

NATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT SYSTEM REVIEW – BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

May 2022

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PREFACE

This review report was developed within the framework of reviews of career development support systems in Western Balkan countries, led by the European Training Foundation (ETF). The objective of this document is to describe existing capacities and development potentials of career development support systems to inform policy and practice enhancement, and future EU and ETF activities. For more information, please refer to the ETF-ILO publication “Developing National Career Development Systems”.

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1. Context and system overview

1.1 Background

Education, training and labour market systems are increasingly challenged by global developments such as digital transformation, globalisation, demographic change, climate change and global disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic. All these have a profound impact on the lives of individuals and on society. The development of technology, especially information and communication technology (ICT), has boosted economic globalisation and opened new opportunities for people, but it also brings new risks.

Amidst these developments with uncertain outcomes, some things are for sure: firstly, a fast-evolving world and a changing labour market require individuals to become real lifelong learners, to acquire new competences to cope with change and to adapt and further develop their competences. Secondly, there is a growing demand for valid information on the changing labour markets and future prospects. There is also a growing need for supporting people to manage their more frequent and complex transitions within and between education and work. In this context, there is a greater need than ever for career development support. At the same time, career development support – i.e. lifelong career guidance, and in particular career education, and career development support for workers – itself faces challenges in adapting to the new circumstances.

Against this background, the ETF has reviewed the state of national/state-wide career development support systems in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*¹, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. The objective of the review is to describe existing capacities and development potentials of career development support systems, and not just services or policies. This will inform policy and practice enhancement in a systematic approach, to support the selection of country priorities for further system development and future planning, and to inform ongoing and future EU and ETF activities, such as the Youth Guarantee and IPA. For more information about the conceptual approach to the reviews, please refer to the ETF-ILO publication “Developing National Career Development Systems”².

The review process was led by local experts under the coordination of the ETF and included (a) desk research and individual consultation interviews; (b) a national consultation meeting that involved all relevant stakeholders to clarify open questions from desk research, to add details and triangulate desk research findings by listening to different points of views from the Ministries of education, labour and youth, social partner representatives, youth organizations, practitioners, employer organizations, sector representatives, and researchers; (c) a review report finalization, translation and distribution, (d) discussions of the findings with national authorities to identify priority areas for further system development; (e) a wide validation event to discuss the review findings and how to move forward in priority areas identified; and (f) a final revision of the report that is being published in both English and BHS language(s).

This document is based on an analysis of available documents, meetings with key stakeholders, and public consultations. On 22 December 2021, a consultation meeting in a hybrid format was conducted with 37 participants / representatives of interest groups, including representatives of public employment services in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), a number of educational institutions (primary, secondary and higher education), ministries of education, representatives of the private sector and civil society organizations (CSOs).

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

² ETF-ILO (2021): <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/developing-national-career-development-support-systems>

1.2 Context

BiH is a country in south-east Europe, neighboring Serbia, Croatia, and Montenegro. Bosnia-Herzegovina is divided into two entities (the Republic of Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), and Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BDBiH). The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) is divided into 10 cantons and the cantons are further divided into municipalities. There are 79 municipalities in the FBiH. The Republika Srpska is administratively divided into 7 regions, consisting of 62 municipalities. The BDBiH is a separate administrative unit, that is in the common ownership of the two entities. According to the Census from 2013, the population of BiH is consisted of Bosniaks (50.1%), Serbs (30.8%), Croats (15.4%) and others (3.7%).³

With a population of 3.5 million (most recent census data from 2013), just over 70% are of working age (15–64 years), with young people (15-24 years) accounting for 11%. Emigration trends point to a steepening rise in numbers as young people, in particular, seek more opportunity away from home, with some 47% of young people planning to leave⁴. By way of example, some 400,000 people left Bosnia and Herzegovina in the ten years up to 2019⁵, while some estimations are even higher – up to 500,000 as concluded in the research of the Union for Sustainable Return and Integrations⁶. The BiH diaspora is among the largest in Europe: 51% of the resident population lives abroad, where the intention to emigrate is highest among those who are young, educated and come from low-income households⁷. Young people seek better opportunities away from home, as the emigration trends show an ongoing steep rise in numbers⁸.

BiH belongs to an upper middle-income group (World Bank classification)⁹ and has an emerging market and developing economy (International Monetary Fund classification) with a gross domestic product (GDP) USD 6,079 in 2020 (from USD 4,636 in 2010)¹⁰. The main contributors to the GDP in 2020 were wholesale and retail trade, accommodation and food service activities (26.87%), followed by services (22.98%) and industry (22.94.2%)¹¹. In terms of export potential, the important sectors of the economy are metals, minerals, wood processing and paper¹². It is estimated that some 34% of the GDP is accounted for by the informal economy. The profile of informal workers is predominantly rural (83% of BiH's informal employees work in the agricultural sector); young (50% under the age of 30), and from poorer families and under-educated¹³. The World Bank's Doing Business assessment of 2020 ranked Bosnia and Herzegovina 90th out of 190 countries¹⁴.

Table 1. Major employment indicators

³ <http://www.statistika.ba/>

⁴ UNFPA (2021). Anketa o emigraciji mladih iz Bosne i Hercegovine - Izvještaj o istraživanju, dostupno na https://ba.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/youth_emigration_survey_in_bih_bcs_final.pdf

⁵ ETF Report (2021). Bosnia and Herzegovina Education, Training and Employment Developments 2021

⁶ Radio Free Europe. BiH u 2021. godini napustio grad veličine Banjaluke, 29 December 2021. Available at: <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/bih-odlazak-porodice/31629794.html>

⁷ Efendic, A. (2016). Emigration intentions in a post-conflict environment: evidence from Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Post-Communist Economies*, 28(3), 335-352. DOI: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14631377.2016.1166800>

⁸ ETF (2021). Bosnia and Herzegovina: Education, Training and Employment Developments 2021. European Training Foundation

⁹ <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>

¹⁰ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=BA>

¹¹ https://bhas.gov.ba/data/Publikacije/Bilteni/2021/NUM_00_2021_TB_1_BS.pdf

¹² ETF (2021). Bosnia and Herzegovina: Education, Training and Employment Developments 2021. European Training Foundation

¹³ ETF Report (2021). Bosnia and Herzegovina Education, Training and Employment Developments 2021

¹⁴ World Bank (2019). Doing Business Report 2020. <https://www.doingbusiness.org/en/reports/global-reports/doing-business-2020>

Table Header	2017	2018	2019	2020
Population ¹⁵	3,351,534	3,323,929	3,300,998	3,280,815
Workforce (15+ age group) ¹⁶	1,329,020	1,319,663	1,336,172	1,297,577
Activity rate (% of 15+ age group) ¹⁷	42.6%	42.1%	42.1%	47.7% ¹⁸
Employment rate (% of 15+ age group)	33.9%	34.3%	35.5%	40.1%
Unemployment rate (% of 15+ age group) ¹⁹	20.5%	18.4%	15.7%	15.9%
Youth (15-24 age group) unemployment rate	45.8%	38.8%	33.8%	36.6%
Youth (25-34 age group) unemployment rate	28.5%	27.7%	23.3%	19.9%

Source: World Bank Doing Business report, World Bank databases, BiH Agency of Statistics

BiH applied for EU membership in February 2016. However, in order for the Commission to recommend the opening of EU accession negotiations, BiH has to fulfil the 14 key principles, covering areas of democracy/functionality, the rule of law, fundamental rights, and public administration reform²⁰. BiH continues to implement the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA). The EU block is currently BiH's main trading partner, accounting for 65% of the country's total trade in goods in 2020²¹.

A long-term analysis of labour market indicators shows a gradual improvement over the last decade, marked by rising activity and employment rates and a decreasing unemployment rate. However, the unemployment rates remain high. The key factors for the persistently high unemployment are²²: a lack of adequate employment possibilities in the economy, a mismatch of education curricula with labour market needs, and the high tax wedge, in particular for low-wage earners. Some key aspects of the labour market are²³: the low market participation of women and the youth, high long-term unemployment (about 75% of the unemployed have been looking for a job for more than one year), the lack of a rigorous process of evaluation of active labour market measures in terms of their efficiency, unreliable country labour market statistics due to substantial discrepancy between unemployment data according to administrative and according to survey-based data, low labour market mobility, the lack of qualified labour, higher public sector wages, and the high proportion of the

¹⁵ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=BA>

¹⁶ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLF.TOTL.IN?locations=BA>

¹⁷ BiH Agency of Statistics. Labour Force Survey 2019

https://bhas.gov.ba/data/Publikacije/Bilteni/2019/LAB_00_2019_TB_0_BS.pdf (all rates between 2017 and 2019 below this cell are from this source)

¹⁸ https://bhas.gov.ba/data/Publikacije/Saopštenja/2021/LAB_00_2020_Y1_1_BS.pdf (all rates below this cell are from this source)

¹⁹ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.NE.ZS?locations=BA>

²⁰ https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/bosnia-and-herzegovina-report-2021_hr

²¹ *ibid.*

²² *ibid.*

²³ *ibid.* (p. 52)

informal sector in the GDP (34% of the GDP corresponds to the informal economy²⁴). The European Commission's May 2019 report states that special attention should be paid to the "low quality of education and insufficient guidance towards current and future skills needed in the labor market." ²⁵

The COVID-19 impact on labour market caused a significant decline in employment in 2020, which later gradually increased. The ceasing of operations, whether temporary or permanent, was a step that affected approximately one third of employers in reaction to the crisis. Approximately 10% of employers decided to lay off employees as a way of dealing with the difficulties that they faced.

In relation to jobs, not all activities were equally affected. In some sectors, more workers were hired than laid off²⁶, and they consequently demonstrated resilience to the COVID-19 pandemic, at least as far as job retention is concerned. Information and communication activities (23.3% of total job growth in 2020), construction (23.1%) and transport and storage (20.5%) in particular contributed to keeping the labour market balanced. All other activities recorded negative differences between the number of new employments and the total number of employees whose employment contracts expired.²⁷

Although affected by the pandemic, there was significant optimism among employers about future prospects of their businesses. Labour market research (in the EU-funded project "Improving Labour Market Research"), shows that the percentage of employers that plan to hire new workers in 2021 was 48.1%. The highest percentage of employers planning employment come from the following two industries: administrative and support services (60.8% of the total number of employers in the industry sector), information and communication (59.3% of the total number of employers in the industry sector), and construction (58.9% of the total number of employers in the industry sector).²⁸

In BiH, the share of the active population is low in relation to the available labor force, and the number of inactive persons is higher than the total number of employed and unemployed persons. The activity rate of women up to 24 years of age is especially low. The structure of registered unemployment in Bosnia and Herzegovina is dominated by unskilled and low-skilled workforce, and as such very unfavorable.

In September 2021, the number of registered unemployed persons in BiH was 384 209, of which 220 949 were women. Compared to September 2020, the number of registered unemployed decreased by 8.1% (the number of men decreased by 9.2% and women by 7.2%). If we look at the registered unemployed by qualification structure, the largest number of unemployed persons²⁹ are grouped as follows:

- NKV (non-qualified worker) 102 096 or 27.00%, of which 60 015 are women (ISCED 1)³⁰;

²⁴ ETF (2021). Bosnia and Herzegovina: Education, Training and Employment Developments 2021. European Training Foundation

²⁵ European Commission (2019). Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for membership of the European Union. Available at <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/system/files/2019-05/20190529-bosnia-and-herzegovina-analytical-report.pdf>

²⁶ Information and communication, construction, transport and storage, professional, scientific and technical activities, water supply; wastewater disposal, waste management and remediation activities and production and supply of electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning

²⁷ Agency for Work and Employment of BiH (2021). "Labour Market Research in BiH 2020/2021. Thematic Report; Covid-19 Impact on Labour Market", available at <https://trzisterada.ba/index.php/2021/10/07/labor-market-research-in-bosnia-and-herzegovina-2020-2021-thematic-report-covid-19-impact-on-labour-market/>

²⁸ Agency for Work and Employment of BiH (2021). "Labour Market Research in BiH 2020/2021", available at https://trzisterada.ba/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/RESEARCH-OF-LABOUR-MARKET-IN-BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA-01_compressed.pdf

²⁹ BiH Agency for Statistics, Registered Unemployment, September 2021. 11 November 2021. https://bhas.gov.ba/data/Publikacije/Saopštenja/2021/LAB_03_2021_09_2_BS.pdf

³⁰ ISCED 0 = Early childhood education ISCED 1 = Primary Education ISCED 2 = Lower Secondary Education ISCED 3 = Upper Secondary Education ISCED 4 = Post-secondary non-Tertiary Education ISCED 5 = Short-cycle tertiary education ISCED 6 = Bachelors degree or equivalent tertiary education level ISCED 7 = Masters degree or equivalent tertiary education level ISCED 8 = Doctoral degree or equivalent tertiary education level

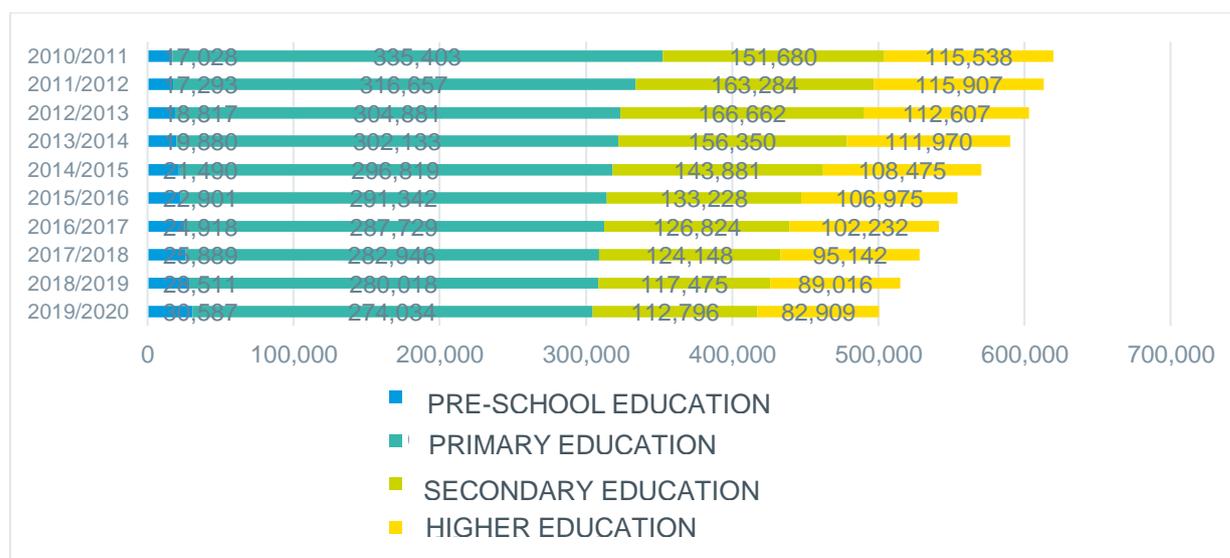
- KV (skilled qualified worker) 119 185 or 31.52%, of which 56 558 women (ISCED 2);
- SSS (Secondary School Qualifications) 109 178 or 28.88%, of which 69 900 are women (ISCED 3)

31.

In addition to the unfavorable structure of the unemployed, negative trends in the education sector are also noticeable. In the last 10 years, the number of children involved in pre-school education (ISCED 0) has increased only slightly (+13 559), while in all other levels of education the trend is declining. The most dramatic decline is related to children enrolled in primary education (ISCED 1), which is 61 369 lower than 10 years ago, while negative trends are noticeable among high school youth, as well as those enrolled in universities. The total number of pupils and students (ISCED 0, 1, 2, 3) decreased by 19.3% in the 2019/2020 school year, compared to 2010/2011. This decrease was visible in almost all levels of education (18.3% primary education, 25.6% secondary education and 28.2% higher education), except for preschool education where there was a growth of 79.6% in 2019/2020, compared to 2010/2011.

The reduction in the number of students is linear for all levels of education, so there are about 50 000 fewer students in primary education (ISCED 1), 40 000 fewer students in secondary education (ISCED 2, 3), and 30 000 fewer in universities (ISCED 6, 7, 8). Although it shows positive trends, preschool education is very underrepresented, which is evident in the comparison with the number of children included in the first-grade. Therefore, more pupils involved in pre-schooling means increased coverage, but not an increased number of children.

Graph: Trend for enrolment at all levels of education in the period 2010-2020



Source: Author based on available data from the Agency for Statistics of BiH

1.3 System overview

Career guidance is provided in institutions of education and by employment offices. People outside the education and employment system are largely unable to access career guidance services. When it comes to employed persons, companies have no obligation to deal with this issue, while human resource management exists most often in large companies and especially in foreign companies. Workers who are at risk of losing their jobs or have been fired can seek services in the PES, but most

³¹ Agency for Work and Employment of BiH (2021). <http://www.arz.gov.ba/statistika/mjesečni/default.aspx?id=6227&langTag=bs-BA>

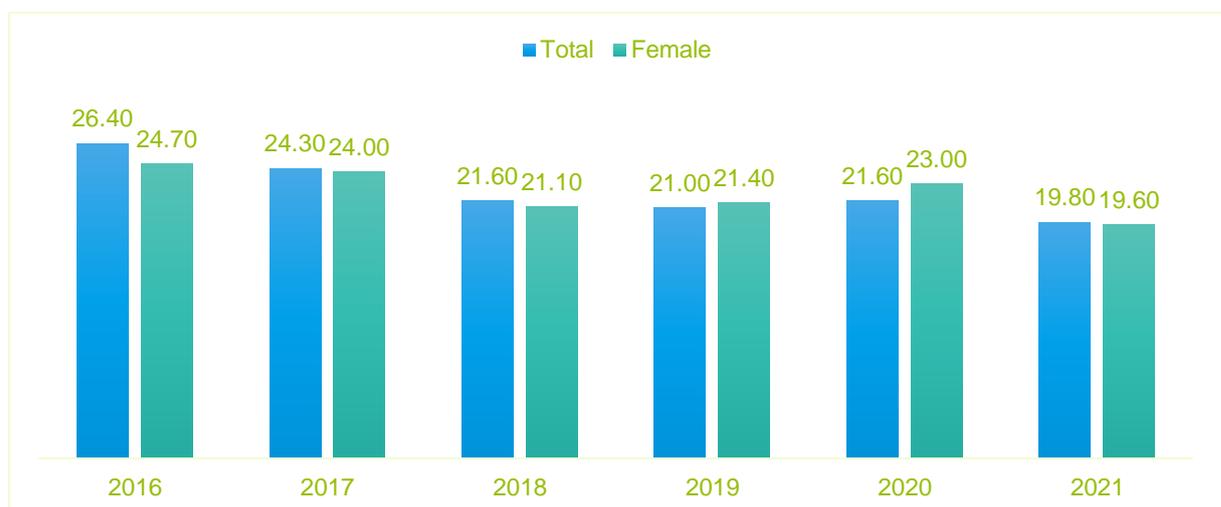
often career guidance is provided only after a person loses their job and registers at the employment office.

The education sector and the employment sector are organized in accordance with the Constitution of BiH, the constitutions of the entities, cantons and the Statute of the Brcko District of BiH and therefore under the full and undivided jurisdiction of the Republika Srpska, the ten cantons in the Federation of BiH and the Brcko District of BiH. At the FBiH level, competencies are mainly limited to coordination between cantons. The Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH (MoCA)³² is responsible for carrying out tasks and performing tasks that fall within the competence of the state in the fields of labor, employment, education, social protection and pensions, and fields related to policy and defining strategies at international level.

Each of the twelve administrative units (10 cantons, and two entities) with operational responsibilities for education and employment has its own ministry of education/labour, education/labour laws, education/employment budgets, determines its own education and textbook policy and other rights and obligations.

Although statistical agencies have started collecting data on young people not covered by responsible institutions/agencies in education, training or employment. There are no responsible institutions in BiH to deal with the causes and characteristics of young people at risk of social exclusion. Young people “outside the system”, who are not on the records of the PES, who are not in the education system or registered in any form of formal system including social services, educational institutions, employment services, etc., lack access to social inclusion activities and career guidance. The scale of the problem can be demonstrated by the World Bank, ETF or statistical institutions data on persons who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)³³. More specifically, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the NEET rate has decreased in the past 10 years and currently stands at 20.76%. This percentage is still very high and is among the highest in Europe. The only three territories that are close to the percentage of BiH are Italy with 18.2%, Montenegro with 18.8%, and Kosovo* with 31.2% of NEET in the population.

Graph: NEET in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2016-2021



Source: Author based on combination of ETF data and BiH Agency of Statistics data³⁴

³² Law on Ministries and Other Administrative Bodies of BiH (Official Gazette of BiH: 5/03, 42/03, 26/04, 42/04, 45/06, 88/07, 35/09, 59/09, 103/09, 87 / 12 and 6/13), Article 15

³³ World Bank data: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.NEET.MA.ZS?locations=BA>

³⁴ European Training Foundation (2021). Key Indicators on Education, Skills and Employment 2021. 20 October 2021

The available data indicate that the economic activity of the population is very unfavorable, as is the qualification structure of unemployed persons. Although the amount of NEET is decreasing, the number of those attending educational institutions is decreasing, which indicates not only economic, but also demographic challenges for the country. The NEET rate should not be regarded as the ultimate indicator of youth transition. In Western Balkan countries, 40% of young people aged 15–29 are still in school, while only less than 5% works. The EU value is 13.5%³⁵.

The complexity of the system does not necessarily mean a negative aspect. Decentralization means more institutions involved and closer services to citizens, but it also has its challenges because the administration is very costly and must justify its existence. Given the high degree of decentralization, career guidance services are provided in a decentralized manner. There are no generally accepted guidelines for providing them, so they are usually reduced to career information services. Funding for career guidance is in most cases covered through the salaries of school workers or public employment services. Access to services is provided only to those in the education or employment system, while some of the most vulnerable groups outside the system do not have adequate access to services. Advanced information technologies in career guidance are not implemented or used, nor are there defined quality standards to be used as a basis for quality assurance and control of services provided.

Given that NEETs are not recognized as a category, therefore there are no services for this group either. Young people outside the education (not involved in official education) and employment (not registered on the PES register or legally employed) systems are generally not covered by any services, nor are they provided with opportunities. In a bureaucratized system, it is very important to be included in official systems, as those outside the system are left to themselves and most often exist in precarious or very vulnerable circumstances. CSOs are the most active in this area, but the activities are mostly restricted to project-funding, and there are almost no permanent and self-sustainable activities.

³⁵ European Training Foundation (2021). YOUTH DISENGAGEMENT AND SKILLS MISMATCH IN THE WESTERN BALKANS. October 2021.

2. Policy framework

In accordance with the internal organization of BiH, the legislative framework on career guidance follows the constitutional principles and assigned competencies of the entities, districts and cantons. In this context, the legislative framework defining primary, secondary and higher education, adult education and the employment sector is of particular importance. The decentralized structure is visible through the fact that at least 62 laws define this area, most of which are related to cantons, where almost all cantons have five laws regulating pre-school, primary, secondary, higher and lifelong learning. Such a complex structure complicates the process of harmonization of different legal solutions, and at the same time complicates the process of analysis due to the different approaches to career guidance. During the consultation process, participants pointed out that career guidance was insufficiently addressed through the legal framework. Another important problem is the non-systemic approach to career guidance, so it is necessary to address the problems of coordination between different stakeholders through the system and legal framework and to adopt medium-term and long-term measures to support career guidance. Employers, as a stakeholder in the consultations, pointed out that they had implemented individual activities in this field, but in general they are trying to "put out the fire" when they look for quality workforce.

The appendix specifies a list of all laws that define education and employment sectors relevant to career guidance in BiH. From the perspective of this analysis, the coordination and cooperation, service provision, financing, access to services, use of technology and quality assurance of career guidance are analyzed. In general, the process of support for choosing a profession and continuing education is not specified in the regulatory framework in the education system of the FBiH. Career guidance in support of making a choice of occupation mostly relied on secondary education. In most (six) cantons, the organization of general and vocational education in the context of preparation for the labor market is defined (Tuzla Canton, Zenica-Doboj Canton, Bosnia-Podrinje Canton, Central Bosnia Canton, Herzegovina-Neretva Canton and Sarajevo Canton). Most of the career guidance activities are not regulated and transferred to the schools themselves, but the quality of activities depends quite much on the interests of the professional team who deal with career guidance within the school.

Schools cannot carry out career guidance activities on their own, so it is necessary to cooperate with professional bodies and institutions, primarily with public employment services. Although this cooperation is realized in the largest number of cantons, it is legally defined in three cantons: Posavina, Herzegovina-Neretva, and Canton 10.

We extend the analysis of policy and legal framework in the context of the existence of specific elements related to career development, including the determination of the competent authority, the concept of professional and career guidance, the link between education and the labor market, the flexibility of the curricula, the support for career choices and / or continuing education, career guidance programs and lifelong learning. Furthermore, the quality or at least the comprehensiveness of legal solutions is assessed. When these criteria are examined, the most comprehensive legal solutions in the field of primary education can be found in the Bosnia-Podrinje Canton, which includes all the above-mentioned criteria in its legal framework, followed by Central Bosnia and Zenica-Doboj. At the state level and the level of the RS, only a few topics have been covered. An analysis of the legislative framework in secondary education shows that the topic of career guidance mostly discussed in relation to secondary level education. The Federation of BiH is still dominated by the Bosnia-Podrinje Canton, followed by the Tuzla and Zenica-Doboj cantons. By including higher education in the analysis, it shows that, as in the previous two cases, the scope of career guidance issues varies from one administrative unit to another, and that, depending on the level of education, the issue is being addressed in different ways. Thus, for example, the framework law at the level of BiH does not define career guidance but leaves that area to the laws of administrative units or of institutions with responsibility for higher education. In the RS, the law promotes the creation of an environment for the career development of highly educated professionals in the RS. In some cantons, education is provided to supplement education with training,

courses, seminars and other forms of certified training. The BD envisages the introduction of elective subjects in the curriculum, as an option for increasing professional knowledge, education and general culture. Some laws define the establishment of alumni associations for the purpose of networking for graduates, and connecting with the labor market. Higher education legislation addresses career guidance in a number of cases, but even in the higher education context, insufficient attention is paid to all previously identified legal frameworks. In essence, higher education institutions show a high level of commitment, but the ways and effects of implementing these commitments remain unclear.

BiH is a signatory to numerous conventions and charters that prohibit discrimination in education and the labor market, the most important of which are: the European Social Charter, which guarantees equal rights to all, including the right to work, training, counseling, protection of minorities and many others, including fundamental principles and rights at work.³⁶

The Sustainable Development Agenda (Agenda 2030)³⁷, within the principle of "no one should be excluded", cites career guidance as one of the instruments of active labor market policy measures for groups at high risk of exclusion, such as inactive people aged 15-24.

Under Convention 142 on Career guidance and Vocational Training in Human Resources Development of the International Labor Organization (1975), ratified by BiH on 2 June 1993, BiH is committed to adopting and developing comprehensive and coordinated policies and career guidance programs. In this context, the public employment services system and career development services within public employment services play an important role, and currently public employment services at all levels are the only institutions that focus entirely on career development support, and as such are the most important provider in the whole spectrum. The services of the employment service mainly consist of the following:

- Individual counseling which includes counseling on defining goals and choosing an occupation (career guidance), professional training and preparation for employees.
- Career guidance of students in the final grades of primary and secondary schools.
- Career guidance and information for unemployed persons and persons seeking a change of employment.
- Vocational training of the unemployed, and
- Retraining.

Public employment services have been reformed in the last 5 years, and the reform was supported by the Youth Employment Project (YEP, implemented 2008-2022), funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). All public employment services have been involved in the reform process and have harmonized their services. The PES are provided to a good extent uniformly throughout BiH, although competencies are divided. The YEP has addressed career guidance twice, the first time was through five pilot schools where infrastructure and materials have been developed, and the second time through the "Zoom Youth Employment" program, when responsibility for career information in schools has been shifted from the PES to professional associates in schools. The PES have supported its implementation through counselors. According to the consultations meeting, YEP is one of the most successful labor market projects implemented in BiH.

As is the case with the competencies and the legislative framework, strategies in the field of education and employment have been created in accordance with the assigned competencies. Responsibilities for carrying out career development support activities are divided between institutions, depending on the target groups (e.g. persons in the education system, unemployed persons, employed persons or persons receiving support outside institutions). Accordingly, this analysis included a number of

³⁶ Postoji veliki broj konvencija i propisa u BiH u ovoj oblasti

³⁷ <https://www.un.org> >sustainable development

strategic documents addressing education, employment or lifelong learning issues. Some of the strategic documents have recently expired, but they have been taken into account as no updated strategic documents are in place. An overview of the strategic documents and the legislative framework is provided in the Appendix.

3. Coordination and Cooperation

3.1 Promoting coordination, cooperation and good governance

According to the feedback received from the participants during the consultation process and the working group for the coordination of career guidance in the project Education for Employment (E4E WG, funded by the EU in period 2020-2022), BiH can currently be assessed as at an early stage of a systematic approach to establishing coordination and cooperation on career guidance. In 2022, the E4E WG plans to define strategies in the field of career counseling. In June 2021, a working group for career guidance was appointed, with representatives of the ministries of the entities, the districts and all cantons. It is necessary to establish a closer cooperation with all parties involved, and all participants stressed the need for symbiosis, not only between the various ministries of education, but also between the ministries of labor, public employment services, CSOs, primary, secondary and tertiary educational sectors. During the consultation, the participants pointed out numerous examples of cooperation in BiH, which showed non-systemic, but rather ad hoc approaches. However, the activities being implemented were mostly viewed as successful activities. Primary schools cooperate directly with secondary schools and public employment services, and often cooperate with the non-governmental sector and organizations focused on career guidance. Cooperation with other stakeholders (primary public employment services), when it comes to the education sector, has intensified in recent years. It is also important to ensure the involvement of parents, given that parents often make decisions instead of their children or greatly influence their decision-making. The business community manages to partially implement projects and establish cooperation with various stakeholders. However, a systematic approach to this problem is needed to create the conditions for a much wider application. These changes resulted in changes to the law, and the establishment of pilot dual education activities in the Bosnia-Podrinje canton. In the context of the analyzed issues, the cooperation between the non-governmental sector and the employment bureaus was assessed as positive by the non-governmental organizations involved in the consultations. The CSOs are involved in these processes, but generally have difficulty finding long-term sources of funding.

The complexity of the career guidance process requires that public employment services support the implementation of the program in cooperation with school pedagogues and psychologists. Public employment services have a significant role in informing about the labor market, required occupations through workshops, regular advertisements, labor market research, and education and employment fairs.

Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina

As explained earlier, the key responsibilities are at the cantonal level, while the FBiH level of governance has coordination role. In the coordination efforts through the activities of the interdepartmental working group in 2014, the Ministry of Education and Science of the FBiH developed Strategic Directions for the Development of Career Guidance in the Federation of BiH for the period 2015-2020. Strategic directions have been operationalized through the Proposed Action Plan, which is the basis for modernizing career development activities. Strategic input did not result in a major shift in the implementation of activities.

In 2016, a “Memorandum on Cooperation in the Field of Career Guidance Development in the Federation of BiH” was signed between the Federal Ministry of Education and Science and six cantonal ministries of education: Una-Sana, Tuzla, Zenica-Doboj, Bosnia-Podrinje, Central Bosnia Canton, Herzegovina-Herzegovina Neretva and Sarajevo Canton. The aim of this cooperation is to create conditions and support systems in the education system that will enable each student and adult learner to make informed and fact-based decisions regarding the choice of further education, learning pathways and lifelong professional development in accordance with individual abilities, affinities, as

well as the requirements of the labor market, economic, social and technological development of BiH. The research on its application in practice has shown that the memorandum remained at the level of intention, i.e. that the activities were not significantly improved or harmonized between the cantons.

Cooperation with international organizations is very important. The Zenica-Doboj and Herzegovina-Neretva cantons use the Career Guidance Program in primary and secondary schools, the so-called Five-Phase Model (Five Steps to Choosing an Occupation), developed by the German organization GIZ. The Swiss Youth Employment Project (YEP) provided support in the development of the methodology "Zoom Youth Employment", and equipped five career classrooms throughout BiH.

Competences for the implementation of career guidance in the Federation of BiH can be divided between pedagogical institutes, ministries, secondary schools, teachers' and class councils. In most cases, pedagogical institutes and ministries adopt annual career guidance programs for students, which determine the teaching obligations and career guidance activities. Pedagogical institutes are an administrative organization under the jurisdiction of ministries of education. As ministries are organized on cantonal level, pedagogical institutes follow that logic of organization. According to educational laws, professional supervision in preschool institutions, primary and secondary schools is performed by the Pedagogical Institute. Professional supervision is performed generally, of the work, organization, teaching and other forms of educational work, the work of teachers and professional associates in all schools in order to continuously improve educational work, and to check whether students meet the standards of success set by the Agency for Preschool, primary and secondary education in BiH. **Pedagogical institutes** are also responsible for the development of professional development programs for teachers and all professional associates that are working in schools, however, in practice career guidance training is not implemented effectively.

In order to achieve the goals of the Bologna Process in terms of supporting students in the field of career guidance, according to available information on the website of the University of BiH, there are several centers for career development:

- Student Support Office of the University of Sarajevo
- Career Center of the Faculty of Economics in Sarajevo - Department of Career Counseling
- Career Counseling University of Mostar (within the organizational unit of the Faculty of Philosophy)
- Career Center, Džemal Bijedić University Mostar
- Career Development Services, Travnik International University
- Center for Student Career Development, Sarajevo School of Science and Technology
- Career Development Center of the Faculty of Economics in Banja Luka

Career development centers should cooperate with employers who are interested in hiring students of certain profiles, but in most cases this practice is not effectively implemented.

Republic Srpska

In the RS, the system is significantly simplified. The Ministry of Education and Culture of the RS has an enrollment policy in secondary schools in accordance with the needs of the labor market, and this process includes the Tripartite Advisory Council for Enrollment Policy, which includes the Union of Employers' Associations of RS, Chamber of Commerce of the RS, the Chamber of Entrepreneurship and the Public employment service of the RS.

The Economic and Social Council of RS (ESC RS) was established in 1997 by a special agreement of the social partners. The existence of the Council is regulated by the Labor Law ("Official Gazette of the RS", No. 1/16), and a special Law on the Economic and Social Council ("Official Gazette of the RS", No. 110/08) was adopted. The ESC RS has nine members, three of which are appointed by the

Government of the RS, and three members each are appointed by the representative association of employers and the trade union. The government has given this body a significant role, and career guidance is among the issues that the ESC RS deals with.

There are two public universities in the RS (Banja Luka and East Sarajevo), and several private universities. According to the data available on the websites of these universities, there are two career centers for students, both in Banja Luka:

- Entrepreneurship Center of the University of Banja Luka (Career Guidance - Career Development and Mentoring Service)
- Apeiron Pan-European University, Banja Luka (Career Development Center)

According to the mission of these career centers, they should serve as a basic point for connecting graduates and the economy, i.e. employers, but their coordinating role is rather limited in practice.

Brčko District BiH

Key coordination activities in the BD BiH are carried out by the Public employment service od BD BiH, which, in cooperation with the Government of the BD BiH, publishes a public call ""Career Guidance and Counseling Program" for non-governmental organizations to be in charge of conducting career guidance activities related to the profession development among young people. The project typically includes two-day educational workshops, labor market research and an employment fair at the Youth Center. The online approach to the work of the career counseling office includes online meeting activities, the application of psychological tests (250 tests in 2020), the Education and Employment Fair, and surveying employers about their needs. The Youth Center "Vermont" from BDBiH is an organization that has carried out these activities so far.

3.2 Key civil society stakeholders

At the end of 2020, a total of 27 432 associations and foundations were entered in the Collective Register of Associations and Foundations in BiH maintained by the Ministry of Justice of BiH. This includes organizations registered at the state, entity and cantonal levels, as well as those registered in the BDBiH. However, registration authorities at these different levels do not regularly make changes to the single database and as a result there is a clear risk that it will become out of date, even though it was only established three years ago.

According to available analyses, the financial sustainability of CSOs in BiH has been the weakest dimension of CSO functioning for years and has remained unchanged over the years. Most organizations rely on international donors for project-based funding. This was especially evident during the pandemic years as funds from public budgets were reduced or redirected to other sectors, primarily health and economic support.³⁸

Representatives of the non-governmental sector are also involved in the process of creating and implementing adult education policies. As important actors in promoting social inclusion, values outside of institutional education and other services they provide, and supporting local communities in implementing agreed adult education policies, CSOs work in close partnership with government and the business sector. Civil society organizations that deal exclusively with career guidance are almost non-existent. Based on the previously described situation, career guidance conducted by civil society organizations can be divided into two groups:

³⁸ Indeks održivosti OCD u BiH u 2020.godini. https://civilnodrustvo.ba/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/CSO-Sustainability-Index-2020-BiH-bhs-final_-compressed.pdf

- Project-based activities
- Activities with a priority focus on integrating into the labor market the target groups with which individual organizations work, such as alumni associations or associations that deal with some specific vulnerable groups.

The three key employers' organizations are the Association of Employers of the FBiH, the Union of Employers' Associations of the RS and the Council of Foreign Investors.

In the last few years, the Association of Employers of the FBiH has been working on the establishment of Employers' Groups based on activities. Primarily, these groups were established for the purpose of negotiating teams that would work on preparations for collective bargaining with trade unions, but also for easier communication with government officials on issues related to the activities from which these groups come. Some of the 12 groups are road transport carriers, the group of employers of freight forwarders / logistics, IT sector, financial business, construction, metal industry, etc. The association is very active in the implementation of projects, and as an example we can take the USAID WHAM project (implemented by USAID in period 2017-2022) "Vocational training and training with employment opportunities in the textile industry", where students are trained for the positions of tailors / seamstresses and shoe fitters, and for such occupations members of the Group in the field of textiles, leather and footwear at the Association of Employers of FBiH express a constant need.

The Union of Employers' Associations of the RS, as a partner of the Ministry of Education and Culture of RS and the Republic Pedagogical Institute of the RS, has been supporting the implementation of the reform of secondary vocational education since 2019. As a concrete contribution to the implementation of reform activities, the Union of Employers of the RS, with the support of GIZ (project "Vocational Education in the RS"), undertook steps to establish regional / local Education Councils, submitting the proposal to the Ministry of Education and Culture of the RS, the Republic Pedagogical Institute of RS and local communities in RS. The previous consultative meetings between representatives of secondary schools, employers and local governments, held in the period from 2019 to 2020, confirmed that there is a need to strengthen cooperation between all actors interested in local economic development³⁹.

The Council of Foreign Investors is a business association that represents the interests of foreign investors in BiH. Their activities are focused on improving the investment climate in the country in order to create better business conditions for foreign and domestic investors. The most important activities in the context of career guidance are the White Paper and the Business Barometer that explains the situation on the labour market and business functioning in general, from the perspective of foreign investors.

One organization that directly deals with career guidance is SOS Children's Villages BiH, which has successfully contributed to better employability of young people from alternative care and people in social need with the support of Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, of the Republic of Germany (BMZ) and Hermann Gmeiner Fond Deutschland (implemented 2016 – 2022). The activities they implement are closely related to the mission of SOS Children's Villages: "No child should grow up alone." Young people growing up in alternative care and young people with complex socio-economic problems often do not have adequate opportunities and access to the labor market due to a lack of skills and qualifications, and are often long-term unemployed and excluded from society, presenting low self-esteem, low social competences and with underdeveloped support networks. At the same time, professionals from local government institutions and organizations need additional skills and methods to successfully support young people in their integration into the labor market. After the successful implementation of the project of social inclusion and economic empowerment of young people, the SOS Children's Villages of BiH continue to work in the field of

³⁹ Union of Employers' Associations of Republika Srpska. Councils for Education of the Republic of Srpska. <https://unijauprs.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Savjeti-za-obrazovanje-u-Republici-Srpskoj.pdf>

strengthening the competencies of young people who are exposed to social risk within a broader regional initiative.

The YEPP's Youth Empowerment Enabling Prospects program (2016 -2022) aims to provide all the necessary support to young people to improve their life skills, employability skills, to become more competitive in the labor market and ultimately find decent employment.

The activities carried out within the program are:

- Life skills training and employability skills.
- Support for additional training and retraining.
- Training in the field of writing business plans (awarding grant funds for starting small businesses).
- Career guidance.
- Mentoring/Coaching with youth.
- Development of an individual development plan with each young person in accordance with the interests of young people and the needs of the labor market, including mentoring and monitoring of young people.
- Organization of internships, introductions to occupations and visits to companies.

The **Foundation Hastor** is a charitable and non-profit organization that has supported and empowered children and young people in their efforts to become self-aware leaders in their communities since 2006. The basic idea and goal of the Hastor Foundation is to provide a chance for young people to participate in the development of local communities and their own resources through their successful schooling and volunteer work. Some of the key activities of the Hastor Foundation, which are closely related to career guidance, are **financial assistance and mentoring by employers**. In addition to the financial aid-scholarships they award, there is developed mentoring or volunteer work for all scholarship holders (approx. 600 students). They pay special attention to the transition periods, i.e. transition from primary to secondary school and, then, from high school to college/university, where through various analyses (such as analyses of employment trends, analyses of data from the labor market, employment bureaus and BiH statistics agencies), they try to present what might be interesting career decisions for students in the future. The Foundation employs pedagogues, psychologists and sociologists in "student-mentors" teams, who later work on the different affinities of their scholarship holders, and then it is directed towards a "win-win" situation for the future of children, with the overall aim of making progress in BiH and, in particular, in the labor market that these students will enter.

PRONI Center for Youth Development is a non-governmental, non-profit and non-political organization founded in 1998. It was established with the aim of organizing and implementing education in the field of youth work. Their goal is to build and promote peace and activism among citizens. The work of the organization is carried out both at the state-wide level of BiH, and at the European level through various partnerships and networking with other non-governmental organizations and youth networks. PRONI is the founder of the largest network of youth clubs in BiH - 42 youth clubs, as well as the initiator and co-founder of the renovation of one of the largest youth centers in BiH - the Youth Center of the BD BiH. One of the programs PRONI has implemented in this area, in cooperation with USAID, is called "Young people are building the future in BiH"; with over 1,100 young people participating in BD and then expanded to north-eastern Bosnia. The project "Youth builds the future in the BD BiH" aims to improve the economic position of young people, increase employment and greater involvement of young people in projects to improve their local community in the BD. One scope of the project is directed to young people that have been in the process of looking for a job for a long time. These participants got a chance to develop their skills for seven days in PRONI, working on development of life skills and employability skills, learning and communication skills, as well as conflict management skills. Over the four-month period of the

program, young people were able to acquire work habits, and to prepare for situations when they actually get a job. The program covered about 12 modules of life and employability skills.

4. Main services and activities

This section summarizes some of the main activities implemented by various participants in BiH. Participants in the Consultation point out that in most cases, career information appears as the main activity / service, and there is a lack of career counseling and career guidance. Employers, schools, institutes and the non-governmental sector are the main participants who, each in their own field, implement various activities, services and projects in the field of career guidance.

From the point of view of the **education system** in the FBiH, the process of support for choosing a profession and continuing education is not specified. The choice of occupation is mostly related to secondary education. Educational institutions are most often involved in career information and counseling, open days, scholarship fairs, employment fairs, and, in rare cases, peer career guidance. Schools conduct career guidance for 9th grade students (age 14), and this most often includes: professional information for students and professional counseling, without psychological testing. However, the number of classes is insufficient to deal with this topic in fully, since career information is most often given in class meetings. Professional information is also provided to high school students in cooperation with universities. Within schools, tasks are divided between the teacher / psychologist or the school's professional team, teachers' councils and class communities. Scholarship fairs are also held, but there are no employment fairs organized under the auspices of the university.

There are **employers** who provide financial support, mentoring, or various forms of non-formal learning, and in order to ensure their growth and development they are involved in development projects that result in changes to legal frameworks and higher employment. However, a relatively small percentage of employers (29.4% in RS⁴⁰ and 35% in FBiH⁴¹) is ready to offer practical classes for pupils and students. Some employers provide non-formal forms of education for occupations that are currently in demand in the labor market to help the trainees to better position themselves in the labor market.

Public employment services and **CISO centers** conduct research and prepare information materials / publications for the purpose of informing about the market situation (e.g. publications such as "What after primary school?", "What after high school?", "Guide to occupations", "Steps in career choices", "Passport of Competences"), and carry out career information activities in primary and secondary schools. However, these activities were significantly reduced or not implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since two years ago, public employment services have been conducting labor market research with the aim of identifying occupations in-demand.

Finally, the **CSOs sector** supports career guidance through the implementation of various projects, such as on acquiring work skills, raising self-confidence, professional practice, support for self-employment, the implementation of individual development plans, and individualized support for employment.

⁴⁰ RS PES. Labour Market Research 2020/2021 in Republika Srpska. https://trzisterada.ba/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/LABOUR-MARKET-RESEARCH-IN-REPUBLIKA-SRPSKA-2020_2021_compressed.pdf (p. 61)

⁴¹ FBiH PES. Labour Market Research 2020/2021 in FBiH. https://trzisterada.ba/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/LABOUR-MARKET-RESEARCH-IN-THE-FEDERATION-OF-BiH-2020_2021-03-web-version_compressed-1.pdf (p. 66)

4.1 Education, training and work-based learning for youth

Table: Activities and competencies related to career guidance during education

Area	Main activities	Frequency and jurisdiction
General education (primary) education	<p>From 1st to 5th grades, definitions of different occupations are introduced</p> <p>In the higher grades, the functioning of the economy and the world of work is introduced</p> <p>Career information in the ninth grade</p> <p>Testing professional preferences</p>	<p>Through the subjects: My Environment, Bosnian/ Croatian / Serbian Language and Art Culture</p> <p>Through the subject: Society</p> <p>In the classroom classes, a few hours</p>
Vocational education and training (VET)	Practical classes	In vocational schools through vocational subjects, practical classes and preparation with the employer
Higher education	Career guidance and support	Career development centers and alumni associations where they exist should provide this type of support to students on request
Adult learning and education	Training for specific occupations	At the individual request of a potential trainee, specialized centers include them in training, most often through a well-known employer

The analysis of career guidance in schools indicates that despite the fragmented legal framework, which does not clearly define the entire support system, in practice fairly uniform practices have developed. Career guidance is implemented in different ways within the subjects, bearing in mind that learning outcomes are not clearly defined for career guidance. In primary school, especially in the grades from the first to the fifth, the occupations and interests of students are defined, while in the higher grades, the interests and abilities of students are elaborated. Elements of career guidance are processed in the lower grades through the subject My Environment, until recently known as Nature and Society, and in the higher grades through the subject Society and within the work of the Departmental Community. The program of career guidance is directly realized in the final grades of primary school in cooperation with pedagogues or psychologists, and professional institutions.

High schools are obliged to monitor the preferences and abilities of students, and to guide them in accordance with the needs of the labor market and the career guidance program. Through secondary education, emphasis is placed on competencies, as well as opportunities, that are both key factors for deciding on career paths. Lectures, written and artistic works, practical classes, and visits to employers and institutions are used as learning methods.

Within schools, tasks are divided between the teacher / psychologist (or the school's professional team including the pedagogue and speech therapist), the teachers' council and class meetings (communities). In all cantons, the pedagogical job has been determined by pedagogical standards. The Teachers' Council should monitor the implementation of the program of career guidance of students, which should be implemented in the class community class. Class communities contribute to the personal development of students. Class meetings are a kind of forum in the classroom, they can hear the voice of students, you can hear ideas from peers, in an atmosphere where there is respect. It is expected that in class meetings (aka communities) they would work on the direct implementation of the a career guidance program for students.

Career guidance activities are conducted in the final grades of high school, at the end of the school year, where information focuses mainly on the possibilities of further education, because higher education institutions are facing a decreasing number of students and are interested in promoting their offer to their target group. In vocational schools of the third degree, one or two classes of the class community are given some career guidance, dealing with topics related to the labor market, preparation for the labor market, writing a CV, and preparation for interviews with employers.

Teachers are not sufficiently involved in the process of professional monitoring, guidance of students, and the cooperation with other institutions outside the school is not sufficiently developed.

In all schools in the RS, cantons in the FBiH, BD BiH, the Annual School Work Program also defines career guidance. The school annual work program is prepared by the school management in cooperation with the teaching staff, and it is often "rewritten" from year to year due to the lack of enthusiasm of individuals who work with children and youth.

As regards work on career guidance in primary and secondary schools in the RS, the work is defined by the Law on Primary Education (Official Gazette of the Republic of Srpska 44/17), where during primary education the school is obliged to monitor student interests and preferences. Schools also give career guidance for students. Article 108 of the Law provides that a teacher performs tasks related to the career guidance of students, and Article 109 provides that a pedagogue and a psychologist give career guidance for students. It must be noted that in the Pedagogical Standards and Norms, as well as in the Law on Secondary Education, career guidance is not mentioned.

In the FBiH, the existing practice of career guidance in schools is mainly related to the work of school pedagogues in this field, for whom this is only one of the work tasks defined by law. Occasionally, one-on-one counseling is provided usually at the request of students. Testing for professional preferences is a technique used in schools, and it is used to assess the potential for further education, or jobs for which the student has preferences. However, due to the lack of professional staff, it is not overly widespread in schools. Batteries of tests used to examine students' professional preferences can only be applied by graduate psychologists, who are not necessarily part of the school's professional team.

As regards evaluation methods for career guidance, one of them includes the career guidance list, which consists of a student and a school pedagogue and psychologist, and the list contains three proposals for enrolling in a suitable high school. In most cantons, in addition to the certificate of completion of the sixth, seventh and eighth grades of primary school, part of the pedagogical documentation is a sheet on career guidance. Upon completion of primary education, a diploma should be issued as a supplement - a certificate of career guidance. Unfortunately, most schools do not have a professional team of at least a pedagogue and a psychologist who could work with the student to fill in the career guidance list. In addition, high schools are not obliged to allocate a certain number of points based on this list, so it is rarely used.

In the BD BiH, the Employment Service, as part of its program tasks, provides career guidance and counseling on the choice of occupations for secondary and primary school students. The main goal of career guidance of the PES is to provide the necessary information for choosing and enrolling in high school or college, according to the needs of the labor market, as well as information on vacancies and employment opportunities.

A particular feature of educational institutions in the BD BiH is that each primary school has at its disposal all the members of the professional team in which they are involved: pedagogue, psychologist, social worker and special educator. In cases where there is no full team, staff from other schools may come to a school. In primary schools, the topic of career guidance from 1st to 9th grade is covered in class community classes, with the possibility of holding psychological tests in relation to professional interests in the 9th (final) grade. It is important to note that in the BD BiH there is close cooperation between primary and secondary schools on this issue, where the professional team from primary school for each final grade students makes a recommendation for enrollment in secondary school which the professional teams in secondary schools take into consideration.

Higher education institutions are mostly engaged in career development by encouraging potential students to enroll in certain faculties. Faculties offer career perspectives to their students by describing the connection of the department with the labor market, opening incubators, cooperating with employers, student standards, possible participation in projects, and the like.

Regarding the professional guidance for students in the final grades of primary and secondary schools in the FBiH, most cantonal public employment services provide professional information once a year in primary and secondary schools in the FBiH to inform students about the importance of further education.

In 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic, the cooperation between the Federal Employment Institute and the education system, in terms of career guidance for students before continuing their education was restricted in most public employment services. The activities were based on exchanging data on occupations with the most vacancies. Although the activity of career guidance was limited by the lack of direct contact with students in the final grades of primary and secondary schools, the cantonal PES adjusted the form of exchange of information, making leaflets and sending information to schools and publishing information on the most popular occupations on the web pages of PES. This ensured that their doors were open to all interested parents and students who needed more detailed career guidance.

In the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, PES psychologists conducted psychological testing for 35 high school graduates in order to assess their ability and interest in continuing their education during 2019 and 2020. This is a very positive development, but it should be developed further to offer service for all interested graduates. Cooperation with educational institutions also takes place through trade fairs, school visits to PES, and others. Classes on career guidance, which were to be held in several primary and secondary schools in the area of Mostar and Citluk in March and April 2020, were canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Informative materials on the review of the situation in the labor market, surplus and deficit occupations and employment opportunities were prepared and submitted in printed form to all primary and secondary schools in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton.⁴²

The Law on Primary Education of the RS provides that career guidance tasks are the obligations of a pedagogue or psychologist. The law does not set out duties and obligations in the process of career guidance. It is expected that in 2022, regulations on the standards of the work of pedagogues, social workers and special educators will be developed, which could also include the area of career guidance.

Professional guidance in the RS is overlooked through the introduction of various forms of teaching such as additional and optional teaching. Special support is provided for talented students in the form of individual work, research, strengthening certain skills and competencies that are deemed necessary.

The Public Employment Service of the RS has a significant role in mediation in employment, public information on employment opportunities and conditions, counseling on job selection (career guidance), vocational training and preparation for employment, implementation of employment programs, but also in career guidance for students in final grades and high schools. The RS PES, in cooperation with schools with the previously obtained consent of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the RS, continuously implements and monitors the implementation of measures in the field of career guidance, information on career choices, career planning and development of lifelong learning. The aim of this measure is to increase the competence in decision-making regarding the choice of occupation / educational path of all interested individuals and groups of students, to encourage successful professional adaptation and career development of individuals. According to the report on the work of the RS PES for 2019, 4 098 students in the final grades of primary schools in 212 classes throughout the RS are directly involved in this activity in the Center for Information, Counselling and Training (CISO), as well as 345 students in the final grades of secondary schools through professional

⁴² Report on the work of the Cantonal Employment Service of the Herzegovina-Neretva for 2019 and 2020

staff. for this activity trained by the Institute's associates through the workshops "Zoom Youth Employment". The Employment Action Plan in the RS annually plans the number of students of primary and secondary schools in the RS to be included in this measure. In 2020, the plan was not implemented because of the cessation of activities due to the state of emergency and the COVID-19 pandemic.⁴³

The website of the PES also contains the brochures "My Way to the World of Work" and "Guide to Occupations", and additional and useful materials in the field of professional information.

Regarding the regulation of career guidance in primary and secondary schools in the BD BiH, it is regulated by the Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools of BD BiH⁴⁴. Article 39 (Content of the annual program) mentions "other jobs, such as work on career guidance of students, the schedule and content of extracurricular and other activities in the school". Article 48 (Enrollment of students with special needs) refers to a "decision on determining the type and degree of disability in student development determines the type and degree of disability, appropriate rehabilitation and career guidance of students" although there is little detail. Very similar to the cantonal laws on education in the above-mentioned law in the Brčko District of BiH, In Article 131 (Class Council), it states that it "works directly on the career guidance of students". The pedagogical institution performs professional supervision, among other things, the implementation of career guidance tasks, but there is no institution that coordinates the process among institutions or practitioners.

There are a number of key challenges in implementing career guidance through institutions at different levels in the BiH, among which the basic one is that career guidance is not organized systematically, that there are no clearly related activities or links between activities in education and employment institutions. To the greatest extent, the implementation of activities is reduced to the enthusiasm of the professional team that implements it, so the scope, quality and manner of implementation varies from institution to institution. Schools implement programs in different ways, through class community classes, through regular classes, electives, free activities, extracurricular activities, etc. Through career guidance, cooperation is encouraged between schools and others, such as the PES, third-level faculties, economic organizations, and the civil society sector.

4.2 Support for the unemployed and for NEETs

The main focus of public employment services is to work with their client - the unemployed. According to the new model of working with service users, all public employment services provide counseling to the unemployed. Unemployment counseling consists of three groups of tasks, each with specifics and different methods of implementation:

- information and registration / application;
- profiling and counseling the short-term unemployed, including the development of an individual employment plan;
- activation of the long-term unemployed, including the development of an individual employment plan.

In practice, all unemployed people should be involved in the counseling process, but this activity is primarily carried out with new applicants because they are more motivated to look for work and more willing to follow the instructions of counselors.

We distinguish two types of counseling:

⁴³ Zavod za zapošljavanje Republike Srpske (2021). „Izveštaj o radu za 2020.godinu“.

⁴⁴ Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools of the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina ("Official Gazette of the Brčko District of BiH", No. 04/13, 48/16 and 22/17).

- Individual counseling is conducted by an expert counselor for employment, using the interview technique, and the basic tool is the Individual Employment Plan (IEP), by which the two parties undertake commitments in order to achieve the desired goal of counseling.
- Special methods used by most developed PES are used for group counseling, especially when it comes to acquiring the skills of active and efficient job search, e.g. active job search workshops, Job Club.

In the FBiH, in Article 5 of the Law on Mediation in Employment and Social Security of the Unemployed⁴⁵ it is prescribed that the Federal Employment Institute is in charge of: providing assistance in the implementation of career guidance, training and retraining programs for the unemployed and their re-employment in appropriate jobs. While the same law stipulates that the cantonal PES are responsible for "implementing programs of career guidance, training and retraining of unemployed persons and their re-employment in appropriate jobs". According to the Rulebook on records in the field of employment, it is prescribed that the Federal Employment Institute is in charge of: providing assistance in the implementation of career guidance, training and retraining programs for the unemployed and their re-employment in appropriate jobs. While the same law stipulates that the cantonal PES are responsible for "implementing programs of career guidance, training and retraining of unemployed persons and their re-employment in appropriate jobs. According to the "Rulebook on Records in the Field of Employment" Cantonal public employment services carry out activities of group information, individual counseling, individual consultations and activities in order to prepare for work in order to actively look for work and find employment faster for the unemployed. These activities are carried out in ten cantonal PES, within which there are 79 municipal employment offices⁴⁶. The goal of career guidance in PES is to contribute to a higher level of employability. Acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills reduces the gap between the needs of employers and individual knowledge and characteristics.

While in 2020, activities in municipal employment offices were largely conditioned by the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020 individual counseling services were provided for 40 017 unemployed persons. According to the report on the work of the Federal Employment Institute for 2020, counselors in ten (10) cantonal PES with the unemployed have developed as many as 19,685 individual employment plans (IEP).⁴⁷

In the cantonal PES, in 19 bureaus, an active employment measure has been established - the Job Club. The Club conducts group counseling for the long-term unemployed, primarily young people aged 18 to 30 who have been registered for more than 6 months, and all long-term unemployed persons regardless of age who have been registered for more than 12 months. These activities were carried out mainly before the start of the pandemic, so in 2020 a total of 4 593 people participated in info seminars, 88 people in trainings for active job search (Job Clubs).

There are several federal / cantonal youth employment programs. Some of the programs are "Opportunity for All", co-financing programs for the employment of under-35s, internship programs, as well as programs for additional training and the acquisition of various qualifications.

The PES of the RS acts in accordance with the Law on Employment Mediation and Rights during Unemployment ("Official Gazette of the Republika Srpska", No. 30/10, 102/12 and 94/19). Among others, they conduct mediation in employment, provide public information on employment opportunities and conditions, **counseling on job search** (career guidance), professional training and preparation for employment, implement employment programs, and conduct organizational work. The Action Plan for

⁴⁵ "Official Gazette of FBiH", No. 41/01, 22/05, 9/08

⁴⁶ Federal Employment Institute (2021). Report on the work of the Federal Employment Institute for 2020

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Employment in the RS envisages the inclusion of all active job seekers in counseling work, which includes individual counseling and the determination of an individual employment plan. There are 10 Job Clubs at 10 locations for group counseling within the Employment Bureau.

There is one CISO in all branches of the PES of the RS. The CISO has a significant role in career guidance and counseling on further career choices in primary and secondary schools.

Career counseling activities in higher education institutions are generally on the margins, and there is significant room for improvement⁴⁸. Within the mentioned measures, the following activities were implemented: collecting, organizing and placing information on the situation on the labor market; analysis of the needs of the employer and monitoring of changes in the labor market in the region and beyond; individual, as well as direct and group informing of students in the final grades of primary and secondary schools. The information was provided in CISOs, where 1 768 people got individual counseling services during 2020.

In the BDBiH, the Law on Employment during Unemployment defines employment activities, among others, and it refers to "career guidance and choice of occupation". Career guidance and career education of young people consists of timely and comprehensive information on the situation on the labor market through direct visits to the final grades of primary and secondary schools. The PES of the BD BiH paid special attention to career guidance and counseling and in its work plan. It defined continuous programs for working with students in the final grades of primary and secondary schools, and that program includes: career guidance (career guidance and counseling of students in the final grades), an Employment and Education Fair, a career counseling office that has been operating and performing regular activities since April 2020 in online format.⁴⁹

In order to create an adequate policy that addresses NEETs, it is necessary to recognize the group within the policy development arena. Although the Agency of Statistics of BiH collects data on NEET, they are not published within the LFS, there is no research, and there are no strategies or action plans that address this issue. Furthermore the causes of NEET status and characteristics of young people at risk from social exclusion are not analyzed. The Survey on Income and Living Conditions could provide important data in this respect but it is not conducted on a regular basis. Civil society organizations could play a significant role, especially for groups of young people who are not on the records of the PES. Adult education centers have a special role to play between the public services and the NGO sector, as they target young people who do not necessarily have to be institutionally covered.

⁴⁸ Zavod za zapošljavanje Republike Srpske (2021). „Izvještaj o radu za 2020.godinu“.

⁴⁹ "Official Gazette of FBiH", No. 41/01, 22/05, 9/08

5. Funding

As career guidance is implemented in support of other activities, budget analysis can be done in relation to institutions that implement career guidance:

- schools
- public employment services
- CSOs

In schools and public employment services, funds are allocated within the standard costs of institutions, through salaries, pedagogues, psychologists or counselors. CSOs are almost entirely dependent on donor funds, given the unsustainability of organizations.

Adult education is a partnership activity that involves the financial participation of all stakeholders. The model of financing in adult education is not systematically regulated and identified as such. Significant public funds for financing adult education are allocated in the field of labor and employment, mainly through active employment measures implemented by public employment services. Also, there is ad hoc funding of adult education from other entity bodies and local communities, but there is no continuous and systematic funding.

There is occasional funding for certain training and retraining programs for workers by international organizations, i.e. donors, who provide funds in various fields. To the greatest extent, this funding relates to non-formal education, and has no continuity but stems from project activities that have a limited duration. Certain sectors are a special focus from time to time, and in recent years projects have been mostly related to the wood and metal sectors.

The Law on Professional Rehabilitation, Training and Employment of Persons with Disabilities ("Official Gazette of the Federation of BiH", No. 9/10) stipulates that the Fund for Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities implements a policy of development and improvement of professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities. It co-finances programs for the development of companies for the employment of persons with disabilities, vocational workshops, and it finances and co-finances programs, etc.

In both entities, business entities are obliged to employ persons with disabilities in proportion to the total number of employees, i.e. to employ one person with disabilities per 16 employees, but the amount of special contribution that employers pay to funds in case they do not meet the quota is different. If they do not fulfill the stated obligation, business entities in the FBiH are obliged to pay a monthly amount of 25% of the average salary in the Federation for each person with disabilities they were obliged to employ. In the RS, an employer who is subject to this obligation, but has not fulfilled it, is obliged to pay a special contribution to the account of public revenues of the RS in the amount of 0.2% of the paid monthly gross salary of all employees. It is very often that employers, including public institutions, rather accept to pay penalties than to hire disabled persons.

Since CGC services are generally underdeveloped in BiH, the situation with people with disabilities is even worse and less developed and is not systematically regulated or affiliated with any institution. Mostly, it is not implemented at all. Existing initiatives are mostly individual efforts. For example, the transition plan for disabled persons has been developed in cooperation with experts in the field of pedagogy and the association "Life with Down Syndrome of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina" and is used sporadically for now. Introducing it in the laws that define primary and secondary education would change the practices of career guidance and orientation for disabled people. If the circumstances of disabled people do not improve and professional support is not provided, the situation will worsen.

6. Access

In line with the services provided in the career guidance system, it is easy to determine who has access to the services. Most of them are school children and youth, and unemployed persons from the records of public employment services. Occasionally, identified vulnerable groups outside the system have access to CGC, but these are mostly project-based activities implemented by CSOs. Based on the available data, it can be concluded that the most vulnerable categories of children in terms of access to education, and thus career guidance are⁵⁰:

1. Children with special needs;
2. Returnee children, children from families in a state of social need;
3. Roma children; and
4. Juvenile delinquents, especially in the case of access to secondary education.

Children with special needs, more precisely, children who have developmental difficulties or suffer from chronic diseases, and are therefore sentenced to stay in hospital or at home, are groups of children who sometimes either do not enroll or drop out of primary education. Children from families with social needs also drop out of high school to a significant percentage, but exact data are not available. State allocations to help such families are insignificant, and, according to some estimates, between BAM 2 000-3 000 (app. EUR 1 000-1 500) is spent on one year of high school education⁵¹. Families in which the parents are unemployed, or only one parent works, especially in rural areas have difficulty in enabling their children to continue their education. The organisation **Save the Children** implemented the EU funded project the **Bright4All** (2017-2020) aimed at preventing early school leaving in BiH, as they recognized this as a serious problem.

Although there are no legal barriers to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the activities of the PES, in practice, persons with disabilities are not largely involved in the activities of the PES. However, as previously described, the funds for professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities mostly deal with this issue and in the FBiH they are partly financed by the Federal Employment Institute.

In the overall educational structure of the population, women are in a much more unfavorable position than men, which puts them at a disadvantage in the further development of their careers, in terms of finding a job, income, quality of life, social status. The participation of vulnerable groups in active employment measures should, as a rule, be the result of career guidance, i.e. individual counseling and a developed individual employment plan. The Federal Employment Institute in all co-financing programs for employment and self-employment increases the amount of subsidies by 10% if unemployed females are employed or self-employed⁵². In order to promote and develop women's entrepreneurship, the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2018 adopted the "Action Plan for the Development of Women's Entrepreneurship 2018-2020", coordinated by the Gender Center of the FBiH. Action Plan set the following goals: -Improve the analytical basis for monitoring and encouraging the development of women's entrepreneurship; -Provide systemic support for the development of women's entrepreneurship; -Strengthen the promotion and networking of women entrepreneurs.

Within the FBiH Government program "Agriculture", a special measure was introduced for women who applied with rural development projects, as well as a measure to support the employment of

⁵⁰ BiH Council of Ministers. Directorate for Economic Planning. BiH Social Inclusion Report. Annual Report 2017 Sarajevo, December 2018

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² FBiH PES

unemployed persons, especially victims of domestic violence, according to which the basic amount of co-financing is increased by 10%. The most significant efforts are made by the FBiH PES, which in all the years of implementation of the Action Plan had a program called "Employment of Women", which, for example, in 2018 was used by 775 companies and 1 466 users. With the technical support of the EU project "Improving Labour Market Research", this measure was evaluated. The percentage of women employed at the time of the evaluation (12 months after expiration of the co-financing contract) is 57.5%, out of which 34.2% remained with the same employer at the same or a new job, and 23.3% continued to work at a new job with another employer.

For example, in 2021, the PES of the RS implemented the "Program of employment and self-employment of target categories in the RS. The program envisages the employment and self-employment of 950 persons from the target group of the Program, who are looking for employment and are registered. The target groups of the program are people over the age of 40, women victims of domestic violence and war torture, residents of homes that have finished school, and unemployed people in rural areas or who have been on the register for more than six months. The PES annual report for 2021 shows that the program has been used by 488 males and 555 females. Of these, 110 were self-employed females against 98 self-employed males, and 445 were females employed in companies against 398 males employed in companies.

The YEP project developed the concept and methodology of the Mobile Bureau in Bosnia-Podrinje Canton, during 2015. Namely, the PES reorganized its services and introduced the Mobile Bureau that provided PES services in dozens of villages in the Canton, including administrative, career guidance and consulting services for unemployed. The Mobile Bureau represents a unique and innovative approach of the PES that enables the most vulnerable categories of unemployed persons to access the PES services. Two years after its testing the Mobile Bureau has been implemented in the BDBiH as well. This service is one of the successful approaches for addressing the needs of NEETs.

Employee career management has significant differences in the private, public and education sectors. With the lack of manpower, the interest of companies to find workers and get the best out of each individual employee is growing. However, only large and fast-growing private sector companies have a human resource management function, while it is not represented in most others, and workers are in most cases left to themselves and market laws.

Over time, vulnerable groups have less and less chance of getting involved in support mechanisms. Long-term inactivity is not only caused by a lack of means of subsistence and exclusion from social flows. Over time it causes disengagement, as long-term vulnerability causes a loss of hope and enthusiasm, a lack of skills to enter the labor market, and at the same time they lose interest in retraining or training. The Labour Force Survey recognized this group as discouraged workers - people who want a job, are available for work, but do not work and do not look for a job because they think they cannot find it.

The PES system ensures different rights for unemployed persons by keeping their records inaccurate and they include people who are not looking for a job. On the one hand, that complicates the work of counselors because they have a large number of clients who do not want services, but on the other hand it leaves those people in systemic flows which prevents their complete alienation. A typical measure for this group of people are public works, implemented by the PES of the RS and FBiH. Public works are service contract-based activities that create an opportunity for the multiple use of funds to help the population, directly through work activation and indirectly through the development of infrastructural, social, communal, educational and other local community services⁵³.

⁵³ Garibija, M. (2020) Public Works in the Local Community - Opportunity for Economic and Social Development of Local Communities, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, August 2020

7. Use of Technology

The use of technologies in schools, as research has shown, is mostly based on power point presentations for students.

As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, a large number of pedagogues, psychologists and teachers faced a lack of knowledge, competencies and technical conditions for accessing online work with students in primary and secondary schools, and career guidance almost died out in these conditions. As a consequence of the pandemic, in the conditions of online teaching, “non-priority” subjects such as class community, and thus career guidance , were most often “thrown out” of the curricula.

Given that the COVID-19 pandemic restricted the work of public employment services in cooperation with schools, which until then was organized in the form of visits to primary and secondary schools, some of the PES worked on making information leaflets with information on deficit and surplus occupations, and published them on the PES website or sent them by mail or e-mail to schools.

There is significant information on the situation in the labor market regarding surplus and deficit occupations in the RS, FBiH and BD BiH on the website of the PES, as well as labor market surveys based on harmonized methodology drawn up with the technical support of the project "Improvement of labor market research", funded by the European Union.

Regarding the equipment of the PES in BiH, technologies are reduced to the use of computers in group work rooms, for the purpose of creating a CV, searching the internet, etc., and these resources are located within the previously mentioned CISO centers or Job Clubs. This technical equipment is available to unemployed persons and students who receive group counseling.

The PES BD BiH in cooperation with the NGO Vermont has created a website that virtually provides information on career guidance for students and unemployed people, as well as those who want to change careers, and it even offers psychological testing services for those interested. (<https://trebadaznas.com>).

8. Quality of provision of career development support services within a culture of continuous improvement

8.1 Standards

In decentralized systems, the biggest challenge is to maintain the quality of services at a certain and satisfactory level, i.e. to develop standards and criteria for the implementation of career development programs. Career guidance is mostly related to the education system, and it is necessary to ensure quality monitoring at that level. In essence, the participants in the Consultation pointed out that quality assurance is not at a high level, and significant improvements are needed in this area. The problem of using, i.e. defining only the process of monitoring and quality assurance in terms of roles and responsibilities is something that needs to be addressed in the near future. Participants pointed out that, regarding activities that are implemented, evaluation questionnaires are mostly conducted, while the evaluation of impact and performance is mostly not conducted, or the results of such evaluations are insufficiently used to improve quality.

Interdepartmental cooperation in the field of education and employment policies is established and implemented in accordance with applicable regulations, primarily related to monitoring the implementation of international obligations, harmonization of sectoral policies and legislation, monitoring and evaluating the effects of sectoral strategies, and rational planning, management and use of public funds of activities in the field of adult education. Institutional cooperation is based on the principles of respect for constitutional and legal competencies in the field. Considering the competencies, the most important coordinating role is that of the BiH, which prepares documents with the aim of defining common content for plans, priorities or quality standards, and the most important of these are:

1. Plan on Guidelines for Labor Market Policies and Active Employment Measures in BiH.
2. Platform for the Development of Preschool Education in BiH 2017-2022.
3. Higher education development priorities 2016-2026.
4. Strategic Platform for the Development of Adult Education in the Context of Lifelong Learning in BiH 2014-2020.
5. Priorities for the Integration of Entrepreneurial Learning in Education Systems in BiH for the Period 2021-2030.
6. Improving the Quality and Relevance of Vocational Education and Training in BiH 2021 – 2030.
7. Improving the Quality and Relevance of Vocational Education and Training in BiH - based on the Riga Conclusions - (2021-2030).

Pedagogical institutes for the levels responsible for regulating education (RS, cantons and the BD BiH) deal to some extent with issues related to the quality and improvement of career advancement. Namely, pedagogical institutes determine the methodology of drafting the Annual Plan and Program of Schools, and the Annual Program contains all goals and tasks of the school, including the plan and program of professional development, plan of free activities, i.e. extracurricular activities, career guidance, etc. It is important to emphasize that the annual work programs of the schools do not list specific activities of career guidance, except in the part related to the tasks of pedagogues. Most cantonal laws on primary and secondary education state that career guidance in school is taken care of by the teachers' council. Therefore, pedagogical institutes prescribe the content of the annual plans of primary and secondary schools, while career guidance should be led by teachers' councils.

However, in practice it has been indicated that pedagogues / psychologists organize hours in accordance with the Annual Plan activities and their jobs. In practice, career guidance is largely left to the responsibility of professional associates who should implement them. Such a situation makes it impossible to define clear criteria by which to monitor the quality of career guidance.

Systematic implementation of career guidance also requires operational legislation. For example, in most cantons, as in Sarajevo Canton, the decision on pedagogical standards and decisions for the primary school of Sarajevo Canton was made in the part on the tasks of pedagogues, psychologists, pedagogues-psychologists, according to number 6.5.1.10. "Work on career guidance within one hour during the work week". The Law on Secondary Education of the Sarajevo Canton (2019) does not contain paragraphs concerning career guidance in any part, nor does it include any content on the process of career guidance. While the established Pedagogical Standards and Norms for Secondary Education in Sarajevo Canton Schools in accordance with Article 17 of the Law on Secondary Education (Official Gazette of Sarajevo Canton No. 10/2004) state career guidance in the job description of pedagogues / psychologists only as part of their work within the Home students / dormitory, for each educational group, 4 hours per week.

Pedagogical institutes perform three types of supervision in schools, one of which (General Professional Supervision) could potentially be related to career guidance. Counselors perform general pedagogical supervision and subject monitoring (different counselors for specific subjects), although based on interviews from practice, the focus of supervision is usually not on career guidance, but on all tasks performed by pedagogues / psychologists, of which career guidance is only about 10%.

All organizers of lifelong learning are entered in the Register of Adult Education maintained by the competent Ministry, i.e. the Institute for Adult Education in the Republic of Srpska. Organizers must accredit their programs according to the regulations of the competent ministry, which set quality standards within which they must operate.

Based on the analysis of data on career counseling and guidance within the activities of the PES, it is clear that two key services dominate - individual and group counseling, and work with school children and youth in primary and secondary schools. A key tool for career guidance in the PES is individual counseling and the development of individual employment plans. The practice of improving the quality of Individual Plans serves to provide better and more purposeful counseling services to the unemployed. The quality of individual plans was monitored and improved through support in their development, primarily through continuous training of counselors (organized by the Swiss Youth Employment Project YEP), and also periodic evaluation, followed by quality feedback provided to counselors as an instrument for learning.

The data show that there has been a significant increase in individual counseling. Individual counseling five years ago almost did not exist in public employment services, while now it is one of the basic methods of working with the unemployed, and it can be said that there has been a significant increase in quality in providing career guidance services. Nevertheless, there is significant room for raising the quality of advisory work.

8.2 Staffing

According to the Rulebook on Employment Records ("Official Gazette of the Federation of BiH" No. 74/18), the cantonal PES conduct group information, individual counseling, individual consultations and activities to prepare for work in order to actively look for work and find employment faster for the unemployed person. These activities are carried out in ten cantonal public employment services, within which there are 79 municipal employment offices and three information, counseling and training centers (CISO). The main limiting factor for the active implementation of the counseling process, as in previous years, is the disproportionate number of registered unemployed and the number of counselors in municipal employment offices, as well as the additional work performed by counselors who are not part of counseling work.). In 2020, the municipal employment offices of the FBiH

employed 76 heads of offices, 155 advisors, and 102 clerks / registrars. In relation to the number of unemployed in the FBIH, one counselor is in charge of an average of 2 000 unemployed persons per month. However, this number varies in relation to the number of unemployed within cantons and municipalities, looking at the cantons, in Tuzla Canton one counselor has an average of 3 430 clients, while in Bosnia and Podrinje Canton 767⁵⁴.

In order to improve cooperation with educational institutions, cantonal public employment services conducted regular activities of professional information for students in a total of 277 primary and 148 secondary schools.

In the past 10 years, schools have piloted the Five-Phase Career guidance Model for Primary Schools and YEP model "Zoom Youth Employment" for secondary schools. Regarding "Zoom in on youth employment", employees of public employment services in the cantons participate in the training of professional associates in the school of pedagogues / psychologists. In 2019, the PES of Canton Sarajevo conducted training for 80 psychologists / pedagogues.

The development of human capacities involved in the realization of career guidance in teaching and learning (pedagogical advisors, school administrations, primary and secondary school teachers, and students of teacher training colleges) has been neglected. For example, in Brčko, professional training of pedagogues and psychologists for career guidance is stated that it is not conducted except sporadically within the Pedagogical Institution. There is no systematic approach or connection of all actors in the education system who are involved in the career guidance of students in BDBiH.

8.3 Quality of data and information

As has been repeatedly emphasized through research, there is a continuing problem with the availability of data related to career guidance (access, participation, providers, success rate, satisfaction, etc.), and besides PES annual reports no data are publicly available on career guidance. Institutions responsible for working with unemployed persons, and thus for creating unemployment statistics, are the PES RS, the PES of BDBiH and the cantonal employment services. The Federal Employment Institute, the BiH Labor and Employment Agency aggregate the data, but they are not their producers, i.e. they do not collect them. Exceptions are data on the Labour Force Survey, which is collected by the entity statistical offices. Administrative data on registered unemployment are based on records of the unemployed registered with employment offices, while survey data are based on estimated data obtained by direct interview of the target group within randomly selected households. There are various ways to improve analytical work thorough publishing of available data on NEETs, but also to design and launch tracer and similar studies.

The FBIH PES, RS PES, and BDBiH PES conducted labor market research using a jointly agreed methodology, including a survey questionnaire. Research is a legal obligation of PES, and is conducted with the technical support of the Project "Improvement of Labor Market Research" funded by the EU in late 2020 and early 2021 (project implemented in the period 2020-2022). The aim of the research is to look at the current situation in terms of the challenges that employers faced in the previous period, and to examine the needs of the labor market for workers in the coming year. Also, the aim of the research is to harmonize the research methodology, so that nationwide trends can be created without entering the competence of individual institutions. As a result, a consolidated overview of research results at the level of BiH was compiled, and it consists exclusively of the use of data produced by the PES RS, the Federal Employment Institute and the PES of Brčko District BiH. This research highlighted inconsistencies in relation to occupations, skills, qualifications or regional distribution, as just some of the problems that employers have faced in finding the workers they need.

⁵⁴ Agency for Work and Employment of BiH (2020). Review of Employment Policies in Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2019 <http://www.arz.gov.ba/files/akti/izvjestaji/Pregled%20politika%20zaposljavanja%202019%20finalno.pdf>

There is a lack of available data, including labour market research, that could be used to design and implement CGC. Therefore, this has to be improved in the future.

There is no uniform approach / model for career guidance at the levels of primary, secondary school, university and labour market levels, and there is no single database on the number of career guidance practitioners, or the number of students who have gone through individual counseling, group counseling or professional follow-up. As mentioned earlier, career guidance in schools is based on the enthusiasm of individuals and their commitment to their work, and there is an urgent need for standardized training for career guidance practitioners. Regarding the monitoring of the results of career guidance, statistics can be found in the annual reports of the PES on the number of students to whom this service was provided in schools at the level of professional information, but there is no information about the methodology used.

9. CONCLUSIONS

Generally speaking, the conclusions of this analysis are that career guidance is a concept that is generally accepted and known within employment and education institutions. There are legal solutions that recognize it, and it is included in the work plans of the competent institutions. However, there is a need to improve standards and quality in the provision of services, access to career guidance and counselling services, and monitoring of results. Specifically, there is no generally accepted definition of what career guidance services represent, how they are implemented, and what the expected results are. There is no link in career guidance between the different stages of an individual's life. Career guidance is essentially limited to career information for students in the final grades of secondary schools, and support for primary school students in deciding whether to continue their education, and to individual and group counselling within the PES.

Therefore, it would be important to move from career orientation at transition points to career guidance aimed at developing career management skills in a lifelong perspective. This requires diversifying career guidance methodologies and supplementing the traditional approach of psychological testing and matching personality traits with possible occupations, with narrative approaches and the development of skills profiles that help capture non-formal and informal learning and focus the attention on skills that a person can influence (in contrast to traits that are stable; the profile could take the form of a digital portfolio that is owned by the individual and can be used along the lifepath). This would give persons the power to take their life into their hands, to become intrinsically motivated and take action to set career goals and work towards these through further skills development.

The priorities defined in this chapter are predominantly based on the strategic framework in the field of employment and education, i.e. the analysis and synthesis of priorities and measures related to career orientation. The analysis included a total of 15 strategic guidance documents or strategies that fully or partially address career guidance issues. Out of that, 6 documents are from the state level, three from the FBiH level, 5 from the RS level, and one from the BDBiH level. It is clear that in a highly decentralized system, it is difficult to agree on common priorities without coordination between different levels of government. Therefore, the first common priority in the field of career guidance can be defined in the field of coordination. Of particular value to the context of BiH would be the introduction of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) in the field of education, labor market and lifelong learning, to ensure coordination and cooperation in the field of career guidance policy. The OMC would be based on cooperation between different administrative levels whose policies are directed towards common goals, without entering into their constitutional competencies. The wide divergence of the education and employment system makes it difficult to reach consensus on solving problems and challenges in this area. Hence there is a need to develop a new coordination mechanism, different from the strict legislative procedure, while preserving entity and cantonal competencies. The OMC is a European Union model aimed at "spreading best practice and moving closer to the main goals of the European Union". It is designed to help Member States simultaneously develop their own policies in a "fully decentralized approach". The advantage of the OMC is that the adoption of policies and elections remains at the constitutionally defined level, with the agreement on common goals and indicators for achieving those goals.

Priority areas for further system development were discussed with the E4E CG working group. Based on the above, priorities in the field of CGC could be defined as follows:

Legal framework

Priority	Measures
<p>Improve the cooperation between relevant actors on issues of lifelong career guidance</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raising awareness of relevant actors and the general public about the importance of lifelong learning and lifelong career guidance 2. Improve inter-sectoral cooperation: all educational institutions at different levels (elementary, high schools, universities) should define types of CGC provided at different levels, and information on students should be exchanged between institutions 3. Learn from good practice in cooperation and collaboration between public employment service offices and various groups: schools (primary, secondary, VET), parents, and the community (employers, employer organisations, NGOs, etc.) to define joint minimum standards that can be adapted to local needs 4. Engage with the Association of Employers of the FBiH, the Union of Employers' Associations of RS and the Council of Foreign Investors to identify ways of closer involvement between them and companies in career education and career guidance in education and youth sectors 5. Align the nomenclature of occupations with the needs of the labor market, and at the same time work on reforming the education system. Ministries of education should not approve programs that do not correspond to the nomenclature (higher education) 6. Involvement of parents in CGC activities, especially in the primary education system
<p>Develop guidelines (models) and establish a system of standardized career guidance and counseling for students</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the current practice, methodologies and tools used in career education and career guidance at local level by service providers in education and employment, and identify commonalities, special strengths of various approaches 2. Define a joint minimum standard approach for all, that can be adapted to local needs (framework curriculum, models, guidelines); in this way, coordination works despite high levels of decentralisation 3. Define measurable goals (outputs and outcomes) at each stage of career guidance, with a special focus on the transition from education to the labor market of further learning 7. The laws that deal with CGC should be based on certain guidelines and follow a unique model, i.e. the stages in which career orientation takes place

Regular education

Priority	Measures
Develop a system for the continuous professional development of teachers, professors and professional associates in the field of career guidance, but also for their career advancement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish clear professional development pathways (certificate programmes for teachers, Bachelor and Master degree programmes for CGC practitioners), building on good practice from existing training programmes (from donor initiatives, etc.) 2. Innovation of curricula within the formal education of teachers, professors and professional associates 3. Systematically regulated professional development of teachers and professional associates in the field of career guidance 4. Encourage the exchange of experiences between colleagues and the mobility of teachers and professional associates. 5. Establish a “community of practice” amongst all primary, all secondary, all VET and all HE career education and career guidance practitioners.
Establish a knowledge base of good practices and develop career counseling tools	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish an online forum where online training, work materials, a forum for exchange are accessible 2. Develop standardized material for CGC in preschool and primary education, secondary, university education and lifelong learning 3. Development of websites and applications that would support the process of career guidance in the education system 4. Organise an annual call for good practice where providers can submit their success stories to keep on exchanging information and learning from each other 5. Establish the practice of “practitioner research” as a monitoring and evaluation tool, whereby practitioners conduct research of their own practice in their educational institution and reflect together with peers in the community of practice their insights on further learning and improving their practice 6. Organization of career conversations, experiential learning about working life through job shadowing, job fairs, internships, trial days, mock interviews, etc.
Establish career development centers at universities and other authorized institutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishment of career development centers at universities and organizations dealing with lifelong learning 2. Development of alumni associations at universities 3. Development of a model of monitoring and cooperation with former students 4. Employment fairs should be included as regular activity at the universities

Employment

Priority	Measures
Strengthen PES CGC services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify channels to disseminate career guidance material (social media, online live streams, infucers, etc.), that can continue in situations of emergency such as COVID-19, and have a large outreach; develop “career talks” programmes adapted to target groups 2. Offer 6-12 months of PES CGC and technical on-the-job-support for participants who make a successful transition into the labour market after participation in ALMM or counselling.
Improve the capacity of CGC services providers in the evaluation of CGC services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Qualitative and quantitative evaluations of CGC measures must be an integral part of the implementation of each measure 2. Actively redesign CGC measures based on the results from evaluating and monitoring labor market trends 3. Conduct tracer studies at educational institution level, carried out by career guidance practitioners, to both inform on outcomes and inform future career guidance work 4. Measure the satisfaction of career guidance participants in quality improvement measures.

Lifelong learning

Priority	Measures
Promote career guidance in the context of lifelong learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop CGC services in adult learning centers

In the second part, the recommendations go beyond the strategic framework, because it deals with the NEET group whose needs are not fully reflected in the current policy framework and availability of CGC services. The main results of the analysis show that the key feature of NEET status is unemployment and inactivity. There is a clear lack of in-depth data and administrative records on the NEET population, the service and benefit coverage for NEET, exiting the NEET status, and the consequences of this status for youth and society.

Occasionally, the vulnerable groups outside the education and employment system have access to CGC, but these are mostly project-based activities implemented by CSOs. CSOs have problems with funding their activities traditionally, but also with the coverage of beneficiaries, because ultimately no one works with the most vulnerable and excluded categories of young people.

During the consultation and validation meetings, the interviewed persons mentioned on a few occasions the alienation of young people, the term the “generation that has been lost”, and that the emigration of entire families from BiH is intensifying. This is a systemic problem, which cannot be solved without the participation of institutions and the engagement of local resources to provide constructive and support to all young people classified as NEET and their families. The recommendations of this report are preliminary in nature and aimed at informing the efforts to design a Youth Guarantee scheme in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They could in particular inform the work of institutions and organisations to define the scope and future monitoring of the Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan, as follows:

Priority	Measures
Recognize NEET as a target group of public policies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect, analyse and publish comprehensive datasets on NEETs 2. Introduce NEET as a target group of the PES and municipal employment and training programmes, as well as education and social protection programmes 3. Pilot NEET integration programmes with a strong CGC component
Give an institutional mandate and necessary resources to the PES to address the NEET population	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinate and implement the NEET outreach strategy to offer CGC. 2. Encourage all relevant stakeholders to identify, contact and engage with unregistered NEETs and put them in contact with the PES or CGC, or reintegrate them in education and training programmes, including work-based learning solutions
Develop local employment and education partnerships as an outreach service for NEETs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involve public employment services, CSOs, social partners, religious communities, community leaders to develop approaches to reach young NEETs who do not seek out career guidance services. An example of efficient services could be job clubs outside of the PES, in municipalities, religious communities, youth organizations, etc. 2. Local communities and youth workers should play an important role in outreach strategies, particularly in rural areas, to provide access to CGC 3. Explore hiring Roma (and other specific vulnerable groups) mediators from local communities in the PES local offices in areas with weak labour market outcomes among Roma youth, to provide access to career guidance 4. Analyse the practice of Hastor Foundation around the concept of “student-mentors” as a tool to work with NEETs to ensure close coaching combined with financial support 5. Analyse the practice of the initiative PRONI that focuses on involving young people in projects to improve their local community as a way to reactivate and reengage NEETs in learning and work
Develop online services to reach NEETs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offer online training courses and CGC to NEETs to use self-services in the area of career guidance

ANNEX 1: Documents used for desk research

Review of the laws in the field of education from the relevant ministries

(Source: Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH, date November 18th 2021, Available at: http://mcp.gov.ba/attachments/bs_Migrirani_dokumenti/Sektor/Obrazovanje/Obrazovanje-zakoni/Pregled_zakona_nadle%C5%BEnih_ministarstava_iz_oblasti_obrazovanja.docx)

At the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the area is defined by the following acts:

- Principles and standards of adult education (reference framework)
- Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education ("Official Gazette of BiH", No. 18/03)
- Framework Law on Secondary Vocational Education / Official Gazette of BiH, No. 63/08
- Framework Law on Higher Education, "Official Gazette of BiH" No. 57/2007

ADMINISTRATIVE LEVEL			LAW	OFFICIAL GAZETTE	
				No	Title
REPUBLIKA SRPSKA			Law on Preschool Education	119/08	"Official Gazette of the Republic Srpska"
			Law on Primary Education	74/08, 106/09, 104/11 44/17	
			Law on Secondary Education and Upbringing	74/08, 106/09, 104/11 41/18	
			Law on Higher Education	73/10, 104/11 , 84/12 , 108/13	
			Adult Education Law	59/09, 1/12	
FBIH	1.	Una-Sana Canton	Law on Preschool Education	8/2010	"Official Gazette of Una-Sana Canton"
			Law on Primary and General Secondary Education	5/04, 7/10	
			Law on Secondary Education	17/12	
			Law on Higher Education	8/09, 09/10 , 04/11	
			Adult Education Law	15/21	
	2.	Posavina Canton	Law on Preschool Education	8/08 , 10/16	"Official Gazette of Posavina County"
			Law on Primary Education	3/04 , 4/04 , 8/08 , 7/12 , 10/13 , 10/16	
			Law on Secondary Education	3/04 , 4/04 , 3/08 , 8/08 , 4/11 , 7/12 , 10/13 , 10/16	
			Law on Higher Education	1/10 , 4/11	
			Adult Education Law	10/19	
	3.	Tuzla Canton	Law on Preschool Education	12/2009	

			Law on Primary Education	6/04, 7/05, 17/11	"Official Gazette of Tuzla Canton"
			Law on Secondary Education and Upbringing	17/11	
			Law on Higher Education	8/08, 11/09 , 13/12 , 16/13	
			Adult Education Law	9/15	
4.	Zenica-Doboj Canton	Law on Preschool Education	7/10	"Official Gazette of Zenica-Doboj Canton"	
		Elementary School Law	5/04, 20/07, 9/11		
		High School Law	5/04, 20/07, 19/09, 9/17		
		Law on Higher Education	6/09, 13/13		
		Adult Education Law	05/14		
5.	Bosnian-Podrinje Canton	Law on Preschool Education	15/09	"Official Gazette of Bosnia and Podrinje Canton"	
		Law on Primary Education	5/04, 6/09		
		Law on Secondary Education and Upbringing	10/11		
		Law on Higher Education	2/10		
		Adult Education Law	05/15		
6.	Central Bosnia Canton	Law on Preschool Educationskom odgoju i obrazovanju	10/17	"Official Gazette of Central Bosnia Canton"	
		Law on Primary School	11/01, 17/04		
		High School Law	11/01, 17/04		
		Law on Higher Education	4/13		
		Adult Education Law	05/17		
7.	Herzegovina-Neretva Canton	Law on Preschool Educationskom odgoju	5/00	"Official Gazette of the Herzegovina-Neretva County"	
		Law on Primary Education	5/00, 4/04, 5/04		
		Law on Secondary Education	8/00		
		Law on Higher Education	4/12		
		Adult Education Law	4/18		
8.	West Herzegovina Canton	Law on Primary Education	6/04, 8/04, 8/08, 10/08, 14/08, 12/11	"Official Gazette of the West Herzegovina County"	
		Secondary Education Law	6/04, 8/04, 8/08, 14/08, 12/11		
		Law on Higher Education	10/09		
		Zakon o obrazovanju odraslih	17/15		
9.	Sarajevo Canton	Law on Preschool Education	26/08	"Official Gazette of Sarajevo Canton"	
		Zakon o osnovnom odgoju i obrazovanju	10/04, 21/06, 26/08, 31/11		
		Zakon o srednjem obrazovanju	10/04, 34/07		

			Law on Higher Education	42/13, 33/17 ,	
			Adult Education Law	40/15	
	10.	Kanton 10	Law on Preschool Education	08/09	"Official Gazette of Herceg-Bosna County"
			Law on Primary Education	12/04, 12/08	
			Secondary Education Law	12/04, 12/08	
			Law on Higher Education	9/09	
			Adult Education Law	1/17	
BRČKO DISTRICT BiH			Law on Preschool Education	13/07	"Official Gazette of BD BiH"
			Law on Primary and Secondary Education schools in BDBIH	10/08, 25/08	
			Law on Higher Education BDBIH	30/09	
			Adult Education Law	50/18	

Annex 2: Review of the laws in the field of employment from the relevant ministries

For the Republika Srpska, the area is regulated by the following laws:

1. Law on Mediation in Employment and Unemployment Rights in the Republika Srpska ("Official Gazette of the RS", No. 30/2010 and 102/2012)

For the Federation of BiH / cantons, the area is regulated by the following laws:

1. Law on Mediation in Employment and Social Security of Unemployed Persons of the Federation of BiH ("Official Gazette of the Federation of BiH", No. 41/01, 22/05 and 9/08)
2. Law on Mediation in Employment and Social Security of Unemployed Persons of Sarajevo Canton ("Official Gazette of Sarajevo Canton", No. 4/04, 29/09 and 18/13)

For the Brčko District of BiH, the area is regulated by the following law:

1. Law on Employment and Rights at the Time of Unemployment of the Brčko District of BiH

Annex 3: Strategic framework in the field of education and employment

No.	Level	Name of the strategic document
1	BiH	Platform for the Development of Preschool Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2017-2022
2	BiH	Higher education development priorities 2016-2026
3	BiH	Strategic Platform for the Development of Adult Education in the Context of Lifelong Learning in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2014-2020
4	BiH	Priorities for the integration of entrepreneurial learning in education systems in BiH for the period 2021-2030
5	BiH	Improving the quality and relevance of vocational education and training in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2021 - 2030
6	BiH	Improving the quality and relevance of vocational education and training in Bosnia and Herzegovina - based on conclusions from Riga - (2021-2030)
7	FBiH	Strategic directions of career guidance development for the period 2015-2020
8	FBiH	Strategy for strengthening the mediation function in public employment services
9	FBiH	Development Strategy of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2021 - 2027 (in procedure)
10	RS	Youth Policy of the Republic of Srpska 2016 - 2020
11	RS	Strategy for the development of preschool, primary and secondary education in the Republic of Srpska 2022-2030 (in procedure)
12	RS	Republika Srpska Education Development Strategy 2016-2021
13	RS	Employment Strategy of the Republic of Srpska 2021 - 2027 (in procedure)
14	RS	Adult Education Strategy in the Republic of Srpska 2021–2031
15	BDBiH	Development Strategy of the Brčko District of BiH 2021–2027

ACRONYMS

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
BHAS	Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina
ALMM	Active Labour Market Measures
BDBiH	Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina
BDBiH PES	Public Employment Service of Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina
BMZ	Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, of the Republic of Germany
CGC	Career Guidance and Counselling
CISO	Center for Information, Counselling and Training
COSME	EU-financed Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Programme
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organization
E4E	Education for Employment, EU funded project
ESC RS	The Economic and Social Council of Republika Srpska
ETF	European Training Foundation
EU	European Union
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IEP	Individual Employment Plan
ILO	International Labour Organization

IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession
MoCA	The Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
OMC	Open Method of Cooperation
PES	Public Employment Service
PES FBiH	Federal Employment Institute
RS	Republika Srpska
RS PES	Public Employment Service of Republika Srpska
SAA	Stabilisation and Association Agreement
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
USAID WHAM	Workforce and Higher Access to Markets Activity Project
VET	Vocational education and training
YEEP	Youth Empowerment Enabling Prospects program
YEP	Youth Employment Project, Swiss funded project