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The Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and has the honor to submit the response from the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in regards to HRC 37/16 on the right to work.

The Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018



OFFICE OF THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
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**RESPONSE FROM THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND REFUGEES IN  
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA TO THE RESOLUTION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS  
COUNCIL 37/16 ON THE RIGHT TO WORK**

In relation to the inquiry of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, i.e., in relation to the Resolution of the Human Rights Council number 37/16, as response to your questions, we would like to inform you on the following:

1. Detailed information about the challenges and good practices relating the right to work and exercise of all human rights for young people, especially the strengthening thereof;
2. Detailed information about the applicable legislation and policies that provide young people with equal chance and opportunity for employment and acquisition of profit in the labour market;
3. Detailed information on Action Plans, Incentives and other measures, if available, for the promotion of young people employment opportunities, including young people from vulnerable groups (young people with disabilities or from national minorities);
4. Detailed information with respect to measures that provide young people with access to educational, technical and vocational programmes of professional development, employment services and professional and lifelong education;
5. The latest statistical data on the number of employed young people in the public and private sector, sorted by age and gender;
6. Detailed information on the international cooperation programmes relating the promotion of employment opportunities for young people. Describe ways in which these programmes are advertised to young people and ways in which they are included in the said programmes.

Competences in the matters of work and employment in Bosnia and Herzegovina are divided between the entities, more precisely, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Two projects related to employment and implementation of active employment measures are currently ongoing at the state level, under the auspices of the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Namely, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) is implementing three-year programme financed by the European Union from IPA Funds – “Local Employment Partnerships” aimed at fostering sustainable and partnership-oriented active labour market at local level. This project is an upgrade to the previous European Union interventions regarding this area in Bosnia and Herzegovina and is a part of the EU programme for local development and employment which is a continuation of certain activities from the Floods Recovery Programme. The project supports Employment Bureaus in strengthening their capacities and creation and implementation of active measures in the labour market. The end beneficiaries of the Project for Local Employment partnerships are the currently unemployed and heir families as well as the members of partnerships.

In addition to this project, we are currently in the third stage of implementing the Youth Employment Project, implemented by the German Company GOPA mbH through its representative office in BiH. This project is ongoing since 2008 and the first stage was financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Austrian Agency for Technical Cooperation, whereas the rest of the project (implemented in two stages until 2020) is



independently supported by the Swiss Government. The trainings provided by the Project in cooperation with the local partners improve and develop human capacities in public service thus giving the employees additional skills that will forward the work of their institutions. All activities come in form of steps aimed at making breakthroughs in resolving the issue of youth unemployment, especially for those in an unfavourable position. The goal of YEP is to provide an efficient response to the needs of its key beneficiaries and employment services in order to improve their work and find jobs for as many young people as possible.

Statistical institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Agency for Statistics BiH, Federal Institute of Statistics, Republic Institute of Statistics RS) have conducted the Labour Force Survey in 2018 as well (ARS/2018). This survey is conducted one per year and the data acquired are comparable at an international level since the survey is developed in line with the EU and ILO recommendations and regulations. Data from the Labour Force Survey for 2018 can be downloaded from the official website of the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In line with the Law on Mediation in Employment and Social Security of the Unemployed, the Federal Employment Bureau and Cantonal Employment Services have, **in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina**, secured significant funds over the past period for the realisation of measures and programmes within the framework of active employment policy applicable to approximately 15,000 people, including a high number of young people, long-term unemployed persons, women and other categories of less employable individuals. Active employment policy measures were mainly directed at:

- Fostering employment with a known employer;
- Self-employment;
- Training;
- Vocational training and education.

Implementation of the said active employment policy measures and creation of equal access opportunity to labour market are aimed at employing as many individuals as possible from the lists of unemployed with particular social and gender vulnerability in order to strengthen their competitiveness and provide conditions for the acquisition of skills necessary in the labour market and to prevent long-term unemployment by providing integration into the labour market.

The Law on Mediation in Employment and Social Security of the Unemployed of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina stipulates rights and liabilities of the Federation in determining and implementing the overall measures for the promotion and improvement of employment conditions, basic principles in employment mediation, material and social security of the unemployed during temporary unemployment, establishment, organisation and work of the Federal Employment Bureau, public cantonal employment services, financing of the overall employment activity and other issues, while acknowledging the competence of cantons and their differences.

According to the data of the Federal Employment Bureau, and within the framework of active employment policy, the Federal Employment Bureau in cooperation with the cantonal employment services, implements various programmes of employment co-financing, self-employment and professional training tailored to unemployed young people, the Roma population, women, long-term unemployed and other less employable categories of the unemployed.

Furthermore, in line with the current data of the Federal Employment Bureau, joint employment projects and programmes are implemented and realised by the Bureau in cooperation with other



organisations for the purpose of providing young people with access to educational, technical and vocational programmes of professional training.

According to the Labour Force Survey from 2017 conducted by the Federal Institute of Statistics, unemployment rate of young people ages 15 to 24 in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was 17.7%, out of which 21.8% men and 12.6% women.

In line with the data from the Report on the work of the Federal Employment Bureau for 2017, significant cooperation was recorded between the Bureau and international organisations in terms of joint employment projects and programmes relating to the promotion of young people employment opportunities. It should be noted that the representatives of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, together with the Bureau, participated in the realisation of the Youth Employment Project (YEP) supported by the Swiss Embassy in BiH. As part of this project, an active employment measure was established in the cantonal employment services, a "Job Search Club" which provided group counselling for long-term unemployed people, especially the young people ages 18 to 30 who have been unemployed for over six months, as well as all other long-term unemployed individuals regardless of age who have been unemployed over a year. In line with the Federal Employment Bureau data, 3,170 young people in total participated in the work of all clubs in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and 1,389 found jobs in 2017.

**In Republika Srpska**, the Employment Institute of Republika Srpska gives special support to the young people through active employment measures mostly related to the support for the young people through employment programmes and other activities aimed at strengthening the capacities of the young people to be more resourceful on the labour market and find jobs faster.

Issues and challenges identified by the Institute as an employment obstacle for the young people:

- When applying for job, young people are asked for experience that they are unable to acquire. The educational system does not offer practical experience, and internships are hard to come by. Volunteer work is recognised as work experience, however not many young people are interested;
- A long time usually passes from the end of educational process to the first job which causes low psychological state in young people, decrease confidence and even depression, including the loss of acquired knowledge and skills;
- The passive attitude and social exclusion of the young people who are reluctant to engage in lifelong learning and ongoing education;
- One of the most significant unemployment causes is spatial and geographic immobility of the young people. This reduced mobility is a result of various traditional, economic and social and cultural reasons, a high number of young people still living with their parents and looking for employment only in their place of residence;
- The present labour force markets demand new professions and constant change in the profiles of skills, qualifications and experiences. The lack of skills and their unfitness, especially in terms of IT, is often one of the main reasons causing unemployment in certain regions and branches of industry;
- Young people do not possess developed entrepreneurial skills to solve the unemployment issues by starting their own business.

The work programme of the Institute for Employment anticipates that the Institute will, in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, War Veterans and Disabled Persons' Protection of Republika Srpska and in line with the Employment Action Plan, define active employment policy measures for a certain year as priority activities and actions aimed at including as many active job



seekers as possible from all target groups and thus increase overall employability. In line with the Employment Strategy for 2016-2020, young people have been recognised as a special target group and the measures directed towards this population are defined through strategic and operative goals. Furthermore, during the proposal of measures, provisions from the document for the Youth Policy of Republika Srpska for 2016-2020 were considered in relation to the “Strategic goal 1: Improving the employability of the young people”. The backbone of activities will certainly be the employment projects in 2018 realised for the most part by the Institute for Employment of Republika Srpska.

Projects realised in the previous period for the support of youth employment were mainly projects for the co-financing of salaries for interns with higher education degrees, an activity implemented by the Institute since 2007. From 2007 to 2016, 4,409 individuals were employed through this Project and 26,307,425 BAM was spent. The realised effects of this programme for 2017 are anticipated at the end of the Contract realisation period.

The Institute for Employment of Republika Srpska provides young unemployed people with active employment measures through the Job Search Clubs and Centres for Information, Counselling and Training (CISO). As part of these services tailored to job seekers, 10 Job Search Clubs were established and 6 Centres for Information, Counselling and Training.

CISO and Job Search Clubs implement activities in relation to direct assistance for unemployed individuals on an active job hunt, mostly for young people up to 30 years of age as well as long-term unemployed individuals, and they are directly contributing to an elevated level of labour market activity.

These activities also included the realisation of tasks from the area of professional informing and providing guidance to the elementary and secondary school students. Lectures and talks were held relating the topic of selecting professions, as well as the state and demands of the labour market.

Given the changing nature of the labour market, the current state of employer demands from the private sector is showing a lack of certain labour force profiles which is caused by lack of coordination between the educational system and needs of the industry, as well as low motivation in young people to enrol in vocational schools. So far, the emphasis was on formal education, However, lifelong learning is a process of constant upgrade and increase of knowledge previously acquired through formal education with the sole purpose of improving the current skillset and obtaining new knowledge, qualifications and skills for work. The Institute for Employment of Republika Srpska has excellent cooperation with adult learning institution and takes part in the development of Adult Education Plans using every opportunity to offer unemployed individuals from the lists some sort of informal education for a faster inclusion in the labour market.

The Institute for Employment of Republika Srpska is cooperating with international institutions that are focusing their activity in BiH, among other, on the area of employment, strengthening functions and institutional capacities of the public employment services. The Institute takes active participation and offers support in line with its competences, development programmes and projects of international institutions such as International Labour Organisation, Swiss Development Agency SDC, the EU Delegation in BiH, Swiss Agency for Development, UN Development Programme and other.

With proactive activity and promotion, the public is kept regularly informed about the activities and plans of the Institute for Employment of Republika Srpska.