

Council of Europe  
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European Union  
Union Européenne

Partnership between the European Commission  
and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth

REVIEWS ON  
YOUTH POLICIES AND YOUTH WORK  
IN THE COUNTRIES OF  
**SOUTH EAST EUROPE,**  
**EASTERN EUROPE & CAUCASUS**  
- **BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA** -



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# 1. Introduction

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## Background

The Framework Partnership Agreement for the period 1 July 2010 – 31 December 2013 between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth continues implementing the activities carried out in the last years and cooperates in promoting knowledge-based youth policy and supporting youth work and building capacity of youth workers. Special attention will be paid to the geographical scope of its initiatives prioritizing CoE Member States which are candidate countries to the EU (South-East Europe) and CoE Member States which are part of the EU Neighborhood Policy (including the Eastern Partnership and the Mediterranean) and the Russian Federation.

The EU-CoE youth partnership, in cooperation with SALTO Resource Centers SEE and EECA, has organized in the past years a series of seminars on youth policy co-operation held in the last years in the two regions of Eastern Europe and Caucasus: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Ukraine and in South East Europe: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as well as Kosovo<sup>1</sup>.

These seminars showed a lack of information and knowledge about the situation of youth policy, youth work and its structures in the various countries of the regions.

Therefore, the EU-CoE youth partnership, in cooperation with SALTO Resource Centers SEE and EECA, has decided to launch the process of preparing previews on the situation of young people and on youth policy, covering all countries in the two regions.

## Aims

In line with the recommendations of the participants in the seminars, the **collection and provision** of more comprehensive information should foster the existing infrastructures and lead to a better knowledge of the situation of young people, of youth work and of youth policy responses. It would also lead to an enhanced dialogue between the various stakeholders and actors and between the European countries.

## Methodology

On preparation meeting, held in Strasbourg 28-29.Jun 2010, research methodology has been agreed. Each country will have responsible person (individual experts) for reporting and EU-CoE youth partnership team will do overall monitoring, support and publishing the reports as following:

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<sup>1</sup> All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

Identify sources and resource persons (policy, research, NGO's...); who: individual experts

Gather information; who: individual experts

Draft reviews; who: individual experts

Organize national check-up (policy, research, NGO's...) to assure acceptability; who: individual experts

Organize European-level check-up (SALTOs and their networks of multipliers / EU (EAC units E.1, E.2 and C.4, RELEX, ELAR and AIDCO), CoE and EU delegations; who: coordination EU-CoE youth partnership team

Organise proofreading before going online and printing; who: EU-CoE youth partnership team.

Responsible person for Bosnia and Herzegovina review is Jasmin Jasarevic, former member of Commission for coordination of youth issues in BiH and present BiH Correspondent person to EKCYF.

### **Challenges faced**

The greatest challenge for this review was the fact that there are no so many researches on this topic done in previous time and that current political situation in BiH is complex with many differences and lack of institutions that are dealing with youth and youth policy issues at State, Entities and Brcko District BiH level. Such situation is result of internal political situation in the country and finding the relevant stake holder at all levels was the most difficult part of review.

Knowing the facts about political situation in BiH is also important in context of reading and understanding this report. State level, two Entity levels (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republic of Srpska), ten Cantonal levels (in Federation BiH), one District level (Brcko District BiH) and Municipality levels (63 MUNICIPALITIES IN Republic of Srpska and 79 in Federation BiH) are present government levels that are, in some ways, responsible for youth policies.

Similar situation is with NGOs that deal with youth and youth policy issues. There is a great number of youth NGOs that are dealing with youth issues and youth policy issues in BiH but there is no single BiH state youth NGOs umbrella organization that can lobby and fight for youth policy implementation in BiH.

## 2. Executive summary

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Bosnia and Herzegovina is a state constituted by two entities: Republic of Srpska (RS) and Federation of BiH (FBiH) which consists of 10 Cantons. There is also the self-governing district of Brčko (operating separately from Entities laws).

Only in RS there is one ministry that have youth in the name of ministry and that is Ministry of family, youth and sport RS.

The two entities of the country, Federation (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS) are on very different terms when it comes to youth policy development. RS went far in the creation of a youth policy and the youth institutions. As a matter of fact, it has a youth ministry, a youth law, a youth action plan and a national youth council.

On the other hand, FBiH has a very fragmented and internally divided youth scene with no existing institutions on the entity level and no holistic and inclusive policy for youth even that in this year FBiH get the Law on youth. Still, on FBiH level there is Center for youth under the FBiH Ministry of culture and sport. FBiH adopted law on youth in 2010 where one Ministry is predicted to be responsible for youth and coordination with other ministries and institutions on youth research and defining FBiH Youth strategy and assure establishment and maintenance of overall database on youth and be a carrier of youth information and youth involvement in decision making processes. (Article 21.).

BiH does not have a umbrella youth council as a platform for lobby and youth coordination and in a same time it's well known that that BiH have great number of registered Youth NGOs or NGOs that deal with youth issues. There is a Commission for coordination of youth issues in BiH consisted of 5 representatives from NGO sector (two from RS, two from FBiH and one from Brcko District BiH) and 4 representatives of governmental institutions (More on Commission in chapter 4.1).

Work with youth in BiH has been one of the main areas of civil society where local and international organizations, supported by their donors, have been very active from the onset of the 1995 to present day.

In BiH there is still huge presence and influence from international organizations, governments of different states, international NGOs, foundations and others that support different processes in the country whether it is for civil society development or other possible views of development including youth work and youth policy development.

Ministry of Civil affairs once per year have open call for projects that support NGO sector in BiH. Entity and municipal level provide support to organized groups of youth but also to individual's trough: credits for youth, youth employment, internship for youth and similar activities.

Lack of available sufficient funds often leads that youth NGOs see each other as “competition” and local and international donors often had that politic of supporting only the best proposal and organizations. More recently it’s seen that EU funds and other “serious” funding is aimed towards creation of NGO networks.

The EU accession is a strategic priority for Bosnia and Herzegovina since the objective to gain full membership in the EU is based on a broad political consensus. The Stabilization and Association Agreement between BiH and the EU was signed on 4 December 2007.

The EU accession process implies huge challenges for all sectors in BiH (public, private and non-governmental), for all the population and thereby for the youth.

Knowledge about the Youth policies on local, entity, state and European level is essential in preparation of quality youth activities and measures for youth. Those policy documents, researches and recommendations from them can be used by local or national authorities or local and international NGOs or development agencies. Often, youth programs are planed and implemented without taking any consideration to existing policies or researches already done in this field.

### 3. Situation of Youth

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#### 3.1 Definition of youth

##### Official definitions of youth and existing Laws

In Bosnia and Herzegovina there are two definitions of who the youth are. Basically, both definitions are similar and they can be found in two laws that treat this area: "The Law on the Youth of the Federation of BiH"<sup>2</sup> and the "RS Law on Youth Organization"<sup>3</sup>. It has been stated that in FBiH "Young people" or "youth" means persons aged 15 to 30 years; and in RS youth are aged from 16 to 30.

Brcko District BiH don't have youth group defined by law of Brcko District BiH.

##### Policy instruments

###### *State level*

The 2008 Decision of the CCYI BiH established the guidelines for the creation of the YP BiH.

Under the guidelines, the main goal of the YP project development reads:

*The draft youth policy of BiH 2009-2013 should include the mid-term solutions already designed on the basis of the youth needs in seven program areas, and the representatives of the governments, civil society and youth, as well as technical experts, should participate in the drafting process following a multisectoral and program approach.*

Status of the development of the 'YP BiH 2009-2013':

- 1) The needs, problems and resources of the youth sector in BiH have been identified; the results of the youth situation analysis have been presented to the interest groups with the aim of developing measures for systematic improvement of the youth life.
- 2) The draft of the coordination strategy 'YP BiH 2009–2013' was made and the CCYI BiH forwarded it to the BiH Council of Ministers for adoption.
- 3) The action plan for the implementation of strategic measures and programs which will be defined in 'YP BiH 2009–2013' has been made.

##### **FBiH**

Youth policy and Youth strategy are mentioned in the Law on the Youth of the Federation of BiH but still no actions were made towards creation of those documents.

Some Cantons and municipalities in FBiH have Youth policy.

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<sup>2</sup> The Law on the Youth of the Federation of BiH Official Gazette of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina" No. 36/10 /June 16, 2010/

<sup>3</sup> Law on youth organizing. RS Official Gazette number 98/04.

## **RS**

In 2006, RS adopted the RS Youth Policy (2006-2010). This document envisages several measures in the following fields:

- a) Establishment of the RS Youth Information Centre with 6 Regional Centers;
- b) Adoption of the Law on Youth Work;
- c) Opening of a Youth Counseling Centre to fight drug addiction;
- d) Professional orientation program in schools;
- e) Youth Training Centre (for the training of youth workers).

None of the aforementioned activities were implemented, even though the funds in the amount of 2.6million BAM were allocated for their completion.

RS Government adopted the "Youth Policy 2010-2015" in November 2009.

Some municipalities in RS also have local youth policies.

### **Brcko District BiH**

Don't have Youth policy document.

## **3.2 Key figures on young people<sup>4</sup>**

### **Number of young people**

The demographic trend in the EU over the past few years has been described as 'aging of the population', to indicate a decreased share of younger population groups in comparison with the older ones. In 1990, the share of persons under 15 in the entire population was 19%, and in 2005 it was as low as 16%. In 1990, the share of persons older than 65 was 14%, and in 2005 it was 17%. The ratio of active working population in the EU maintained a level of 67% during this period, with the same ratio of men and women. If we compare the 1991 census data for BiH with estimates from 2007, we will see that the trend is similar to that in the EU, i.e. the population is aging. However, during the period from 1991 to 2007, the share of active working population remained the same (69%), but the share of persons under 15 decreased by 7% and the share of persons older than 65 increased by the same percentage. This change was twice as low in the EU, amounting to 3%. If we express this trend in real numbers, we see that there are 607,000 persons under 15 years of age living in BiH, lower than 1991 by 420,000. Also, the number of person aged between 15 and 29 dropped by 315,000 (777,000 compared with 1,091,775). On the other hand,

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<sup>4</sup> The Analysis of the Position of Young People and the Youth Sector in BiH [http://www.mladi.gov.ba/pdf/MLadi\\_politika-EN\\_final.pdf](http://www.mladi.gov.ba/pdf/MLadi_politika-EN_final.pdf)

the number of persons older than is 490,300, higher than in 1991 by some 277,000. And finally, the size of active working population today is lower than in 1991 by more than 500,000.

**Analyses of data on BiH population: by age groups and sex (BiH Statistics Agency, 2007) leads to several general conclusions.**

First, the male population is more numerous than the female population up to the age of 54. As for persons older than 54, there is a relatively higher number of women. This means that the age pyramid is relatively tilted towards men in younger age groups, and towards women in older age groups. Second, similar conclusions can be drawn from an analysis of the same data for EU-25 (2005). However when comparing data from BiH and that from the EU, several demographic differences appear, the most important being that the ratio of young population in BiH, aged 15 to 29, is higher than the ration of the same population in the EU. On the other hand, the ratio of persons between the ages of 30 and 39, i.e. the most active part of the population, is much higher in the EU than the same age group in BiH.

The estimate is that there were 950,330 young people aged 15-30 in 2000 in BiH (24 percent of total BiH population). Because of the war and post-war transition, thousands of young people have left the country.

According to a source, 92.000 young people had left the country between 1996 and 2001. Therefore, the number of persons aged 15-29 has decreased by about 315,000 (from 1,091,775 to 777,000).<sup>5</sup>

There are 17 legally recognized national minorities in BiH, of which Roma are the largest. It is estimated that there are between 30,000 to 60,000 Roma in the country. This figure was determined during a joint fact-finding project by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and the Council of Europe.

**There is no available data on youth by sex and age groups, rural – urban and minorities.**

### **3.3 Living conditions and situation of young people** (According the Analysis of the Position of Young People and the Youth Sector in BiH)

#### **Culture**

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<sup>5</sup> Source: BiH Statistics Agency 2007

Reviews on youth policies and youth work in the countries of South East Europe, Eastern Europe & Caucasus  
Bosnia and Herzegovina

Friends and peers (58%), followed by television (29%), have the highest degree of influence on decisions of young people to participate at cultural events. Radio (16%) and teachers (19%) have the least influence in these matters. The internet and newspapers have somewhat more influence on young people in urban areas and in FBiH than in rural areas and in RS.

When it comes to the attitude of local authorities to cultural events, the research indicates that most young people are dissatisfied with their support for creating cultural contents, and a third of young people did not express any opinion on this matter. Apart from that, young people in RS express a somewhat higher degree of satisfaction than those in FBiH.

In view of the quality of media space allocated to cultural contents, a third of young people are dissatisfied, and almost 50% have no opinion on this matter. Young people from RS are considerably more satisfied with this issue than those from FBiH.

**Education and Training** (formal education, vocational education, drop outs, success figures, literacy rate),

According to data supplied by state statistics agencies in BiH, 88,281 persons were registered in 2005 as university students. The total university enrolment rate is 26%, but the ratio of those who actually graduate within the prescribed time is just 10%.

In 2005, 160,600 students attended some form of secondary education – of that number, 38,571 (24%) attended general secondary schools, and 118,671 (74%) attended vocational secondary schools. In the same year, 451 students (0.3%) were enrolled in secondary schools for persons with disabilities. The total secondary school enrolment rate was 76%, but 54% graduated within the prescribed time.

Of the total number of persons aged between 15 and 29, 62% completed or interrupted their education, and 48% enrolled in an education institution. In major BiH cities, participation in the formal education system is at the level of 49%, and in smaller towns it is at the level of 33%.

### **Employment & Entrepreneurship**

The unemployment rate for persons between the ages of 15 and 25, which amounted to 59% in 2007, indicates the critical position of BiH youth in comparison with their peers in other European countries. The unemployment rate in the EU-25 is approximately 15%, which is 5 times less than in BiH. This is particularly so for women in this age group, since their unemployment rate is 7.5% higher than that of men. The difference between men and women does not reach this level in other European countries, except for Croatia, Portugal and Spain. The unemployment rate for the entire population (15+) in the EU-25 is approximately 7%, and in BiH it is almost 30%. Graph 15 presents the youth unemployment ratio (15-24) in relation to unemployment among the population older than 24. For example, for each unemployed person aged 25 or more in Germany, there is 1.4

unemployed persons aged 15 to 24. In BiH this ratio is 1 : 2.4, which is at the level of the EU-25. Countries like the United Kingdom, Sweden, Norway and Luxemburg stand out in this respect, since their ratio is four or more unemployed 15 to 24 year olds per one unemployed person older than 25.

8% of young people have tried launching their own businesses to date. This was a solution for a number of those currently employed. Those currently employed are significantly more prepared to launch a business venture (13%) in comparison to the unemployed (7%) or inactive (8%).

A considerable number of young people would be prepared to launch their own businesses (41%), but most require support from the very start (38%). Residents of larger cities are considerably more predisposed towards private entrepreneurship than those from smaller cities (50% vs. 38%), as well as men compared to women (45% vs. 35%).

**Health & Well-being** (health insurance, age of coverage, mortality, morbidity, violence),

10% of young people from 16 to 30 have no health insurance. Young people are most often insured through their parents (43%), through the employment bureau (23%), and through their employers (23%). It is important to note that rural residents are more frequently without insurance (13%) than urban residents (7%), and the same is true of men (12%) compared to women (8%).

### **Human and Youth rights**

Under the BiH Constitution, an additional human rights agreement to be applied in BiH is the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

There is a joint commission of both BiH Parliamentary Assembly houses for human rights, children rights, youth, immigration, refugees, asylum and ethics.

Among other issues, this Joint commission also addresses the issues in relation to the exercise of the youth rights, particularly improving the youth rights in BiH.

There is a State Ministry for Human rights and refugees

### **Leisure**

Leisure activities for young people in BiH, realized as extracurricular activities in schools, youth clubs or associations, are developing without any significant influence of legislative provisions apart from the already mentioned Law on Youth Organization of RS, which indirectly regulates youth activities.

### **Lifestyles**

#### *Health Self-Assessment*

With 91% of the people assessing their own health as good or very good, BiH is at the level of the EU average.

### *Smoking*

A third of young people in BiH between 15 and 24 smoke cigarettes, which is about 6% more than the EU average.

### *Alcohol Consumption*

The proportion of young people in BiH who consume alcoholic drinks is far below the EU average.

### *General Check-Ups*

Every fourth person between 16 and 30 has gone for a general check-up in the past 12 months. However, for only 8% of them this was a regular check-up.

### *Gynecological Exams*

On average women have their first gynecological exam only at age 19.

Every fourth girl/woman aged 16 to 30 does not go for the minimum annual gynecological exam.

## **Mobility**

78% of young people, 81% from FBiH and 74% from RS, have travelled to another city in BiH in the past 12 months. For the most part, young people travel within their entity. So, young people from FBiH have travelled to RS in only 12% of the cases, while 33% of young people from RS have travelled to FBiH.

Excursions abroad (12%) and excursions within the entity (10%) are the most frequent programs of organized travel for young people. Young people from FBiH go on excursion within their entity or to the other entity more frequently than young people from RS who go on excursions outside of BiH more frequently. In all other programs presented in table 11, young people participated at a rate no greater than 5%.

70% of young people are prepared to host or be a guest in the household of another nationality from another city in BiH. Young people from FBiH are somewhat more open to this form of socialization and travel than young people in RS, as well as men in comparison to women, and young people from larger in comparison to young people from smaller communities.

39% of young people from rural areas have never travelled to another country.

Neighboring countries are the most frequent destination for young people in BiH.

80% of young people go to other countries as tourists or to visit family and friends.

## **Participation and Volunteering,**

Participation of the youth at the local level in activities of the public sector, NGO sector and political parties is very weak all over the country. Networking between youth organizations is lacking and it is not widespread. Communication with the youth is very poor and insufficient, which also pertains to the youth participation in designing pastimes, work with the youth, culture and sport.

Most of the young people see the benefits from voluntarism and they are ready or they are involved in voluntary activities in schools or organizations.

## **Religion**

No specific data on youth relations to religion in BiH.

## **Social Inclusion (excluded groups, youth at risk) and Housing**

The customary approach in social policy making must be abandoned, and a new approach more sensitive to the specific and contemporary needs and interests of young people must be urgently established. No responsible government responds to the challenge of juvenile delinquency by opening prisons for minors, police pressure or through ignoring the problem.

The current position of young people requires a multi-sector approach and cooperation of responsible institutions for social policy, education, labor and employment, healthcare, and youth work, which is the precondition for a sustainable policy of their social inclusion. Governments must ensure that competent institutions develop coordinated policies in various areas of significance for the position of young people, that they protect youth interests and promote positive attitudes among young people and in society in general.

Housing problems of young people has negative effects on forming families, but also on other private and social aspects of young people's lives. 93% of young married couples do not have their own living space. Additionally, only 1% of young people live in student dorms, which speaks volumes about the conditions for students, their numbers and the amount of organized social support.

The youth housing policy has been implemented only in two BiH towns – Banja Luka and Sarajevo.

## **Sport**

The number of young people dissatisfied with physical education classes exceeds that of those who are satisfied with these classes.

Only 7% of young people are involved in sports activities within an organization or association, and most of them are satisfied with the available sports events.

Every fifth young person has spent money on sports or other physical activities in the past month.

## **Values and Attitudes**

Only 1 to 2% of young people from 16 to 30 is institutionally active in representing the interests and solving the problems of young people. The relevant institutions include local councils or youth forums (2%) and youth commissions at local administrative bodies (1%). Apart from that, only 1% of young people have participated in the creation and development of youth strategies at local levels.

3% of young people, 5% in FBiH and 2% in RS, have participated in organizing youth activities on the local level in the past year.

Youth membership in political parties or their youth sections (8%) is somewhat greater than youth engagement in youth non-governmental organizations (5%).

Most young people (79%) have a positive view of the work and projects of youth organizations in their municipality or city. Trust in youth organizations is somewhat weaker in rural areas in comparison to urban areas.

### **Other national specificities.**

#### *Leaving the country*

40% of young people from 18 to 30 do not have a passport.

5% of young people from 18 to 30 do not have a passport.

14% of young people have an immediate family member who has emigrated in the past 7 years.

67% of young people would leave BiH for at least one other reason apart from education.

9% of young people, 13% from FBiH and 5% from RS have already undertaken concrete steps to leave the country.

## 4. Youth policies and youth work

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### 4.1 Institutions, actors and structures

#### Public authorities

##### ***State public authorities:***

##### *Ministry in charge of youth*

At the state level, within the BiH Council of Ministers, the youth issues are addressed by the CCYI BiH (Commission for Coordination of the Youth issues in BiH) in terms of their coordination within the country, with the international community and with the non-governmental sector. Following the 2009 decision of the BiH Council of Ministers, the CCYI BiH became a standing body within the Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH (BiH Council of Ministers). Except for the CCYI BiH, there are no significant youth-related capacities within the BiH Council of Ministers.

The Minister of Civil Affairs of BiH is Mr. Sredoje Novic. His term of office lasts from 2007 to 2011.

##### *Youth Department in the Ministry*

In Ministry of Civil affairs there is no division in charge of the youth. The Division for Science and Culture within this Ministry is providing technical assistance for the CCYI BiH.

##### - Main tasks of the CCYI BiH

The CCYI BiH is in charge of determining the main principles in creation of the national youth policy, and coordinating activities of all actors which are significant for the promotion and protection of young people role and position in BiH, while focusing on improving youth life conditions, and international representation of the youth-related issues in BiH.

In accordance with the competencies of the relevant institutions, the CCYI BiH tasks are to contribute to:

- Determination of main principles for the coordination of youth-related activities;
- Harmonization of plans of the entity youth-related government authorities;
- Definition of the international strategy on the youth issues;
- Analysis of the youth problems in BiH;
- Coordination of the youth projects;
- Collection and dissemination of information in the field of the youth issues.

The CCYI BiH proposes and implements:

- Solutions for the institutional framework of youth policy;
- Creation of the YP BiH;

- Initiatives to the governments and parliaments in BiH, including proposals for new laws and amendments to the existing ones ;
- Organization of meetings with the youth;
- Initiatives of CCYI BiH to international and other institutions, pertaining to youth-related significant issues

The CCYI BiH proposes to the BiH Council of Ministers its annual work plan and program for adoption and provides also a semiannual performance report.

In 2009 Council of Ministers BiH changed the composition of the CCYI BiH: It has nine members now: four members are representatives of the government institutions (two from the entities' level and two from the Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH), and five members come from the youth NGO sector. The CCYI BiH members are obliged to hold meetings once a month.

- Contact person in the youth department competent for the European youth policy

Mirjana Nikolic - Chairperson of the Commission for Coordination of Youth Issues in BiH (CCYI BiH)

***Other state public bodies who are directly involved in youth policies***

*Other ministries*

Some additional agencies at the level of the BiH Council of Ministers have indirect competencies as to the youth-related issues:

**Agency for Labor and Employment of BiH**

Phone/Fax: +387 33 208 252 / +387 33 209 475

E-mail: [agenrbh@agenrbh.gov.ba](mailto:agenrbh@agenrbh.gov.ba)

Web: [www.agenrbh.gov.ba](http://www.agenrbh.gov.ba)

**Directorate for Economic Planning of BiH**

Info: Division for coordination of preparation, M&E development documents and analysis of social exclusion

Tel: +387 33 225 933 Division for Economic Research, Tel: +387 33 225 992 Division for Common and General Affairs, Tel: +387 33 225 932

Phone /Fax: Fax: +387 33 225 930

Web: [www.eppu.ba](http://www.eppu.ba)

**Directorate for European Integrations of BiH**

Info: Education Section

Contact person: Dzenana Zivalj

Phone /Fax: +387 33 296 396 / +387 33 296 391

E-mail: [dzzivalj@dei.gov.ba](mailto:dzzivalj@dei.gov.ba)

Web: [www.dei.gov.ba](http://www.dei.gov.ba)

### **Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of BiH**

Info: Division for Diaspora

Contact person: Ruzmira Tihic-Kadric

Phone /Fax: +387 33 703 974

E-mail: [iseljenistvo@mhr.gov.ba](mailto:iseljenistvo@mhr.gov.ba)

Web: [www.dijasporabih.gov.ba](http://www.dijasporabih.gov.ba)

### **Parliament commission in charge of youth issues**

There is a joint commission of both BiH Parliamentary Assembly houses for human rights, children rights, youth, immigration, refugees, asylum and ethics.

Among other issues, this Joint commission also addresses the issues in relation to the exercise of the youth rights, particularly improving the youth rights in BiH.

The first deputy chairman of this commission is Mr. Zoran Koprivica.

### **Entities public authorities responsible for youth issues**

Most of the constitutional competencies regarding youth issues are at the entities' government level (Republic of Srpska (RS), cantons of the FBiH Federation of BiH (FBiH),

A government representative from each entity is the member of the CCYI BiH at the national level.

The competencies at the entity level in the field of youth are within the following ministries:

### **Republic of Srpska**

#### **Ministry for Family, Sport and Youth of RS**

Minister: Prof. Dr. Nada Tesanovic

Term of office: four years, starting in 2010.

Division for Youth in the Ministry

The main tasks of the Division:

- Monitoring and studying the youth situation
- Participation in the creation of laws, regulations and other youth-related bylaws
- Cooperation with other organizations aiming to contribute to youth development

Staff in the Division for Youth: 6 (4+2).

Head of the Division: Dragan Kupresanin.

Contact person for the European youth policy in the Division: Branka Malesevic.

***Other public bodies directly involved in the youth policy:***

**Ministry of Education and Culture of the RS**

**Ministry of Science and Technology of the RS**

**Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of the RS**

Parliamentary commission in charge of the youth issues in the RS:

Board for Youth Issues within the RS National Assembly

President: Nikola Bastinac

**Federation of BiH:**

In the FBiH, there is a 'Center for Youth' which functions as an organizational unit within the **Federation Ministry of Culture and Sport**. This ministry deals with the youth issues in culture and sport. The Minister is Mr. Gavriilo Grahovac, whose term of office is four years, starting in 2007.

**Center for Youth in the Federation Ministry of Culture and Sport**

Contact person: Azra Lojo-Hajro

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**Parliamentary commission in charge of the youth issues in FBiH:**

Commission for youth issues within the FBiH Parliament.

President: Indira Karovic

**Local public authorities responsible for youth issues** (Data from: Youth information agency. Report 3. conference of Local governments and youth in BiH. (2007).

It is expected that the process of adopting youth strategies in 46 of the total 150 municipalities in both entities in BiH, will be completed by the end of 2009. Most of these strategies are supported by the local parliaments through approved budgetary funds. International organizations, such as the GTZ Youth Project, have invested mostly in projects aimed at establishing better relations towards the youth at the local level.

There are youth officers in 50 municipalities, i.e., government servants who deal with the youth issues among other things. They represent a link between the municipality administration and the youth associations. They have passed the curriculum for youth officers so they have the necessary expertise at the local level. In most of the municipalities, the establishment of this position, led to positive changes in the local community and to the creation of the local youth strategies.

Essentially, the local communities depend on the reforms that need to be implemented at the higher levels of government in almost all significant fields for the youth and at the moment there is no coordinated and harmonized general development at the state level, i.e., at the inter-entity level.

In 70-80 municipalities, which represent 60% of all municipalities in BiH, there are special working bodies called 'commission' or 'youth board'. These bodies work within the municipality council/parliament and have competences in the youth issues, often along with other bodies. In cases where municipality statutes and other regulations defining the work of the local parliaments allow an option of membership outside the council members, there are youth representatives, i.e., youth associations representatives, participating in the working bodies. Nevertheless, many expert events in BiH assessed that the main problem in the work of these bodies within the local parliaments is the lack of experience and knowledge of the councilors on the youth policies, and that it would be necessary to provide them with some guidelines for work and appropriate training to increase their efficiency.

A lower form of participation represents is the so-called 'advising of decision-makers'. This form exists in almost one-quarter of the municipalities/towns in BiH<sup>6</sup> and it has been implemented through the establishment of youth advisory boards. Such a board is established by a municipality mayor or town mayor with the aim of obtaining advice and views from the youth, with a particular focus on presenting and affirming the needs and position of the youth. The goals, manner of action, election and work of the members are regulated by a particular book of rules on performance, which is in accordance with the municipality statute. There was more influence on

the development of local youth policies when the members of the youth advisory boards had more experience.

There are no such bodies at the higher government levels, except the Youth Advisory Board of the Prime Minister of the Zenica-Doboj Canton. Offices of the prime ministers of the Sarajevo Canton and the Una-Sana Canton have a job position of advisor for the youth issues; some BiH Presidency members have such advisors. These advisors may often be a link with young people and the youth organizations and thereby lobbyists for the youth in official counseling.

### **Youth welfare services**

The state-level institution in charge of coordination of Entity bodies for this area is the Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH, i.e., its Division for Labor, Employment, Social Protection and Pensions. Within the RS Government, there is the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of the RS and the Division for Social, Family and Child Protection within the Ministry.

In the FBiH Government, there is the Federation Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and the Division for Social, Family and Child Protection within the Ministry.

At the local level, the youth social protection is among the competencies of the centers for social work and the social protection services. The centers for social work are the main social protection institutions established by the municipalities. There are 45 of them in the RS and 59 in the FBiH.

An important center for social work is the 'central institution of the social protection system', which:

- Has the public competence for protecting the rights stated in the social protection law, child protection law, family law, and provides services of social work in the administrative proceedings of making decisions on rights;
- Pays entitled benefits;
- Monitors and studies social needs of the citizens and suggests steps for meeting the needs accordingly; organizes and implements relevant forms of social and child protection and social work;
- Plans and develops the programs aimed at applying the new methods in the social work and improving social services in the community;
- Initiates activities in the community to help the citizens to organize themselves and solve social problems;
- Coordinates activities of the stakeholders in the social protection system of local communities, aiming to plan and implement efficient and comprehensive measures and programs;

The municipalities which do not have a center for social work in place carry out social protection affairs through administrative services or a relevant staff member. There are 17 such services in the RS and 20 in the FBiH.

Nevertheless, according to the report from several fields within the 2008 "Analysis of the youth position and the youth sector in BiH" (compiled by the CCYI BiH and GTZ), the youth in BiH belongs to the group of socially excluded population.

## **Non-public actors/structures & youth services with competencies in the youth field**

### ***Youth councils***

There is no Youth Council at the BiH level.

There is a Youth Council at the RS level, serving as an umbrella representative body, which is legally defined under the Law on Youth Organization of the RS. The Council does not have a Web site. More details on [www.mladirs.ba](http://www.mladirs.ba).

There is no Youth Council in the FBiH, neither at the Federation level nor at the cantonal one.

There are a dozen youth organizations at the BiH level and they act on the most of the BiH territory. Besides the RS Youth Council, there are only a few representative bodies, such as the Youth Initiative of Central Bosnia which represents an informal initiative of the youth organizations in the Central Bosnia Canton (FBiH)

### ***Youth NGOs***

The most important interest groups in the field of youth participation are the youth organizations in BiH themselves. The estimated number of active organizations is around 250-300. The largest database of youth organizations in BiH may be found at [www.mladi.info](http://www.mladi.info), which records 310 youth organizations, whereas lower numbers may be found in the directories at [www.civilnodrustvo.ba](http://www.civilnodrustvo.ba), [www.ngo.ba](http://www.ngo.ba) and [www.omladina-bih.net](http://www.omladina-bih.net).

Most of them have a local character, meaning that they act in one or several neighboring municipalities. Most are based on volunteer work, and a significant number of them have developed through the support and activities of the international organizations working in BiH. The youth organizations are active in youth work, improving the quality of the way young people spend their time providing opportunities for travels, etc. Only some organizations are financially self-sustainable.

### ***Other structures***

In BiH, the practice of associating into joint projects, coalitions or networks in some fields, is quite common. An example is the Coalition for Conscientious Objectors which in 2004 affected the decision on granting civilian service as a substitute for military service. In the late '90s, the Youth Network of BiH originated within the associations 'Helsinki Parliament of Banja Luka' and 'Tuzla Citizens'. The Youth Network of BiH has provided information and training for the youth organizations in BiH in the past years ([www.omladina-bih.net](http://www.omladina-bih.net)).

There are several civil society professional organizations working with the youth. An example is the Youth Information Agency ([www.mladi.info](http://www.mladi.info)), whose work is supported, among others, by the Open Society Fund of BiH (Soros Foundation) and which tries to operate in both entities. For eight years it has been providing an information service for the youth, its associations and the broad public. The Agency has provided counseling, designed professional publications and training programs, and participated in the organization of the events supporting more significant youth participation.

A significant activity is a project of peer education, implemented in high schools.

The CIVITAS organization has tried to affect changes to the curricula with regard to the youth participation. Worth mentioning is the Center for Culture of Dialog which has been focusing on developing critical and logical thinking skills of the high-schoolers in large number of schools in BiH in the past decade, and has also provided them with participation in TV-programs and public debates along with representatives of institutions and other target groups.

Particular support to the strengthening of the pupils' and students' organizations in BiH has been provided in the past years by the German foundation 'Schüler Helfen Leben' and the 'World University Service'. Aiming to promote volunteerism, various activities have been carried out: volunteer actions (international summer labor camps, organized by the Southeastern Europe Youth Network; volunteer service in several cities, arranged by the association OKC Banja Luka); creation of web pages (such as [www.volontiram.ba](http://www.volontiram.ba) and [www.kampovi.ba](http://www.kampovi.ba)), etc.

In recent years, the training for young politicians in BiH was conducted within the project "Political Academy" by the associations 'Helsinki Parliament of Banja Luka Citizens' and 'Perpetum Mobile'. More details at [www.parlamentmladih.org](http://www.parlamentmladih.org).

The first organization that was involved in education of Youth workers in BiH was PRONI Institute for social education (now PRONI Center for youth development). This organization provide education for more than 300 youth workers since 1998 (in cooperation with Jonkoping University from Sweden) and PRONI was supporting establishment of youth policy in RS since the 2004. This organization is still active and can be reached through [www.pronibrcko.ba](http://www.pronibrcko.ba).

## **4.2 Context of youth policies and youth work**

### **4.2.1 Youth policy**

Youth policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the form of systematic and institutional involvement of the state in caring for young people with special mid-term and long-term strategy and action plan that is based on European standards and practices, is in development stage as well as some other sector policies for youth such, ex. education.

Regarding the mechanisms for the development of youth policy, BiH has several instruments at the national level, of which there is certainly the most important of the Commission for Coordination of Youth Issues in BiH, which operates at the Council of Ministers, namely within the Ministry of Civil Affairs.

In the FBiH, there is no ministry responsible for youth policy development.

In the Republic of Srpska, there is a Ministry of Youth, Family and Sports and it is only institution in Bosnia responsible for addressing of youth and youth policy issues.

Earlier, in the second half of 2002, PRONI Institute in cooperation with the entity governments, first conducted research on young people and then held talks on the draft national plans of youth entity as the first documents on youth policy. The next step of signing an agreement between the entity ministries (Republic of Srpska) and the PRONI Institute for work on the action plan has resulted in the adoption of the first document Youth Policy of RS in 2006.

Process of youth policy in BiH at the state level began in June 2002. with the organization of first Youth Parliament in the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH. Resolution of young people initiated the Youth Parliament and was later released for discussion and parliamentary procedure, which resulted in its adoption as an official state document On 16 July 2002. Among other things, it obliges BiH to create mechanisms for the development of youth policy and youth strategy. In October 2002, the Working Group to build institutions and the international community in BiH has established five groups working in the field of democratization and citizen participation, of which one was the Working Group on Youth Policy.

At beginning of 2008 and based on guidelines provided by the Commission for Coordination of Youth Issues in BiH, have been realized a comprehensive survey on the situation of young people in BiH.

After processing the collected information has been prepared Analysis on Youth and Youth Sector in BiH. This study is the first phase of the document "Coordinated Youth Policy in BiH 2011-2015".

The youth engagement in organizations of the NGO sector has contributed to the introduction of the options for cooperation between the youth sector and the government authorities at all levels in BiH. In 2002, cooperation initiative led to the first resolution concerning youth in BiH which was adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly of BiH in the same year. This was the first official document in BiH containing provisions for youth policy. Moreover, in early 2003, the Chair of the BiH Council of Ministers<sup>1</sup> underlined the need of particular attention to youth since it is an endangered category.

In December 2004, the BiH Council of Ministers adopted the Decision establishing the 'Commission for Coordination of the Youth issues in BiH' (CCYI BiH), a standing body responsible of dealing with the problems of youth and to work on the determination of youth policy in BiH.

The CCYI BiH started its activities in 2006. The Commission CCYI BiH web site is [www.mladi.gov.ba](http://www.mladi.gov.ba).

In the period 2006-2009, the CCYI BiH consisted of eight representatives from the state and entities levels and 10 representatives of the youth associations in BiH. The CCYI follows the principles of co-management, multisectoral and regional approach in addressing the youth issues and determining the Youth Policy of BiH (YP BiH).

In its first working period (2006-2009), the CCYI BiH established prerequisites for its activities and adopted several key strategic documents containing guidelines for the YP BiH in several sectors. Moreover, four public events promoting youth policies were held, i.e., conferences with regard to the youth issues in BiH.

The CCYI BiH strategic documents are:

- "Analysis of the youth position and the youth sector in BiH"
- "Study on youth employment in BiH"
- "The EU and the youth" – assessment of the human resources development for the needs of the European integration processes
- "The Law on the Youth of the Federation of BiH" – a study on legal solution for the youth in the Federation of BiH (FBiH, one of two BiH entities)
- "Policy for the youth health" in the Republic of Srpska (RS) and the FBiH
- Guidelines for the creation of Youth Policy of BiH

In 2007, the CCYI BiH began with the YP BiH creation process by developing strategic guidelines. In 2008, the "Analysis of the youth position and the youth sector in BiH", carried on with the support of the GTZ Youth Project, was completed in order to meet the information needs of the CCYI BiH and those of the BiH Council of Ministers.

This document represents the first overall report on the youth position in BiH. It is also the first step towards a fact based determination of the YP BiH. Through analyses and empirical research, this study made an overview of the youth needs in several key areas, such as: education, employment, health and social position, youth active participation in the society, work with the youth, culture, sport and free time.

In December 2006, the CCYI BiH presented the "Study on youth employment in BiH".

In early 2007, the CCYI BiH adopted the study "The EU and the Youth" which pointed out the necessary changes in the educational system, which imply appropriate actions on the part of the government in the field of education, in order to comply with the long-term strategy of accession to the EU.

In 2007, the CCYI BiH initiated the drafting process of the "Law on the Youth" in the Federation of BiH.

By the end of its three-year term of office (2006-2009), the first CCYI BiH has not managed to develop the YP BiH. At the end of 2009, a new CCYI BiH was set and is continuing with the work.

In the development of the YP BiH, the CCYI aims:

- to establish goals, priorities and measures with clear guidelines for their implementation;
- to incorporate the EU legacy in the field of youth;
- to establish conditions for the coordination of measures;
- to establish conditions that facilitate the inclusion of these measures in other development documents, following the principle of intersectoral action on the youth issues;
- to establish conditions to support local community efforts in developing local youth strategies;
- to introduce options for a successful use of the EU funds to support youth;
- to introduce options to use other funds, e.g., from international agencies.

As the entity government levels in BiH – RS, FBiH, cantons in FBiH - have almost exclusive jurisdiction on the youth issues, and financial possibilities as well, an action on their part is necessary to improve the quality of youth actions. These youth action programs, developed by the ministries at the entity and cantonal levels, should have smart-goals and indicators of achievement; contain appropriate deadlines for implementing actions, financial investments, material and other support needed and a successful monitoring system of the programs.

The 2009 decision of the BiH Council of Ministers reconstructed the composition and position of the CCYI BiH. Under the 2009 decision, the CCYI BiH became a standing body within the Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH. This decision was taken to establish the conditions for a more effective and

efficient performance of the CCYI BiH, while keeping the above-mentioned performance principles of the CCYI BiH.

#### **4.2.2 Youth work**

The term “youth work” is the direct translation from English and is totally unknown as such to the general public in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This term is understood differently depending on individual countries. Council of Europe is representing youth work as group of activities with youth or for youth in the areas of social, cultural or political activities, and more and more these activities include the sport activities, and some other topics related to youth.

When defining this field, it helps if one concludes that there are different forms of working with youth, rather than merely one form with characteristics which are subject to consensus. However, it is possible to identify some key dimensions present in this field in practice since the beginning of the last century. Youth work includes:

- Focusing on young people;
- Emphasizing voluntary participation and cooperation;
- Becoming involved with organizations;
- Friendly actions, informality and acting which encompasses respect for other persons' integrity;
- Responsibility for education of youth, and, on a wider scale, responsibility for facilitating a better position of youth.

The primary objective of youth work is to support youth in their integration and involvement in their communities' social life, and to provide opportunities for youth to be the creators of their own future. According to international standards, youth work is a concept of planned, purposeful and conscious support to youth through youth's voluntary participation, as well as support which is appropriate for their varying ages and other specifics.

A comprehensive definition of youth work can be found in the proposal FBiH Law on Youth:

By definition, youth work is understood as planned, purposeful and conscious support to young people through their volunteer participation and it includes:

- extracurricular education, which can complement the formal education of young people, along with their general, social, natural and technical education;
- creative, artistic, sports and cultural youth activities;
- activities and programs related to the development of their abilities, skills and knowledge, and community work;
- activities related to matters like specializing, working environment, school, family;
- activities and programs related to their well-being, social and health protection;
- youth counseling;

- youth tourism, recuperation of young people and their spending time in nature;
- programs designed for specific youth groups;
- international youth work, intercultural cooperation and exchange;
- other models of creative and planned leisure for young people.

In any case, its concerns different planned activities, including extra-curricular education activities, recreation, dissemination of information, sports, youth counseling, support with professional orientation, involvement in and managing of international youth projects, centers where young people can spend their leisure time, special support to marginalized young people such as members of minorities, numerical minorities, and youth with certain behavioral tendencies, all through counseling, education and other forms of support.

At its best, youth work is a separate profession based on a formal university education and specialized training programs. Sometimes, it functions as volunteer work regulated by a law on youth work, as is the case in the Republic of Ireland.

Youth information activities – or “youth information work”, to use the EU term- denotes the concept or service of provision of regular information to young people about all topics of interest to them. These activities can be performed in various ways, which may include a whole range of actions: provision of information, consulting, counseling, leadership, support, teaching and training, and also networking, referring to specialized services, role of media etc.

Such activities are most frequently performed by some public institution, e.g. a Youth Information Centre having trained personnel, and in some countries they are performed by NGOs in partnership with authorities. There are more than 7,000 such centers in 25 European countries with more than 12,500 youth information workers employed and 20million young people visiting the information centers.

In BiH situation with youth centers and youth clubs are generally “in hand” of youth NGOs and depending on funds from international donor agencies.

There is no serious debate on Quality assurance mechanisms from local authorities but on initiative of TACSO program (funded by EU) and GTZ there are initiatives on quality assurance mechanisms in NGOs and Quality assurance in Youth centers in RS. Those are the two separated initiatives and both activities started in 2010.

Example of good practice in Quality assurance can be found in PRONI Brcko, CORNO and CEM (also former PRONI Institute projects) that have developed Balkans Quality assurance mechanism called “OKORUZ”, standing for Quality assurance in community youth work.

Those three organizations are involved, through TEMPUS program, in Youth work education in Zenica University that should start with formal education for youth work and leadership program in 2011.

On initiative of above mentioned three organizations and by support of Forum Syd Balkans Program, the procedure on registration of State level Association for professional in youth work started in 2010.

#### **4.2.3 Youth research**

CCYI in BiH has conducted research that is often used in as base for other researches on youth issues in BiH as well by practitioners and not so often by policy creators.

This research "The Analysis of the Position of Young People and the Youth Sector in BiH" was compiled through partnership cooperation between the Commission for the Coordination of Youth Issues at the Council of Ministers of BiH, the Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH and the Project for Support and Development of Youth Structures in BiH of the German Technical Cooperation Society (GTZ). Following the adoption of research guidelines, the Commission members actively participated in the making of the study. This study is the first phase of drafting of the BiH Coordinated Youth Policy 2011-2015.

#### **4.3 Legislation and youth work**

Legislation and youth work is one of the key issues for young people and the youth sector to be solved in the future through changes of the existing laws on youth work and adoption of a new law on youth work in RS, as well as the adoption of relevant laws in FBiH and the Brcko District of BiH.

The Law on Volunteer Work was adopted in RS in July 2008. This Law creates the legal framework for regulating the concept of volunteerism, which can have a positive impact on the field of youth work and other fields.

FBiH and RS Law on Youth Organizations mentions some of these terms. However, the RS Law contains incomplete, vague or even wrong definitions, such as the definition of youth work: "Youth work or activity is understood as various forms of community work in the field of youth interests in which young people participate and which contribute to the betterment of the position of young people."

Pursuant to international standards, youth work is defined differently. It is understood as planned, purposeful and conscious support to young people through their voluntary participation, as

pertinent to their different age and other specific characteristics. Still, the RS Law mentions terms “professional work and education” in the youth sector, but it is not viewed as a component of “youth work” nor is it clear why it is mentioned separately.

The RS Law does not recognize the term “youth mobility” and uses the term “international cooperation” instead. The problem is that this term does not encompass the mobility of individuals and informal groups but only that of representatives of youth associations. Also, youth mobility within the country is not mentioned. Moreover, in its introductory part, the Law does not provide any definition of the term “youth information”. An indirect definition can be found in Article 76, which prescribes adoption of youth information programs.

It should be emphasized that the Law obliges the RS Government and local communities to adopt periodical youth strategies that encompass: youth work, mobility, information and counseling (Article 11).

In the report submitted by the Advisory mission of the Council of Europe’s Youth and Sport Directorate, the Law is evaluated as follows: „... serious attempt to provide a rational statutory framework for youth policy in RS. ... the text of the statute has drawn upon progressive examples of European practice in order to facilitate the introduction of European standards in youth policy. ... as an example of good practice it should therefore form the basis of a framework law that has coverage across BiH.“

The responsible Entity Ministries of Health and Education, respectively, play an important role in the creation of counseling policies for youth, given that most of the programs in this field are being implemented through institutions which are governed by these Ministries, such as schools, health care centers and social welfare centers.

However, youth counseling is not fully institutionally organized and developed. Currently there are special services like public institutions of family counseling or specialized services for young people in five cities within healthcare centers in BiH, where young people can get advice related to their sexual and reproductive health. There are also staffing positions for student counselors and psychologists in schools, whose work is defined by relevant laws, as well as individual counseling centers for combating addictions etc.

Many NGOs also provide counseling services. However, their cooperation and coordination is not at a very high level. Also, it is very difficult to know the number, locations and fields of specialization of counseling centers that have young people as their target group.

The main institutions, which should be responsible for youth work are youth departments at all levels of governance. The only attempt, to date, to create conditions for youth departments at the

local community level was the activity to train for and create the new professional profile – Youth Officer.

At the RS level, the Ministry for Family, Youth and Sports is a competent authority in this field.

In FBiH, there is a Youth Centre within the FBiH Ministry of Culture and Sports. This institution currently only deal with youth issues related to sports and culture.

The Brcko District of BiH has an official in charge of youth activities, as does a quarter of the municipalities in BiH but their work is limited by other organizational structures in the municipalities and often this role is connected with other duties that youth officers need to do as additional work.

Around 50 municipal officers responsible for youth issues attended training about youth policies and youth work, which was created and supported by the GTZ. In the period that follows, the newly formed Association of Youth Officers of BiH (USM) shall assume the responsibility in the field of training.

An important role in creating youth counseling policies in both entities is played by ministries of health and education because most programs in this field are implemented through institutions within their responsibility, e.g. schools, healthcare and social work centers.

RS and FBiH parliaments have Committees for youth issues, i.e. commissions that discuss youth related legal provisions adopted by the parliaments.

Youth work is very often covered by NGOs, some 20 of them that manage and organize public spaces for young people's free time. Some of the personnel in these organizations are professionals trained through various short training programs led or supported by international organizations, where the rest of their personnel comprise of volunteers. However, the Training Center for training of youth activists from the governmental and non-governmental sectors has not been formed yet. Such training would ensure standards for youth work and creating of policies based on facts.

The biggest problem and potential risk lie in the fact that there are no standards in youth work and that there are no mechanisms for ensuring quality of work, i.e. certification of the persons who implement such activities.

In addition, the number of young people who are involved in the activities of youth associations is actually very small. According to results of the research (Commission, GTZ 2008), only 3% of youth, 5% in the FBiH and 2% in the RS, took part in the organizing of activities at the local level in the course of the last year. Only 5% of youth are engaged in the youth non-governmental organizations.

The non-governmental sector plays an important role in the field of youth information. A good example is the BiH Youth Information Agency (OIA). This association fulfills its mission while following European standards and is a national partner to ERYICA since 2003. In cooperation with three municipalities, the OIA opened youth information offices, which provide information to young people in ten categories, e.g. through a web page for youth information ([www.mladi.info](http://www.mladi.info)), info-points in 37 towns, and some radio and TV shows.

Regarding the participation in the EU program Youth in Action, which deals with youth mobility, CCYI is playing key role in promoting information about the YiA program. Currently, organizations from Bosnia and Herzegovina can only apply for the program sections 1, 2, and 5 out of the five program departments within the "Youth in Action" program. Many associations from Bosnia and Herzegovina have successfully participated in this Program for several years through their EU partners.

Actors that deal with youth mobility are NGOs and schools and universities, which enable some young people to travel through their international projects. These projects are still funded mainly by international agencies.

#### **4.4 Strategies, Programmes, Action Plans in youth work and non-formal education/learning**

In 2008, in accordance with the findings from the "Study on the Youth Employment", the project "Youth Employment in BiH" began and it was supported by the Swiss Development and Cooperation Agency and the Austrian Technical Cooperation Agency with a funding of €2M.

To the same end, the BiH Council of Ministers and the UNDP Resident Coordinator Office in BiH signed the program for improving possibilities of youth employment, the value of which is €4M.

In cooperation with the CCYI BiH and the entity governments in BiH, the Canadian organization CIDA supported the development of the document 'The policy for youth health' which was adopted at the entities level.

The CCYI BiH intends to support the creation of the YP BiH in 2010 with its own funds, the World Bank funds and the GTZ Youth Project. The CCYI BiH funds and as well the funds of the two foreign organizations will be spent on the activities of several working groups that will be set up in early 2010 in several sectors that are of interest for improvement of the youth position.

In 2010 there will be broad consultations with the youth as end-user of the proposed actions, with government representatives, entity and cantonal levels. The adoption of the YP BiH by the BiH Council of Ministers will follow the consultation process.

There are no “regular” events for youth in BiH, except annual RS Youth meeting (this year organized by RS Youth council and PRONI Brcko) and annual RS Voluntary award.

Other than this there are few bigger events such are CIVITAS youth camps, Helsinki Committee for Human rights Youth schools of human rights, Kids festival and some other educational and youth work events at whole BiH territory but the majority of events are held in Sarajevo and Banja Luka.

#### **4.5 Strategies in cross-sectorial policies**

In terms of youth protection, BiH possesses a solid legal basis forming a framework of opportunities for effective activities. Most of the regulations are contained in 41 laws in BiH. Of those, 17 are laws of RS, 14 are law of FBiH, and 10 are laws of the Brčko District of BiH.

The solutions presented by some of these laws contain provisions directly aimed at protecting the health of young people. The provisions of other laws pertain to all citizens and as such affect young people as well. In terms of the relevant regulations for the health of vulnerable groups, so far attention has been devoted only to offenders and addicts, and to improving the statues of women with respect to reproductive health. Barring a few exceptions, the legislative treatment of vulnerable and highly vulnerable groups has largely been neglected. These issues would have to be tackled through an cross-sectoral approach and regulations, especially when it comes to these groups of the population.

There are four laws on the BiH level with provisions indirectly regulating youth health issues:

- **Law on the Prevention and Suppression of Hallucinogenic Drugs** - although young people are not mentioned as a separate category, the main provisions and measures stipulated pertain to young people;

- **Law on the Principles of Road Safety in BiH** - is not strictly focused on young people and their health, but provides a legal framework for regulating traffic and education in this areas that should contribute to improving traffic conditions and safety in the long term, and therefore reduce traffic accidents as one of the causes of youth mortality;

- **Law on Gender Equality in BiH** - contributes to decreasing gender discrimination.

Although it is not directly related to youth health, it is clear that in the long term, this Law will contribute to improving access to services, reducing violence against women, improving education

on sexual and reproductive health and hazardous behavior, as well as generally empowering young women;

- **Framework on Primary and Secondary Education in BiH** - Article 3 defines education as, among other things, intended to ensure optimal development for each individual, including persons with special needs, in accordance with the individual's age, abilities and mental and physical capacities<sup>80</sup>. This is an important framework for enabling schools and communities to organize activities for the promotion and protection of children and young people.

The youth health protection legislation in RS is similar to that in FBiH, it is regulated through a range of laws as well as the RS Constitution. Namely, Article 68 of the RS Constitution provides for measures for social protection, healthcare, education and care for children and youth, while health protection is concretely dealt with in Chapter II and Articles 36 and 37. Thus, for example, Article 36 stipulates that the family, mothers and children, as well as minors without parental guardianship enjoy special protection. Furthermore, Article 37 stipulates the right to health protection for all in line with relevant laws, while children, pregnant women, the elderly and other special categories of persons have the right to protection covered by public funding.

The following Laws regulate influence on youth in RS:

- **Law on Health protection** - determines the health protection for individuals, families and the society as a whole through a range of health protection institutions and organizations as defined by the law. However, this law does not stress children and young people, or guidelines for healthcare education and general education in health;

- **Decision on the Minimal Basic Package of Health protection** - is attached to the law and stipulates that full health protection is provided to certain population categories such as children up to 15 years of age, pregnant women and mothers up to one year after the birth of the child;

- **Law on Health Insurance** - similar to the counterpart Law in FBiH, this Law determines health protection for children up to 15 years of age within the family of the insured party, and for young people up to 26 years of age during regular schooling. For persons who interrupt their regular schooling to serve a term in the military, the Law provides health protection up to 27 years of age (Article 16). Furthermore, the Law foresees waiving participation in the expenses of health protection for children up to 15 and for pregnant women (Article 45).

- **Law on Social Protection** - defines population categories requiring social protection, including certain categories of minors (Article 10). This Law determines measures of material and social support. Also, Article 18 of the Law defines measures for adults with socially unacceptable behaviors, a category that includes young adult addicts.

- **Law on the Protection of Persons with Mental Disorders** - pertains to the treatment of children and young people through establishing special wards for the psychiatric treatment of this population category (Article 13).

- **Family Law** - determines protection for the family and child (Article 3), as well as stipulating the obligation of the parents to care for the life and health of children, their upbringing and education (Article 6). Just as the Family Law in FBiH, this RS Law foresees measures against abuse and neglect in the family, i.e. giving custody of the child to the other parent, guardian or institution (Article 97), and in extreme cases revoking parental rights (Article 106).

- **Labor Law** Similar to the counterpart Law in FBiH, this Law determines protection for minors under an employment contract, and stipulates special measures for employment of this category of persons.

- **Law to Ban Smoking of Tobacco Products in Public Spaces** Apart from regulations prohibiting smoking in public spaces, this Law also foresees measures for rooms where smoking is allowed, namely, that a sign must be posted forbidding entrance to minors (Article 4).

- **Law to Ban Sale to and Use of Tobacco Products by Minors** As mentioned in the section dealing with legal regulations in FBiH, legislation in RS is more advanced in terms of defining the prohibition of sale of tobacco to minors as per the provisions of the World Health Organization. This Law bans the sale of tobacco and tobacco products to minors, and bans sale at locations in the vicinity of institutions frequented by minors, as well as stipulating the obligations of educational institutions in terms of banning the sale and use of tobacco products (Article 1).

The RS Youth Policy (2006) foresees the adoption of the Law on Youth Work. This Law would further expand the opportunities for a multi-sector approach to youth health issues.

Access to protection in FBiH, for both the general population and young people, is regulated by the following laws:

- **Law on Health protection** - regulates the distribution of competences in health protection between FBiH and the cantons. This Law also regulates prevention activities and healthcare education for citizens, as well as the principles for implementing health protection (in terms of their comprehensiveness, continuity, and access to primary healthcare), improving health, etc. The Law pertains to the entire population of FBiH, with a special focus on primary healthcare for children and young people, as well as women in the period before, during and after giving birth.

- **Law on Health Insurance** - regulates the health insurance of children and young people via the family of the insured party (father, mother or guardian), as well as universal health insurance for children up to 15 years of age. Young people over the age of 15 may have health insurance by being members of families of ensured persons up to the age of 26, provided they are enrolled in regular schooling either as pupils or university students (Articles 3, 4, and 22). This Law does not

provide for special measures for young people, nor does it include gender distinctions, but it does provide for health insurance for persons incapacitated for independent life and work (Article 26).

- **Law on Principals of Social Protection, Protection for Civilian War Victims, and Protection of Families with Children** - defines categories of children and young people eligible for social protection as follows: children without parental care, neglected children, abandoned children, children with developmental problems due to family circumstances, persons with disabilities and persons with arrested physical or psychological development, persons unfit for work (Article 12); as well as persons with socially unacceptable behavior, i.e. those who “engage in loitering, wandering, begging, prostitution, alcoholism, drug abuse and other forms of socially unacceptable behavior” (Article 17) – as well as measures for working these categories, such as material aid and training for life and work, as well as other forms of social support (Article 22, 23, 29, and 87). The Law ascribes competences for determining social protection to the cantons, which means that it only provides frameworks and definitions of social protection on the FBiH level.

- **Family Law** - protection and health of children and young people within the family, as well as the obligations of parents and guardians with respect to the health and protection of children are one of the focus points of this Law. Thus, this law stipulates that parents are obliged to protect children from all forms of abuse, maltreatment and neglect (Article 127), as well as all forms of vices (drugs, alcohol, prostitution, sexual abuse, economic exploitation, etc. (Article 134). If the family is unable to provide adequate protection for children and young people, the law stipulates measures whereby a person may be entrusted to an institution or foster family, as well as measures of judicial revocation of parental rights in extreme cases, in the best interest of the child (Article 147 and 154). Accordingly, this Law is of extreme importance for the health of children and young people, and for their protection.

- **Labor Law** - quite strict in terms of young people and employment. According to this Law, young people between 15 and 18 years of age are entitled to special protection in employment. Also, a young person under 18 cannot enter into an Employment Contract that may jeopardize his/her health, morality or development (Articles 15 and 51), and cannot undertake overtime and night-time work (Articles 32 and 36). Such violations are further determined by provisions of the Criminal Code.

- **Law on Restricted Use of Tobacco and Tobacco Products** – In line with the need to prevent and remove the negative consequences of tobacco use, Article 3 of the Law stipulates bans on the use of tobacco products in educational institutions, institutions where children and students are accommodated, healthcare institutions, social institutions, as well as other public institutions. Furthermore, Article 12 expressly prohibits the sale of tobacco products in a 100 m radius from preschools and schools, as well as within sports and recreational facilities. The same Article also prohibits the sale of tobacco products to persons under the age of 15. In terms of preventing and

removing the negative consequences of tobacco use in young people, it is important to note that this Law set the age limit for prohibition of sale of tobacco to young people at a lower age than that determined by RS regulations and the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control adopted by the World Health Organization. The age limit stipulated by the RS Law and in line with the WHO Convention is 18. Although the Federal Ministry of Culture and Sports, in cooperation with the Commission, GTZ and the Association of Youth Officers in BiH, has drafted a Youth Law FBiH, this legislation has not been adopted yet. The Law is expected to introduce a programmatic approach to resolving youth issues in FBiH, including those related to youth health.

Healthcare and social protection are an important sector of functions and competences in the Brčko District of BiH, and as such, they are determined by Article 9 of the Statute. The regulations determining or related to youth health are:

- **Law on Health protection**
- **Law on Health Insurance**
- **Law on Social Protection**
- **Law on Child Protection**
- **Law on Protection of Persons with Mental Disorders**
- **Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools**
- **Labor Law**
- **Law on Protection at Work**

Certain specificities of the Brčko District of BiH legal framework are that the Law on Health protection lists young people as a separate category of the population and deals with their education for self-protection (the Law stipulates that the Department of Healthcare of the Brčko District shall also be responsible for health education in preschools and schools in cooperation with the Department of Education), as well as dealing with their primary healthcare (Article 17). Also, in contrast to similar laws in the entities, the Law on Protection of Persons with Mental Disorders determines a requirement for the institutionalization of a child or minor whereby the court is obliged to receive an opinion from a psychiatrist specializing in treating children and minors, or with 3 year of experience in working with children (Article 23). Additionally, the Law on Youth is currently undergoing the adoption process in the Brčko District of BiH. This Law should devote special attention on adopting and implementing programs of health protection, as well as other programs contributing to the health of minors. In the upcoming period, within the process of EU accession, BiH will harmonize its administrative and judicial system, as well as leading capacities and institutions with EU standards. Regulations pertaining to youth health on the international and European level provide guidelines to BiH about how to regulate youth health issues. We can, therefore, expect that additional efforts will be needed to create a modern framework to promote human and social rights in line with international standards.

As mentioned before, the healthcare sector and legal regulations directly pertaining to youth health issues fall under the jurisdiction of the entities. This is also true of all other questions pertaining to youth health, but which belong outside this sector. Legislators and decision makers will, therefore, face the challenge of harmonizing certain issues both as regards youth health in BiH and with respect to international standards.

#### **4.6 European and International dimension**

Owing to good cooperation with the Council of Europe (Directorate for Sport and Youth), the CCYI BiH became a full member of the European Youth Partnership in 2008.

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The program "Youth in Action" as a global program which in practice encompasses all European countries, including the Western Balkans countries has, without doubt, a great significance for Bosnia and Herzegovina, considering the amount of funds planned for investment.

Participation in all actions of the program "Youth in Action" is supported through the NGO contact points. In 2006, there were three YiA info points in BiH - OKC Banja Luka, OKC Jajce and OKC "Abrašević" from Mostar. In 2007, there were two info points - Kastel Banja Luka and IPAK Tuzla. In 2008, there has been only one info point – IPAK Tuzla.

The analysis has shown that there were 54 projects allocated to the organizations in BiH in the time period 2007-2009, for a total amount of 1,054,564 Euros.

The new position of the CCYI BiH within the institutions of the system (Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH), and the more operative composition of the CCYI BiH should, by all means, contribute to the improvement of the YiA promotion in BiH. It is exactly the CCYI BiH that could be one of the bodies to bridge the visible information gap that emerges. In fact, at the moment it is impossible for all info points to carry out their tasks fully and there is a lack of promotion activities at the state level. Through better dissemination of information to the youth organizations and strengthening of their capacities through trainings, the number of organizations participating in the program "Youth in Action" will expand by all means, the whole Bosnia and Herzegovina will be covered and the program impact will be multiplied.

In April 2009, the Delegation of the EU in BiH announced a 'Individual service contract forecast' for the project "EU Support to the coordination and implementation of the BiH National Youth Policy" in the frame of IPA 2008 program. The project value is €0.5M.

At the level of BiH the most important are two strategies that are mostly directed to the EU integration and by small part are related to young people in certain areas. These are: "The strategy of integration of BiH into the European Union" and "The Stabilization and Association Agreement."

## **4.7 Budget/Funding**

### **State level**

The BiH Council of Ministers in 2009 provided a funding of around 1,3M KM that was allocated to NGOs: part of this money was allocated for youth associations' projects while in 2010 that funds were 664.000 KM. Within the World Bank support, around 600,000 KM should be allocated to BiH for institutional support to the youth and the development of the YP BiH. It is also expected that that the institutional development in the youth sector will be supported through the European integrations and pre-accession funds.

### **Entities level**

In the RS for several years there has been a public call for youth organizations, which allocated funds amounting to around 500,000 KM. In 2009 this call was opened for the first time to activities of the students' councils and the RS student unions received 100,000 KM for their annual work.

There is no separate budget in the FBiH for financial support to youth associations or for the youth in general, although the Federation Ministry of Culture and Sport and the Federation Ministry of Education and Science announce public calls annually and then finance projects regarding youth and student organizations and promoting youth participation.

There are mostly no precise budgets for the youth at the cantonal level but they are integrated in the budgets of some ministries.

Many municipalities finance the youth projects through the public calls for NGOs or separate calls for the youth projects. In smaller municipalities the amount of the funds usually ranges between 1,000 and 5,000 per project. In larger municipalities, up to 8,000 KM are allocated for the projects, e.g., in Celinac; up to 20,000 KM in the Sarajevo Municipality Center, 50,000 KM in Novo Sarajevo, 70,000 KM in Prijedor, 200,000 KM in Banja Luka.

Overall, it may be said that there are budgets supporting the youth organizations and that there has been recorded progress in the quality of funding procedures and total amount of funds allocated for the youth needs.

## **5. Trends, needs, challenges and expectations**

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Since there is no youth policy in BiH it is for sure important to start as soon as possible to implement plans towards bringing such policy at State level.

Facing the needs and problems described in the "Analysis of the youth position and the youth sector in BiH" on the part of CCYI BiH, require multiple-side and well-coordinated approach by all actors responsible for youth. The Analysis provided very unfavorable assessment of existing relations, and therefore two are the prerequisites for future positive development:

- Improvement of cooperation within the country in most fields of the government sector, both vertically and horizontally.
- Multi-sectoral approach to youth problems and inter-sectoral cooperation among governmental, non-governmental and private sectors in all significant youth policies.

Through the analysis of various significant fields for the youth population, this study emphasizes several additional conclusions that must be taken into account for the overall understanding of the framework wherein the youth sector is developed in BiH:

- Insufficient institutional and legislative capacities in BiH cause delay in the EU accession process and in the reform implementation, causing also a failure to comply with commitments assumed by signing the international charters on the rights of children and youth.
- At all governmental levels there is a lack of programmatically approached support to the improvement of the condition of youth and in FBiH also a strategic approach to the support is missing.
- Systematic data collection is missing, which hinders a fact based creation and monitoring of youth policies.
- The activities adopted at the entity level are not being implemented.
- There is a lack of public space for the youth at the local level.

There is no harmonized legal definition of the youth population in BiH. In FBiH law on youth its determined that is that 15 years of age is the lower age limit and 30 years of age as the upper limit. This definition that is envisaged in the "Law on Youth Organization in the RS" said that person is young with 16 up to 30 years.

The intermediate government levels in BiH (entities and cantons) have most of the functional and fiscal competencies in the field of youth. However, the FBiH lacks youth policies both FBiH and RS lack youth action programs.

In addition, in the FBiH and in the 10 cantons within the FBiH there are no ministries in charge of the youth issues, whereas in the RS there is the Ministry for Family, Sport and Youth.

There is also a difference in the legislation on youth in the two entities: the proposal of the "Law on the Youth" has not been adopted in the FBiH, while in 2004 the RS adopted the "Law on the Youth Organization of the RS".

In both entities, financial support for youth comes to some sectors and through several ministries of the entity governments. Moreover, in the RS Ministry for Family, Sport and Youth there is an allocated budget for the youth issues, while such practice is not being implemented at both the FBiH level and 10 cantons level.

At the state level, within the BiH Council of Ministers, the youth issues are addressed in terms of coordination within the country, with the international community and with the non-governmental sector. Except for the CCYI BiH, there are no significant youth-related capacities within the BiH Council of Ministers. A positive step forward made in 2009 was that of placing the CCYI BiH within the Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH, in its Division for Science and Culture.

If the document Coordinated youth policy in BiH 2011-2015 is adopted by the end of 2011, that will be a positive step towards long term and systematic improvement of position of youth in BiH.

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