

COUNTRY FACTSHEET

2017

SWISS COOPERATION WITH BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



Switzerland's support

Bilateral cooperation between Switzerland and BiH began in 1996. During the conflict and its immediate aftermath, Switzerland delivered humanitarian aid and carried out a reconstruction programme. Since 2000, Switzerland's assistance has focused on the political reform process, reconciliation between the parties to the conflict and economic development.


The 2017–2020 cooperation strategy aims to strengthen social, economic and political inclusion in the BiH and help build a social market economy and democratic political system with a view to the country's eventual accession to the EU.

Complex political structures and an underdeveloped centralised state mean efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina must pay particular attention to the country's political context. To ensure that it takes into account the interests of all parties, Switzerland is active in all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) engage in development cooperation activities in the areas of democratic governance, local services, justice, the economy and employment, and healthcare, while the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) is responsible for the migration partnership between Switzerland and BiH.

Democratic governance, municipal services and justice

In its cooperation with BiH, Switzerland is helping to develop accountable institutions tailored to citizens' needs by improving access to public services and making them easier to use. The inclusion of marginalised groups is a key concern. Furthermore, Switzerland is working to increase decentralisation in politics, the tax system and administrative matters by encouraging better cooperation between the different levels of government. It is also supporting reforms in the justice system to rebuild citizens' confidence in their institutions and society as a whole.

Swiss representations

 Embassy with Cooperation Office

Credits: CGIAR-CSI, GeoNames.org, Natural Earth. © 2014 Natural Earth, CC 3.0

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by Switzerland.

Switzerland is assisting Bosnia and Herzegovina in its transition towards a democratic society and social market economy. Cooperation activities focus on supporting inclusive political reform, encouraging economic development and strengthening the health sector.

Background

The Dayton Peace Agreement put an end to the war in Bosnia in 1995 following four years of devastation and bloodshed. The agreement still influences the political structure of today's Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), a fragile state split into three parts: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, inhabited mainly by people of Bosniak and Croat origin; Republika Srpska, where mainly people of Serb origin live, and the District of Brčko, a self-governing administrative unit. Ethnic divides still influence the country's politics and reform is slow. The economy suffers from severe structural deficits and there is 54% unemployment among young people aged between 15 and 24. Social and economic divides are growing and nearly 50% of the population is exposed to some form of discrimination. Nevertheless, BiH applied to join the European Union in February 2016 and its application was accepted in September of that year. However, the country must still overcome important hurdles to become a member state.



One-stop-shops – provided by local government – offer comprehensive and transparent municipal services.

Healthcare

The aim in this sector is to guarantee universal access to good-quality primary healthcare and equip people with knowledge to help them to make better choices and adopt more healthy lifestyles. Switzerland's efforts to set up primary healthcare services focus on the development of nursing services, on community mental healthcare and on preventing chronic diseases, which will reduce sector costs in the long term.



Switzerland is committed to universal access to primary healthcare.

Economy and employment

Switzerland's efforts in BiH encourage a business-friendly environment and new job opportunities. The two countries are working at the regional level to increase the transparency and efficiency of public finance mechanisms, while efforts to improve economic framework conditions envisage private sector growth and access to foreign markets for Bosnian businesses.



In order to alleviate unemployment, Switzerland supports vocational education and training for young people.

Alongside these efforts, Switzerland is helping to fight unemployment among young people. It is assisting in the development of vocational education and training courses geared to market demand. It is also supporting government employment agencies in efforts to reintegrate unemployed people in the job market, with particular focus on disadvantaged groups including women.

Migration

In 2009, Switzerland and Bosnia and Herzegovina signed a migration partnership to deal with the challenges and exploit the positive economic and social potential of migration. In the event of a continuation of the mass migration movements from the Middle East, which have particularly affected the Balkans region, Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to be prepared.

Multilateral cooperation

Switzerland works closely with multilateral organisations such as the UNDP, the World Health Organization and the World Bank to lend targeted support to institutions undertaking reforms towards European integration.

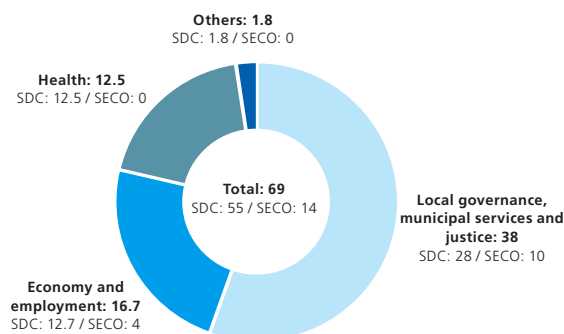
Transversal themes

Switzerland ensures that all projects comprise the five principles of good governance – accountability, participation, non-discrimination, transparency and efficiency. Switzerland also supports gender equality through all of its programmes. Depending on the context in which a project is carried out, it may also address various aspects of disaster risk reduction or migration and the opportunities it represents for the country's development.

Partners

- > Swiss NGOs, e.g. Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation
- > Swiss partners: Cantons of Geneva, Jura, Fribourg and Bern; Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Canton of Zurich, Geneva University Hospitals
- > International NGOs: CARE International
- > Multilateral organisations, e.g. UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, World Bank
- > National partners: Government departments, regional and local authorities (bodies, cantons, municipalities) and civil society organisations
- > Co-funding partners: Sweden, Norway, Germany

Budget for 2017-2020 by theme and source of funding (mio. CHF)



Impressum

Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
3003 Bern, Switzerland
www.sdc.admin.ch

Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research (EAER)
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO)
3003 Bern, Switzerland
www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch

Photos: © SDC