

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is a federal republic with three tiers of subnational government. The country is divided into two entities (the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS)) and the autonomous region of Brčko District. Then, the country is subdivided into 10 cantons at the intermediary level and 141 local governments at the municipal level. Among the latter, there are 79 municipalities and cities in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and 62 in the Republic of Srpska.¹



Unless otherwise indicated, all the information in this profile is taken from the previously published Voluntary National Review (VNR).²

1. NATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR SDG IMPLEMENTATION

In 2019, Bosnia and Herzegovina was still in the process of defining their national strategy and **SDG Framework**.³ The latter is “a key document that will define Vision 2030 for the country as well as the development pathways and accelerators for development that will in turn inform all key strategic planning processes in the country at the state, entity and Brčko District level”. This framework has been developed through an extensive and reiterative consultative process with various institutions, CSOs, the private sector, academia and citizens at large. This citizen consultation process during 2018 – ‘**Imagine2030**’ – was to be finalized in 2019.⁴

1.1 NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

Joint activities of all institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina related to the SDGs began in 2018 with the creation of the **SDGs Rollout Working Group**. This group was established for elaborating the SDG framework and the 2019 VNR. Members of the working group comprise representatives from the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Directorate for Economic Planning and the governments of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and Brčko District. The SDGs Rollout Working Group formed three subgroups in 2018, responsible for leading the process of crafting the VNR, drafting the SDG Framework document and dedicated work on data/statistics for the SDGs. Besides, a Private Sector Group established with respect to the SDGs and several other stakeholders from civil society and academia were also very active. The SDG Rollout Roadmap document was to be developed in 2019.

1.2 VNR ELABORATION PROCESS

The 2019 VNR was elaborated by the same working group responsible for drafting the SDG Framework. Consultations for the elaboration of the SDG framework also contributed to the VNR process.

1.3 MONITORING

One of the subgroups of the SDGs Rollout Working Group is dedicated to data and statistics. **SDG Dashboards** were created for the state and entity level and a specific dashboard was initiated for **Brčko District**.⁵ The 2019 VNR states that such dashboards “support the adaptation of SDG targets and indicators within a particular country context. The process behind the creation

1. See: https://www.sng-wofi.org/reports/SNGWOFI_2019_report_country_profiles_DEC2019_UPDATES.pdf

2. See: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23345VNR_BiH_ENG_Final.pdf (2019)

3. UCLG, 2019, Towards the Localization of the SDGs, https://www.gold.uclg.org/sites/default/files/Localization2019_EN.pdf

4. More details on the ‘Imagine2030’ initiative in the VNR, 2019, p. 12.

5. United Nations support under the MAPS approach was instrumental in this respect.

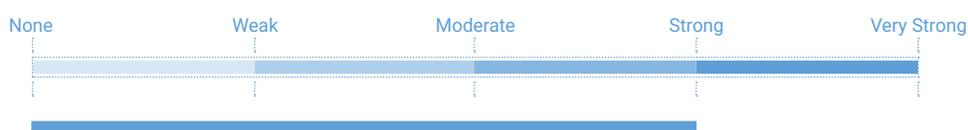
of SDG dashboards initiates a review of the systems and capacities that are available, improves interoperability between different data systems and better integrates data from external sources” (VNR, 2019, p. 18). Right after that, the report refers to the necessity of a whole-of-government approach to effectively implement the 2030 Agenda. Based on the dashboard data, a complexity analysis was conducted for the country, SDG complexity maps produced for Bosnia and Herzegovina and a network of SDG targets and their mutual influence identified.

2. LRGs INVOLVEMENT IN SDG LOCALIZATION

Bosnia and Herzegovina’s 2019 VNR gives particular emphasis to the **SDG localization** process. The report also stresses that for the upcoming SDG Framework to be made operational, the government must include subnational levels of government and their associated organisms within the national coordination mechanisms for SDG implementation. Nonetheless, the three state governments seem to have been a lot more engaged than cantons and municipalities.⁶ Indeed, states are represented in the **SDGs Rollout Working Group**. At the local level, the 2019 VNR specifies that “SDGs are to be implemented in accordance with internal organization through the chief coordinator, who will maintain direct communication with the ministries responsible for local authorities, the associations of municipalities and cities in the entities and local departments” (see VNR, 2019, p. 33).

2.1 LRGs PARTICIPATION

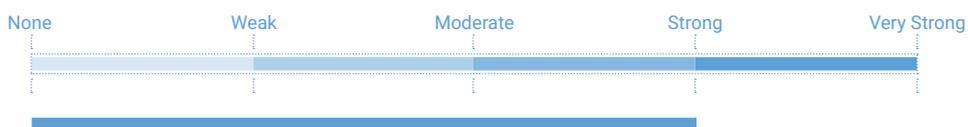
► In the VNR process



2019

Comments: LRGs are mentioned throughout the VNR (with specific examples and dedicated sections). No evidence of LRG participation in the drafting of the report, although it could have happened via consultations.

► In national coordination mechanisms for SDG implementation



2019

Comments: States (FBiH, RS and the District of Brčko) were represented in the working group in charge of drafting the SDG Framework.

This assessment is based on the information collected in the VNRs and in the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments’ annual survey on the localization of the SDGs.

2.2 VNR REFERENCES

LRGs are mentioned in the 2019 VNR. There is a paragraph on the “Localization of the SDGs” (see VNR, 2019, p. 10) which acknowledges initiatives from different cities, with special emphasis on **Bijeljina** (see below). There is also a very brief paragraph on the “Local level” as part of the presentation of the institutional mechanisms for SDG implementation (see VNR, 2019, p. 33). There are specific sections on the planning strategies for SDG implementation of the three state level entities (see VNR, 2019, p. 28, 29, 30; see also institutional mechanisms p. 32). A few of the boxes on “good practices”, in the presentation of the different SDGs, refer to LRGs.

2.3 SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND CASES

► **Brčko District** planned to initiate the process of designing its Development Strategy 2020–2027 in early 2019, also with a highly participatory approach. Also in 2019, Brčko District was to adopt a decision on introducing mid-term and annual planning and reporting within the entire administration. It is through these mid-term and annual plans that the measures defined in the development strategy will be implemented.

► Similar to the Brčko District, the **Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina** is about to launch its planning process (in late 2018, early 2019). There is the legal obligation in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to align its strategic documents with the 2030 Agenda and the relevant strategic documents at the state level. Consequently, the design of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Development Strategy 2020-2027 will be structured around the four pillars of sustainable development and

6. Indeed, in order to “engage in and inform all institutions” about the VNR process and the creation of the SDG Framework document, dedicated sessions were organized for the Republika Srpska institutions, for Brčko District and for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

the five 'P's, namely people, prosperity, planet, peace and partnership. The planning process will be a consultative one that engages a broad spectrum of stakeholders (institutions, cantons and local government and socioeconomic stakeholders). The 2019 VNR also acknowledges that the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Development Strategy 2020-2027 will serve as a **platform for the design of the development strategies of the cantons and local governments**. Therefore, subsequent planning processes at the cantonal and local level will follow the same approach, logic and principles and thus ensure that all levels of government in the entity will contribute cumulatively to the achievement of the SDGs. Institutions at all three levels of government in the entity will be responsible for monitoring progress, which is to be captured annually through 'development reports'.

► **Republika Srpska** initiated a policy dialogue on its future strategic planning and development management system. More specifically, a working group was created in 2018, consisting of representatives of institutions at the entity level and local government. It was tasked with proposing improvements to the entity's current system. Republika Srpska does not have an overarching development strategy in place that could define the development priorities for this entity and serve as the key platform for designing sectoral strategies at the entity level and local development strategies. Recognizing this limitation, the government of Republika Srpska is considering initiating the design of a sustainable development strategy 2030. This strategy would serve as the key reference document for local governments in the entity. The 2019 VNR adds that "annual reporting on the level of attainment of the SDGs would be part of the reporting mechanism within the overall strategic planning and development management system, where relevant indicators from the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina are taken over at the entity and local level. In addition, the entity institutions and local government would be able to add additional indicators as per their specific needs".

Regarding education (SDG 4), the Republika Srpska Education Development Strategy for the period 2016–2021 recognizes persons with disabilities. Since 2010, the government of Republika Srpska has financed assistants for autistic children in education and scholarships are awarded to pupils with disabilities. When it comes to learning the Roma language in primary school, the possibility of using textbooks from Serbia is under consideration for the education of Roma pupils. The legislation in Republika Srpska allows Roma children to enroll in primary school even without all of the necessary documents.

► Several local administrations, such as **Tuzla**, **Zivinice** and **Sarajevo**, have started to consider the localization of the 2030 Agenda into their everyday work and strategic planning at the local level.

► The City Administration of **Bijeljina** has advanced furthest in the localization process. To date, it has conducted awareness raising training sessions with partner groups at the city of Bijeljina level (the private, public and civil sectors and the academia) through 18 training sessions attended by 190 representatives, including those from the banking sector, private companies, NGOs, entrepreneurs, the municipal/city administrations, the **Association of Municipalities and Cities of Republika Srpska**, social welfare centers, the police and public institutions from 26 cities/municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2018, a systematic approach to the localization of the SDGs began with their inclusion into the revised Development Strategy of Bijeljina for the period 2019-2023. Bijeljina is the first city in Bosnia and Herzegovina to adjust and include relevant SDG targets and indicators into its development strategy. In addition, in partnership with the local NGO 'Centre for Promotion of Sustainable Development' (CePSuD), Bijeljina has raised awareness on SDGs in the private and banking sectors as well as in the media and the public sector. It emphasizes partnership and mutual support in future actions as the only successful formula for a more human and sustainable way of life.

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

2.4 VOLUNTARY SUBNATIONAL AND/OR LOCAL REVIEWS (VSRs / VLRs)

Not applicable.

2.5 MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

There is little information on means of implementation for the SDGs in the 2019 VNR. It states that "the SDGs will be implemented in accordance with the available budgets and international financial support for development". It also mentions that "over the forthcoming period, new business models that could unlock investment potential and attract an inflow of development investment will be in focus and explored in collaboration with international financial institutions and international organizations as well as with the private sector and domestic financial institutions" (see VNR, 2019, p. 92-93).

3. RELEVANT INFORMATION

General comments: The 2019 VNR specifies that "in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Agenda 2030 is equally about peace as it is about development. Given the country's governance structure, it is more about the connective and collaborative process that Agenda 2030 has helped unlock than about the end destination itself" (see VNR, 2019, p. 6).

3.1 WOMEN PARTICIPATION

The Electoral Act Amendments Act of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its harmonization with the Gender Equality Act from 2013 ensure a 40% quota for the underrepresented gender on political party lists. Yet despite this, women continued to remain underrepresented in politics. According to the Central Electoral Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina data on the gender structure of elected officials in legislative authorities, as of April 2015, women held 20.1 % of all seats in the House of Representatives and at the levels of BiH, the FBiH, the RS and the cantons.

3.2 COVID 19

Not applicable.

4. SDG INDICATORS⁷

5.5.1. (b) Proportion of seats held by women (%) in local governments		19.6 (2020)
6.1.1. Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services (%)	Urban	-
	Rural	-
6.2.1. (a) Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services (%)	Urban	30 (2020)
	Rural	-
11.1.1. Proportion of population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing (%)		7.6 (2018)
11.6.1. Proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed (%)		74 (2012, All areas or breakdown by cities not available)
11.6.2. Air pollution – annual means of particulate matter in cities (population weighted)		28.1 (2016)
11.b.2. Proportion of local governments that have adopted local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national strategies (%)		0 (2018)

7. The data used for this table come from the UN SDG Indicators Database. See: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/UNSDG/IndDatabasePage>. More information on the country's progress towards the SDGs here: <https://country-profiles.unstatshub.org/bih>