to adopt an entity strategy for employment, a central-level strategy must exist, which is not the case. In addition, the process requires EUR 20 million, thus placing this strategy lower on the list of government priorities.

On the other hand, considering a document entitled “Youth Policy of the Republika Srpska 2016-2020,” which calls for a multi-sectoral approach in the implementation of the document with defined actors for each measure, further developed through the projects in the Action Plan implementing the youth policy, the Youth Council of Republika Srpska was established by the Government of Republika Srpska. With the aim of giving opinions on professional issues in the field of youth policy, the members of the council consist of the Minister of Family, Youth and Sports, the Minister of Education and Culture, the Minister of Health and Social Welfare, the Minister of Labor, War Veterans, and Disabled Persons’ Protection, and the Minister of Finance. A representative of the working body on youth issues of the National Assembly of Republika Srpska and three representatives of the Youth Council of Republika Srpska are also members. Hence, most of the programs, projects and activities outlined in the document are implemented by the relevant institutions and their sub-departments. The main coordinator of all the planning, implementation and monitoring is the Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports.

2.7 Critical assessment

The development of the youth sector started 15 years ago with significant international donor support. However, due to a lack of a single institution responsible for national youth policy development, youth policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina is very dispersed in terms of its institutional setup. The process of development of youth policy at all levels of governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina is challenging because of several reasons.

There is limited coordination and inclusion of the relevant stakeholders. Ministries responsible for youth issues in both entities do not provide the mechanisms, such as a Council for Youth or permanent working group for youth, to include other stakeholders to develop and implement the youth strategy documents. Ministries responsible for other sectors, like education, sport, culture, and employment, do not recognize the importance of youth issues within their scope of work, which results in a lack in the addressing of youth problems in education strategies or youth needs in active labor market measures. The improvement of coordination and cooperation between different stakeholders is especially relevant and essential during the COVID-19 pandemic due to a complete absence of any policy regarding youth in and on the job market, continuous education, support for health and mental health of youth, and assurance of their continuous participation. Beside the problems with adopting the strategic framework, monitoring and evaluating the adopted and previously implemented strategies are also an issue.

There are limited resources and capacities of institutions to deal with youth issues. Youth related research studies³⁵ have been conducted only through the support of international donors. Likewise, the development of youth policy documents is usually conducted similarly, being mostly funded through the projects implemented by local organizations and financed by international sources. The youth councils of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republika Srpska and of Brčko District should include competent young people, and adequate funds should be allocated for their functioning. However, these organizations have professional employees, voluntary membership, and all activities rely on volunteers. It is necessary to improve the organizational and professional resources of all councils and to have more coordination and cooperation among them as each of them is now in a different stage of development.

There is limited youth participation and inclusion in the decision-making processes. Only ministries that have been put under pressure through the civil society sector effectively include youth in their work. In most cases, ministries do not invite young people to participate in activities, but other stakeholders, like international donors or local NGOs, insist on having consultations with youth. As a result, in most cases, youth policy is developed without youth participation, even though youth councils sometimes have their representatives in working groups, different meetings, and councils..

There are an inadequate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacities within ministries. The monitoring and evaluation of policies for youth at different levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina are not recognized as necessary, although each youth strategy (on all levels, including cantonal/municipal in Republika Srpska) clearly outlines the monitoring and evaluation procedure. There is a lack of institutional ability to define and plan an efficient monitoring system and evaluate policies. And, while it has been stated that policies have been developed based on previously finalized policies, it is a challenge to find evaluation and monitoring reports of implemented youth policies.

35 "Mladi trebaju omladinsku politiku! Analiza položaja mladih i omladinskog sektora u Bosni i Hercegovini" 2008; Council of ministers Bosnia and Herzegovina, Commission for coordination of YOUTH ISSUES in Bosnia and Herzegovina, GIZ; available at: https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/42128013/47261830/Analiza_mladi_Bosnia_and_Herzegovina_2008.pdf/5aeb233f-2dd1-4b7b-9b25-c70b49f2db05 (Accessed November 23, 2020).

CHAPTER 3: YOUTH FUNDING FRAMEWORK: NATIONAL YOUTH PROGRAMS AND INSTRUMENTS

This chapter analyzes youth policy funding and presents some key interventions and government programs in the youth area, including a critical assessment of the above.

3.1 Youth policy funding

The funding of the youth policy in different parts of the economy is planned at the entity or district levels. Financing at the entity level also takes place through transfers/grants of the ministries in charge of youth questions or youth-related issues. Grants are disbursed through public calls for youth organizations. However, the information about budget allocations for youth issues is difficult to pinpoint to, as budgets on all levels do not include a separate budget line for youth organizations. To illustrate closer, budgets specify allocations for NGOs, for which youth organizations may apply, but nowhere do they indicate that these sums are for youth organizations only.

Hence, the lack of central-level policy is reflected in the budget lines. Since the central-level youth policy is still not developed, there is no specific budget line for youth policy implementation in the public budget. The Ministry of Civil Affairs Bosnia and Herzegovina has allocated funds from the public budget, but it only supports projects strictly related to its jurisdiction. The budget decision available for 2020 foresees an allocation of EUR 5,927,406.78 for the Ministry of Civil Affairs Bosnia and Herzegovina. The only central-level funding related to youth is the one allocated for the Commission for Coordination of Youth Issues of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Budgets for 2021 are still not available.

3.1.1 Federation of Bosnia and Hercegovina

There is no specific budget line in the Federal budget for 2020³⁶ that allocates funds for youth policy. The only budget line for youth is included in the budget line for non-profit organizations with EUR 200,000. The Federal budget also allocates transfers for youth-related funds (e.g., the student loan fund and the student mobility fund).

According to the Work Plan of the Ministry of Culture and Sports of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2019³⁷, the Sector for Youth is responsible for implementing the strategic goal, which creates conditions for improving the position of youth, protecting their interests, and strengthening youth participation in the decision-making process.

The foreseen budget for this purpose is approximately EUR 290,000, and it includes three the following specific goals:

- Strengthening the cooperation and coordination of policies for youth with other ministries and institutions (app. EUR 5,500).
- Strengthening the cooperation and coordination regarding the implementation of youth policy in collaboration with the non-governmental sector (app. EUR 200,000).

36 "Budget of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina", 2020, Government of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, available at: <http://www.FBosnia and Herzegovinavlada.gov.ba/bosanski/budzet/> (Accessed November 23, 2020).

37 "Plan rada za 2019. godinu", 2019, Federal Ministry of Culture and Sports, available at: <https://fmks.gov.ba/o-ministarstvu/plan-i-program> (Accessed November 23, 2020).

- Establishing the condition for work of public servants - salaries and material costs (app. EUR 90,000).

3.1.2 Republika Srpska

The legislation of Republika Srpska³⁸ defines that each level of governance allocates parts of their budgets to follow and implement programs specified in the Youth Policy of RS, following the Youth Policy and on the proposal of related youth bodies. Within the budget of RS for 2020, the Ministry of Family, Youth, and Sports RS will receive grants for the implementation of programs defined by the Youth Policy and projects for the promotion and development of youth organizations in the amount of EUR 155,944.02.

3.1.3 Brčko District

According to the Law on Youth in Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Article 18, point 7), the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Government is obliged to provide financial resources for conducting research and developing a youth policy. Since the Government of Brčko District has just adopted a resolution referring to research on youth, its implementation is yet to be completed.

3.2 Youth project funding

3.2.1 Economy (central) level

According to the Mid-term plan of the Ministry of Civil Affairs 2019-2021,³⁹ the ministry goal in youth-related issues is to improve the policy and implementation of international obligations in the areas of education and youth.

The specific goal is to develop programs and an efficient model of coordination of activities in the field of education and youth in Bosnia And Herzegovina that include:

- the development and implementation of regulations and strategic documents in the area of education and youth at the level of Bosnia And Herzegovina (estimated costs for 2020 are EUR 1,951,089.82).
- taking over and implementing international obligations in the fields of education and youth (estimated costs for 2020 are around EUR 975,500).

The mid-term plan of MoCA is to implement the program on drafting and implementation of the strategic documents in the field of youth education in Bosnia and Herzegovina according to the following timeline:

- The decision on adopting a strategic document in the area of youth matters in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2020.
- The decision on adopting a strategic document in the area of education and training in Bosnia and Herzegovina (all levels), 2021.

However, no information is available on the actual status of these processes, even regarding the adoption of the strategic documents specified above.

³⁸ According to the Law on Youth Organizing in Republika Srpska (Article 54) "In order to realize the general interest, the Republic, the city and the municipalities allocate part of the funds from the budget for funding the program, in accordance with the Youth Policy and on the proposal of corresponding youth bodies (commissions, committees)."

³⁹ "Decision on adoption of the Medium-Term Work Plan of the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2019-2021", 2019, Ministry of Civil Affairs Bosnia and Herzegovina, available at: http://www.mcp.gov.ba/attachments/bs_Migrirani_dokumenti/Va%C5%BEni_dokumenti/Va%C5%BEno-Srednjoro%C4%8Dni_plan/Srednjoro%C4%8Dni_2019-21.pdf (Accessed January 10, 2021).

3.2.2 Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Ministry of Culture and Sports has annual programs for the allocation of funds through transfers that are adopted based on the Government of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, following the Law on implementation of the budget of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina⁴⁰. The decision for 2019⁴¹ was adopted in April 2019, and it includes six transfers, one of which is the Transfer for Youth. In 2020, under the Transfer for Youth, four programs are foreseen with a total budget of approximately EUR 200,000.⁴²

Table 5: Transfer for youth four programs - 2020

Transfer for the reconstruction of culture and cultural heritage	EUR 756,711.98 (app. 1,480,000 KM)
Transfer for culture from the significance for the federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	EUR 726,034.47 (1,420,000.00 KM)
Transfer for science and culture institutions significant for Bosnia and Herzegovina	EUR 332,339 (app. 650,000 KM)
Sport transfer	EUR 726,034.47 (1,420,000.00 KM)

Research, development, and promotion of youth policy in the Federation of Bosnia and Hercegovina

The overall objective is to harmonize federal policies with youth, strengthen youth stakeholders' organizational capacities, and encourage their promotion. Grantees can be institutions and organizations, and funds are allocated through public calls. The indicative budget is EUR 150,500.

Support to Council of Youth in Federation of Bosnia and Hercegovina

This program's overall objective is to strengthen the capacities of the Council and set conditions for its functioning. The grantee is the Council for the youth of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the indicative budget is EUR 15,338.

Intervention funds for programs of associations of youth organizations

The overall objective of this program is to support youth programs and projects. Beneficiaries are institutions, organizations, and associations, as well as others. The indicative budget is EUR 30,677.

40 Official Gazette of Federation of BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, no. 141/19

41 Decision no. 324/2019 available at http://fmks.gov.ba/stara/images/download/2019/Odluka_o_programu_uto%C5%A1ka_FMKS_2019.pdf (Accessed January 10, 2021).

42 Official Gazette of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, available at: https://fmks.gov.ba/files/Odluka_o_programu_utroka_FMKS-2020.pdf (Accessed December 25, 2020).

3.2.2.1. Cantonal Level Budgeting

Budgetary allocations for youth-related issues also exist on cantonal levels in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Sarajevo Canton, Zenica-Doboj Canton, Una-Sana Cantons, Bosansko-podrinjski Canton and Posavina Canton specify grants for youth organizations in their budgets. Herzegovina-Neretva Canton and Canton 10 do not specify budget funds for youth organizations. On the other hand, all Cantons which specify youth grants in their budgets publish public calls for applications, except the Posavina Canton.

The only available information regarding a more specific allocation of funds for youth-related projects for 2020 is from the Sarajevo Canton, which has allocated funds for 59 youth organizations in the amount of EUR 97,145 (190.000 KM). The funds were allocated to projects in the following areas: education, healthcare, culture and sports, social security, safety, activism, work and employment/self-employment.

Lastly, looking at Table 6, it is important to note that cantons also allocate scholarships for talented students. Una-Sana Canton, however, does not grant scholarships, while only two cantons – Sarajevo Canton and Zenica-Doboj Canton, specified budgets for scholarships in 2019 and 2020 budgets.

Table 6: Transfers for Youth – Sarajevo Canton, Una-Sana Canton, Zenica-Doboj Canton

Canton	Transfer Name	Amount
Sarajevo Canton	Implementation of Youth Strategy	EUR 25,564.59 (app. 50,000 KM)
	Ministry of education, science, and youth of Sarajevo Canton	EUR 7,137,736.92 (13,960,200.00 KM)
Una Sana Canton	Youth Grants	EUR 50,000 (97,791.50 KM)
	Grant for NGOs	EUR 143,161 (279,998.58 KM)
	Grant for NGOs – support for participation in projects	EUR 7,669,38 (1,500,000 KM)
	Student Union Grant	EUR 3,000 (5,867.49 KM)
Zenica Doboj Canton	Transfer for talented youth	EUR 7,669 (app. 15,000 KM)
	Facilitating Youth Employment	EUR 53,685 (104,998.73 KM)
	Transfer for Youth Project Activities	EUR 25,564 (app. 49,999 KM)

3.2.3 Republika Srpska

Since 2006, the Ministry of Family, Youth, and Sports is using the Youth Policy of the RS for financing the youth organizations and programs for young people through regular annual public calls and providing support, funding, and co-funding for youth organizations projects.

All funding opportunities are published in daily newspapers and on the official website, but no specific figures, number of calls, or list of projects are publicly available. These funds are usually supporting:

- projects for the construction of facilities for children and youth.
- subventions to youth housing.
- public institutions dealing with youth grants.
- Youth Policy programs.
- programs for rural youth.
- Youth mobility programs.

3.2.4 Brčko District

Although the Brčko District still does not have an implemented Youth Strategy, its annual allocations demonstrate investment into the work of youth NGOs and the Brčko District Council of Youth.

Table 7: Budget of Brčko District 2020

Transfer Name	Amount
Annual Grant Program for NGOs and Civil Society Associations ⁴³	EUR 43, 971 (86,000 KM)
Council of Youth – work improvement	EUR 10,225.84 (20,000.00 KM)
Council of Youth - organization of the 2 nd meeting of Youth of Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region	EUR 15,338.76 (30,000 KM)

The following table demonstrates the amounts allocated for funding of youth-related issues at all levels of governance for the year 2020.

Table 8: Funding for Youth Issues – all levels of governance

Governance level	Institution	Beneficiary and purpose	Amount
Central-level⁴⁴	Ministry of Civil Affairs	Commission for Coordination of Youth Issues of Bosnia and Herzegovina	EUR 28,121 (2020) (55,000 KM)
Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina⁴⁵	Ministry of Culture and Sports FEDERATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	Transfer for youth	EUR 200,000 (2020) (391,166 KM)
	Non-governmental organizations	Transfer for youth Transfer for Student and Teacher Mobility Fund Transfer for Student Loan Fund	EUR 200,000 (2020) (391,166 KM) EUR 102,258.38 (2020) (200,000 KM)

⁴³Funding is ensured for projects dealing with general youth issues, overcoming prejudice, and dealing with peer violence.

⁴⁴“Izvršenje” 2020, Ministry of Finance and Treasury, available at: https://www.mft.gov.ba/bos/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=145&Itemid=95 (Accessed November 23, 2020).

⁴⁵ “Budget of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina”, 2020, The Government of Bosnia And Herzegovina, available at: <http://www.FBosnia and Herzegovinavlada.gov.ba/bosanski/budzet/index.php> (Accessed November 23, 2020).

			EUR 112,484.21 (2020) (220,000 KM)
Republika Srpska ⁴⁶	President of Republika Srpska Office	Support project for building facilities for children and youth	1,080,359.74 EUR (2020) (2,113,000 KM)
	Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports RS	Interest rate support for housing loans for youth and young couples.	EUR 920,325.39 (2020) (1,800,000 KM)
		Grant to public institutions and educational institutions for youth projects	EUR 10,225.84 (2020) (20,000.00 KM)
		Grants for the implementation of programs defined by the Youth Policy and projects for the promotion and development of youth organizations	EUR 155,944.02 (2020) (305,000 KM)
		Grants for youth and youth organizations in rural environments	EUR 25,564.59 (2020) (50,000 KM)
		Grants for projects supporting international cooperation and youth mobility	EUR 46,016.27 (2020) (90,000 KM)
Brčko District BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA ⁴⁷		Youth Council – support for work activities	EUR 10,225.84 (2020) (20,000 KM)
		Youth Council - 2 nd meeting of Youth of Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region	EUR 15,338.76 (2020) (30,000 KM)
		Project "Network of Youth Clubs" – grant to 25 local communities	EUR 37,068 (2020) (app. 73,000 KM)

As evidenced from the above table, but also previous entity/district level tables with budget information, budget allocations differ from level to level, but also tend to overlap if observed comparatively. In addition, titles of budget allocations are often very generic and frequently do not include only youth organizations/projects as primary beneficiaries or objectives.

3.3 Key youth programs and instruments

Key youth programs on all levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina focus on supporting key areas of employment, with a specific focus on young entrepreneurs, targeting unemployment through additional education opportunities in forms of internships, career guidance and counseling, as well as support to businesses of marginalized groups, especially young women. Most of the key youth programs are funded through donor support (see Chapter 5) and seem to be equally dispersed with far reaching activities across the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Youth programs represent good practice examples, as they tend to have a far-reaching outcome which does not primarily target specific ethnic groups among youth, but have objectives which are successful in fostering strong partnerships with local authorities. Above all, they tend to synchronize program interventions with key instruments specified in the

⁴⁶ "Budget of Republika Srpska for 2020", 2020, The National Assembly of Republika Srpska, available at: <https://www.narodnaskupstinars.net/?q=la/akti/bud%C5%BEet/bud%C5%BEet-republike-srpske-za-2020-godinu> (Accessed November 23, 2020).

⁴⁷"Budget" n.d, Government of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, available at: <http://www.vlada.bdcentral.net/Content/Read/dokumenti-budzet> (Accessed November 23, 2020).

existing youth strategies on all levels (from entity to city/municipality). Such an approach contributes to the principle of “ecosystem building,” or working together at different levels to effect success in youth-related issues. Lastly, the existing and finalized youth programs tend to foster youth participation in decision-making and youth activism, often times including relevant ministries on all levels.

Some of the most successful finalized key programs include:

*The program for facilitating the development of entrepreneurship among the youth of age up to 35 – START-UP SRPSKA*⁴⁸

The overall objective of the program is to decrease youth unemployment. The program is implemented in Republika Srpska by the Agency for the employment of RS. The Agency supports developing a business plan for young people who would like to start an enterprise. The indicative budget for this program is EUR 1,800,000. The program is funded by both the Agency for the employment of RS and the Government of Serbia.

The support program for youth with higher education for taking an internship in 2019

The program's overall objective is the capacity building of unemployed youth by taking an internship exam and independent work in the profession of choice. The indicative budget of the program is EUR 750,000 and it is funded by the Agency for the employment of the Republika Srpska.

*The program of career guidance and counseling*⁴⁹

The overall objective of the program is to empower secondary-school students for career development through capacity-building activities. The program is implemented by the Employment Agency of Brčko in cooperation with the Brčko District Government and the Youth Centre "Vermont." An indicative budget is not available.

Currently, there are several active key youth programs which, just like the previous ones, mostly target areas of youth employment, education and leadership skills development, but also institutional programs which focus on strengthening the work of existing youth councils (institutional capacity building) and fostering the role of local communities in working with youth. A smaller number of programs also target traditionally unrepresented policy areas, such as minority youth, reconciliation, and human rights in the economic sector. Through analyzing project activities and gathering data from the interviews, it appears that active key youth programs still continue to function according to “ecosystem building” principle and, in the opinion of all interviewed stakeholders, represent the main driving force for advancing and strengthening youth-related issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

48 “PUBLIC INVITATION TO UNEMPLOYED PERSONS TO USE FUNDS UNDER THE PROGRAM FOR PROMOTION OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE UNDER 35 STARTAP (START-UP) IN 2019” 2019, Ministry of Labor, War Veterans and Disabled Persons' Protection and the Employment Bureau of Republika Srpska, available at: http://www.zzzrs.net/images/uploads/javni_pozivi/Javni_poziv_Start-up.pdf (Accessed November 23, 2020).

49 “Program karijernog usmjeravanja i savjetovanja za brčanske učenike” 2019, Employment Bureau of BD, available at: <https://www.zzzBrcko.org/index.php/saopštenja2016/2410-program-karijernog-usmjeravanja-i-savjetovanja-za-brcanske-ucenike> (Accessed November 23, 2020).

3.4 Critical assessment

Despite the progress, when it comes to the youth sector, the budgeting system's main issue lies in the lack of sufficient budget allocations for youth policy development, while other challenges continue to persist.

The financial overlapping is frequent. Two entity ministries dealing with youth issues only communicate if and when they are invited to standard processes by the central-level ministry. Unlike institutions responsible for the youth sector, youth organizations and young people collaborate and use a variety of opportunities for cooperation. Therefore, due to the lack of coordination, the Ministry of Civil Affairs Bosnia and Herzegovina financially supports only issues related strictly to its jurisdiction, while the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry for Culture and Sport and Ministry of Family, Youth and Sport of Republika Srpska rarely funds joint activities. This overlapping is not financially efficient.

Budget planning is not harmonized with youth policy documents. Youth policy documents are developed in the timeframe of 4 to 5 years, while budget planning is happening every year. As a result, budgets for youth policies are not planned for the entire policy implementation period but only cover a specific period.

Grants allocated to youth organizations are not based on a needs analysis. Available funds disbursed through grants are usually small (from several hundreds of Euros, to a maximum of EUR 5,000 per project). This has hindered the sustainability and impact of the implemented projects.

Budget allocations for youth are mostly not specified as “youth grants” nor are there budget lines which specifically state that grants are meant for youth organizations.

No updated financial reports are available. Financial reports available to the public are either outdated or not available. This makes the analysis of spending impossible. Furthermore, no insight into lists of recipients of youth grants is available, impeding financial analysis of youth-related projects and programs. Priority areas need to be expanded. Although key youth programs have very good outcomes, policy areas still focus mostly on youth employment, education/development of leadership skills and institutional capacity building. Hence, it would be good to further the programs not to overlap with the existing, but to focus on issues such as human rights, youth participation, culture and sports and youth health.

CHAPTER 4: YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN POLICY AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

This chapter analyzes the existing mechanisms of youth participation, both at the central and local levels, and presents the primary national youth organizations and networks.

4.1 Youth engagement and participation in policy: Key mechanisms and processes

By the Constitution, young people are given access to basic human rights and freedoms, but they only gain access to certain rights when they reach the age of 18. All three laws on youth (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina), in addition to emphasizing the importance of respecting human and civil rights to persons, define additional rights for the youth. Young people have the right to support and promote their development without discrimination on any grounds. Representatives of the umbrella youth associations / organizations at all levels (local, cantonal, entity) have the right to be consulted on all issues concerning young people, and in addition to mandatory involvement in the work of the Youth Commission at all levels (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska), representatives of youth structures will be included in the work of other professional-advisory and working bodies of interest to the life of young people. Representatives of youth structures in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina have the additional right to be involved in planning and development of the Strategy for Youth at all levels of government (which is the responsibility of the government in this entity).

The ways in which young people can organize themselves are different:

- a. **Through informal youth groups** - the most informal form of association that seeks to fulfill common ideas, goals and activities. Informal groups are not legal entities (e.g., they do not have their own statute). They can be included in the list of youth associations in local communities in order to record their existence, but they do not exercise the rights that youth organizations have.
- b. **Through youth associations / organizations** – i.e., associations that have two thirds of young people in their governing bodies.
- c. **Through youth councils, i.e., youth councils** - the youth council (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina) is an umbrella youth association based on the voluntary membership of youth associations, and which represents the interests of youth and youth associations. The Youth Council (RS) is an umbrella youth organization established to contribute to the improvement of the position of young people and the achievement of goals in all areas of youth policy.
- d. Young people can also be organized **through other associations (sports, cultural, environmental, among others)** formed according to the Laws on Associations and Foundations, and whose work is not covered by the current Laws on Youth (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Brčko District), or the Law on Youth Organization of Republika Srpska. These associations can deal with young people, but they are not primarily established as youth associations/organizations.

Youth participation in drafting youth policy is obligatory by all three youth laws in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The legal framework requires that youth participation is ensured through youth organizations and their active participation in youth councils, working groups, and

assembly commissions. Table 9 illustrates and legally describes the mechanisms for such participation:

Table 9: Legally prescribed mechanisms for institutional participation of youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina (all levels)

Name of the body	Level at which it is formed	Obligation of youth representatives participation
Youth Commission	municipality/city	YES (min. 1)
Youth Commission	Canton	YES (min. 1)
Youth Commission	entity (parliament)	YES (min. 1)
Youth Council	entity (government)	YES (50%)
Youth Commission	municipality/city	YES (1/3 membership)
Youth Commission	entity (assembly)	YES
Youth Council	entity (government)	YES (3 members)
Youth Commission	entity (government)	NO

Based on the legal framework, youth associations are organizations where 2/3 of organization members belong to the age group of 15 to 30 and whose activities and statutory work is mostly aimed at youth. The Commission for Coordination of Youth Issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina includes members from all three Youth Councils on all levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and this is how youth participation is ensured at the central level.

4.1.1 Economy (central) level

There is no central-level policy that defines youth participation in national policymaking.

4.1.2 Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Youth Law of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina defines the establishment and functioning of a youth council. It therefore secures the possibility for youth to participate in the decision-making process. The Youth Law (Article 11) prescribes that youth councils at municipal, cantonal, and entity-level have to be included in developing the youth strategy. The same article declares that all levels of governance in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina must define, adopt, and implement a youth strategy. In addition to this, Article 18 foresees the establishment of a Council for Youth whose members are both youth councils from across this entity and ministry representatives concerned with youth issues. In 2020, this Article is still not active. Despite the above, the Youth Council of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina⁵⁰ was established in 2015 following the 2010 Youth Law. Since its establishment, this body has developed its reputation in the youth participation policy and decision making through its representatives in the relevant decision-making bodies and is

⁵⁰ Note: The Youth Council of the Federation of FEDERATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA is an umbrella organisation in FEDERATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA. It is not the same organization as the Council for Youth of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina envisioned by Article 18.

considered, in the words of almost all interviews, as the most active of all youth councils (compared to those from the Republika Srpska or Brčko District). Currently, 50 local councils are members of this Youth Council. The primary areas of their engagement, aside from youth participation, include youth education about their rights and raising awareness about the importance of local communities in the work of youth councils. In 2020, together with youth councils from the Republika Srpska and Brčko District, the Youth Council of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina launched an initiative entitled “Fakat je Vakrat za Mlade” (It is Time for Youth) which envisions the cooperation of all three roof institutions which work with youth across the economy. The Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina established a Commission for Youth Issues, but currently, this body does not have representatives from the Youth Council. All mentioned bodies defined by Youth Law Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina should cooperate in developing and implementing a youth strategy. At the same time, the Ministry of Culture and Sports of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is responsible for the coordination and drafting of the Strategy. The Strategy has been in its draft form since 2015.

4.1.3 Republika Srpska

According to the Law on Youth Organizing in Republika Srpska (Article 11), it is in the RS's general interest to care for its youth, including a particular focus on youth participation in the decision-making processes. This is ensured by implementing a *Youth Policy of Republika Srpska*, a document that is revised every five years. The implementation of the Youth Policy is ensured by the Government and proposed by the Ministry of Family, Youth, and Sports. When it comes to the councils, the Youth Council of RS was established in 2004. The primary role of the Youth Council is defined as an advisory one – providing expert opinion on youth-related issues. As such, they include representatives from the Youth Council and members from different ministries whose work covers youth issues. Currently, this Youth Council includes 55 local youth organizations and they are mostly active in the field of youth participation, but also sports and culture. Although, they are not very active in far-reaching activities which would encompass youth councils across Bosnia and Herzegovina, this Youth Council remains active in the areas of youth in the spheres such as culture, sports and student exchange. They remain locally vocal about issues such as rising youth unemployment, quality of education and youth housing mainly through organization of various workshops and communication with the government through media.

4.1.4 Brčko District

In accordance with the Youth Law of Brčko District, the Brčko District Government, in cooperation with the Youth Council of Brčko District, must develop a Brčko District's youth strategy. Brčko District has just started with the implementation of the Youth Law BC (adopted in 2017), while the Youth Council of Brčko District has been in existence since November 2020. Currently, this youth council numbers 12 member organizations. They are mostly engaged in spheres such as youth participation, cooperating with government on youth issues, promotion of work with youth, improving youth status and strategy drafting and proposal. In February 2020, it was announced that the Strategy should be drafted by May 2020, but this has not yet occurred due to the pandemic.

4.2 Evidence-based youth policy

Evidence-based youth policy making is challenging due to several reasons starting from the lack of statistics. Bosnia and Herzegovina lacks comprehensive research on youth. Lower levels of governance conduct their research on youth. Many of them are using consultancy support of NGOs. Official government bodies dealing with youth issues lack the resources to implement broader research on youth. There are however instances of research commissioned and funded by international donors. For instance, in 2019, Fredrich Erbert Stiftung researched youth opinion on specific politically related issues in Bosnia and Hercegovina.

A year earlier, the Ministry of Civil Affairs Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Institute for Youth Development KULT signed a Memorandum of Understanding on implementing a new national research study on the youth population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This process is ongoing. Alternatively, research completed by the government institutions also occurred to draft youth policies. In Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the first comprehensive research on youth was conducted in 2013 as a baseline for drafting the youth policy in 2015.

In Republika Srpska, interviewees explained that comprehensive research had been done before outlining the Youth Policy of Republika Srpska for the period 2016-2020. Still, the adopted Youth Policy does not reflect the results of this research. Instead, the document is based on different international and desk research data.

There is no data on research on youth in the Brčko District.

4.3 The establishment and functioning of Youth Councils and umbrella organizations

The existing youth councils at the entity and district level mentioned above, still struggle with the individual implementation of the youth law, operational budgets, and the development of internal structures. Since all three were established in different periods, each has its development and organizational challenges. Thus, they still have not found a way of adequately cooperating in developing a national youth council. None of them is a member of the European Youth Forum.

Although an NGO, a true umbrella organization which unites all youth organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina is The Youth Network in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The network started its work in 1997 following an initiative and co-ordination of the Helsinki Citizen's Assembly (HCA) Organizations from Banja Luka and Tuzla. The lack of contacts and co-operations between the youth organizations in the economy was a motivation for the initiative. In the period following the war, the main focus of work was on citizen's initiatives, refugee organisations and female groups, but youth issues were not in focus. The basic idea behind the network was to connect youth's initiatives (independent organizations, informal groups and individuals) from the whole territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to work on their strengthening, support in implementation of their projects, activities and ideas, with a special focus on small communities and rural youth. Today, the Youth Network gathers 186 organizations and 115 individuals from 75 cities across Bosnia and Herzegovina. Currently, the network sends a monthly newsletter, apart from publishing on its web page, mailing lists and social networks. The Bulletin is published in Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian and English language and it provides information about the activities of the Youth Resource Center in Tuzla and the Youth Network of Bosnia and Herzegovina, information about monthly

activities of the youth organizations and groups – members of this network, their plans for the following period, and other useful information (donors, calls for conferences and seminars, scholarships, etc.).

4.4 Platforms of youth cooperation at national level

There is no youth council at the central level in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The only central-level body for youth, the Commission for the Coordination of Youth Bosnia and Herzegovina, has not been functional in the last two mandates due to political reasons. As a result, every international representation of young people from Bosnia and Herzegovina becomes a matter of political discussion of ministries and youth councils. Sometimes, discussions end with a request to have at least three representatives from Bosnia and Herzegovina in certain international events and international bodies.

4.5 Regional platforms and networks

The most important regional platform operating in the economy is considered to be the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO),⁵¹ the Young European Ambassadors (YEA),⁵² and the Western Balkans Youth Cooperation Platform (WBYCP).⁵³ Youth organizations from Republika Srpska closely cooperate with National Youth Council of Serbia (KOMS), but associations/organizations from Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Brčko District also cooperate in different initiatives with youth organizations from Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro. Interviewees spoke about these initiatives globally but confirmed that they do not have accurate data on these projects. The most well know program includes an exchange of youth from Republika Srpska to Russia, the so called “Youth Camp” whereby 15 youth representatives from this entity attend a youth-oriented training in Russia each summer.

⁵¹ Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO), available at: <https://www.rycowb.org/>, (Accessed, October 18, 2020)

⁵² The Young European Ambassadors, available at <https://www.webalkans.eu/>, (Accessed October 18, 2020).

⁵³ Western Balkans Youth Cooperation Platform, available at <http://connecting-youth.org/about.php>, (Accessed October 18, 2020).

CHAPTER 5: MAPPING OF DONOR INTERVENTIONS IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH

This chapter presents programs and interventions of key donors in youth-related issues. It also outlines how donor coordination works in Bosnia and Herzegovina and what are the priority areas for the future in the field of youth.

5.1 Key donors in the field of youth

The international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, through its programs, supports the youth sector. The activities relating to the youth sector broadly encompass the activities in the fields of education, employment, and social policies sector. Donors usually follow their development strategies for Bosnia and Herzegovina or EU priorities for youth. Some economies, such as Germany, Italy, Austria, France, Sweden and, Switzerland, through their respective embassies and development agencies, invest in youth policy development at the central and local levels in many cases. This is done through the cooperation with institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. During the past years, the international community has implemented many programs on capacity building for institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Several of them were done in a specific youth policy field.

Bosnia and Herzegovina benefits from the Instrument of Pre-accession Assistance 2014-2020 (IPA II). None of EU IPA programs in Bosnia and Herzegovina target youth, but programs related to youth issues are planned under the Community Programs, where Bosnia and Herzegovina partly participate (such as education programs, since Bosnia and Herzegovina is not a full beneficiary of Erasmus youth programs).

Foreign embassies and international organizations have been very active in the implementation of youth projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The most active donors which provide both grants and loans, include the World Bank, United States Agency for International Development - USAID, European Union – EU, United Nations – UN, while economies that invest the most in the youth sector include Switzerland, Japan, Germany, The Netherlands and the United States.⁵⁴

The Swiss Embassy

Youth Employment Project - YEP, 2013 - 2020

The Swiss Embassy Youth Employment Project is dedicated to improving the work of the Public Employment Services (PES) by introducing new work methods, which enable them to provide better services to young people, match them with prospective employers, and encourage self-employment. Additionally, the project contributes to raising general public awareness of youth employment issues. It has been implemented in both entities and BD in all ten cantons and 48 municipalities. The project is worth EUR 4.35 million.

⁵⁴ “Development Partners Mapping Report” 2018, Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of Finance and Treasury, available at: <http://www.donormapping.ba/pdf/DMR%202018%20ENG.pdf> (Accessed on October 17, 2020).

USAID

Project reGeneration, 2017 - 2019 (finalized)

The USAID project reGeneration was launched in May 2017, and it was designed to make youth the principal agents of social and political change in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Project activities allow both youth and adults to reflect on the past, be exposed to alternative narratives, and speak with a more unified voice as advocates for positive change. USAID's implementing partner for this two-year USD \$1.2 million project was the International Republican Institute (IRI), with core local partner *Magacin Kabare*. This project's two main objectives were to foster cross-community discussions on ethnoreligious divides and empower youth activists to organize and conduct community-focused advocacy campaigns.

US Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Democracy Commission Small Grants Program, April/May 2019 – April/May 2020

This program supports NGO efforts to promote grassroots democracy, viable civil society in Bosnia and Herzegovina, respect for human rights, and promotion of Euro-Atlantic integration through media outreach and public advocacy campaigns. Grant-funded civil society organizations will focus on youth empowerment with a particular focus on youth employment (non-formal education about the market economy, entrepreneurship, job searching techniques, networking, etc.) and youth activism (effective engagement in public advocacy actions to protect nature, counter corruption, development of youth leadership, communication and negotiation skills), promotion of Euro-Atlantic integration and human rights including projects focused on LGBT issues, gender equality, and support for people with disabilities and minorities. The indicative budget of this program is EUR 629,951.00.

Interethnic Reconciliation and Youth Camps Program to be implemented, April/May 2019 – April/May 2020 focusing on youth and children age 11-25

This program supports initiatives with the primary goal of promoting interethnic and intercommunity exchange, collaboration, and joint projects. It seeks projects and initiatives that clearly develop increased tolerance and cooperation between the ethnically and geographically diverse communities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The indicative budget for the program is EUR 296,679.00. This program is only supporting the organization of camps with children and youth.

Interethnic Reconciliation and Youth Small Grants Program, April/May 2019 – April/May 2020, focuses on youth and children aged 11-25

This program supports initiatives with the primary goal of promoting interethnic and intercommunity exchange, collaboration, and joint projects. It seeks projects and initiatives that clearly develop increased tolerance and cooperation between the ethnically and geographically diverse communities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It does not precisely target youth organizations, but organizations which engage in work with children and youth. The indicative budget is EUR 224,982.00.

UNDP

ReLOaD project (planned end was in February 2020, but the status is still indicated as "active" on UNDP's website)

The project's overall objective is to strengthen participatory democracies and the EU integration process in the Western Balkans by empowering civil society to actively

participate in decision-making and by stimulating an enabling legal and financial environment for civil society. The Western Balkans program targets all economies and its local authorities, aiming to reach 200 CSO projects from which some 38,000 citizens will benefit. The indicative budget is EUR 10,030,000.00 (out of which EUR 8,500,000.00 funded by the EU and EUR 1,530,000.00 from UNDP offices in the economy and local governments).

EBRD

Youth training program in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in implementation since 2019

The project's overall objective is to help young Bosnia and Herzegovina women and men gain access to work experience and the skills the local labor market needs. The Taiwan Business supports the EBRD Technical Cooperation Fund project, the EBRD's Private Sector Youth Initiative (PSYI), which provides work-based learning, mentoring, and networking opportunities by linking academic institutions with private businesses to offer internship opportunities to students in line with recognized international standards.

European Union (and government institutions from Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Strengthening structures for empowerment and participation of youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2018-2020

The Initiative of Strengthening Youth Structures in Bosnia and Herzegovina, among other things, strengthens youth umbrella organizations to independently exert a direct influence on improving the position of youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Institute for Youth Development KULT and the Youth Communication Centre from Banja Luka (OKC) cooperates with ministries at the entity level that are competent for youth issues, and other organizations. The cooperation is reflected in a joint effort toward creating strategic documents for youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in compliance with the Youth Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Law on Youth Organizing in Republika Srpska. The Institute and OKC will support and strengthen government institutions' capacities to ensure that the documents developed will be tailored to youth needs and aimed at addressing their problems. This project is implemented by the Youth Communication Centre Banja Luka (OKC) and the Institute for Youth Development KULT, with the European Union, Federal Ministry of Culture and Sports, and the Ministry of Family, Youth, and Sports of Republika Srpska.

Implementation of the IPA project "EU Support for the Coordination and Implementation of Youth Policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina" (EUNYP project)

The Commission for the Coordination of Youth Issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina implemented the project financed by the EU and implemented by a consortium led by EEO Group SA in cooperation with EPRD Ltd., Particip Gmbh and OKC. The project implementation began on 9 January 2012 and lasted until the end of August 2013. The general objective of this project was to improve the position of youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Specific objectives were the creation of adequate conditions for a better and more effective dialogue and more functional coordination of all stakeholders responsible for youth issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project included the organization of numerous seminars, trainings, open info day and so on. Currently, the website of the project is inactive.

German Federal Foreign Office and the Franco-German Youth Office (ended July 21, 2020)
Re-boot Europe

Re-boot Europe is an online conference and a platform for young Europeans. It aims at bringing together 100 young European citizens who will have the opportunity to discuss urgent European topics, including reconciliation and dealing with the past, migrations, climate change, the future of the EU, and so on. The project brings together youth from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, France, Germany, Kosovo*, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands - Initiative Dialogue for Joint Future

The project aims to develop a platform in Bosnia and Herzegovina that allows children and youth to learn and cooperate, as well as to protect and access basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. This initiative includes 26 young people who strive to become leaders in peace and human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina. By working directly with young people, children and their parents/guardians, the KULT Institute, which implements the projects, will raise awareness about the youth's role in the society, leading them to take action in their local communities, support the work of youth organizations, and network with young people in other local communities across Bosnia and Herzegovina. The initiative is designed to empower and support youth leaders and the civil society in engaging in constructive dialogue and cooperation with local governments, which will strengthen the transparency and accountability of local governments in protecting, respecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms. The budget of the project is 115.643 euros.

Olaf Palme International Centre - Learn, Think and Act

A project on youth workers implemented by KULT Institute, advocating for the recognition of *Learn, Think, and Act* – UMiD as a form of non-formal education that provides youth with an opportunity to acquire different competencies which would increase their labor market value. The UMiD training lasts for 1 year in the course of which youth leaders participate in the realization of civic initiatives in their local communities. As part of the initiative, the attendants are mostly focused on one of four areas, which include: active engagement of youth in social processes, commemorating significant dates, strengthening ecological conscience in youth, active engagement of youth with disabilities and non-formal youth education. The initiatives were organized with the support of other youth, youth organizations, local administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the past UMiD training attendees. This is an ongoing initiative which has been in existence for the past 15 years. UMiD has been funded through the years by different donors, both international and local. The Embassy of Sweden supported the project for three years. So far, over 400 youth from Bosnia and Herzegovina have benefited from this project.

Governments of the Western Balkans - Regional Youth Cooperation Office – RYCO

The Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) is an independently functioning institutional mechanism, founded by the Western Balkans 6 participants (WB 6): Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia. It aims at promoting the spirit of reconciliation and cooperation between youth in the region through youth exchange programs. The Agreement on the Establishment of RYCO was signed by the WB 6 Prime Ministers at the WB Summit held in Paris, on 4 July 2016. Three most recent RYCO's projects include the following: Supporting the Western Balkan's Collective

Leadership on Reconciliation: Building Capacity and Momentum for RYCO, Enhancing Youth Cooperation and Youth Exchange in the WB6 and ROUTE WB6 (see donor matrix for more information on each).

Japan

The Government of Japan supported the youth sector through infrastructural projects, namely those related to school reconstruction and IT curriculum modernization in schools. However, all such projects ended in 2013 and 2014, respectively. There were no active projects in the youth sector in the last five years.

5.2 Donor coordination

The Donor Coordination Forum was established in December 2005. The Forum was initiated by 17 main donor agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to serve as a platform for exchanging information among these organizations. However, in order to ensure the oversight of donor activities and reinforce government oversight of its development funds, the Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MoFT) and UNRC/UNDP transferred all DCF Secretariat responsibilities to the Sector for Coordination of International Economic Aid (SCIA).

Starting in January 2009, the SCIA has organized the Forum's quarterly meetings, has carried out the Donor Mapping Exercise, and has provided technical support to the Forum's members. Hence, the Bosnia and Herzegovina MoFT systemizes all the information on official development assistance flows to Bosnia and Herzegovina and uses this information for resource planning and development.

The DCF meetings are complemented by expert presentations coming from Bosnia and Herzegovina governments and international organizations. Currently, the forum has 20 members. It meets on a quarterly basis with a chair rotating among its members. All donor agencies work in line with the commitments deriving from the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, donor coordination relating to the youth sector activities occurs under the auspices of the Education, Employment, and Social Policy area of donor activities. Donor activities relating to education are well-coordinated and implemented through meetings of the Conference of Ministers of Education on the central level.

In addition, the Ministry of Civil Affairs (MoCA) organizes the Coordination Forum Meetings of the MoCA Bosnia and Herzegovina and international organizations participating in the economy's education reform. In addition to education, "labor market and employment," donor coordination occurs under the EU delegation's auspices, which holds frequent meetings with donor EU member states. However, when it comes to vocational training, social inclusion, social dialogue, and social protection, donor coordination is deemed informal ad-hoc coordination and/or project-based. Meetings are often bilateral or multilateral.

5.3 Priority areas for the future in the field of youth

Youth sector development cannot be achieved without comprehensive reforms in education, employment, and social policies relating directly to youth. Considering the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth, especially when it comes to education, training, access to healthcare, but also the lack of coordination mechanisms between relevant actors on all levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the donor community, as well as the weak legislative framework relating to youth, further efforts are needed in the following areas:

1. Adopt the Youth Strategy in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Brčko District and allow for their implementation.
2. Continue activities relating to youth employment, especially in small and rural communities.
3. Continue activities relating to the inclusion of minority youths and youths with disadvantaged backgrounds.
4. Develop a strategy for vocational education and training adapted to the needs of the labor market to increase youth employment, especially age groups 24-30.
5. Focus on activities which relate to self-employment of youth.
6. Improve donor coordination mechanisms between the donor community and institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina covering the youth sector.
7. Promotion of projects which encourage youth exchange not just regionally, but in Europe and globally.
8. Support for actions aimed at greater inclusivity and participation of youth from different backgrounds and not just social sciences.

In addition, there are areas which are scarcely, if at all, covered by donor interventions in the youth sector. Hence, the following areas for support could be investigated further:

1. Participation of youth from rural areas – projects could target educational activities on the participation mechanisms; support for participating in local youth work; support for youth activities in rural areas.
2. Participation of youth members of national minorities – projects that target youth national minorities (not just Roma) are very rare. These could include support for national minority youth club activities (they are often funded with very little funds from the outside).
3. Support to projects for promotion of visibility of youth cultural organizations from Bosnia and Herzegovina – especially for participation in international competitions (e.g., youth orchestras, youth choirs, dance clubs at competition levels).
4. Support for projects which would contribute to youth awareness raising with respect to radicalization/corruption/organized crime. Such projects are almost non-existent, while radicalization is an issue among youth, especially from rural areas, in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
5. Support for projects which would target digital literacy among youth in rural areas across Bosnia and Herzegovina.

5.4 Critical assessment

Based on the analysis of over 30 projects covered by the Donor Mapping, most donations from international organizations and Embassies seem to be directed toward educational opportunities (often with a particular emphasis on underprivileged and marginalized youth) as well as reconciliation projects, as a way of tackling potential conflict among post-war

generations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The educational opportunities include vocational training, academic exchanges (both short-term and long-term), and providing funds for more inclusive and accessible schooling for all. In the past few years, many projects also focused on improving students' skills in STEM, offering a wide range of opportunities to learn from established professionals in the field.

As for the reconciliation projects, local partners of the donors often gather high school and university students to work together on various projects, which frequently include learning about the history of the conflict between different national groups living in the economy and promoting future cooperation. Since war-related topics are considered taboo topics in many parts of the economy and even get excluded from the official school curricula, it is no surprise that large investments are being made towards this type of education among young people. Ranging from one-day conferences to summer schools and even long-term projects lasting several years, the idea of reconciliation has marked a profound importance in youth-oriented projects. That is not to say that these are the only priority areas of the donors. Still, they tend to be the most transparent in terms of accessibility of project information for the wider public, such as the budget and identified outcomes.

Other than that, as youth unemployment became a mainstream issue in Bosnia and Herzegovina, an increasing number of donors began directing funds toward equipping young men and women with the necessary skills to enter the labor market more efficiently, as well as providing a chance to develop their ideas and start their small businesses. Funds are increasingly being supplied for start-up companies to reach a certain standard of technological advancement.

A significant number of funds were also directed towards improving the disadvantaged groups' conditions, a good example being the Roma Education Fund, albeit often being conducted on a much smaller scale. With this in mind, not as many cases were noticed of multicultural exchanges between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the rest of Europe, let alone the rest of the world. Most projects tend to stay on the regional level. While Reboot Europe stands as an excellent example of such a project⁵⁵, introducing German and French youth to young people of the Western Balkans, it also happens to be one of the few well-established and well-recognized ones. The promotion of such projects might serve as an integral part of European integration. It reduces the gap between the youth from the region and other European economies and allows them to learn from each other. A potential solution might be more significant investments into national branches of international organizations, and local initiatives focused on the notions of multiculturalism and cultural exchange.

It has also been noted that funds are often directed toward projects supporting youth studying law, humanities, and social sciences. In contrast, students from other fields of study do not share the same opportunity of obtaining non-academic knowledge and skills. While this claim requires more extensive research, a simple analysis of eligibility criteria for various youth projects might prove a significant gap in opportunities between the students solely based on their choice of a field of study. Participating in non-academic activities has a range of benefits for students. Not only does it often drive greater political participation and

⁵⁵ Not covered in the Donor Mapping. Link to website: <http://reboot-europe.online/> (Accessed October 25, 2020).

democratization among them, but it might inspire more innovative and efficient approaches on their respective fields. Therefore, it might be useful to support more actions aimed at greater inclusivity and participation (regardless of major) and those offering additional knowledge and skills in their fields.

It has also been noted that many initiatives have been financially supported by several Embassies and international organizations simultaneously. This happens for both small-scale projects, which depend on various funding sources to sufficiently implement their initiatives and large-scale projects, which require various sources of support with the aim of a more significant impact. An excellent example of this can be found in the Mozaik Foundation, which conducted over 500 projects with said actors' support. Another example is RYCO, which highlights the importance but also showcases the potential success of top-down initiatives. These organizations have successfully engaged both governmental and non-governmental actors to gain support during the past few years.

When it comes to the youth sector, foreign donors' main problems lie at the lack of donor coordination and the so-called "sector approach." Other challenges that arise directly out of the previous two also persist.

Lack of donor coordination is noticed as the youth policy sector falls within the "Sector on Education, Employment and Social Policy," a broader field of donor support in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Considering this comprehensive approach, which also impacts the youth sector, most activities are coordinated on an ad-hoc and bilateral basis. This also directly affects the financial planning, resulting in frequent financial overlapping.

Lack of "sector approach" strategy – the donor community, often duplicates program and project schemes and disperses them across the economy. This is because there is no broad consensus between governments across all Bosnia and Herzegovina levels and aid partners on key sector policies/strategies. There are several "lead aid partners" who support governments in managing donor coordination. Still, most of the incentives are broadly defined (e.g., education, employment, social policy), and there is no "sector approach" to youth policies on all levels.

The financial overlapping is frequent. A direct influence of weaker donor coordination, donors usually communicate on ad-hoc and bilateral/multilateral basis. Due to the lack of coordination, project topics remain repetitive and mostly within the reconciliation and inter-ethnic cooperation fields, thus calling for similar organizations in the calls.

Grants allocated to youth organizations are not based on need analyses, and they are small, thus influencing the sustainability of the projects. International donor funds only partly contribute to local youth policies, and there is little synergy with the local interventions. These programs make little reference to the existing youth legal framework. Interviewees noted that despite the support of roof bodies in Bosnia and Herzegovina that deal with youth issues, development of partnerships must also include youth organizations which are more often than not excluded from such programs and planning. Little attempt has been made on behalf of the donor community to revive the work of the Commission for Youth Issues,

which is the only central-level body responsible for youth issues. Hence, more intervention within Bosnia and Herzegovina's public administration is needed.

CHAPTER 6: GOOD PRACTICES AND GAP ANALYSIS

This chapter presents good practices in youth-related policy and programs as well as gaps in financing mechanisms following the same structure of the report itself. It analyzes the impact of COVID-19 on youth and outlines some key recommendations for each key actor.

6.1 Good practices

The fragmentation of youth laws in Bosnia and Herzegovina draws the youth policy development and implementation closer to the decision-makers and political process in the economy. There is a good chance that this approach can respond to the real needs of young people in the field if used properly. If each administrative/authority unit follows the legal regulation, more youth issues could be solved with youth policy documents and their implementation.

Over the years in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska, even slow implementation of youth laws installed necessary system mechanisms for youth policy development and implementation. In Republika Srpska, all governmental structures are in place at the central level. The Youth Council of the Republika Srpska has its members in all intergovernmental bodies. Youth organizations across the Republika Srpska are using available funds from the Ministry of Family, Youth, and Sports, as well as other funds in order to support youth policy implementation over the past three years.

In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, several municipalities are fully implementing the Youth Law, and three cantons follow their example.

The development and implementation of youth policy documents are available to young people in local communities/municipalities. As a good practice to be shared is the one done by several municipalities in both entities. The youth council is working on research on youth issues, analysis, and coordination of the working group that delivers a draft of the municipal youth policy document with the municipal youth officer.

There is a pyramid approach in establishing a youth council in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although it struggles in some areas, it is still a very participatory and inclusive body for youth that genuinely represents young people's voices in the youth policy development.

Existing youth laws, even those in need of revision and further expansion, are legal tools for establishing youth representation bodies on all levels of governance. If fully implemented, they provide good legal support to youth from the municipal to entity level. These also provide a base for youth in the policy framework and in budgeting youth issues. However, not every level of governance is taking the law implementation seriously.

Youth councils on all three levels continue to work together and are well supported by the local and entity governments. The interviewees confirmed that the Brčko District is a role model for the rest of the economy when it comes to financial support, but also for all other activities, as the government has proven ready and capable in dealing with youth issues. The

case could serve as a model for the development of a nationwide functioning youth policy framework.

Another good example is the Municipality of Jablanica (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), which has in place all mechanisms described by the Youth Law and that has a history of the oldest youth council in the economy. This youth council was established before the adoption of Youth Law in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This municipality is fully functional with all the mechanisms and bodies described by the Law. An intersectoral approach is taken in every step of the development and implementation of youth strategy. Most of the processes are led by young people and their representatives with the full support of decision-makers. A high level of trust in the youth, and the approach used in the implementation of Youth Law brought young people to be consulted for every relevant decision-making process within the municipality.

Since 2002 certain activities have been undertaken by different stakeholders to facilitate, empower, and support the process of establishment of youth laws, development of youth policies, and its implementation. The following activities serve as an illustration:

- a. The dialogue with youth, implemented in April 2015, as a broad consultative process, developed by the Institute for Youth Development KULT, was first implemented with the Ministry of Culture and Sports Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina drafting the first youth policy in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- b. In partnership with the Ministry of Family, Youth, and Sports of Republika Srpska, the youth communication center in Banja Luka took over a very similar methodology in drafting the last youth policy in Republika Srpska.
- c. Currently implemented Youth Club Network activities, developed by PRONI Centre for youth development, could be used as an example of youth space and support mechanisms in the youth law implementation. PRONI is the founder of the largest network of youth clubs in Bosnia and Herzegovina – with 42 youth clubs and the initiator and co-founder of the renovation of one of the largest youth centers in Bosnia and Herzegovina - the Youth Center of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Youth clubs are organized as places where young people can meet and participate in various activities. It is very suitable not only for a short youth consultation process for municipalities but also for a higher governance level.

This year has also seen the signing of the first formal agreement of a general cooperation nature between three overarching bodies in Bosnia and Herzegovina that deal with youth issues. In 2020, the Youth Council, through its Action Plan and a 1st Youth meeting held in 2019, managed to create a set of recommendations and measures which they deemed urgent. A new working group was established in October 2020, aside from the YC Assembly, which will work on issues such as youth grants for living arrangements, scholarships, support for youth start-ups, etc.

6.2 Gaps

Major gaps are evident in the following areas: focused youth policy (national youth policy framework), financial support for youth, addressing the impact of COVID-19 on youth and youth participation.

National youth policy framework

The lack of a national youth policy framework jeopardizes the rights of youth across the economy. The central-level body called the Commission for Coordination of Youth Issues Bosnia and Hercegovina is not functional, leading to the exclusion of youth from the Bosnia and Hercegovina in different youth international frameworks. Each level of governance defines and organizes its youth policy and sector individually, which results in a highly fragmented and inefficient youth policy system in Bosnia and Hercegovina. As a result, some strategies for youth are not developed or adopted yet. There is a lack of coordination and coherence, a lack of participatory approach between entities, and different governance levels regarding youth issues and the development of youth-related policies.

Funding framework

When it comes to the financial support of the youth sector, it is evident that financial aid is fragmented and very hard to follow. This is mainly caused by the lack of a single budget line that is entirely devoted to the youth sector. The lack of coordination between different governance levels results in financial overlapping and support to the same youth-related issues, programs, and projects from the municipality, cantonal, and entity resources. This overlapping seriously decreases the efficiency of the youth sector development in Bosnia and Hercegovina. The interviewees also confirmed that there is a serious problem with the unequal distribution of funds, especially when it comes to grants given to NGOs. However, a new legal framework in Brčko District on Funding of NGOs aims at resolving this issue and could serve as a good example for the two entities. All the stakeholders, both the local government and the NGO sector, as well as donors, believe that funding of youth issues is not inadequate and that the donor funds are always available to youth NGOs and organizations. Hence, more transparency is needed in presenting financial contributions, as well as beneficiaries in order to have a complete picture of available funds that seem like an established and well-functional area of investment at this point. A larger issue in this equation is the lack of knowledge in smaller or rural communities in which leaders of such organizations have limited knowledge and experience in the application procedures, severely impacting their ability to apply for funding.

Youth participation

Young people and youth councils are not perceived as serious partners on all levels of governance in the development and implementation of youth policy. Sometimes, they are excluded from the consultation process. Youth participation in Bosnia and Hercegovina is more evidenced through policies than it is in practice. While there is a set of very valuable policies at lower levels of governance that provide an excellent pathway for youth participation, their implementation is not effective. This mainly refers to Youth Laws on all three levels, as they define different mechanisms for youth participation. There is no unique opinion from all three youth councils on improving the current youth structures and supporting youth participation. The Commission for the Coordination of Youth Issues in Bosnia and Hercegovina is not functioning, which harms the participation of youth at the central-level decision-making process. This also means that Bosnia and Hercegovina youth lack a common voice in the international youth arena. The cross-sectoral approach was implemented on an ad hoc basis in one part of the economy since there is no established mechanism for inter-ministerial cooperation in Federation of Bosnia and Hercegovina. Youth

organizations do not participate in funding allocations, which was deemed problematic by almost all stakeholders. Interviews yielded that the NGO work in the field of youth participation is uncoordinated and that there is a lack of cooperation between them, especially on entity levels.

6.3 The impact of COVID-19 on youth

The central and sub-central units did not provide a response strategy to the COVID-19 pandemic when it came to youth-related issues. Extraordinary funding of youth organizations did not occur, nor was there any special funding for youth coming from either government agencies or donors. The Law on “Easing the Negative Economic Consequences”⁵⁶ does not touch upon youth issues at all. Two studies were published by two youth-oriented NGOs. The MediaCenter published a study⁵⁷ on the most common information channels that youth utilized during the pandemic, while KULT Institute published the results of a large research⁵⁸ on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on youth activists in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The opinion of the interviewed stakeholders is that the pandemic had two major implications on youth – their mental health and continuous education. All interviewees mentioned that there is a large portion of youth who cannot receive traditional education, including online courses because of a lack of equipment. The NGO sector organized several online workshops which focused on the education of youth during the pandemic. In addition, both the NGO and donor sectors are aware of the inadequate government response when it comes to education during the pandemic on all levels and support the fact that youth had mass organization in order to call upon the academic institutions to ease the access to necessary documentation and decrease the amount of paperwork, as well as lower tuition fees. Members of youth has also been warning about a complete lack of mental health care and support during the pandemic, especially on behalf of the academic institutions.

Another aspect mentioned by all interviews concerning the economic well-being of youth, since many young people lost their jobs notably in the service and tourism industry. Some of the most visible online campaigns were initiated by youth, but the stakeholders agree that little has been done to satisfy their demands, even to a limited degree.

6.4 Recommendations

This section is dedicated to final recommendations and conclusions. Based on the data gathered from interviews with different stakeholders, as well as the desk research, this report summarizes the recommendations into the following participants:

Recommendations for policymakers on all levels

- Ensuring budgeting transparency is essential to allow for better monitoring and accountability as well as better coordination of future investment areas and sustainability of envisioned outcomes.

⁵⁶ Official Gazette of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, no.28.20

⁵⁷ Hodžić, Sanela. (2020). “Informiranje mladih u Bosna and Herzegovina u kontekstu Covid-19 pandemije: Između dobre informiranosti i teorija zavjere”. Media Centar: Sarajevo Available at: https://www.media.ba/sites/default/files/mladi_i_covid_-_izmedju_dobre_informiranosti_i_teorija_zavjere_final.pdf (Accessed November 30, 2020).

⁵⁸ “Rezultati istraživanja - utjecaj pandemije COVID-19 na mlade” 2020, Institute for Youth Development KULT, available at: <https://mladi.org/v2/bs/resursi/riznica-znanja/vijesti/8538-rezultati-istrazivanja-utjecaj-pandemije-covid-19-na-mlade> (Accessed November 30, 2020).

- Introduce policy-making budgeting. There is room for more policy-based budgeting where each policy would be closely linked to the budget for its implementation. This would require budget planning of the complete strategy and planning of the accompanying action plan on an annual basis. This would increase the efficiency and effectiveness of youth policy implementation.
- Support the functioning of the Commission for Coordination of Youth Issues Bosnia and Hercegovina. Primary support should be in terms of re-introducing the functionality of the Commission. This requires cross-entity and district coordination, namely in terms of naming representatives and supporting the work of this body. This recommendation requires close cooperation with the donor community in order to create a sustainable and efficient central-level body for youth-related issues.
- Improve the coordination and inclusion of relevant stakeholders at all governance levels in Bosnia and Hercegovina. The Advisory Council for Youth in Federation of Bosnia and Hercegovina needs to be established as soon as possible. This is conceived as an inter-ministerial working body of the Government whose main task would be to coordinate and harmonize youth policy and supervise the implementation of the Law on Youth. When it is formed, young people will make up at least 50% of this body through their representatives. In addition to young people, representatives of ministries within the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, preferably ministers, will actively participate in the work of the Youth Council. This body is a necessity for a full cross-sectorial approach and youth participation in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Three cantons with adopted youth strategies should promote their role and make an example of good practice for other cantons. Existing cantonal and municipal youth council across the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina should advocate and delegate their role in cantonal and municipal commissions for youth.
- The Youth Council of RS should coordinate more with local/municipal youth councils across Republika Srpska, promote their membership and representatives in commissions, and other intergovernmental bodies. Support should also be focused to help ministries responsible for youth issues in both entities, namely, the Ministry of Family, Youth, and Sport of Republika Srpska and Federal Ministry for Culture and Sport, to develop the mechanisms for the inclusion of other stakeholders for the development and implementation of the youth strategy documents. Inclusion of other ministries would improve recognition of the importance of youth issues within their scope of work, increase participatory approach, and improve coordination.
- The Brčko District Government should start with the establishment of the Advisory Council for Youth of Brčko District, as prescribed by the law. The newly established Youth Council of Brčko District should advocate their role within the youth policy development and partnership to the Brčko District Government.
- Improve the financial support for human resources and institutional development in Youth Councils in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska. Financial support to the youth council should be revised, as the Youth Council of the Republika Srpska is in need of technical and human resources. There are no official employees in this organization and the funds that they get are not sufficient for quality work at this entity's level.
- The Youth Council of Federation of Bosnia and Hercegovina needs support for developing its technical resources to reach out to cantons, which are not yet part of the structures, support, and regional and international cooperation.

- Fulfill all the obligations of Article 14 of the Law on Youth of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The measures outlined in Article 14 represent a minimum requirement in terms of supporting government plans in working with youth and youth issues. The most urgent obligation includes the appointment of a youth officer (public official position) by all cantonal governments. Where the position has been established, assure that youth officers are well-acquainted with the sector and that there is no overlapping of work activities with other sectors, which currently severely undermines the officers' focus on youth-related issues.
- Make statistical data on youth available through the public Agency of Statistics. Research on youth is currently difficult to conduct in terms of available statistical data. While certain categories, such as employment and education do include statistical data which is inclusive of youth, it is difficult to discern from the general population. In addition, it is crucial that NEET rates be re-included in the Social Labor Survey such as it was the case in 2016. The cross-sectorial approach and coordination with donor community is encouraged in this aspect.

Recommendations for youth organizations and other relevant civil society actors

- The communication of youth organizations and youth councils should be improved. Youth organizations must inform themselves of the benefits of acting jointly through existing youth councils. This recommendation is especially important for youth organizations that are active in smaller communities and rural areas.
- Youth organizations must be more proactive in communicating with relevant government institutions responsible for youth issues. Youth organizations must insist on the minimal respect of the existing laws on all levels. This is especially valid for the legal framework relating to workspace for youth within local communities, clear budget lines relating to funding of youth organizations, hiring of a youth officer, etc.
- Enhance the political participation of youth organization members through communication with government institutions dealing with youth. There is a weak link between youth and all government levels when it comes to educating, informing and advocating among decision-makers and institutions about their legal obligations when it comes to youth issues. This results in under-budgeting of initiatives which call for the implementation of key documents on youth, as well as the disregard for legal provisions from the existing laws.

Recommendations for the donor community

- Improve donor coordination for youth-related issues. As youth policy is a sub-sector of the "Sector on Education, Employment and Social Policy".
- Introduce a "sector approach" strategy.
- Streamline financing and grant initiatives to avoid program/project overlapping.
- Conduct a need-based analysis in order to assure long-term outcome sustainability of programs/projects.
- Make reference to existing youth legal frameworks. Despite the support of overarching bodies in Bosnia and Herzegovina that deal with youth issues, the development of partnerships must also include youth organizations which sometimes are not included in programs and planning. Little attempt has been made on behalf of the donor community to revive the work of the Commission for Youth Issues, which is the only central-level body

responsible for youth. Hence, more intervention within Bosnia and Herzegovina's public administration is needed.

- It is essential to support the collection, analysis and publication of statistical data on youth. Cross-cooperation with relevant public agencies on statistics would be highly encouraged.
- Focus on some priority areas such as rural youth, culture and youth, security and youth, including organized crime and radicalization, and science and youth.

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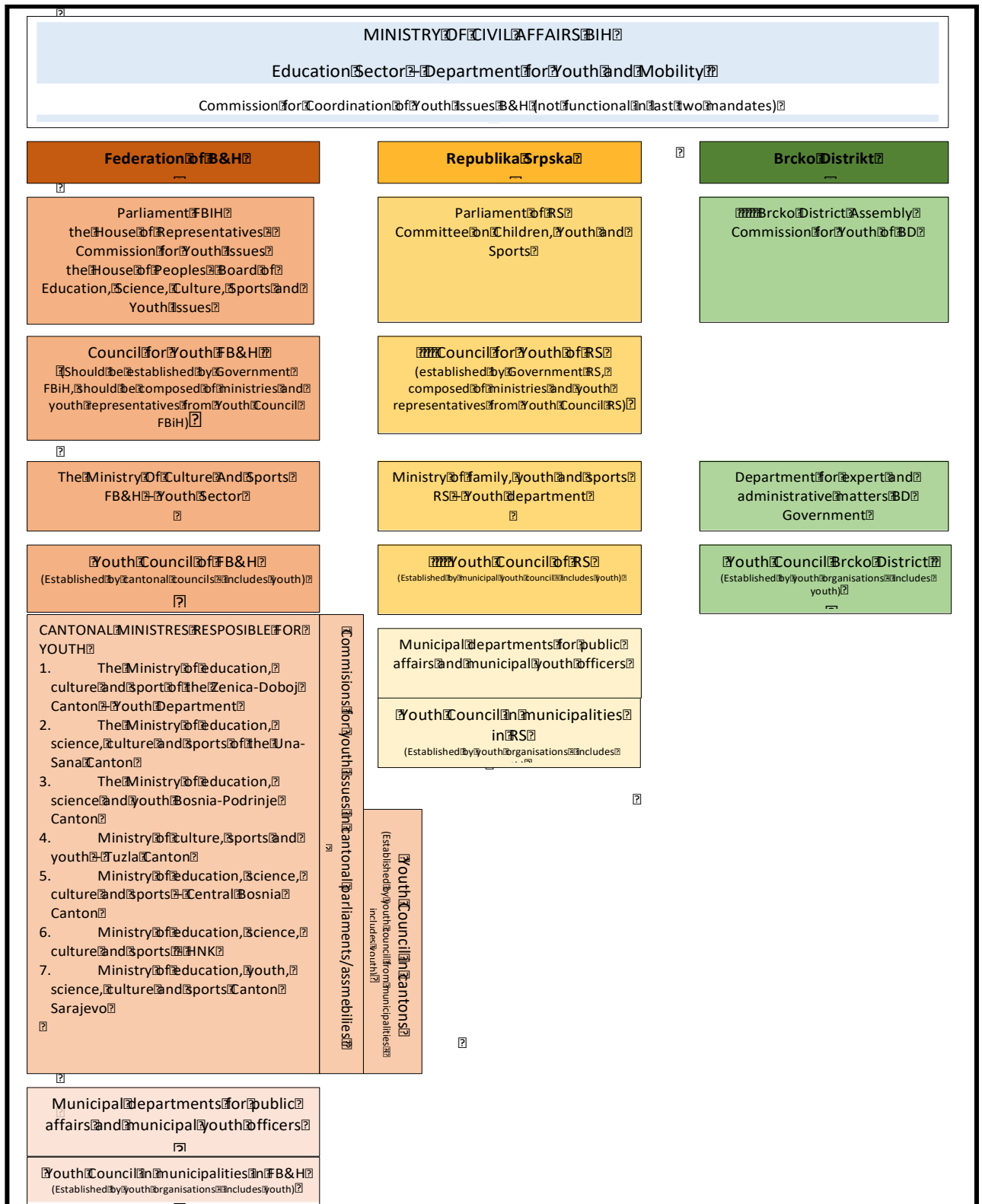
ANNEXES

Annex 1 - Overview of central and local level stakeholders in Bosnia and Herzegovina

CENTRAL LEVEL	
Responsible authorities for overall implementation of the NYS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Civil Affairs, Department of Youth in MCA - Commission for Coordination of Youth Issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as advisory body to MCA (currently not functional)
Responsible authorities at entity level – Republika Srpska	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports of Republika Srpska - responsible for implementation of Law on youth organizing, preparation, drafting and coordination of youth policy implementation - The Advisory Council for Youth of RS is formed by the Government of Republika Srpska - monitoring youth policy and implementation of Law - The Committee on Children, Youth and Sports in Assembly of Republika Srpska
Responsible authorities at entity level - Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Federal Ministry of Culture and Sports – responsible for implementation of Youth Law, preparation, drafting and coordination of youth policy implementation - Commission for Youth Issues in Parliament of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina - 10 cantonal ministries of education to implement Law on Youth in cantonal level
Non-governmental organizations operating at Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina level	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth Council of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Cantonal Youth council (operating in 6/10 cantons)
Non-governmental organizations operating at Republika Srpska level	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth Council of Republika Srpska
Non-governmental organizations operating at all levels or Government	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Institute for Youth Development KULT - involved in youth policy development in all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina PRONI Center for Youth Development - registered in Brčko District, but operating as youth work organization across Bosnia and Herzegovina - Youth Communicative center Banja Luka - operating in field of volunteering and youth employment, based in Republika Srpska - Social innovations incubator <i>MUNJA</i> works to improve the situation of young people increase their active role in society and employability in the labor market. - Perpetuum Mobile – Institute for Youth and Community Development working in policy development with young politicians
International organizations and donors at national level	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RYCO - regional youth cooperation office - UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA – implementing several different programs targeting youth and topics of youth policy (e.g. UNFPA very supportive in health and education of youth) - German Agency for International Cooperation – GIZ: one of the key interventions trough history of youth policy development in Bosnia and Herzegovina - US Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina - implementing several grant programs targeting youth - The Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development – SDC: - Organizations for Security and Cooperation in Europe – OSCE, actively involved in the youth sector trough YAG.
LOCAL LEVEL	
Local level authorities	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipal Departments for civil services - Municipal Youth Officer
Non-governmental entities	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local Youth Councils - Local NGOs

Annex 2 - The institutional framework for youth issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina



Source: Table prepared by the authors of 2019 Report, Katarina Vučković and Nina Branković

Annex 3 - Comparative review of youth laws in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Subject matter	Youth law Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	Youth law RS	Youth law BD
Competence for defining, adopting and implementing youth strategies	Federal, cantonal and municipal bodies, with the support of the NGO sector ⁵⁹ The cantonal and municipal governments will designate an official for dealing with youth matters ⁶⁰ All levels of Government must provide the minimum standards for the implementation of youth policies and include them in their budgets. ⁶¹	Republika Srpska Secretariat for sports and the youth, the competent ministries, local self-government and the Committee for youth issues of the People's Assembly. ⁶²	Government of BD, Department for expert and administrative matters, Youth Council. ⁶³
Youth programs	The cantons develop youth programs within their jurisdiction which are implemented by the corresponding ministries through the action plans they develop. ⁶⁴ The Federation includes youth-related issues into all the relevant strategies and programs. ⁶⁵	Youth programs based on the youth policy are adopted by the Government of RS and the local self-government. Action plans for the implementation of the policy is adopted for a period of 1 year. ⁶⁶ Special attention will be given to programs dedicated to employment, professional development, sport and social, healthcare and social security. ⁶⁷	Youth programs for the implementation of the youth policy are adopted by the Government of BD based on the proposal of the Department for expert and administrative matters. ⁶⁸
Council for youth (Vijeće za mlade F&H, Savjet za mlade RS)	Working body formed by the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina government tasked with the coordination and harmonization of the Federal youth policy. 50% of the members are from the Youth assemblies. ⁶⁹	Established by the Government of RS based on the proposal of the Ministry. It serves as an advisory body for youth policies. Its membership consists of the ministers of the: Ministry of family, youth and sports, Ministry of education and culture, Ministry of health and social security, Ministry of labor, Ministry of finances, a representative of the People's Assembly working group for youth issues and 3 members of the Youth committee. ⁷⁰	Permanent working group established by the Assembly of BD, under the provisions of its rules. ⁷¹
Youth Commission Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Youth Committee RS (Komisija za mlade F&H, Odbor za mlade RS)	Established by the Federation and confirmed by both houses of Parliament. At least one member is from the Youth Council. ⁷²	Consists of representatives of youth organizations which are registered in accordance with the Law. It is charged with the development and implementation of the Youth policy and the protection of youth interests.	Consists of at least 50% of representatives of youth organizations which are registered in accordance with the Law. It is charged with the development and implementation of the Youth policy and the protection of youth interests. ⁷³

59 Article 11 of the Youth Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

60 Article 12 of the Youth Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

61 Article 14 of the Youth Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

62 Article 16 of the Law on Youth Organizing of RS

63 Article 18 of the Youth Law of BD

64 Article 16 of the Youth Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

65 Article 17 of the Youth Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

66 Article 13 of the Law on Youth Organizing of RS

67 Article 19 of the Law on Youth Organizing of RS

68 Article 19 of the Youth Law of BD

69 Article 18 of the Youth Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

70 Article 77 of the Youth Law of RS

71 Article 26 of the Youth Law of BD

72 Article 19 of the Youth Law of FBi9

73 Article 26 of the Youth Law of BD

Youth report	The Federal Government submits an annual report to the Parliament regarding the status of the youth issues and areas for improvement. ⁷⁴	-	-
Corresponding Ministry/Institution for youth issues.	The Federation will designate a ministry which will be in charge of the coordination and implementation of youth policies. The Council for Youth will oversee the implementation of youth-related strategies. ⁷⁵	Republika Srpska Secretariat for sports and the youth, the Managing committee, the competent ministries, the competent authorities from the local self-government, the committee for youth issues of the People's assembly of RS.	Government of BD and the Department for expert and administrative matters.
Grants and financial support for the youth population.	The federation will award grants to the youth based on merit or social need. ⁷⁶	For activities of general interest of Republika Srpska related to the youth, financial support is allocated from the budget of Republika Srpska and the local self-government. ⁷⁷	The Government of BD is in charge of providing the finances for the development of the youth policy and its implementation. ⁷⁸
Youth Strategies	The youth strategy is adopted based on the needs assessment and it refers to the matters of the youth sector. The Strategy must contain a program for the implementation of the planned activities. ⁷⁹	The youth policy is developed at the level of RS and the local self-government. The entity youth policy is adopted by the People's assembly for the period of 5 years. ⁸⁰	The youth policy is developed and proposed by the Department for expert and administrative matters and the Youth Council, and upon approval from the Government of BD, it is adopted by the Assembly of BD. ⁸¹

74 Article 20 of the Youth Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

75 Article 21 of the Youth Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

76 Article 23 of the Youth Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

77 Article 54 of the Law on Youth organizing RS

78 Article 18 of the Youth Law of BD

79 Article 25 of the Youth Law of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

80 Article 13 of the Law on Youth Organizing of RS

81 Article 18 of the Youth Law of BD

Annex 4 – List of interviews

No.	Institution	Sector	Contact Person	Position
1.	Friedrich Ebert Foundation	Donor	Merima Ejubović Nermin Kujović	Scientific coordinators
2.	Institute for Youth Development – KULT	NGO	Katarina Vuckovic	Executive Director
3.	Humanity in Action	NGO	Jasmin Hasić	National Director and Senior Fellow
4.	Embassy of the Kingdom of The Netherlands	Donor	Mirnes Kurtanović Viktorija Ružičić	Senior political officer Senior officer
5.	GIZ	Donor	Filip Radunović Jasmin Valjevac	Program officers
6.	European Delegation in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Donor	Vladimir Pandurević	Program Manager Civil Society, EIDHR, Youth and Culture
7.	USAID	Donor	Haris Kusmić	Project Management Specialist
8.	Ministry of Civil Affairs	GOV	Mirela Alihodžić	Head of Department for Mobility and Youth
9	Youth Council of Brcko District	GOV	Harun Šabanović	Secretary General