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## REPORT ON WB REGIONAL ISSUES RELATED TO URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Curricula innovation in climate-smart urban development based on  
green and energy efficiency with the non-academic sector

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## Executive Summary

This document represents D2.1 “Report on WB regional issues related to urban development” of SmartWB project funded by the European Commission's Erasmus+ Programme ERASMUS-EDU-2022-CBHE under grant agreement No 101081724. In this activity, the regional issues related to urban development in the Western Balkan (WB) region were identified and reviewed. The gathered information will be further used in preparing a platform for sharing knowledge. The Report on WB regional issues related to urban development was developed based on literature and academic studies covering the wider economic and social environment in the WB region, including those published by national and European public institutions, NGOs, international organisations and research projects.

## List of abbreviations

CSUD	Climate Smart Urban Development
DCM	Decision of the Council of Ministers (of the Republic of Albania)
EU	European Union
FB&H	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina)
GDP	Gross domestic product
GHG	Greenhouse Gasses
GLPT	General Local Territory Plans
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
NECP	National Energy and Climate Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NHDR	National Human Development Report
NSSD	National Sustainable Development Strategy
RS	Republic of Srpska (entity in Bosnia and Herzegovina)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SAA	Stabilization and Association Agreement
STEAM	Science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics
SUMP	Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WB	Western Balkan
WBIF	Western Balkans Investment Framework

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## 1. Introduction

The focus of this Report will be on issues directly related to inclusive urban development identified through the review of the following topics:

- 1) social cohesion,
- 2) national plans in the WB region,
- 3) reducing car dependency,
- 4) preservation of the environment and resources,
- 5) urban planning and land management,
- 6) urban planning regulations, and
- 7) sustainable urban planning.

The review of responsible institutions and the qualifications of their staff in the urban development sector in WB partner countries will be presented. The WB partner HEIs will consult stakeholders and associated partners during the report development.

*Contributing: Partners from the WB region: P01 University of Montenegro, P08 University of Sarajevo, P09 Dzemal Bijedic University of Mostar, P10 University of Bihac, P11 European University of Tirana, P12 Polytechnic University of Tirana, P13 Polis University, 14 Co-Plan and P16 ACEB&H*

### 1.1 Countries included in the report

#### 1.1.1 Montenegro

Montenegro has a total area of 13.812 km<sup>2</sup> and about 293 km of coastline. The capital and largest city is Podgorica. According to the National Statistical Office, Montenegro currently has a population of about 603.000. According to International Monetary Fund, GDP per capita for 2023 is \$11.664 and has experienced growth of about 3,40%. The Labor Force Survey shows average employment increased by 18% in 2022. In 2022, inflation averaged 13,00%, peaking in November at 17,50%. The unfavourable global economic outlook and high domestic uncertainty are disadvantages of Montenegro's positive outlook. One of the major sources of income is tourism. Tourism is likely to continue recovering in 2023 to reach its 2019 level. However, deteriorating growth prospects in the EU and the region may harm tourism and broader growth prospects. Since 2012 Montenegro has been a candidate country to be a member of the European Union.

#### 1.1.2 Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina has a total area of 51.129 km<sup>2</sup>. The coastline is about 20 km long, with the sole town by the sea Neum. The capital and largest city is Sarajevo. B&H is a decentralized country. It comprises two autonomous entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska, and a third unit, the Brčko District, governed by its local government. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina furthermore consists of 10 cantons. According to the Agency for Statistics of B&H, the country has a population of about 3.475.000. According to International Monetary Fund, GDP per capita

for 2023 is \$9.690 and has experienced growth of about 2,50%. Labour market participation and the employment rate decreased in 2022, with unemployment at about 15.4%. B&H has high inflation of 14% in 2022. Bosnia and Herzegovina had the third highest tourism growth rate in the world between 1995 and 2020 and is slowly turning to tourism as one of the highest sources of income. Due to diversity in architecture, nature and culture, B&H had 1,900,000 primarily foreign tourists in 2018. EU candidacy status received in December 2022 could serve as input for needed structural reforms.

### 1.1.3 Albania

Albania has a total area of 28,748 km<sup>2</sup>, with a considerable coastline of 450 km. The capital and largest city is Tirana. According to Statistical Institute, Albania currently has a population of about 2.794.000. According to International Monetary Fund, GDP per capita for 2023 is \$7.858 and has experienced growth of about 2,80%. During 2022, Albania's economy continued to rebound, despite rising food and energy prices. Annual employment growth accelerated to an average of 4,00% in 2022. Unemployment fell to 11,00% in 2022. The average inflation for 2022 is estimated at 6,70%. Albania is a developing country with an upper-middle income economy dominated by the service sector, followed by manufacturing. It has been an official candidate for membership in the European Union since 2014. Reforms associated with the prospect of EU accession are expected to boost productivity growth and expand Albania's integration into foreign markets.

## 2. Comparative Analysis

### 2.1 Social cohesion

#### 2.1.1 Social cohesion in Montenegro

In February 2023, the Government of Montenegro, with the help of the Swiss Embassy, established the Fund for the Accelerated Development of Montenegro. As a catalyst for accelerating the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030, the Fund aims to accelerate Montenegro's accession to the EU. It was designed to support strategic initiatives until 2027 in three priority areas:

- inclusive economic development and environmental sustainability
- development of human capital, reduction of vulnerability, social inclusion, and social cohesion
- human-scale management, the rule of law and respect for human rights

As the key development process in Montenegro, accession to the European Union has been a major path towards prosperity ever since independence in 2006, so it should be used to build social cohesion in Montenegro. This process is focused on many issues that concern the better functioning of society, especially society that needs to be part of a wider community. Therefore, European integration can be assessed as comprehensive and essential.

The National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Montenegro by 2030 (NSSD) [1], to create a cohesive society in Montenegro, should place economic growth and development as a basis, but also consider the increase of social trust, ensuring equal opportunities and high participation of citizens in all social processes, from making decisions to their monitoring and implementation. A comprehensive and socially harmonised strategic approach could contribute to creating Montenegro as a community of shared values, common challenges and equal opportunities based on trust, hope and reciprocity among all citizens.

The Human Development Report Montenegro (UNDP) [2] provides a comprehensive overview of human development in Montenegro, including social cohesion and urban development issues. The report highlights the need for more significant investment in urban infrastructure, services, policies, and initiatives promoting social inclusion and community participation. The overview of social cohesion in Montenegro and other Western Balkan countries and the importance of fostering social cohesion for sustainable and inclusive urban development is given in the report "Social Cohesion in the Western Balkans: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities" [3]. In the report "Towards Inclusive and Sustainable Urban Development: Analysis of Montenegro's Voluntary National Review Report for the High-level Political Forum 2019" (UNDP) [4], there are analyses of Montenegro's progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities, and emphasises the importance of promoting social cohesion for sustainable urban development.

Montenegro is a country on the Adriatic coast of the Balkans with an estimated population of 627,082 inhabitants (2022). Over the last 20 years, the total population has grown modestly from 603,152 in 2000, with an average annual growth rate of 0.15 %. While the total population remained

stable, the composition of the population has relatively aged. In the last two decades, the population has become older, with a rise in life expectancy for males from 71.1 to 74.0 years and for females from 76.3 to 79.5 years.

The urbanisation rate in Montenegro grew relatively fast – from 58.5 % in 2000 to 67.5 % in 2020 (UNDP Human Development Indicators 2019, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/indicators/4510667>) – and Podgorica now houses 30.6 % of the total population.

There is a large discrepancy between the average per capita income of the population's richest and poorest sections. For example, the richest 20 % of Montenegro's population earns about 39.9 % of the country's total income, while the poorest 20 % earns 5.9 % (Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), 2019 data (version 23 April 2021)). The Gini index, which measures inequity in access to resources, services, and opportunities (A Gini coefficient of 0% expresses perfect equality, everyone has the same income, and a Gini coefficient of 100% expresses maximum inequality (one person has all the income and all others have none)), has improved from 36.5 % in 2015 to 34.1 % in 2019. However, Montenegro still faces higher inequalities when compared with the average for the EU-27, which stands at 30.2 %.

The survey under the action Promotion of Diversity and Equality in Montenegro was prepared as part of the European Union/Council of Europe joint programme “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey 2019-2022” [5], implemented by the Anti-Discrimination Department of the Council of Europe. The survey is meant to help institutions, civil society organisations, media, and the public identify critical challenges in reducing social exclusion and combating discrimination and related phenomena, such as hate speech and hate crime, including sexual orientation and gender identity. From 2010 to 2022, the estimated percentage of residents of Montenegro who felt discriminated against has significantly decreased: by 11.2% for perceived discrimination on the grounds of nationality, by 8.7% on the grounds of religious affiliation and by 7.2% on the grounds of political beliefs. The only area where an increase in perceived discrimination has been noted, compared to 2010, is discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. These are only some of the results of a new survey on trends in the field of discrimination in Montenegro, presented at a conference in Podgorica. It was the sixth comprehensive survey of this kind on discrimination conducted since 2010. It has been funded jointly by the European Union and Council of Europe, in partnership with the Ombudsperson Office and the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights of Montenegro and conducted by the Center for Democracy and Human Rights - CEDEM.

The average degree of discrimination for all groups in the 2022 survey was obtained by field: culture 22,6%, education 19,4%, health care 17,8%, employment 53,5%, and public services 21,7%. By comparing the values of discrimination for 2010 and 2022, the most significant progress has been made in the following fields: public services (7,6% decrease), education (7% decrease), health care (5% decrease) and culture (2,2% decrease). The biggest problem is that discrimination in the field of employment, which was already high, has increased in the last 12 years by 5.5%. According to the research results, an extremely high degree of social alienation was noted vis-à-vis LGBTI persons and a very high degree of separation vis-à-vis Roma and Egyptians.

Montenegro amends the laws on non-discrimination and equality between women and men in employment and social policy to align its legislation in these fields with the acquis. It demonstrates that adequate administrative structures, particularly the required equality body, the Ombudsman, and administrative and enforcement capacities, will be in place by the time of accession. Montenegro has made significant efforts to implement international standards to meet anti-discrimination policies. With the adoption of the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination, an important step was taken in dealing with the problem of discrimination. The Amendments to the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination were adopted in June 2017 (The Official Gazette of Montenegro, No. 42/17). In cooperation with the European Commission and to fully comply with the new Labor Law, Montenegro is working on recent Amendments to the law on the Prohibition of Discrimination. Amendments to the Law on Gender Equality („The Official Gazette of Montenegro”, No. 35/15), aligned with the acquis, international agreements and other documents adopted by the UN, EU, and the Council of Europe, were adopted on June 11, 2015. Furthermore, the Action Plan for Achievement of gender equality in Montenegro (2017-2021), an essential document for implementing the gender equality policy in Montenegro, was adopted in March 2017. Furthermore, Montenegro has developed a Gender Equality Index for the first time, and it was presented on January 29, 2020, in Podgorica. When it comes to the rights of the members of the LGBT population, the Strategy for improving the quality of life of the LGBT persons in Montenegro 2019-2023 with the Action Plan for 2019 was adopted in 2019. Furthermore, the Law on Same-Sex Life Partnerships was adopted on July 1, 2020.

In Montenegro, 71.5% of the population has access to the internet, whether at home or outside. However, despite solid progress, Montenegro stands below European trends (80.1%) and the average access rate for all developed countries (84.9%) – highlighting the opportunity for accelerated progress (Source: ITU, 2020). But digital access is unevenly distributed along geographical lines in Montenegro. For example, access is just 62.8% in rural areas compared to 80% in urban areas.

Montenegro’s human development outcomes are on the rise. From 2014 to 2019, Montenegro’s human development index (HDI) value improved from 0.813 to 0.829. As many as one in three jobs in Montenegro are estimated to be in the informal ‘grey’ economy – which lacks stability and protections and intensifies other forms of discrimination. Women are also overrepresented in the informal economy, at a rate of 16.6%, compared to men’s participation at 11.9%.

The employment rate in Montenegro remains at 46%.

To create social cohesion in Montenegro, monitoring the degree of inequality is very important. The expected economic growth and development of society will inevitably lead to an increase in inequality, primarily through income and property inequality. However, for cohesion, the state needs to influence the reduction of inequality through its policies, primarily through enabling equal access to quality education, health, and employment, regardless of socio-economic position. In this way, social capital will be improved, and social mobility will increase. The directions of action are the following:

- improvement of the existing legal framework,
- achievement of a new, socially acceptable agreement about specific legal solutions,
- increasing the transparency of the work of institutions, and
- development of state control mechanisms using which law enforcement would be enforced.

Montenegro can become a more cohesive society, although according to numerous indicators, it has a low level of social cohesion. The most important decision on this path concerns the initiation of an extensive process of social transformation. The process of European integration is a process of social change. This process is focused on many issues that concern the better functioning of society, especially society that needs to be part of a wider community. Therefore, European integration can be assessed as comprehensive and essential.

For this reason, two essential principles should be followed when defining the social cohesion agenda, which is particularly prevalent in developing countries.

First, many complex measures should not be introduced in societies where the system's institutions could be stronger. Still, in the phase of gaining trust in the institutions, the focus should be on standards and programs that the state can implement and monitor their implementation fully.

The second principle is that the state should have as many institutions as it can sustainably finance its economy. Regarding social cohesion, societies should also choose what and how big institutions they need.

The success of the social cohesion agenda in developing societies usually depends on how organisations have applied these two principles.

Finally, social cohesion requires good coordination of policies. It implies a careful attempt to look at the effects in the future when creating fiscal and tax policies, linking employment policies, education, social policies, etc. Experience shows that the impact of individual policies depends on their mutual interaction and connection.

Social cohesion is the surest way to ensure sustainable growth and development. Social cohesion refers to the degree of connectedness and sense of community among people in a particular society or community. It involves the ability of individuals and groups to work together to achieve common goals, despite differences in culture, background, and beliefs. Social cohesion is closely related to creating liveable, inclusive, and sustainable cities in urban development. Urban areas with high levels of social cohesion tend to be more resilient and better equipped to address social, economic, and environmental challenges. Focusing on social cohesion in urban development involves designing and implementing policies and initiatives promoting social interaction, inclusiveness, and community participation. It can include creating public spaces encouraging social interaction, supporting community events and activities, promoting affordable housing, and improving access to transportation, education, and health care.

By fostering social cohesion in urban areas, cities can create more liveable and sustainable communities that are better equipped to address the needs of all residents, promote economic growth, and support social justice.

### 2.1.2 Social cohesion in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The National Human Development Report 2020 (NHDR): Social Inclusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina was produced by the United Nations Development Programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the

support of the Embassy of Switzerland in Bosnia and Herzegovina aiming to assess and to trigger a debate on social inclusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The National Human Development Report 2020 was commissioned to assess what has been achieved over the past decade. It does so by focusing on the structural dynamics of inclusion (instead of a static measurement to assess the characteristics of exclusion) when assessing the performance of the networks of social institutions whose proper function is to ensure the well-being and participation of all members of society.

The report approaches social inclusion from the perspective of the interaction dynamics between an individual and his or her social, legal, and economic environment. Asking whether a person can participate equally in society leads to the identification of gaps and barriers to participation.

The social inclusion assessment in this report is connected to the concept and measurement of human development and to the principle of 'leaving no one behind' enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This NHDR on Social Inclusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina continues the research undertaken through two previous human development reports. In 2007, UNDP produced a National Human Development Report on Social Inclusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina that provided unique insights into those population groups that remained vulnerable to social exclusion more than a decade after the end of the conflict. The National Human Development Report on Social Capital followed in 2009, exploring how individuals assessed their social relationships in post-conflict Bosnia and Herzegovina. By recording citizen perceptions of social life and institutions, these two reports established a baseline of social data from which it was possible to measure the direction of social change in the country.

The report looks at the institutional structures of education, health, labour markets and social protection, using their measurable outcomes to compare Bosnia and Herzegovina to the neighbouring countries or across different parts of the country. While noting the areas that function well, the report identifies gaps that require attention and offers recommendations on addressing them. The analysis aims to understand how each sector functions individually, but more importantly, how well they interact as parts of an integrated system to ensure social equity.

The institutional analysis is complemented by a citizens' view on social inclusion and cohesion. The report includes the findings of a case study of seven municipalities (City Bijeljina, municipalities Gradačac, Ilijaš, Laktaši, Ljubuški, Nevesinje and Tešanj) selected to reflect a range of characteristics, including size, ethnic composition, urban/ rural and geographical location. It is important to emphasise that all the results presented in this analysis do not apply to all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Social inclusion, interpersonal relations, and relations towards vulnerable categories differ significantly between larger municipalities and those in smaller areas. It should also be noted that some cities, such as the city of Brčko or the city of Sarajevo, Mostar, Bihać, Tuzla, Zenica, etc., nor in any case can they be brought into the context of the conclusions stated in the following paragraph.

The survey of seven municipalities showed that social cohesion and connections, including ethnicity, have weakened over the past decade. Social ties with people within their own ethnic group, other ethnic groups and people leading a different lifestyle have all declined over the past decade. The survey showed that people today are less likely to interact with members of a different ethnic group at work,



in education or through social or cultural activities, or even to drive through one another's territory compared to a decade ago and are far less likely to have such contacts now than they were before the conflict. The key findings of the case study resonate with key issues revealed by the institutional analysis, providing validation but also a people's voice on social inclusion issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The report's review of social inclusion support mechanisms in Bosnia and Herzegovina reveals a set of fragmented political, administrative, and economic institutions and a social sector that, based on its current funding arrangements, cannot ensure the equitable provision of essential social goods and services for all. While most of those denied access to these rights are indistinguishable from their fellow citizens, persons with disabilities, members of disfavoured minorities and those without social or economic resources were most at risk.

Over the past 25 years, Bosnia and Herzegovina has changed from a country with relatively low inequality and high social mobility based on equitable access to social goods into a relatively high level of inequality and low social mobility.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is classified as an upper-middle-income country. The legislation and institutions meant to ensure fundamental rights, non-discrimination, and gender equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina are largely in place, but enforcement remains insufficient. The effective enforcement of fundamental rights requires the strengthening of administrative capacities and the provision of adequate resources. The European Commission assesses that equality is not ensured for all citizens. Protection and inclusion of vulnerable groups remain inadequate, particularly for persons with disabilities, children, the Roma community, detainees, migrants, asylum seekers and LGBTI persons.

As the politicised nature of the public administration and the fragmentation of state institutions continue to reinforce each other, service delivery and infrastructure in Bosnia and Herzegovina have had a negative impact on the healthcare and agricultural sectors and singles out Bosnia and Herzegovina for having one of the worst transport infrastructures in the Western Balkan region.

A study of the transportation infrastructure in Bosnia and Herzegovina (included in The National Human Development Report 2020: Social Inclusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina, produced by United Nations Development Programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2021) provides detailed evidence of this assessment. The study demonstrates that instead of rebuilding and expanding existing cross-national transport routes, the road-building plans in the Republic of Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina duplicate them, rerouting travellers within their own territory away from areas populated by the other ethnicity. According to the constitutional solution of the organisation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, imposed by the EU and the international community, the entities have the competence of independent management, adoption, and implementation of laws on their territory with very little or no obligation of mutual harmonisation. Therefore, budget planning and financing within each entity, and thus both planning and financing of key infrastructure projects, are usually separated, which will be explained in more detail in the following chapters.

The findings of the National Human Development Report point to a critical need for improvement in the coverage of social protection systems and services in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Integrated networks of social sector institutions that provide these services are the foundation of a socially inclusive society.



Some of the key recommendations outlined in the report are:

- Invest in digital connectivity for every child and increase the quality of e-learning;
- Perform in-depth research into out-of-pocket health expenses and use the results to adjust social assistance to reduce inequity in access to health protection and broaden insurance coverage;
- Prioritise programmes in primary healthcare, including options for the development of telemedicine;
- Introduce flexible and part-time employment into the labour legislations, without loss of entitlement to social benefits. This would reduce informality and increase participation of women in the labour market;
- Improve the situation of people with disability by implementing the recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities from 2017;
- Ensure uniform maternity entitlements; and
- Eliminate the excess administrative burden in the social protection system by the development of digitalised social services.

As stated in the Multidimensional Review of the Western Balkans: Analysis to Action, social cohesion is the bedrock of resilient societies. A socially cohesive society fosters the ability and willingness of its members to undertake collective action and improve the societal well-being of all. This requires allowing them to participate, creating a sense of belonging and promoting trust among people, and fighting against exclusion and marginalisation. In societies with low social cohesion, disenfranchisement hinders collective action and the sharing of the benefits of progress. Many in the region do not find opportunities in the formal labour market, especially the long-term unemployed women and citizens from disadvantaged groups; this poses a significant challenge to building cohesive societies. Labour market policies and social protection are complementary, mutually reinforcing ways to foster social cohesion. If they are adequately coordinated and resourced, they can support those facing hardship and fulfil essential needs while presenting pathways for socio-economic integration. The report proposes six policy recommendations:

- Strengthen the coverage and effectiveness of active labour market programmes, focusing on the long-term unemployed and youth with limited work experience.
- Provide more opportunities for people from vulnerable groups to participate in the labour market, including Roma and people with disabilities, to improve social mobility.
- Support women's integration into the labour market to fully leverage their human capital and encourage entrepreneurship.
- Encourage people to participate in formal employment, reduce high social security contributions, especially for low-wage earners, address the adequacy of benefits, and improve the effectiveness and attractiveness of social security systems.
- Increase the coverage and adequacy of social assistance.
- Improve the coordination and effectiveness of social services, such as elderly care, health care, education, and others, for better user outcomes.

Regarding Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is stated that the country has achieved significant success across various dimensions of social cohesion over the last decades. Employment rates have steadily

risen in Bosnia and Herzegovina – from 31.5% in 2012 to 40% in 2020 [1]. Labour market performance has improved for women, who traditionally trailed behind men regarding labour market participation. Given its gross domestic product (GDP) level, Bosnia and Herzegovina performs relatively well in terms of adult literacy, life expectancy and security. Thanks to fiscal surpluses throughout the past decade, public debt has declined to about 33% of GDP in 2019, providing considerable fiscal space for stimulus to deal with the negative impacts of the COVID-19 crisis [2].

To continue building a socially cohesive society, Bosnia and Herzegovina must now tackle a set of important problems that remain. Many groups, including women, young and ethnic minorities, are excluded in terms of economic opportunities. Many jobs do not provide enough income to escape poverty, as evidenced by very high (24.5%) in-work poverty rates in 2015 [3]. Access to pensions, social assistance, and health insurance, favours the employed and war veterans rather than those most in need. For instance, early retirement for war veterans and the exclusion of informal workers from the public pension system have led to a situation in which one-third of all pensioners are younger than age 65, while approximately 38% of elderly adults (65 or above) collect no state pension (World Bank, 2020[4]).

Six priority actions have a great potential to foster social cohesion in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the Western Balkans:

- Increasing employability of women through family-friendly policies (peer-learning priority)
- Making active labour market policies (ALMPs) more effective
- Creating equal opportunities for vulnerable groups to participate in the labour market
- Create a more inclusive and fair social security system
- Strengthen targeting, equity and adequacy of social assistance for those most in need
- Deliver community-integrated approach

Of these, participants in the peer-learning workshop from Bosnia and Herzegovina identified increasing the employability of women through family-friendly policies as the key priority.

### 2.1.3 Social Cohesion in Albania

This chapter summarises the status of implementation of social cohesion policies in Albania, and gives an overview of the situation in key sectors that share social goals, such as education, social welfare, employment, etc. The Council of Europe defines social cohesion as “...the capacity of a society to ensure the well-being of all its members, minimising disparities and avoiding marginalisation.” In this regard, Albania has not yet committed to developing an integrated social cohesion policy, but it is included partially in the Regional Development Policy, currently drafted but not yet approved by the Council of Ministers.

The National Regional Development Strategy 2021-2027 (draft) sets the main framework of development in terms of economic, territorial, and social cohesion, intending to develop the human capital; create the conditions for sustainable growth; foster employment and wealth creation; and improve inter-institutional capacities.

Amongst the main challenges for social cohesion, this strategy lists:

- The unemployment rate increasing gradually between 2013 and 2019, with the highest rates in Region 1 (Shkodër- Kukës – Lezhë).
- Very high general youth unemployment, going up to 33.2% in 2018.
- A High number of unemployed job-seekers, especially in urban areas (in Tirana, up to 15% of the active workforce).
- A very proportional relation between unemployment and level of education, especially relevant for people with secondary education, the category in which the number of unemployed jobseekers has increased 30% in the last 6 years.
- Low quality of healthcare services, despite the continuous efforts of the government to reform the sector.
- Uneven distribution of tertiary healthcare services (Hospitals and specialized treatment) focused mainly in Tirana.
- Stagnant number of high-school and tertiary education institutions.
- Uneven distribution of funding for education within regions, with 47% going to Tirana.
- Very low national expenditures on Research and Innovation in comparison to the region.
- Discrepancy between job market offers and requests, where the quality of education does not reflect the current market needs.
- Low rates of highly skilled persons and (increasing) high rate of underqualified people, or people with no education at all.
- High and increasing level of brain-drain, coupled with no incentives for life-long learning.
- Low impact of Vocational education and poor quality of education in rural areas.
- Limited financial resources to support disadvantageous and/or elderly population.
- High disparity rate in terms of poverty for rural and urban areas.
- Low level of social engagement and community representation, especially for vulnerable, disadvantaged, and marginalised communities.
- Relatively weak social capital, unable to develop relevant networks within governance, communities, and industries.

Aside from this integrated strategy, Albania has implemented various sectorial policies to promote social cohesion and reduce inequality through education, employment, social welfare policies, support to marginalised groups, etc.

Firstly, it has made significant investments in **education**, including free primary and secondary education for all children (National Strategy for Pre-University Education 2015-2020). This policy aims to reduce the educational gap between urban and rural areas and improve access to education for disadvantaged groups. The strategy also emphasises the importance of integrating education with other sectors, such as urban planning and development, to ensure that schools are located in safe and accessible areas. Moreover, continuous support is given to higher education and to promote research throughout academic and non-academic stakeholders. For example, some attention has been allocated to promoting STEAM education through the National Strategy for Science, Technology, and Innovation 2016-2020, fostering partnerships between academia and industry. Vocational training has also gained some support with establishing the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training and

Qualifications and the design of the respective strategy. No data to support progress has been evidenced so far.

Secondly, some efforts have been mobilised to create **job opportunities** and promote labour market participation. The National Employment and Skills Strategy 2014-2020, i.e. aims to promote employment growth, increase productivity, and improve the quality of jobs in Albania by focusing on measures such as improving education and training systems, supporting entrepreneurship, and enhancing social protection programs for vulnerable groups. The National Employment Service provides job placement services, career guidance, and vocational training to job seekers and works with employers to identify job vacancies and match them with suitable candidates. Nevertheless, the unemployment rates are still slightly increasing in Albania, as World Bank data suggests, factoring in the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Albanian economy and labour market. The unemployment rate in Albania was 11.8% in 2022, up from 11.5% in 2019. The next population Census will give a clearer snapshot of the unemployment situation and trends compared to the last published one in 2011.

Thirdly, regarding **social welfare**, the Albanian government provides financial assistance to vulnerable groups such as the elderly, disabled, and low-income families. Spending on social protection in recent years has increased, from 7.5% of GDP in 2010 to 9.3% in 2020. This includes spending on social assistance, health care, and education.

Fourthly, in terms of **overall poverty**, the situation has seen some improvement. In 2019, the poverty rate in Albania was 11.5%, down from 14.3% in 2018. However, poverty remains a significant issue, especially in rural areas with higher poverty rates. Child poverty remains a significant issue in Albania, with an estimated 36% of children living in poverty in 2019. Moreover, the population is rapidly ageing, and there are concerns about the ability of the social welfare system to meet the needs of elderly citizens. In 2020, the government launched a program to provide financial assistance to low-income elderly citizens.

Fifthly, the **healthcare system** in Albania has seen some improvement in recent years, but still, there are significant disparities between rural and urban areas. Albania has 1.1 doctors per 1,000 inhabitants, which is lower than the average for countries in the European Union. The life expectancy at birth in Albania was 78 years in 2019, which is higher than the average for countries in the Western Balkans region. However, non-communicable diseases, such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes, are a growing concern in the country.

Sixthly, the **housing sector** is also very important in addressing social cohesion, especially at the urban level. Albania has state-financed social housing programs that provide housing for low-income families. As of 2021, the country has approximately 30,000 social housing units. However, despite the national funding, many Albanians still live in inadequate housing conditions, particularly in rural areas. In 2020, around 14% of the population lived in overcrowded housing, and 6% lived without access to basic amenities such as running water and sanitation facilities. The homeownership rate in Albania is high, with over 85% of households owning their own home. However, access to affordable financing is challenging for many Albanians, particularly those with low incomes. In Tirana, this problem is more pronounced due to the increased land values because of land development speculation.

Finally, regarding **marginalised groups**, Albania has implemented policies to promote their integration, especially Roma and Egyptian communities. The poverty rate among these communities is still estimated to be over 80%, and they face significant barriers to accessing education, healthcare, and employment. Discrimination against the LGBT community is a significant issue in Albania. According to a survey conducted in 2021, 61% of LGBT people in Albania reported experiencing discrimination, harassment, or violence because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. People with disabilities in Albania face significant challenges in accessing education, healthcare, and employment. In 2019, the unemployment rate among persons with disabilities was 83%. Women in Albania face discrimination and gender-based violence, and there is a gender pay gap. According to a survey conducted in 2018, 58% of women reported experiencing some form of violence in their lifetime. Nevertheless, Albania has made significant progress in recent years, with women's participation in politics and the workforce increasing. However, women still face challenges in accessing leadership positions and equal pay, and domestic violence remains a significant issue. The country has ratified several international conventions and laws that protect the rights of minorities, including the Law on Protection from Discrimination, the Law on Minority Rights, and the Law on Gender Equality.

Some challenges can be summarised when addressing social cohesion in terms of urban development.

- Urban development in Albania has included the revitalisation of city centres and the renovation of historic buildings, which has led to some gentrification in some neighbourhoods, especially in Tirana, Vlova, etc. Gentrification can contribute to social exclusion and displacement of low-income residents, which can negatively affect social cohesion.
- Informal settlements are a common feature of urban areas in Albania, particularly in Tirana and Durrës. These settlements often lack basic infrastructure and services, such as water and sanitation facilities, and residents may be at risk of eviction. Addressing the needs of residents in informal settlements is important for promoting social cohesion.
- Urban development can positively impact social cohesion by providing public spaces for residents to interact and engage in community activities. However, public space in Albania is often limited and poorly maintained, which can negatively impact social cohesion.
- Urban development promoting social mix, or integrating residents from different socioeconomic backgrounds, can contribute to social cohesion. However, in Albania, there is often a lack of affordable housing options in newly developed areas, which can lead to socioeconomic segregation and hinder social cohesion.

However, viewing the issue from a more holistic approach, we can conclude that some steps are being taken in the right direction:

- The quality of urban planning is essential in promoting social cohesion. In Albania, some efforts are to develop a comprehensive and strategic approach to urban planning to minimise urban sprawl, traffic congestion, and inadequate infrastructure. Addressing these issues has been essential for promoting social cohesion.
- Community engagement is critical in promoting social cohesion in urban areas. Engaging residents in the planning and design of urban spaces can help build a sense of ownership and

community pride. In Albania, community engagement in urban planning has steadily grown, but residents need greater participation in shaping the development of their neighbourhoods.

- Improving access to social services can help to reduce social inequalities and promote social cohesion. Access to main services is not lacking, especially in urban areas. If this well-balanced access is coupled with increased quality of service, social cohesion will improve significantly.

Overall, promoting social cohesion in Albania requires a holistic approach that considers the interrelationships between urban planning, community engagement, and social services while also tackling the challenges of informal settlements, quality of education, access to affordable housing, marginalised groups, etc. By addressing these factors, Albania can build more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable urban communities that enhance the quality of life for all residents.

## 2.2 National plans in WB region

### 2.2.1 National plans in Montenegro

Guided by the determination to establish an ecological state, Montenegro is one of the first countries in Southeast Europe to establish a strategic and institutional framework for sustainable development by the standards of the developed countries of the European Union. The main document dealing with urban development is the **National Sustainable Development Strategy until 2030, Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism** [5].

The new National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) until 2030 improves the sustainable development policy of Montenegro. The strategy establishes a comprehensive framework for the national response to challenges on the way to the sustainable development of Montenegrin society until 2030. Positive experiences from global, European, and Mediterranean region processes were used to develop the strategy. By NSSD, Montenegro expressed its total commitment to the priority issues of sustainable development, such as introducing a green economy, strengthening the efficiency of using natural resources, climate change, conservation of sensitive ecosystems and coastal areas and sustainable production and consumption. Priority is also given to creating conditions to progress on key determinants of sustainable development enshrined in the relevant EU policies, primarily the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Roadmap to a Resource-Efficient Europe (Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism of Montenegro, 2016). At the heart of Montenegro's National Sustainable Development Strategy is the question of sustainable management of natural resources as a prerequisite for the long-term preservation of natural capital. Likewise, due to the importance that natural means have for the growth and development of the economy, it is necessary to direct economic development in the direction of greening the economy, efficient management of resources and not endangering the sustainability of the volume, quality and potential of natural resources, emphasising the importance of opportunities provided by ecosystem services, somewhat above all in protected areas of nature.

**The Energy Development Strategy of Montenegro until 2030 (SRE)** [6] is based on six critical goals that define the fundamental principles of energy consumption in Montenegro, such as:

- Political context
- Market and competitiveness development
- Economic growth and structure

- Energy supply security
- Environmental protection and climate change
- Energy structure and technologies.

Energy efficiency is recognised as the most effective way to ensure security in the electricity supply and to reduce the impact of gases that cause the greenhouse effect that directly affects climate change. Based on this, energy efficiency is a priority in the new energy policy. SRE proposes energy efficiency as an issue of great importance for the future because the demand for consumption is unequal, where Montenegro has 6 to 8 times higher energy intensity indicators compared to the average in the EU due to the presence of two energy-intensive companies in the industry sector and a low level of energy efficiency in other areas of the economy. Chapter 16 of SRE defines the fundamental principles of environmental protection and integration of climate change in SRE. Considering that the energy sector represents one of the three strategic sectors for future national economic development, it dramatically impacts the environment and climate change.

**The National Strategy in the Field of Climate Changes by 2030** [7] aims to reduce energy poverty. Climate change policy, including mitigation and adaptation measures, is firmly cross-sectoral and connected with the activities of the entire state administration. However, the integration of climate policies into relevant sectoral policies has yet to be developed. It requires a functioning system of policy coordination at the national level. Integrating climate policy into all applicable sectoral policies is the main prerequisite for implementing and achieving goals. This plan provides an overview of the essential instruments of the strategic and legal framework that deal with the issue of climate change.

The **Center for Sustainable Development** (CSD) was established in Montenegro in December 2013, based on the Memorandum of Understanding concluded by UNDP and the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism. The Center focuses on projects that consider priorities in implementing the 2030 Agenda and the EU integration process. The vision defined by the strategic guidelines foresees that the Center will become a technical and innovative centre that will: promote the introduction of green economy approaches, strengthen human and social resources for sustainable development in Montenegro, and support the strengthening of national management systems for sustainable development in general.

The Center supports the efforts and development priorities of the country through the effective implementation of its three essential functions:

- Establishing a link between sustainable development policy and science in the context of greening the economy and strengthening human and social resources and management for sustainable development through applied research for the needs of fact-based decision-making.
- Providing project support for implementing the Agenda for Sustainable Development until 2030, the National Approximation Strategy in the environment and climate change field and UN conventions.
- Through introducing the green economy, raising awareness, and increasing knowledge about sustainable development in the national and regional context [8].



### 2.2.2 National plans in Bosnia and Herzegovina

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) recommends that countries develop national adaptation plans to facilitate and advance their climate change adaptation planning. Developing an adaptation plan is set out in UNFCCC guidelines and manuals. The National Adaptation Plan aims to improve existing reporting on the development and implementation of adaptation measures and contribute to integrating climate change adaptation into relevant social, economic, and environmental policies and actions.

The most important technical studies that look at climate change issues included in the Bosnia and Herzegovina National Adaptation Plan (NAP) are:

- Initial National Communication of Bosnia and Herzegovina under the UNFCCC (INC),
- Second National Communication of Bosnia and Herzegovina under the UNFCCC (SNC),
- Third National Communication of Bosnia and Herzegovina under the UNFCCC (TNC) and
- Climate Change Adaptation and Low-Emission Development Strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The First and Second National Communications laid the foundations for developing the Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) Initial Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. Currently underway is the preparation of the Fourth National Communication of Bosnia and Herzegovina under the UNFCCC (FNC), the revised Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and the revised NDC that will include a chapter on climate change-induced losses and damages. These documents were used in preparing the initial draft of the NAP, while the final NAP document will be aligned with the aforementioned documents once they are adopted.

The current legislative framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina does not provide a sufficient basis to adequately address climate change impacts, further complicating adapting to changing climate. Under the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, legislative competencies in the field of environment belong to the entities in B&H (the Republic of Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and the Brčko District of B&H. Analysis of the entire legislative framework in B&H shows that all primary and secondary legislation in the country addresses this problem within the broad concept of 'climate', which is insufficient. The only piece of legislation that, in terms of its content, indeed addresses climate change is the Rules on the manner of preparation, content and formation of spatial planning documents (2013) in the Republic of Srpska, which lays down the methodological approach to drafting spatial planning documents and emphasises climate change as one of the aspects that must be taken into account in spatial planning and the preparation of spatial documents. Accordingly, as a related piece of legislation, the Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of the Republic of Srpska also addresses the issue of climate change, but only to a minimal extent.

The existing spatial plans in B&H have not factored in climate change as a dynamic impact factor. Thus, the existing legislation and its accompanying regulatory framework do not contain provisions on – and do not in any way address – the problem of climate change as a dynamic impact factor. To that end, appropriate procedures need to be initiated to amend the current legislation in B&H in such a way as to ensure the integration of 'climate change' and 'climate change adaptation' in the most vulnerable sectors.



The NAP development process should result in an assessment of vulnerabilities and risks arising from climate change and climate extremes as well as offer possible adaptation options, in particular measures to address short-term (2020–2023), medium-term (2023–2027) and long-term needs (2025–2030). The B&H National Adaptation Plan aims to improve existing reporting on the development and implementation of adaptation measures and flow of information and contribute to integrating climate change adaptation into relevant social, economic and environmental policies and actions.

**Framework Energy Strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina until 2035** (FES) is aimed at prioritising the key energy strategic guidelines of Bosnia and Herzegovina with clearly set objectives and implementation priorities to be reached in the future, and also, strategic guidelines form for the application and withdrawal of the IPA and WBIF funds for the Bosnia and Herzegovina energy sector.

The life-cycle approach includes six elements: Diagnostics, Strategy, Development plan, Preparation, Implementation, Monitoring and evaluation. Topics elaborated within the segments of the FES are:

- electricity segment: European and regional trends, coal mine issues, market system organisation, etc.,
- oil segment: the research and exploitation process and import of oil and oil derivatives,
- gas segment: an overview of the entire market structure, analysis of import activities,
- “energy trilemma” through a prism of security of supply, price competitiveness and decarbonisation, i.e. clean and sustainable energy, elaborates the key energy segments and issues.

**Energy Efficiency Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2016-2018** was adopted in 2017. Adoption is underway for the Energy Efficiency Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina for 2019-2021.

A draft of the **Integral Strategy for the Renovation of Buildings in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period until 2050** has been prepared.

**National Renewable Energy Action Plan** was adopted in 2016.

Activities for transitioning to market-based support-oriented incentive systems for renewable energy are ongoing.

B&H is developing a **National Energy Climate Plan** (NECP) in line with EU regulations to address energy efficiency, renewables, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions, interconnections, and research and innovation. An approved NECP with a laid-out decarbonisation strategy is reportedly necessary for B&H to have further access to EU financing in the energy sector. NECP describes planned policies and measures and the necessary investments to achieve set-up goals. NECP B&H will define targets for energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and GHG emissions reduction by 2030 and the necessary policies and measures to achieve them. Achieving the goals should be described within the five dimensions of the NECP, which will simultaneously ensure a secure energy supply and economic development:

1. Security of supply
2. Energy market

3. Energy efficiency
4. Decarbonisation
5. Research, innovation, and competitiveness.

The Action plans for energy efficiency and renewable energy sources will be replaced by the NECP B&H. The adoption of the NECP-a B&H is planned to be some time soon.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is currently working on developing the **Integrated Energy and Climate Plan of B&H for 2021-2030**. Parallel to NECP B&H 2021-2030 development, the entire energy and climate plans will be developed.

**The Environmental Strategy and Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina** should be adopted in 2023.

**Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF)** was adopted by the B&H Council of Ministers on 16 December 2020 and reconfirmed by the B&H Presidency on 5 March 2021.

This Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF) between authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) and the United Nations (UN) system describes four strategic priorities and five cooperation outcomes and how they will contribute to priorities in B&H expressed by:

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and selected Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets as expressed in the emerging SDG Framework in B&H and domesticated SDG targets 8;
- Future accession to the European Union, as expressed in the Action Plan for implementation of priorities from the European Commission Opinion and Analytical Report;
- The Joint Socio-Economic Reforms ('Reform Agenda'), 2019-2022/10; and
- The human rights commitments of B&H and other agreed international and regional development goals and treaty obligations and conventions.

The strategic priorities and outcomes for cooperation are:

- Sustainable, resilient and inclusive growth
- Quality, accessible and inclusive education, health and social protection
- People-centered governance and the rule of law
- Citizen and community engagement for social cohesion

**Strategic Plan of Rural Development of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2018-2021)** was adopted. Activities on the development of the strategic plan for the rural development of the B&H - Framework document for the period from 2022 to 2027 have been launched.

In line with the Law on Development Planning and Management in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in September 2018, the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina passed the Decision on Developing the Development Strategy of the Federation of Bosnia 2021-2027. The new FB&H Development Strategies reflect the globally accepted Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). **The Development Strategy of the Federation of Bosnia 2021-2027** was published in February 2021.

The Sarajevo Canton has officially started preparing a ten-year **Strategy for restricting the use of coal and other solid fuels for 2021-2031**.

UNDP B&H and the cantonal Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and Environmental Protection worked together on the development of the strategy, which is one of the activities within the Green Economic Development project, implemented throughout B&H.

### 2.2.3 National plans in Albania

European integration is the geostrategic and political objective of Albania, which is at the core of its domestic and foreign policy. This strategic objective is based on the will and full support of the Albanian citizens and as defined, in the resolutions of the Albanian Parliament of April 11, 2019, October 3, 2019, and June 18, 2020, on Albania's progress on the road to the European Union and the opening of accession negotiations.

Based on the priorities of the Program of the Albanian Government for the period 2021 – 2025, the priority of Albania's foreign policy is to advance faster towards Albania's accession to the EU.

The National Plan for European Integration 2021 – 2023 was approved by the Decision of Council of Ministers No 90 of 17.02.20121 "On the approval of the National Plan for European Integration 2021 – 2023". Pillars: macro-economic & fiscal stability, increased competitiveness, investing in people and social cohesion, sustainable use of resources.

Structure of the plan:

- Overall policy framework and objectives;
- Implementation of the policy guidance;
- Policy guidance;
- Macroeconomic framework;
- Fiscal framework;
- Structural reform priorities in 2023-2025;
- The cost and financing of structural reforms;
- Institutional issues and stakeholder involvement.

The National Plan for European Integration aims to coordinate this approximation process while simultaneously aiming to fulfil the obligations under the Stabilization and Association Agreement and the obligations that arise as part of the membership process in the European Union. Timely and quality drafting of the Plan and its monitoring are a precondition to accelerate the process of approximation of Albanian legislation with the *acquis* of the European Union.

**National Sustainable Development Strategy for Albania (2030)** provides a roadmap for achieving sustainable development in the country. The strategy is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and aims to promote economic, social, and environmental sustainability. It covers economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainability, governance, and institutional capacity. Considering the global agenda set out in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the strategy is designed to be a long-term framework for Albania's development. The key objectives of the National Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 are as follows:

- Economic growth: Albania aims to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth by increasing productivity, promoting entrepreneurship, and enhancing competitiveness. The country aims to reduce poverty and inequality and create employment opportunities.
- Social development: Albania aims to promote social development by enhancing access to quality education, health care, and social services. The country also aims to promote gender equality, social inclusion, and human rights.
- Environmental sustainability: Albania aims to promote environmental sustainability by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing biodiversity conservation, and promoting sustainable use of natural resources. The country also aims to reduce pollution and improve waste management.
- Governance and institutional capacity: Albania aims to enhance governance and institutional capacity by promoting transparency, accountability, and participation. The country also aims to strengthen its institutional capacity to implement the sustainable development agenda.

Overall, the National Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 provides a comprehensive framework for achieving sustainable development in Albania. However, the successful implementation of the strategy will require the commitment and cooperation of all stakeholders, including the government, private sector, civil society, and citizens. It will also require sufficient financial resources and effective coordination among different sectors and levels of government.

**National energy strategy for Albania (2017-2030).** Formulation of the Strategy for the Energy Sector 2017–2030 occurred during dynamic developments in Albania’s energy sector. During this period, several framework laws and regulations were drafted and adopted, the electricity sector was going under important structural, legal, and tariff reforms, and the oil and gas sector was subject to important developments. Also, during this period, Albania has continued to implement its obligations and commitments towards regional integration through the Energy Community and it has taken on new international commitments and initiatives, including in relation to climate action. All these activities have served as a foundation for developing this National Energy Strategy.

As announced at the Energy Community Ministerial Council meeting on 14 December 2017, the Republic of Albania will cooperate with the Secretariat of the Energy Community in elaborating and adopting an Integrated Energy and Climate Plan in the course of 2018. This Plan will complement the present Strategy and address the five mutually reinforcing and interrelated dimensions adopted in Albania to bring greater energy security, sustainability, and competitiveness. The five mutually supportive dimensions are:

1. Energy security, based on energy sources diversification, solidarity, and trust.
2. Fully integration into the regional and, subsequently, European market.
3. Energy efficiency contributes to the moderation of demand.
4. Decarbonizing the economy.
5. Research, innovation, and competitiveness.

**National Strategy on Climate Change for Albania (2021-2030)** aims to address the challenges of climate change, mitigate its impacts, and promote sustainable development. The strategy is aligned with

the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The main objectives of the National Strategy on Climate Change are as follows:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions: Albania aims to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 11.5% by 2030 compared to the 2005 baseline. The country has set sector-specific targets for emissions reduction, such as the energy sector, transport, agriculture, and waste management.
- Increase renewable energy production: Albania aims to increase the share of renewable energy in its energy mix to 38% by 2030. The country has significant potential for renewable energy production, particularly in hydropower, solar, and wind power.
- Increase energy efficiency: Albania aims to increase energy efficiency in the residential, commercial, and industrial sectors. The country has implemented various energy efficiency measures, such as building codes, energy audits, and energy-efficient lighting.
- Adaptation to climate change: Albania aims to strengthen its resilience to the impacts of climate change, such as extreme weather events, sea-level rise, and drought. The country has identified priority sectors for adaptation, such as agriculture, water resources, and coastal zones.
- Awareness-raising and capacity-building: Albania aims to increase public awareness and understanding of climate change and its impacts. The country has implemented various capacity-building initiatives for policymakers, government officials, and civil society.

The National Strategy on Climate Change also includes a monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress and ensure accountability. The strategy is implemented through various policy measures, such as the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan, the National Renewable Energy Action Plan, and the National Adaptation Plan.

Overall, the National Strategy on Climate Change is a comprehensive framework for addressing the challenges of climate change in Albania. However, more efforts are needed to implement the strategy effectively and achieve the desired outcomes.

**National Energy and Climate Plan of the Republic of Albania.** Albania has committed to preparing its first NECP 2021-2030 during 2020. The development period had to be extended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It can be summarised that policy and legislation are in place for each of the five dimensions of the Energy Union, which are described and presented through many planned measures and investments identified in different policy documents. Albania is involved in creating a supportive domestic energy market, ensuring energy security, energy efficiency and environmental protection, including GHG emissions reduction.

Developing and implementing the national energy policies and establishing the NECP will significantly impact economic growth in different sectors. Many investments foreseen to be realised in the whole energy sector will greatly impact the sartorial GDPs, generating revenues and increasing labour forces in different areas. Policies and measures related to the construction and renovation of buildings as well as the construction of photovoltaic systems, will contribute substantially to creating green jobs. Reduced dependence on energy imports will not only contribute to improving the security

of the energy supply but also to the macroeconomic and political security of the country by decreasing the domestic budget deficit.

Environmental context: Albania's energy policies pursue three objectives: i) support the overall economic development, ii) increase the security of the energy supply, and iii) protection of the environment. Renewable energy, especially other than hydro, is a solution for decreasing the strategic dependence on energy imports and mitigating the impact of climate change resulting in unreliable hydropower production. However, there are conflicts of interest with environmental protection goals, which must be handled properly.

Social context: The increase in employment, mainly through investments in the energy and building sector, led to an increase in personal/family revenues, followed by an increase in the living standard of the society. There is a strong impact on municipalities and governmental revenues through taxes, fees, etc. and their use in budgeting forms for purposes such as health, education, etc. Specifically, targets on energy efficiency aim at the reduction of energy consumption per unit and thus at a contribution to affordable energy supply and reducing poverty.

**National Environmental Strategy for Albania** provides a comprehensive framework for environmental protection and sustainable development. The strategy is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and aims to promote a green and circular economy, reduce pollution, and enhance biodiversity conservation. The key objectives of the National Environmental Strategy are as follows:

- Promote sustainable development: Albania aims to promote sustainable development by integrating environmental considerations into all sectors of the economy. The country aims to achieve economic growth while reducing environmental impacts and improving social welfare.
- Reduce pollution: Albania aims to reduce air, water, and soil pollution. The country has implemented various measures to reduce industry, transport, and household emissions, improve waste management, and promote sustainable land use.
- Enhance biodiversity conservation: Albania aims to enhance biodiversity by protecting natural habitats, promoting sustainable forestry, and supporting wildlife conservation. The country also aims to promote eco-tourism and sustainable use of natural resources.
- Promote circular economy: Albania aims to promote a circular economy by reducing waste generation, promoting recycling, and reusing, and reducing the consumption of natural resources. The country has implemented various measures, such as extended producer responsibility, to promote circularity.
- Increase public awareness: Albania aims to increase public awareness and participation in environmental protection and sustainable development. The country has implemented various initiatives, such as education programs and public campaigns, to raise awareness and encourage behaviour change.

The National Environmental Strategy also includes a monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress and ensure accountability. The strategy is implemented through various policy measures, such

as the National Waste Management Strategy, the National Biodiversity Strategy, and the National Air Quality Strategy.

Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for the City of TIRANA. This comprehensive plan aims to improve the city's transportation system while reducing its environmental impact. The plan is designed to support sustainable mobility options and to make transportation more accessible, affordable, and safe for all residents.

The SUMP is based on several key principles, including the promotion of walking, cycling, and public transportation, as well as the reduction of private car use and carbon emissions. The plan also prioritises the creation of safe and comfortable pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, the improvement of public transportation services, and the promotion of alternative modes of transportation, such as carpooling and car-sharing.

One of the main goals of the SUMP is to increase the share of non-motorized transportation modes, such as walking and cycling. To achieve this, the plan includes the development of a network of cycling and pedestrian paths and introducing of bike-sharing systems. The plan also aims to improve road safety for pedestrians and cyclists by implementing traffic calming measures like speed limits, pedestrian crossings, and traffic islands.

As Tirana, the capital of Albania, during the last years, is transforming rapidly towards a modern city and metropolis, the designed "Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan for the City of TIRANA" is considered the rank of National Plan to be realised in the year 2030. This Plan started implementation in 2019.

## 2.3 Reducing car dependency

### 2.3.1 Reducing car dependency in Montenegro

In Montenegro, the transport sector has a share of 10% in the final energy consumption. Road transport accounts for almost 90% of energy consumption in the transport sector, with the dominant share of passenger cars. CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from traffic come from burning fuel, so by saving fuel, i.e. economic consumption, significant reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions can be achieved. Regarding fuels, diesel fuel consumption is the dominant source of GHG emissions in the transport subsector, accounting for over 60%. Montenegro is a member state of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and a signatory to the Paris Agreement. Therefore, to make a national contribution to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector is also foreseen.

The average age of all motor vehicles in 2021 in Montenegro is 13.61 years. Registered motor vehicles increased from 164,626 in 1998 to 256,732 in 2021 (~56%). Of the total number of cars, passenger vehicles have the most significant share year after year (~86% in 2021). In 2021, 195,628 motor vehicles and trailers used oil or 77.24% of the total cars. Gasoline 98 was used by 49,980 motor vehicles, which is 19.73% of the total vehicles. Petrol gas was used by 6,806 cars, or 2.69% of the total vehicles. Other fuels were used in 0.01% of the total cars in 2021 [9].

Data related to 2021:



- Passenger cars registered in Podgorica account for 35.3% of the total registered passenger cars in Montenegro;
- The density of vehicles in Montenegro was 390 motor vehicles or 413 passenger cars per 1000 inhabitants;
- The percentage of motor vehicles that use oil as a fuel is 77.2% [10].

The fact that almost 257,000 motor vehicles (Table 1), with an average age of over 15 years, are moving on Montenegrin roads every day (not counting cars in transit) speaks for itself to the incredible pressure on air quality and the environment in general, considering they especially see the fact that over 77% of vehicles use diesel fuel for propulsion. The reduction of air pollution originating from traffic is mainly carried out by conventional methods, installing filters, and limiting the emissions of polluting substances from vehicles through improved technologies in the auto industry. However, despite improvements in technology and the promotion of cleaner engines and cleaner fuel, traffic-related pollution is constantly increasing as the growing human population increases the intensity of traffic and the number of vehicles. Because of the emission of greenhouse gases in road traffic, it is necessary to promote cleaner cars through the obligations of the auto industry to significantly reduce the emission of greenhouse gases from new cars already in the production process; the responsibility of vehicle distributors in the entire sales chain to inform consumers about greenhouse gas emissions, promotion of alternative vehicles (electric and hybrid vehicles), promotion of alternative fuels (biodiesel, ethanol), etc. [9]

Due to all of the above, it is necessary to develop other types of traffic, for example, bicycle traffic. Of all the cities of Montenegro, only Podgorica, as the capital, has city bike paths. The total length of bicycle paths in Podgorica is approximately 22 kilometres, consisting of the main city corridors. The bicycle is considered the most efficient vehicle in urban areas for distances of up to five kilometres. In Podgorica, most of the distances citizens cover during the day are shorter than that. It is known that bicycle does not pollute the air and does not create noise; at the same time, it positively affects the flow of people and reduces parking problems.

In 2020, Podgorica adopted its first Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) [11]. This strategic document creates prerequisites for sustainable mobility planning and solving traffic challenges in the city through a balanced treatment of all modes of transportation. The Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan foresees a wide range of measures for strategic planning of mobility in the city, parking regulation, public transport modernisation and improvement of conditions for cycling and walking.

*Table 1 Number of vehicles in Montenegro from 2000 to 2021 [9]*

Year	Type of passenger vehicle									In total
	Engine	Passenger vehicles	Van	Bus	Work vehicle	Truck	Towing vehicle	Trailer	Agri-cultural vehicle	
2000	595	128319	809	996	857	12116	916	2108	10	146726
2001	360	93959	638	598	652	8147	539	1606	16	106515
2002	596	100501	653	588	768	8637	522	1529	4	113798



2003	1445	110047	733	640	814	8888	526	1395	23	124511
2004	995	104220	689	588	718	8431	438	1333	3	117415
2005	1246	126570	721	741	800	9189	422	1249	8	140946
2006	1425	154319	768	656	787	9623	349	1221	10	169158
2007	3032	193875	832	1210	1118	13214	603	1519	7	215410
2008	4797	199542	1224	1283	1608	14574	877	1827	28	225760
2009	4879	179937	1265	1202	1854	12851	931	1477	64	204460
2010	4572	164728	1040	1140	1857	12105	933	1422	63	187860
2011	4529	166878	1048	1174	1957	12018	937	1751	169	190461
2012	4524	170557	1003	1180	2140	12366	1003	1705	164	194642
2013	5013	177646	953	1238	2395	12744	1030	2071	222	203312
2014	3650	172170	764	1234	2411	11836	1055	1976	220	195316
2015	4172	174526	649	1242	2663	12390	1157	2150	272	199221
2016	4364	184952	622	1309	1110	14956	1290	2413	141	211157
2017	4744	187777	562	1370	482	16426	1405	2524	351	215641
2018	6710	197213	475	1283	494	17415	1442	2769	645	228446
2019	6167	215315	463	1459	997	19700	1652	3068	196	249017
2020	5632	209367	377	970	928	20141	1736	3244	255	242650
2021	6166	220638	359	1207	945	21762	1922	3471	262	256732

However, Podgorica and most Montenegrin municipalities, still need to have experience with comprehensive and integrated urban mobility planning. Although other strategic documents (dedicated to spatial planning, environment, energy or development) agree on the need for sustainable transport as a goal, the document has yet to be prepared. As a result, this topic is usually addressed only in documents and measures further down the planning hierarchy and in day-to-day operational practice [12].

### 2.3.2 Reducing car dependency in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The main source of CO<sub>2</sub> is the energy sector, which contributes more than 75% of total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The share of the transport subsector (road transport) in emissions from the energy sector rose from 9% in 1990 to 15% in 2001 (Figure 1). As for the period under review, in 2010, the share of the transport subsector was 15%, while in 2011, it dropped to 14%. This drop is due to increased production in the energy sector in 2011.

The road network in B&H is among the less developed networks in Europe, as evidenced by its density of 45 km/100 km<sup>2</sup>, or 5.7 km per 1,000 inhabitants, which is 2.5 to 4 times lower than in Western European countries. The density of main roads is 7.77 km/100 km<sup>2</sup> in the Federation of B&H and 7.11 km/100 km<sup>2</sup> in the Republic of Srpska. Given that in 2013, a total of 785,890 motor vehicles were registered in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and based on the available data, it can be concluded that the average number of motor vehicles is 34,360 vehicles/1,000 km (Table 2).

Table 2 Indicators on the volume of transport by type [19]

Cargo transport	2010	2011	2012
Vehicle-kilometres travelled (thousands)	284,680	317,032	343,278
Tonnes of goods transported (thousands)	4,837	4,857	6,288
Tonne/km (thousands)	2,038,731	2,308,690	2,310,607
Passenger transport	2010	2011	2012
Vehicle-kilometres travelled (thousands)	97,663	93,823	94,376
Transported passengers (thousands)	28,702	29,303	31,399
Passenger-kilometres (thousands)	1,864,471	1,926,212	1,925,617

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, no significant programmes or projects are focusing on reducing emissions in the transport sector. However, state and entity legislation regulating the fields of transport (e.g. the Law on the Basics of Traffic Safety on Roads in B&H and other laws) and environmental protection (the Air Protection Law and associated secondary legislation) sets a framework for the import, purchase, registration and homologation of motor vehicles, fuel quality, and mandatory regular annual inspection of motor vehicles (roadworthiness test), and provides that owners cannot register motor vehicles that exceed a certain emission threshold. Additionally, owners of motor vehicles in the Federation of B&H are required to pay a special fee when they register their vehicles or when they have their vehicles checked for roadworthiness, depending on the type of engine, fuel, engine size and age of the vehicle. The same mechanism is being considered for introduction in the Republic of Srpska. These activities directly and indirectly reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the transport sector. It is expected that further, more effective implementation of EU directives on emission reductions, efficiency of motor vehicles and fuel quality will contribute to reducing emissions in the transport sector in B&H. Regular maintenance activities and construction of new transport infrastructure by the relevant institutions also reduce emissions.

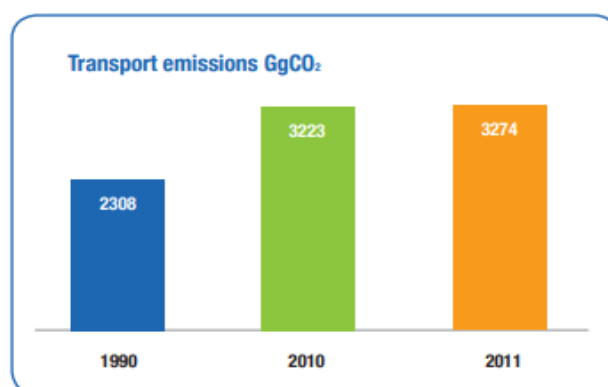


Figure 1 Emissions from the transport subsector for selected years [19]

Transport in Bosnia and Herzegovina is regulated by the following laws:

- Framework transport policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2015-2030 [www.mkt.gov.ba](http://www.mkt.gov.ba)
- Framework transport strategy of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2016-2030 [www.mkt.gov.ba](http://www.mkt.gov.ba)
- Law on international and inter-entity road transport (NN 1/02 and NN 14/03) [www.granpol.gov.ba](http://www.granpol.gov.ba)
- Law on the basics of transport safety on roads in Bosnia and Herzegovina (NN 06/06 and NN 9/18) [www.mkt.gov.ba](http://www.mkt.gov.ba)

Transport strategies and law in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina:

- Transport strategy of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2016-2030. [www.parlamentFB&H.gov.ba](http://www.parlamentFB&H.gov.ba)
- Law on road transport of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (NN 28/06 and NN 2/10). [www.propisi.ks.gov.ba](http://www.propisi.ks.gov.ba)
- Law on roads of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (NN 12/10, NN 16/10 and NN 6/13). [www.FB&Hvlada.gov.ba](http://www.FB&Hvlada.gov.ba)

Transport strategies and laws in the Republic of Srpska:

- Law on transportation in road traffic in the Republic of Srpska (SG RS 47/17) [www.putevirs.com](http://www.putevirs.com)
- Law on public roads in the Republic of Srpska (SG RS 89/13) [www.putevir.com](http://www.putevir.com)
- Law on traffic safety on public roads in the Republic of Srpska (SG RS 63/11) [www.mup.vladars.net](http://www.mup.vladars.net)
- Law on transportation of hazardous materials (SG RS 15/16) [www.mup.vladars.net](http://www.mup.vladars.net)
- Rulebook on the manner of performing control tasks and direct regulation of road traffic (SG RS 122/11) [www.mup.vladars.net](http://www.mup.vladars.net)

The increasing number of registered vehicles in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2021 to 2022 is shown in Figure 2.

Most advanced in reducing car dependency is the local government of Sarajevo canton. On December 30, 2020, the Sarajevo City Council adopted the Plan for Sustainable Urban Mobility of the Sarajevo Canton and the City of Sarajevo – SUMP and the document was created in line with the 2030 Agenda.

The main pillars on which SUMP Sarajevo is based are cycling and walking as an active form of mobility, urban public transport, individual personal transport, city logistics and sustainable spatial planning and urban mobility.

Sarajevo already has a respectable base for developing a sustainable urban environment for mobility. The density of the urban public transport network covers the entire territory of the urban part of Sarajevo. There are various modes of transportation. The cycle path is under construction. One part of the planned 14 km has already been built and released for usage. In the past 5 years, a bike-sharing service has been introduced in Sarajevo, just like, last year, the e-scooter sharing service.



Figure 2 Number of Registered Vehicles in B&H [14]

In addition to adopting SUMP, The Government of Sarajevo Canton, through the Ministry of Communal Economy, Infrastructure, Physical Planning, Construction and Environmental Protection, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) to facilitate the project named **Urban Transformation of Sarajevo (UTPS)**. Agreement on implementing the “Sarajevo Urban Transformation Project” (UTPS) was signed between ETH Zurich, the University of Sarajevo, and the Sarajevo Canton Development Planning Institute. The project “Urban Transformation of Sarajevo” aims to modernise the system of integrated urban planning in Sarajevo Canton, through work programs and access to urban planning based on climate resilience, transparency, inclusiveness, and real data, in a way that contributes to economic development and quality of life.

The project “Urban Transformation of Sarajevo” is based on three main components:

- Institutionalization that includes building and developing the academic capacity of the University of Sarajevo through the activities of teachers and students from the Faculty of ETH Zurich DArch and the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Sarajevo as well as international experts which will be implemented through academic courses, summer schools and workshops, international project studies conference and symposium,
- Urban planning practices, and
- Urban transformation - It will be realised through planning, programming, design and realisation of urban prototypes and small-scale urban interventions.

### 2.3.3 Reducing car dependency in Albania

According to the Institute of Statistics of Albania, in 2021, the total number of vehicles in Albania was 740669.

The latest INSTAT data in the Regional Statistical Yearbook show that Albania is the country in Europe that has the fewest vehicles in relation to the population. The data on the level of motorization

show that in 2019 that the county had about 199 vehicles per 1000 inhabitants, out of 520 which is the average of the European Union.

In the coastal city of Durrës, it is very difficult to find parking while the traffic gets heavier in the summer and during the end-of-year holidays. The County of Durrës holds the record for the highest number of vehicles in relation to the population. According to INSTAT, in this district, there are 279 vehicles per 1000 inhabitants.

In second place is Lezha, with 258 vehicles per 1000 inhabitants, followed by Gjirokastra, with 230 vehicles per 1000 inhabitants. The number is constantly increasing.

The largest percentage of the total number of road vehicles is occupied by cars (80.1%), vehicles for mixed transport (6.7%) and motors (5.1%).

In 2021, the number of passenger cars per 1000 inhabitants was 212 compared to 190 in 2020, increasing by 11%.

According to the data of the General Directorate of Road Transport Services for the 10th month of 2022, a total of 54000 vehicles were registered, of which 44000 were cars.

Managing the growth of urban traffic is vital for improving the liveability of our cities. This report examines how government can encourage citizens to use alternatives to private cars to reduce car dependency, regardless of how they are powered or who drives them.

It analyses fiscal policies and other instruments for managing urban traffic and correcting current policy biases favouring automobile travel over more sustainable and affordable transport options. It also reviews international experience in coordinating transport planning with land-use development and in allocating space to walking and cycling to make transport more efficient and streets less congested.

Cities need more efficient, less damaging, and fairer use of scarce space. Managing the growth of urban traffic is vital for achieving that and improving the liveability of our cities. More globally, reducing traffic is essential for scaling back the environmental and social costs associated with private car use to meet sustainability objectives. However, the car will likely be irreplaceable for travel between peripheral areas. The objective must not suppress travel by car but channel it to locations and uses where its value to the individual exceeds the costs it imposes on society, including other car users.

The guiding principle for managing car use is enabling citizens to carry out their daily activities without a car and not rely on cars to satisfy their transport needs. The question for policy is how to ensure an adequate level of car-free accessibility through other travel options, including public transport, cycling, shared micro-mobility and walking. Boosting the use of non-car transport modes requires safe walking and cycling infrastructure. It also involves adequate parking for vulnerable groups, such as disabled people, who must rely on private vehicles for equitable access. Significantly reducing the modal share of private vehicles in urban mobility implies a significant long-term change in the spatial form of cities. In the short to medium term, it means reallocating space away from roads and parking. In the longer term, it implies changes in land-use patterns to maintain high levels of accessibility with lower overall levels of mobility. Reallocation of road space is used more widely than road pricing to manage car use. Possibly, it is seen as more acceptable in view of concerns over the equity impacts of

road pricing. The most effective urban mobility management systems deploy road pricing schemes together with road space allocation and land-use planning instruments.

High priority for more sustainable forms of transport will drive more efficient use of road space, enhance the attractiveness of non-motorized modes, and improve the accessibility of specific locations. It will also reduce damage to the environment, make street space more attractive and improve road safety for non-motorists.

Government should review how much road and parking space is allocated to the different transport modes. Cars tend to take up disproportionately more space than their modal share. Reallocating road and parking space to public transport, cycling and walking increases mobility options for non-drivers, encourages users to shift from cars to more space-efficient modes and thereby helps to achieve equity and efficiency objectives. The emergence of shared micro-mobility has increased demands for redistributing space. Expanding dedicated cycling lanes to accommodate e-scooters, e-bikes, and similar micro-vehicles will do much to make these safer and also perceived as safe, thus making micro-mobility a much more attractive alternative to cars.

Reallocation of road space and changes to road layouts that give more space to cyclists and pedestrians should be used as a strategy to manage car use. A growing body of evidence suggests that a well-planned reduction of road space for private cars does not add to congestion. On the contrary, reduced road capacity can lead to "disappearing traffic". Car drivers adapt to changed conditions in many ways, often too complex for computer models to predict. Empirical evidence from measures implemented is, therefore as important as modelling for decision-making. The Improvements to public space and liveability associated with the reallocation of road space generally benefit retailers via increased footfall and associated sales. Citizens and local administrations are less prone to contesting road space reallocation than road pricing, as no cash payments are involved.

Minimum parking space requirements for new developments should be abolished. They tend to worsen car dependency, hinder infill development, contribute to urban sprawl, reduce the financial viability of real estate investments for developers and make home ownership less affordable for citizens. Reducing parking requirements reduces the shadow subsidies non-drivers must pay for parking facilities they do not need and thus increase economic efficiency and enhance fairness. Allowing developers to determine parking supply based on demand will contribute to more sustainable and compact urban development patterns.

Road pricing is an effective tool to manage congestion and use road capacity more efficiently. Flexible charges that vary by time and location can set prices to match drivers' marginal cost of using roads and thereby change their behaviour. Road pricing may have unwanted effects on equity, however, as do many fiscal instruments. The scale of distributive impacts will depend on the travel patterns of the different income groups, the location of jobs and residential areas, and how tolling revenues are used. Earmarking tolling revenues for improvements in public transport can neutralise distributional impacts.

Cities should consider dynamic parking pricing systems that adjust tariffs in real-time based on parking place occupancy in surrounding areas. As pilot projects have demonstrated, dynamic pricing can help prevent capacity saturation and unnecessary cruising in search of or in place of parking. Where dynamic parking pricing is impossible, charging by the minute at the average market price for curbside

parking is the best alternative. Retailers will tend to benefit because charging for the time the parking space is occupied increases turnover, which makes finding a parking space easier.

Free parking at a workplace is a common fringe benefit. Employers should be encouraged to eliminate parking subsidies or widen their scope to include commuting by other modes as an effective way to make commutes by car less attractive. Offering a cash payment or a comparable transit benefit equal to the parking space cost also incentivises employees to avoid commuting by car. Governments should also make bike-sharing and other emerging transport options that can reduce environmental impacts and congestion eligible for commuter benefits.

Providing quality public transport options at affordable prices is central to encouraging a modal shift. Improving service quality has a stronger influence on demand than lowering ticket prices. Reducing crowding, increasing comfort, and enhancing reliability are particularly effective. Peak pricing should be considered for public transport, with or without concomitant road pricing, especially where fares are low and use is high. This will help balance demand with supply and fund additional peak-time services. By reducing crowding and delays, peak pricing on public transport could contribute to reducing congestion on the road as some car users switch to better-managed public transport.

Promoting compact urban development should be the core of any long-term strategy to reduce car dependency. Aligning transport networks with high-density residential and commercial corridors over several decades is highly recommended. Accessibility indicators have proved useful for coordinating land use and transport planning and for identifying areas for development. Cities with high density could follow the example of Chinese cities that use investment in rail transit to manage urban growth by extending rail lines to less developed areas to steer the anticipated spatial expansion.

Evidence suggests that relaxing density regulations can reduce car use and emissions. Specifically, restrictions on building height or floor area ratios hamper densification. Policies that allow population density to increase can sometimes curb growth in the cost of housing.

Major cities across Albania kicked off on Sunday a new initiative to go car-free every first Sunday of the month, a national plan decided by the government to improve air quality and reduce the use of cars amid an ongoing energy crisis. The Albanian government last month decided to make every first Sunday of the month a car-free day, starting first in major cities and then expanding throughout the country.

## 2.4 Preservation of the environment and resources

### 2.4.1 Preservation of the environment and resources in Montenegro

Preserving the environment, space, and the rich resources Montenegro has at its disposal is a challenge that all segments of society should work on together.

The basic legal regulation in this area:

- The Law on Environmental ("Zakon o životnoj sredini"), "Official Gazette of Montenegro". 52/2016, 73/2019 - second law and 73/2019. [21];
- The Law on Environmental Impact Assessment ("Zakon o zaštiti životne sredine"), "Official Gazette of Montenegro", No. 075/18 of November 23, 2018. [36];



- The Nature Protection Law, ("Zakon o zaštiti prirode") "Official Gazette of Montenegro", no. 54/2016 and 18/2019. [20];
- The Water Law ("Zakon o vodama"), "Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro", No. 27/2007 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro", No. 32/2011, 47/2011 - amended, 48/2015, 52/2016, 2/2017 - other laws, 80/2017 – sec. Law, 55/2016 - Second Law and 84/2018. [22];
- The Law on the Protection of the Marine Environment ("Zakon o zaštiti morskog dobra") "Official Gazette of Montenegro", No. 73/2019 of 27.12.2019. [24];
- The Air Protection Law ("Zakon o zaštiti vazduha"), Official Gazette of Montenegro, No. 25/2010, 40/2011 - second law, 43/2015 (Art. 29. and 30. are not in the revised text) and 73/2019 - another law. [25].

Monitoring parking space cost also motivates employees and examination of quantitative and qualitative indicators, which includes monitoring of natural factors, i.e., changes in the characteristics, including cross-border monitoring of the environment. The Environmental Protection Agency of Montenegro oversees preserving the environment and resources in Montenegro.

The Environmental Protection Agency of Montenegro performs tasks related to:

- organising, planning and participating in environmental monitoring in the area of:
  - air quality (including monitoring of pollen suspended in the air),
  - the content of dangerous and harmful substances in the soil,
  - the state of the coastal sea ecosystem,
  - the state of biodiversity, noise in the environment,
  - ionising and non-ionizing radiation; analysis and reporting on the state of the environment,
  - proposing measures to reduce the negative impact on the environment,
  - issuance of an act on the conditions of nature protection to develop plans, bases and programs;
- preparation of the Protection Study for the declaration of a protected natural asset;
- issuance of IPPC (Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control) permits;
- issuance of permits for cross-border movement of waste, processing and/or disposal of waste;
- issuance of permits:
  - for the performance of maintenance and/or repair activities, as well as the exclusion from use of products containing substances that damage the ozone layer and/or alternative substances,
  - for monitoring fuel quality, and air quality, issuing permits for measurement of emissions on permitted emissions of pollutants in the air, import or export of substances that damage the ozone layer, alternative substances, and products containing them,
  - for measuring the level of noise in the environment and for creating strategic noise maps,
  - for the production, circulation and use of sources of ionising radiation and radioactive materials,



- for the performance of professional work on protection against non-ionizing radiation, for the use of sources of electromagnetic fields, devices that emit optical radiation or contain sources of optical radiation and devices that emit ultrasound, as well as a permit for professional training in persons responsible for the implementation of protection measures against non-ionizing radiation,
- for the import, export and transit of chemicals that are on the list of classified substances; for the import and export of detergents, for carrying out the activity of trading dangerous chemicals; import, export and transit of biocidal products;
- implementation of the strategic impact assessment procedure and the project environmental impact assessment procedure;
- implementation of the procedure for determining the immediate danger of damage to the environment and liability for damage to the environment;
- issuing consent to waste management plans;
- giving opinions in the process of issuing permits and keeping records on production and waste management;
- assessment of the radiological burden of the population, development of a program for monitoring the quality of liquid fuels of petroleum origin, collection of data for updating the LRTAP (Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution) and GHG (Greenhouse Gas) Inventory, reporting to international organisations (European Environmental Agency, MedPOL (UNEP/MAP));
- monitoring the state and threat of habitat types, the number and state of wild bird populations, as well as other indicator species that indicate and enable the assessment of the state of nature, conducting the prior notification procedure (PIC procedure), executing international agreements within the competence of this authority, preparing expert documents for the preparation regulations in the field of environmental protection;
- management of the information system in the field of the environment;
- managing the cadastre of pollutants; giving opinions on planning documentation and nature protection measures that those acts should contain;
- as well as other tasks assigned to her.

#### 2.4.2 Preservation of the environment and resources in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a decentralised country comprising two entities (the Republic of Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Brčko District. The two entities and Brčko District manage environmental issues through laws, regulations, and standards. The Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations is responsible for coordinating activities and harmonising plans of the entities' governmental bodies and institutions at the international level in energy, environmental protection, development, and the exploitation of natural resources. The designated UNFCCC focal point and Designated National Authority (DNA) for the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) is the Republic of Srpska Ministry for Spatial Planning, Civil Engineering and Ecology.

The highest level of competence in air quality legislation in Bosnia and Herzegovina has entity governments. Brcko District has its own competence in air quality management and legislation. Most of

the competence in air quality management has lower administrative units – municipalities and, in Federation of B&H – cantons.

Legislation:

#### **Federation of B&H**

- Air protection law,
- Rulebook on the manner of monitoring air quality and defining the types of pollutants, limit values and other air quality standards,

#### **The Republic of Srpska**

- Air protection law,
- Decree on conditions for air quality monitoring,
- Decree on the establishment of a national network of measuring stations,
- Regulation on air quality values,
- Regulation on the zones and agglomerations

Above mentioned regulations, both in Federation and Republic of Srpska, generally are aligned with 2008/50 “CAFE” directive.

Environmental protection and developing an emissions inventory in Bosnia and Herzegovina is primarily regulated by relevant environmental and air protection laws in FB&H and RS. This legislation covers the following activities:

#### **Federation of B&H**

The FB&H Ministry of Environment and Tourism establishes and manages an environmental information system in FB&H and enables environmental monitoring as well as the measuring, collecting, processing, and recording of data on the use of the environment and environmental burdens.

Cantonal ministries responsible for environmental protection are obliged to submit the data required for the operation of the environmental information system.

The FB&H Ministry of Environment and Tourism maintains the Register of Plants and the Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (which also includes the air emissions register) in accordance with the Regulation on Plant and Pollution Registers.

Cantonal ministries responsible for environmental protection prepare annual reports on permits issued to plants and facilities, and they submit them to the Ministry along with data for the Register.

The Federal Hydrometeorological Institute of FB&H establishes and performs air quality monitoring, maintains a database of air quality measurements, prepares annual air quality reports, and submits them to the FB&H Ministry of Environment and Tourism and the FB&H Ministry of Health for publication.

#### **The Republic of Srpska**

The RS Ministry of Spatial Planning, Civil Engineering and Ecology is responsible for the overall quality of environmental protection in RS. This ministry maintains the Pollutant Release and Transfer Register in accordance with the Regulation on the Methodology and Manner of Keeping the Plant and Pollution Register.

The Republic Hydrometeorological Institute of RS maintains an air quality information system and prepares and releases monthly and annual air quality reports in RS. This institution is also responsible for compiling an inventory of GHG emissions. Polluters, specialised institutions, and competent authorities in both entities must submit the data necessary for distribution, assessment and/or monitoring to ministries.

Although it is not directly involved, the entity-level statistical institutes and the state-level Agency for Statistics also play a key role in environmental monitoring (information from the First biennial update report of Bosnia and Herzegovina under the United Nations Framework Convention on climate change).

Regarding implementing the Directive in local regulations, general provisions, subject matter, and definitions from the directive are mostly aligned with local regulations, but there are some issues.

For example, regarding Responsibilities (Article 3):

Member States shall designate at the appropriate levels the competent authorities and bodies responsible for the following: (a) assessment of ambient air quality; (b) approval of measurement systems (methods, equipment, networks and laboratories); (c) ensuring the accuracy of measurements; (d) analysis of assessment methods; (e) coordination on their territory if Community-wide quality assurance programs are being organised by the Commission; (f) cooperation with the other Member States and the Commission.

In Bosnia's case, the state has responsibilities on this issue, entity governments have to designate two Reference laboratories for these issues - most probably entity Hydrometeorological Institutes, which already are designated for some of the mentioned activities. This is supported by the IMPAQ project, in which cooperate institutions from B&H and Sweden.

Article 4. Zones and agglomerations – yet not determined in accordance with the Directive. The Republic of Srpska had determined agglomerations a few years ago but did not align with definitions from the Directive. In 2020. The proposal of zones and agglomerations in B&H, aligned with the Directive, is in the final preparation phase. (Local Hydromets and Swedish SEPA – IMPAQ project). Some of the zones and agglomerations already meet the needs of AQ monitoring but some will need more investments in AQ station networks.

Chapter 2. Assessment of ambient air quality; Assessment regime and assessment criteria: It is described in local legislation but not implemented – needs determined zones and agglomerations. Also, it needs high-quality data coverage from monitoring sites for a few years in a row, which is often not the case.

Chapters 3. and 4. of Ambient air quality management and Plans – described in local legislation align with the Directive. Some Cantons and municipalities make their own plans, but without coordination with higher administration unit management and plans, it is hard to evaluate the results.

Chapter 5. Information and Reporting – implementation is improving, especially in the Federation of B&H. Daily reports are provided from FHMI, media contacts and reports, mobile applications, and social networks. Annual reports yet do not contain Plans and Assessments.

A specific air quality index in force in the Federation of B&H will probably be the same methodology in RS too. IMPAQ project Reports to EEA /EIONET are implemented in a limited format (technical data of networks and measuring sites, measured concentrations, real-time data).

The third Environmental Performance Review for Bosnia and Herzegovina was done in 2019.

Environmental Performance Review (EPR) assesses the progress of countries of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) region in reconciling their environmental and economic targets and meeting their international environmental commitments. They do not cover the whole range of issues addressed by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development but support the achievement and monitoring of those Goals and/or targets from the 2030 Agenda that are relevant for the particular review content requested by the country under review.

The third EPR of B&H includes a set of recommendations to the country on legal and policy frameworks, regulatory and compliance assurance mechanisms, economic instruments, environmental monitoring and information, education for sustainable development, international cooperation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, water management and waste management. Since 2017, all EPRs have included a review of the relevant Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda and provided recommendations to the countries on reaching SDGs. As the third EPR of B&H was carried out in 2017, the Review includes recommendations supporting the country's gradual achievement of SDGs.

Bosnia and Herzegovina (on a state level) has, among others, also adopted the following documents: Climate Change Adaptation and Low-Emission Development Strategy for Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) (2013) and in 2017 Environmental Approximation Strategy of Bosnia And Herzegovina, Environmental Approximation Strategy of FB&H, Environmental Approximation Strategy of RS and Environmental Approximation Strategy of Brčko District. Now, Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) is embarking on preparing an environmental strategy and action plan. The B&H Environmental Strategy and Action Plan 2030+ will:

- build on existing and past strategic environmental documents to strengthen current environmental governance in B&H, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FB&H), Republic of Srpska (RS), and Brčko District (BD);
- support B&H in its European Union approximation through the alignment of the environmental strategy with EU environmental acquis;
- provide a roadmap for future environmental-sector measures and investments, and mechanisms for their implementation beyond 2030.

#### 2.4.3 Preservation of the environment and resources in Albania

Since 1984, the Worldwatch Institute has published an annual volume, State of the World, which summarises some of the key issues facing the planet. The series has covered problems ranging from promoting sustainable fisheries to population growth and management to global climate change. What makes the series so remarkable is that the problems the volumes highlight are not unique to any one state or region, or time—they are applicable to virtually any location on Earth at any point in contemporary history.

The situation regarding environmental protection and durable development is one of great actuality and importance. The definition of the durable development must be correlated with two basic concepts:

- the protection capacity that the planet has, characterised by an exact natural rhythm, a complex bio-physical and biochemical dynamic and other certain characteristics (of the territory, of the absorption, of the biological type, etc.), by which is defined a system in which the individual lives like in a closed system.
- the durable programming has to be associated with the social programs of economic, technical, and social development following objectives compatible with the ecologic succession in such a way as to guarantee the satisfaction of day-to-day needs without compromising the future generations.

Durable development has to be made in such a way as to reduce the negative outcomes of the artificial structures, simultaneously satisfying some of the needs of the people and guaranteeing the liveliness of future generations as well. Furthermore, when elaborating and promoting environmental protection policies, the European Community and the member states, according to their competencies that have been established through the constitutive treaties, cooperate with third-party states, judicial institutions and international and regional organisations that also have attributes within this domain.

The European Union has played a crucial role at an international level by patterning environment-related global policies, having signed and ratified a series of international conventions regarding environmental protection. Also, the United Nations, having supervised the unfolding of some of the most important environmental conferences, has contributed to environmental protection and preservation. The protection and durable development programming has to be affirmed at the international, regional and national levels, as well concerning the entire public authorities' ensemble.

The status of the environment and its trends present a real obstacle for the accession of Albania into the EU in the future. The accession of Bulgaria and Romania in the EU, and the problems they faced with the status of their environment before and after accession, show a similar trend for Albania due to the similarity of problems and cultural context of the countries under discussion. Mitigating the environmental degradation left by the communist legacy and the one caused during the transition period proved hard and costly, with costs still showing up even after the EU accession of both countries. The challenge did not include just incorporating the EU directives, regulations, and decisions into the national legislation, but it proved extremely expensive to implement. Albania had a similar history of the environmental situation. It has toxic hotspots spread all over the country—a legacy of 45 years of heavy, polluting industry developed during the communist regime, which did not pay attention to environmental and health protection. In a study commissioned by the UNPD in Albania in May 2010, they applied the environmental damage caused by communism. The environment in Albania, region, or time—they apply 20 years, with a trend of further degradation and, in some areas, a substantial decline. While Albania has applied for membership and aims to become a member of the EU soon, it is lagging behind in the environmental criteria, which might be a serious, costly barrier in the future for accelerating the EU accession process.

Albania's environmental degradation is not something to be taken lightly or, even worse, to be disregarded completely, as it has often occurred in the post-communist transition period. While certainly there are tens of documented and non-documented hotspots inherited by the communist regime, there are tens of newly created hotspots and other environmental issues caused during the last twenty years. Although there were some improvements in landfills and wastewater treatment, the

progress has been minimal, and in some areas, there was regress, setting a dangerous trend for the environment and the achievement of the EU environmental criteria. Destruction of natural parks, pollution of waterways and seas, contamination of soil, the annihilation of forests, and fast loss of biodiversity and ecosystems could be irreversible if it continues at the actual pace and might result in a serious threat to the life of the population in the long run, and an obstacle for the accession of Albania in the EU.

Despite some progress in wastewater treatment and landfill management in Albania, the progress has been slow, and the costs of solving the pollution at the end and not at the source have been enormous. Some key achievements have been the construction of the sewage treatment facility in Pogradec and the construction of a simple sewage treatment facility in Saranda, with costs respectively of € 13.5 million and € 4 million. The grant for the Pogradec facility has been donated by the German government, whereas the construction of the facility in Saranda is a co-financing of several international institutions and the Government of Luxembourg. As seen from the success cases above, they were very costly, the funds were usually donated by other governments, and they have veed the problem for two small towns, still not tackling it at the source, but anyway complying with the EU directives. Studies from state and independent institutions and NGOs have shown that most streams and lower courses in the Western Lowland of Albania are badly or severely polluted with at least 5 rivers which cannot be called any more rivers but — open sewers. Just Tirana, the capital, hosts two of the most polluted rivers of Albania, the Lana River and Tirana River, with figures tens of times higher in every aspect of pollution, compared with the EU limits and directives for water quality

Air quality is the other gravest problem in Albania. Tirana, the capital, is considered one of the most air-polluted capitals in Europe and the world. There is no plan or strategy to combat air pollution, except for some local strategies, which give limited results if not coordinated with other strategies and central and local authorities. The main urban centres, Shkodër, Durrës, Tiranë, Fier, Korçë and Vlorë, have air monitoring centres which show frightening figures in all parameters for air quality. All 6 cities have air pollution 3 times higher than the maximum pollution allowed by the EU, with a monitoring point in Tirana surpassing 6 times more pollution than the maximum pollution allowed by the EU. In a few words, breathing air in some parts of Tirana might be toxic and dangerous for your health. Only small towns, usually situated in hills or mountains, have good air quality due to the lack of industry and traffic.

Some progress has been made with landfill rehabilitation, especially with the Sharra landfill in Tirana. But, there is no national waste management strategy or plan, and each municipality has its own waste collection method, which usually consists of a primitive collection of waste from garbage bins and depositing it in landfills. Waste disposal in almost every village of Albania is done by depositing it on the roadsides, rivers, or just informal dumps in forests or fields where it is usually burnt, thus exacerbating air pollution. Recycling is done by private companies, which usually accept plastic, paper, and metal waste. There is no data on how much of the waste goes to these recycling companies due to the collection almost virtually done by poor or Roma people. Nevertheless, for many tourists, the waste deposited almost everywhere in the territory of Albania has deterred them from revisiting the country— in many internet blogs, you could see the expression —the first thing you see when you approach a city in Albania is plastic bags and piles of garbage on the roadsides. There is almost a complete lack of a culture of waste disposal, and it is very common to see citizens dumping garbage in the Lana River,

which runs across Tirana. The waste management issue could be a real problem in stopping or delaying the accession of Albania to the EU, or it could be an issue for a court case by the European Commission against Albania in case of its accession to the EU.

There is a shortage of competent staff and a lack of equipment in the environmental inspectorate to conduct proper control and verification on the site. Several factories, plants, and SMEs work without any environmental permit, or even when they get one, they hardly respect any regulation towards the environment. The principle — “the polluters pay” is not functional in practice, with most of the fines put, not paid and with the inability of the inspectors to collect the fines they put on polluting businesses. The number of environmental inspectors per region is very low, with 2-3 inspectors covering a territory with hundreds of thousands of inhabitants and thousands of businesses and usually having no car or even a computer to carry out their work. An example to illustrate the status of environmental inspection is the Tirana Region which comprises several cities like Tirana, Kamza, Vora and Kavaja and has a population of more than 1 million inhabitants. Although the Tirana region has the biggest population in the Republic of Albania and hosts more than half of the industry of Albania, it has a mere team of 6 environmental inspectors. The most evident example of industrial pollution is the Ballsh refinery, where the oil extraction waste is dumped directly in streams which end up in the Gjanica River, making it the most polluted river in Albania, a river which has, for decades, dumped oil and bitumen in the Adriatic Sea, severely polluting the coast near the Seman estuary. There is a lack of authority on hazardous materials and waste, and there is no system for the safe management of hazardous waste.

How can Albania avoid the unwanted effects of low progress in implementing EU environmental criteria and avoid repeating the same way Bulgaria and Romania had? There are several ways which one can discuss and propose; we have tackled some of the most feasible and realistic ways:

- Continue with the actual pace of transposing and implementing the EU environmental acquis.
- Just try to rely on IPA funds to mitigate the environmental damage.
- Let civil society deal with the environment.
- Wait for the EU to intervene in the environmental sector in Albania.
- Complete reform and change of approach in dealing with the environment.

## 2.5 Urban planning and land management

### 2.5.1 Urban planning and land management in Montenegro

The Spatial Plan of Montenegro [13] is a basic document for urban planning and land management. It contains, in particular:

- Guidelines for developing the General Regulation Plan of Montenegro,
- Guidelines for environmental protection,
- Guidelines for the management and planning of areas,
- Guidelines for the protection of cultural heritage,
- Basics of the country's defence, security and rescue,
- Guidelines for preventing natural disasters and other accidents,
- Guidelines for reducing seismic risk,
- Guidelines for adapting the General Regulation Plan of Montenegro to climate change,



- Guidelines for increasing energy efficiency and using renewable energy sources,
- Guidelines for concession areas and other policies for implementing the plan.

The goals for urban planning and land management are defined in the Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings [14]. The objectives of planning and construction are the following:

1) even and regionally balanced spatial development aligned with the needs of society, the economy and the capacities of space;

2) rational and efficient use and preservation of spatial potentials and resources on land, sea and underwater and protection of natural assets;

3) development of regional spatial characteristics and preservation of the identity and recognizability of the area;

4) mutually coordinated deployment of various human activities in the space while protecting the integral values of the area;

5) protection and improvement of cultural assets and the environment while preserving the integrity and authenticity of cultural values, creating conditions for the sustainable use of cultural assets and high-value built space with respect and development of specific characteristics, integrity and value of natural and urban areas and environments;

6) arrangement of construction land and quality and humane development of urban and rural settlements, as well as safe and healthy living and working conditions;

7) encouraging an investment environment aimed at the development and increasing the quality of space with simultaneous economic development;

8) application of best practices in the development of urban units and improvement of quality in the field of urban planning and architectural design, as well as improvement of the quality of buildings;

9) protection against earthquakes, landslides and other natural disasters;

10) stability and durability of buildings;

11) protection against technical-technological and other accidents;

12) rational use of natural resources, energy and increasing the degree of energy efficiency,

13) creating conditions for access, movement and residence of persons with reduced mobility and persons with disabilities.

Planning and construction are based on the following principles:

1) an integral approach in the planning process, according to which urban planning, as an ongoing process, is based on a comprehensive overview of the use and protection of space in a way that the implementation of all operations in the space is planned, regardless of their location, purpose or type;

2) spatial sustainability of development and the quality of planning and construction by which economic and social development of society is encouraged;



3) compliance with planning documents, confirmed international agreements, declarations and conventions;

4) horizontal integration, by which, during the creation, adoption and implementation of development documents must respect the principles of planning, especially the realisation of spatial sustainability in the processes that influence settlement planning, use of natural resources, environmental protection, development of activities, infrastructure and their distribution in space;

5) vertical integration, by which, when adopting planning documents and development documents (strategies, plans, programs, etc.) which are adopted based on special regulations and which affect spatial planning or spatial development, all participants in the preparation of those documents are obliged to cooperate and respect the goals and interests expressed in higher-level documents;

6) preventing or mitigating the impact of climate change, by which measures to reduce climate change and adapt to climate change are planned;

7) realisation and protection of public and individual interest by which the public interest and personal interests that must be respected in the performance of planning and construction tasks are evaluated and mutually harmonised, whereby personal interests must not harm the public interest;

8) reduction of seismic risk, by which measures are taken in planning and construction to mitigate the consequences of an earthquake whose occurrence is predicted;

9) involving the public, which gives the public the right to participate in preparing and adopting planning documents, and

10) prohibitions of discrimination by special regulations.

The General Regulation Plan of Montenegro [15] is a planning document that determines in more detail the goals and measures of the spatial and urban development of Montenegro while respecting the specific needs arising from regional peculiarities, elaborates the plans of spatial planning and regulates the rational use of space and sea areas, by the economic, social, ecological, and cultural - historical development.

The General Regulation Plan of Montenegro is adopted for the northern, central, and coastal regions, as well as the area of national parks and the area under the protection of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

The region's scope is determined per the law governing regional development, excluding areas of national parks and regions under UNESCO protection.

In addition to being covered by the law regulating regional development, the coastal region also includes the territorial sea and the exclusive economic zone following the law regulating the sea.

The General Regulation Plan of Montenegro determines, in particular: the purpose of land; terms of arrangement, construction and use of space; infrastructure corridors and capacities; boundaries of construction areas of settlements; boundaries of separate construction areas outside the territory; edges of separate parts of the construction area of the settlement; boundaries of scope for which detailed urban planning solutions are developed; boundaries of urban rehabilitation zones; space provided for the development of urban projects; boundaries of protected areas up to II categories

according to the categorisation of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), internationally protected areas and ecological network areas.

The General Regulation Plan of Montenegro contains, in particular:

- Rules of arrangement and management of construction by zone;
- Rules for the subdivision of the land;
- Urban rehabilitation guidelines;
- Guidelines for creating urban projects;
- Guidelines for landscape architecture;
- Guidelines for the protection of cultural heritage;
- Guidelines for improvement and preservation of nature and the environment;
- Guidelines for prevention and protection against natural disasters and technical-technological and other accidents;
- Guidelines for adapting to climate change;
- Guidelines for reducing seismic risk;
- Guidelines for increasing energy efficiency and using renewable energy sources;
- Guidelines for concession areas;
- Economic-market projection and other approaches for the implementation of the plan.

### 2.5.2 Urban planning and land management in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In the Constitution of B&H, the strategy of spatial arrangement and planning does not exist at the state level nor within the framework of the Council of Ministers. Consequently, such a significant issue and an even more significant framework for possible development are not legally regulated. The two entities and Brčko District are responsible for providing spatial planning. There is no state-level ministry of spatial planning. Each entity, independently, without mutual coordination, plans and carries out the most significant interventions. Only a state strategy can ensure high-quality planning and implementation of primary transport and energy corridors, the definition of spatial scope and categorisation of protected areas, cultural and historical heritage and other issues of interest to the state. At the same time, a unique approach, and an adequate methodology for adopting strategic goals must be ensured. Planning, both development and implementation, is defined at the entity levels and the Brčko District level (Table 3).

The absence of any administrative form of spatial management and the lack of a state spatial planning strategy can call into question the realisation of correct regional development and a polycentric development system with cities - centres of regions that will generate overall development.

Spatial organisation throughout the world and Europe is based on geographical, functional, economic, historical and other criteria. The spatial organisation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the result of political agreements, which caused a reduction in the spatial connectivity of municipal centres as a generator of development and reduced their capacity for development and competitiveness on the market. By the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, spatial arrangement and planning are not included as an activity of importance at the state level, and even strategic development is not set at the level of the entire state but is exclusively the competence of the entities.

Table 3 Competence in spatial planning framework in B&amp;H [24]

Bosnia and Herzegovina		
The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina	The Republic of Srpska	Brcko District
Entity level: Law on spatial planning and land use at the Federation of B&H (FB&H Official Gazette 06/02) and amendments in 2007, 2008, and three changes in 2010.	Entity law: Law on Spatial Planning and Construction in the Republic of Srpska (Official Gazette no. 55/10)	Entity law: Law on Spatial Planning and Construction (Official Gazette of the Brcko District, no. 29/08)
Cantonal level: Each of the 10 cantons has its own law on spatial planning		
The municipal level: Decision on spatial planning specific to each municipality	The municipal level: Decision on spatial planning specific to each municipality	

All cantons were obliged to make and adopt spatial development plans that, with more or less success, analysed the situation in the space by creating a spatial basis and gave a vision of the development of the canton through the spatial plan itself. Within the framework of the plan, the development directions of local communities, their correlations, and general and special goals are given. However, when determining general and special goals, it was necessary to start from common interests and goals determined by the spatial plan of the wider area, strategic development documents, state and entity, and international guidelines, charters and conventions, which in the case of the Federation of B&H and the Republic of Srpska, as the basis, omitted.

There is no development and spatial document at the state level.

To manage change, it is necessary to define the management strategy in all segments of life precisely, and the instrument for establishing order and achieving strategic goals is the Planning Act. Although the laws in both entities had a common goal: to achieve greater efficiency in the field of spatial planning, encouraging faster construction and more efficient general development, socioeconomic, socio-political and other reasons in the Bosnian society did not allow for greater progress in this area. First of all, in almost all municipalities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is a problem with up-to-date geodetic or cadastral records. The law prescribes the preparation of planning documents in both analogue and digital form, and most municipalities have not digitised these documents, mainly due to the lack of trained staff, equipment, and software, which require large financial resources. Also, in the field of land registry records in both entities, there are still double records (old and new surveys) that are not harmonised, which also represents an additional problem in planning.

Since adopting the law on spatial planning, spatial information systems should be established at all three levels of government. However, this process occurs without umbrella regulations that prescribe standards and other conditions to ensure mutual harmonisation at all levels. The lack of a standardised

approach makes it difficult to achieve work efficiency, and often due to different tools, it is impossible to implement and use data and plans.

Slight improvements can be observed in the past few years.

**Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Planning, in the sense of the law, is considered planning management, land use and protection of the space of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a particularly valuable and limited asset.

The planning management of the space is ensured by implementing planning documents based on a comprehensive approach to the planning of the space and sustainable development. In the Federation, the law regulates the following: planning and land use, preparation and adoption of planning documents, their implementation, type and content of planning documents, land use, supervision over the implementation of planning documents, etc. (Figure 3).

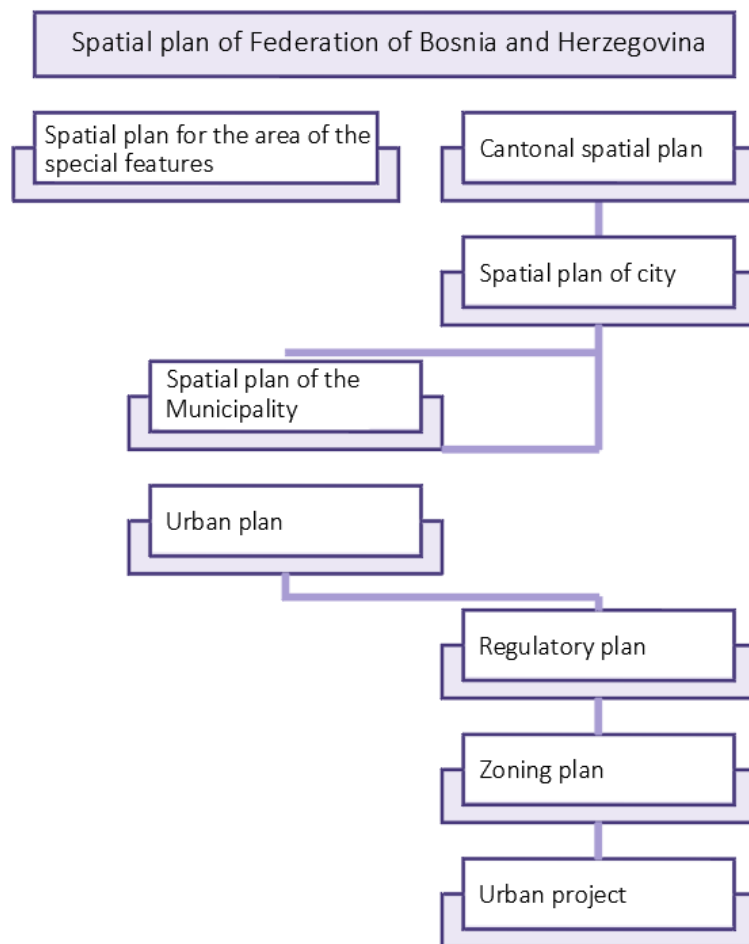


Figure 3 Competence in the framework of spatial planning in B&H [24]

The Federal Ministry of Physical Planning has existed in its current form since 2006 when the Federal ministries underwent reorganisation under the Law on Federal Ministries and Other Bodies of the

Federal Administration. Before this reorganisation, the Federal Ministry of Physical Planning also included the Sector for Environment.

In its present form, the Ministry focuses on main activities related to physical planning in the Federation, land use at the Federal level, long-term resource planning and protection of national monuments and areas of major importance in terms of natural, built and cultural and historical heritage.

Article 18 of the Law on Federal Ministries and other bodies of the Federal Administration states: “The Federal Ministry of Physical Planning performs management, professional and other duties in the jurisdiction of the Federation, related to: physical planning and regulation; land use policy at the Federal level; development, implementation and enforcement of the physical plan of the Federation B&H; harmonisation of cantonal physical plans with the physical plan of the Federation B&H; steering of long-term development of natural resource exploitation; geological surveys; creation of basic geophysical, seismic, geothermal, mineral/energy, geochemical, geomorphological and other maps; preparation of underlying geological maps for physical development; supervision of relevant institutions in this sector and other duties assigned to it by the law.”

Article 3 of the Rulebook on the internal organisation of the Federal Ministry of Physical Planning states that the Ministry performs administrative, professional and other duties under the competence of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, specifically related to:

- Physical planning and development;
- Land use policy at the Federal level;
- Development, implementation and application of the physical plan of the Federation;
- Harmonisation of cantonal physical plans with the physical plan of the Federation;
- Steering of long-term development of natural resource exploitation;
- Geological surveys;
- Production of basic maps – geophysical, seismological, geothermal, mineral/energy, geochemical, geomorphological and other;
- Production of underlying geological maps for physical development;
- Supervision of relevant institutions in this sector;
- Handling of first-instance administrative procedures upon requests for issuance of urban planning consents, building permits, usage permits for constructions and interventions of importance for the Federation B&H, constructions, business operations and interventions with potential major impact on the environment, life and health of people in the Federation B&H and further, and for national monuments assigned the status of a national monument of B&H by decision of the Commission for Conservation of National Monuments;
- Handling of first-instance administrative procedures for issuance of authorisations to conduct energy audits and energy certification of buildings with simple technical systems, to natural and legal persons;
- Handling of first-instance administrative procedures for issuance of authorisations to conduct energy audits and authorisations to conduct energy certification of buildings with complex technical systems to legal persons;

- Handling of first-instance administrative procedures for issuance of authorisations to deliver the Training Programme for energy audits and energy certification of buildings to legal persons;
- Administration of mandatory registers, in accordance with the regulations;
- Issuance of certificates of completion for training programmes;
- Handling of second-instance administrative procedures in the domain of residential relations and inspections;
- Other duties prescribed by the law.

Most relevant spatial planning documents in Federation B&H are:

- The Physical Plan of the Republic of B&H 1981-2000 (until the adoption of the physical plan for the Federation B&H),
- Decision on the development of the Physical Plan for the area with special features of importance to the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina “River Una watershed” for a 20-year period,
- Physical Plan for areas with special features of importance to the Federation Bosnia and Herzegovina “Motorway in Corridor Vc”,
- Regulation Plan for the Mostar city area for the period 2007-2017

### Republic of Srpska

In the Republic of Srpska, the law regulates the following: basics of organization, planning and spatial planning, types and content of spatial planning documents, method of drafting and adoption of spatial planning documents, rules and implementation plan of spatial planning documents, type and content of technical documentation, obligations and mutual relations between construction participants, issuance of location conditions and approvals for construction, approvals for use and approvals for the removal of the building, and other issues of importance for the arrangement of space, building land and construction of buildings. Therefore, spatial planning documents determine the organisation, purpose, and method of using and managing the space, as well as criteria and guidelines for planning and protecting the space of this entity of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Figure 4).

The Ministry of Physical Planning, Civil Engineering and Ecology performs administrative and other professional activities that refer to the following:

- integrated spatial planning and physical organisation of space;
- design and application of the spatial plan of the Republic;
- review, administrative supervision and providing approval for spatial plans of cities, municipalities, and special purposes areas as well as for urban planning;
- review of spatial-planning documents, development programmes and investment-technical documents of special interest for the Republic;

The Ministry attends to the following:

- Urban planning and building;
- Organisation of building land, production of building materials, development and services in the domain of building;

- Housing building and its funding;
- Housing cooperative is also under the Ministry’s authority. The Ministry stipulates and arranges housing relations and acquiring ownership over residential buildings and flats in public ownership, maintenance and management over buildings and flats and utility services. The Ministry manages integrated protection of environmental quality and its enhancement through research, management and safeguards planning; protection of public interest assets, natural resources, and natural and cultural heritage.

The Ministry performs public administration activities referring to improving operations in spatial planning, construction and the environment through preparation and working within the Committees to develop drafts and proposals of laws and other regulations under the Ministry’s authority.

Within its scope of work, the Ministry prepares and proposes questions and materials and coordinates activities in spatial planning, construction, and environment for consideration by the committees, other Governmental bodies, and the Council of Ministers responsible for these areas.

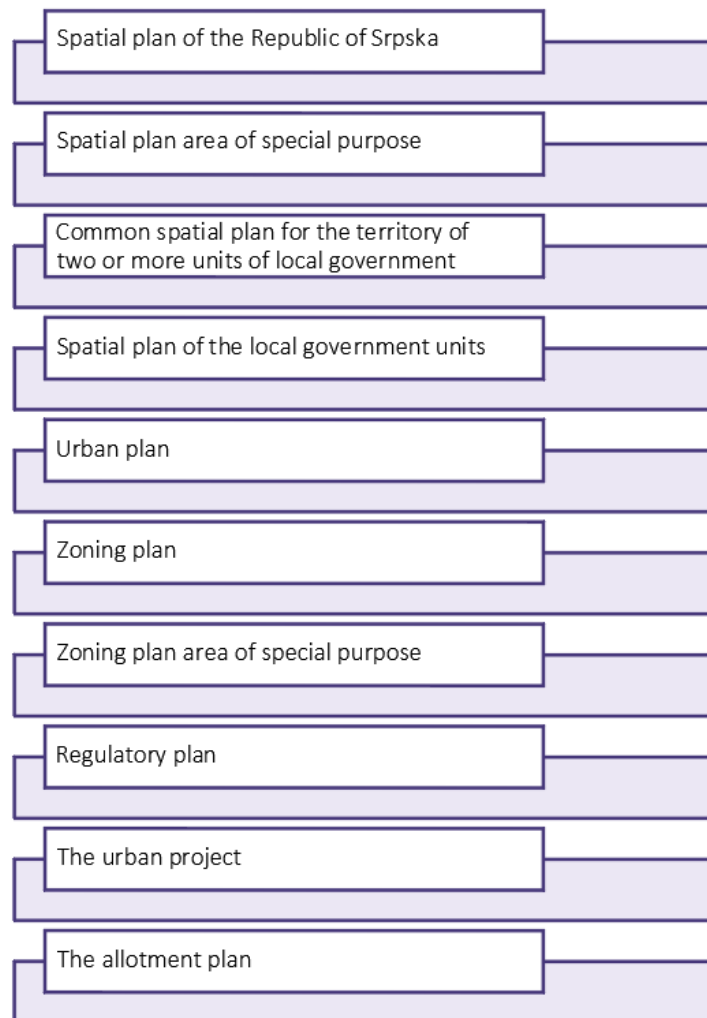


Figure 4 Strategic spatial planning and implementation documents in RS/ B&H [24]

Most relevant spatial planning documents in RS are:

- The Spatial Plan of the Republic of Srpska is a strategic document in the field of spatial planning for the territory of the Republic of Srpska. The planning document of the highest order, the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Srpska, is adopted by the National Assembly of this entity. The Assembly is also in charge of adopting special purpose spatial plans of entity significance (e.g. Spatial plan of special purpose areas: Kozara National Park). Spatial planning at the local level is based on the fact that each municipality decides on spatial planning (or construction) in which all conditions for construction are specified that reflect the specificity of the municipal territory.
- Spatial plans of local self-government units (municipalities), urban plans, special purpose area plans of local self-government units, and implementation documents of spatial planning are adopted by the Assembly of local self-government units (municipalities). The joint spatial plan of several local self-government units is adopted by a decision of the Assembly of each municipality, which determines that such a plan replaces the spatial plan of each of the aforementioned local self-government units.

### 2.5.3 Urban planning and land management in Albania

In terms of understanding, urban planning encompasses plans for and the regulation and management of towns, cities, and metropolitan regions. It attempts to organise socio-spatial relations across different scales of government and governance.

Related to this definition, in the case of Albania, it should be underlined that Urban Planning during the last 30 years has been dependent on the Reform of land distribution into private ownership (parcel based) and after the process of Legalization of Informal buildings.

After '90, people started to move freely from the mountainous interior and were settled illegally either close to urban areas or in the coastal zone. This is because the movement of people seeking employment and better living conditions is considered a fundamental human right in a democratic society.

In parallel, the construction sector also developed rapidly. New construction took place mostly on prime agricultural land around the largest cities but also outside the village boundaries.

In the meantime, as the land distribution and registration started, there was a wave of emigration to the neighbouring countries with Western-style free-market economies. This was accompanied by a massive urbanisation movement, with the population of greater Tirana increasing from 275,000 to 800,000 citizens in a short time. So, those informal developments cause tremendous changes in the urban configuration of the main cities in middle Albania, mainly in Tirana and Durrës.

It is estimated that more than 40,000 hectares of land were occupied either illegally or informally by over 300,000 informal buildings or constructions.

Most informal constructions are not connected to basic infrastructure, causing supply problems for fresh water and electricity and a lack of sewerage systems. Many important planning aspects are overlooked when providing services, such as spaces for education, health care, parking, or for traffic management. Illegal connections for water and electricity create urban management problems, while the hygiene of the water supply system is questionable. Most jobs are within the cities, so settlers have to commute daily. The poor road network and public transportation quality encourage dependence on



private cars, increasing traffic, commuting costs and time, and air and noise pollution. Illegal squatting on private land has complicated the first registration of property rights and the land restitution procedures and thus weakened the trust of citizens in the new cadastral and land administration system nevertheless that this process and system arrived the success at the beginning of the year 2000 and after.

At the initial stage, most informal settlers' building activity was in or around the main city and settlements were only used for housing purposes. The legal framework for planning and development control inherited from the communist regime could not cope with the increase in population and construction activity.

After this year, the Albanian government put as objective the establishment of Urban planning as the main factor for developing the country and applying various infrastructural programs and projects for development. But for that, it was figured out that first, the solution for the situation of informal settlements should be found. Albania Government has considered four ways to address the informal development challenge:

1. Demolition: Demolition asked for demolition and a return to the situation of the 1990s. Not feasible was considered.

2. Ignore the problem: Ignoring the problem, which was foreseen to happen in the first 15 years, but not a sustainable and wise option to be continued since the informal development simply kept growing. Doing nothing was considered a poor solution.

3. Comprehensive spatial planning: The implementation of comprehensive, detailed planning was considered too costly and asked for a long time and, also, very complicated.

4. Legalization: "Legalization" was considered the optimal option due to the fact that it clarifies ownership rights on land and real estate and solves the land tenure problems only. Violations of planning regulations, or enforcement of new planning regulations, are left to be dealt with later. Legalizing property rights, with simple zoning criteria for rejection, the provision of registration and providing basic infrastructure as a following stage was selected as the most preferable option.

## 2.6 Urban planning regulations

### 2.6.1 Urban planning regulations in Montenegro

Urban planning regulations in Montenegro are primarily governed by the Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings, which was last amended in 2020 [14]. This Law regulates the spatial planning system, the manner and conditions of construction of buildings, the legalisation of illegal buildings and other issues of importance for space planning and construction of buildings. The law regulates various aspects of spatial planning, including land use, urban development, and construction activities.

Some key regulations include:

- The creation of a spatial plan for each municipality, which outlines the area's land use and development goals.

- The requirement for building permits before any construction activities can take place.
- The establishment of building standards and requirements for safety, environmental protection, and accessibility.
- The creation of a system for monitoring and controlling construction activities to ensure compliance with regulations.

Other regulations related to urban planning in Montenegro include the Law on Protection of Cultural Heritage, the Law on Environmental Protection, and the Law on Spatial Data Infrastructure.

The Law on Spatial Data Infrastructure in Montenegro [16], published in the Official Gazette of Montenegro in 2018, aims to establish a framework for developing and maintaining spatial data infrastructure in the country. The law defines spatial data infrastructure as policies, standards, and technologies enabling spatial data collection, management, and dissemination. The law also establishes the obligations of public authorities and other organisations to contribute to developing spatial data infrastructure by providing access to spatial data they hold, ensuring the quality and accuracy of that data, and adhering to relevant standards and policies. Overall, the Law on Spatial Data Infrastructure is an essential piece of legislation that aims to improve the management and sharing of spatial data in Montenegro, which is crucial for effective urban planning, environmental management, and economic development.

The Law on Waste Management [17] aims to regulate the country's generation, handling, transport, treatment, and disposal of waste. The law was first adopted in 2011. The Law on Waste Management outlines the legal framework for managing waste in Montenegro. The law establishes measures that guarantee proper waste management, including the prevention, reduction, and recycling of waste and the safe disposal of waste that cannot be reused or recycled. In addition, the law requires establishing a waste management system that meets certain technical and environmental standards and implementing measures to prevent waste pollution and protect the environment and public health.

The Law on Municipal Wastewater Management [18] regulates the country's collection, treatment, and disposal of municipal wastewater. The law was first adopted in 2017. The Law on Municipal Wastewater Management sets out the legal framework for managing municipal wastewater in Montenegro. It establishes the obligations to ensure the proper management of municipal wastewater, including the collection, treatment, and safe disposal of sewage. The law requires establishing a wastewater management system that meets specific technical and environmental standards and implementing measures to prevent water pollution and protect the environment and public health. In addition, the Law on Municipal Wastewater Management includes provisions for the regulation of the discharge of wastewater into the environment, including the establishment of discharge limits and the requirements for obtaining discharge permits. The law also establishes the legal framework for the financing and implementation of wastewater management projects, including the use of public funds and the participation of private sector stakeholders.

The Law on Protection from the Negative Effects of Climate Change [19] sets out the legal framework for protecting the environment and public health from the negative effects of climate change. It sets up the obligations to develop and implement strategies, plans, and measures to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. The law requires the adoption

of greenhouse gas emission reduction, the development of climate change adaptation plans, and the implementation of measures to increase the resilience of communities, ecosystems, and infrastructure to the impacts of climate change. In addition, the Law on Protection from the Negative Effects of Climate Change include:

- Provisions for the promotion of sustainable development.
- The rise of renewable energy sources.
- The implementation of energy efficiency measures

The law also establishes the legal framework for promoting public awareness and education about climate change and its impacts.

The Nature Protection Law [20] regulates nature protection and preservation conditions and manner. The law aims to protect the country's biodiversity, natural resources, and ecosystems. The law was adopted in 1993 and has been amended several times, with the latest amendments made in 2019. The Nature Protection Law sets out the legal framework for conserving and managing natural resources and ecosystems in Montenegro. It defines the legal responsibilities to protect and conserve biodiversity, natural habitats, and other natural resources. The law also sets out the procedures and criteria for the designation of protected areas, such as national parks, nature reserves, and protected landscapes, as well as the requirements for managing these areas. The law also establishes the legal framework for protecting endangered species, including regulating hunting, and fishing activities. The 2019 amendments to the Nature Protection Law introduced several changes, including establishing a new system for managing protected areas and regulating activities related to exploiting natural resources. The amendments also introduced new measures to protect endangered species and their habitats and promote public awareness and education about nature conservation.

The Law on Environmental [21] regulates the principles of environmental protection and sustainable development, instruments and measures of environmental protection and other issues of importance to the environment.

The Water Law [22] regulates the legal status and method of integral management of water, water and coastal land and water facilities, the conditions and practice of performing water activities and other issues of importance for the management of water and water assets.

The Law on Energy [23] defines energy activities, regulates the conditions and the manner of their performance to provide high-quality and safe energy to end customers, encourages the production of energy from renewable sources and highly efficient cogeneration, the way of organising and managing the electricity and gas market, as well as other issues of importance for the energy sector.

The Law on the Protection of the Marine Environment [24] aims to protect the marine environment and biodiversity in Montenegrin waters. The law was adopted in 2009 and has been amended several times, with the latest amendments made in 2020. The Law on the Protection of the Marine Environment sets out the legal framework for managing the marine environment in Montenegro, including regulating activities that may impact the marine environment, such as maritime transportation, offshore oil and gas exploration, and fishing. The protection the marine environment, including adopting measures to prevent pollution from land-based sources, protecting marine ecosystems, and conserving marine

biodiversity, is defined by law. Furthermore, the law requires establishing marine protected areas to conserve biodiversity and marine habitats, as well as implementing monitoring and assessment programs to measure the health of the marine environment and identify any negative impacts.

The Air Protection Law [25] aims to protect ambient air quality in the country. The law was adopted in 2006 and has been amended several times, with the latest amendments made in 2019. The law outlines measures to reduce air pollution, improve air quality, and promote sustainable development. The Air Protection Law sets out the legal framework for regulating emissions of pollutants from various sources, including industrial facilities, transportation, and households. In addition, it requires adopting air quality monitoring programs and establishing air quality standards in line with EU regulations. The law also establishes the legal framework for permitting industrial facilities that emit pollutants into the air. The permit process requires an assessment of the potential impact of the facility on air quality and adopting measures to mitigate any negative impacts.

The Rulebook on the Content of the Energy Efficiency of Buildings Report [28] is a regulation in Montenegro that sets out the requirements for building energy efficiency reports. The rulebook was last amended in 2019 and applied to all new and existing buildings. The energy efficiency report is a document that provides information about the energy performance of a building and includes recommendations for improving its energy efficiency. The account is required when applying for a building permit or conducting energy renovation works on an existing building. The Rulebook on the Energy Efficiency of Buildings Report specifies the content and format of the energy efficiency report. The report should include information on the building's envelope, heating and cooling systems, ventilation, lighting, and other energy-related features. It should also include assessing the building's energy performance and recommendations for energy-saving measures. The rulebook also sets out the requirements for energy efficiency certification of buildings.

## 2.6.2 Urban planning regulations in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a sovereign state with a decentralised political and administrative structure. It comprises two entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FB&H) and the Republic of Srpska (RS), as well as the Brčko District. Decision-making involves the Council of Ministers, the governments of two Entities (the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska) and Brčko District government. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is further subdivided into 10 Cantons.

In the environmental sector in B&H, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of Bosnia and Herzegovina (MOFTER) is responsible for coordinating activities and harmonising entity plans at the international level, but the responsibility for environmental issues in B&H rests with the entity governments. The corresponding authorities are the Ministry of Environment and Tourism of the Federation of B&H (FB&H), the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Civil Engineering and Ecology of the Republic of Srpska (RS) (the UNFCCC Focal Point), and the Department for Spatial Planning and Property Affairs of Brčko District (BD). The Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a party to a number of international environmental agreements and conventions, and it is fully committed to meeting the requirements laid down in these agreements.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a potential candidate for EU membership. The Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU was signed in June 2008. An Interim Agreement, mainly on trade and trade-related matters under the SAA, has been in force since July 2008. However, progress towards EU reforms has been limited. The most important international agreement ratified in environmental protection is the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified the UNFCCC in 2000. Following the ratification of the UNFCCC, B&H has made a series of efforts to establish appropriate political, institutional and legal frameworks to meet the commitments stemming from the Convention. Based on the mutual agreement of both entities, the B&H Focal Point for the UNFCCC is the Ministry of Spatial Planning, Civil Engineering and Ecology of RS. In addition, the Kyoto Protocol was ratified on 16 April 2007. In 2010, B&H submitted its Initial National Communication under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to the UNFCCC Secretariat. The Second National Communication under UNFCCC was adopted and submitted to the UNFCCC Secretariat in October 2013.

### **Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Link on all laws and regulations: <https://fmpu.gov.ba/legislativa/uredbe/>

Most important laws regulating spatial planning are:

- Law on Physical Planning and Utilisation of Land at the Level of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina,
- Law on Construction Products,
- Law on the Implementation of Decisions of the Commission for Protection of National Monuments established under Annex 8 of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina,
- Law on the Takeover of the Law on Housing Relations,
- Law on the Sale of Apartments Subject to Tenancy Rights
- Law on the Cessation of Application of the Law on Abandoned Apartments,
- Law on Return, Allocation and Selling of Apartments,
- Law on Energy Efficiency

In addition to the law on spatial planning at the level of the Federation, the government also passed a number of other by-laws, as well as a whole set of environmental regulations regulating activities related to spatial planning and land use. In the framework of spatial planning, the most important, after the Law, are regulations, as by-laws of the highest rank. The following can be singled out:

- Decree regarding Physical planning, Land use, National monuments, Energy efficiency,
- Decree on the single methodology for the development of physical planning documents,
- Decree on the special requirements for companies and other legal persons that intend to register to provide expert services related to the development of planning documents,
- Decree on the content and owners of the single information system, methodology for collection and processing of data and unified recording templates.

The Regulation on a unique methodology for the preparation of planning documents is extremely important, which determines the preparation and preparation procedure as well as the content of planning documents at all levels of spatial planning in the Federation. This Regulation, among other things, elaborates in detail the procedure for preparing and creating the Spatial Basis, as well as the procedure for creating preliminary drafts and proposals for the Spatial Plan. However, during the preparation of these planning documents, most often the holders of the preparation do not adhere to the articles and positions presented in the Regulation, primarily Article 13 and Article 21. In this sense, an analysis of only some of the listed contents is carried out, as well as a graphic representation of certain and not all contents. The projection of spatial development and the projection of the development of spatial systems, as well as their graphic processing and presentation, are in the domain of geographical science and field. Precisely for this reason, geographers - regional and spatial planners, who have professional and scientific knowledge about the preparation of planning documents - are also necessary for the team dealing with the preparation of planning documents. As in most absurd events in the fields of politics, economy, science and education and other realities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the law on spatial planning of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina does not recognize experts of this type in the spatial planning team.

*Table 4 Overview of cantonal laws in the area of spatial planning FB&H / B&H [24]*

Canton	Law
Unsko-sanski	Law on Spatial Planning and Construction (Official Gazettes USC no. 10/11)
Posavski	The Law on Spatial Planning (Official Gazettes PC no. 5/99)
Tuzlanski	Law on Spatial Planning and Construction (Official Gazettes TC no. 11/06)
Zeničko-dobojski	The Law on Spatial Planning (Official Gazettes ZDC no. 2/04)
Bosansko-podrinjski	Law on Spatial Planning and Construction (Official Gazettes BPC no. 15/09)
Središnja Bosna	The Law on Spatial Planning (Official Gazettes CBC no. 11/05)
Hercegovačko-neretvanski	The Law on Spatial Planning (Official Gazettes HNC no. 4/04)
Zapadno-hercegovački	The Law on Spatial Planning (Official Gazettes ZHC no. 4/99)
Sarajevo	The Law on Spatial Planning (Official Gazettes CS no. 7/05)
Canton 10	The Law on Spatial Planning (Official Gazettes HBC no. 14/98)

The Regulation on the content and carriers of the unified information system, the methodology of data collection and processing, which implies the use of GIS, also brings the process planning to a higher

level, facilitates spatial analysis and enables purposeful arrangement and use of space. However, the Regulation itself is not accompanied by instructions on how to oblige and mutually bind all those who have spatial data: ministries, municipal services, communal and other organizations that maintain their own databases, development and scientific organizations and other institutions that have said data. In this way, municipal and cantonal institutions and institutes for spatial planning are not connected with the federal ministry, which, due to the lack of a standardized approach, makes it difficult to achieve efficiency in work, and often makes it impossible to implement and use data and plans. Until now, unique databases have not come to life at any level in the right way.

Spatial planning and arrangement of space at the canton level in the Federation of B&H is also carried out according to the Federal Law on Spatial Planning and Land Use in the Federation of B&H, as well as according to the cantonal laws adopted for each canton by the assembly of that canton. The cantonal laws were made in accordance with the needs and possibilities of development and the specificities of each canton individually, but in their basic provisions and recommendations, they are entirely based on the umbrella law of the Federation (Table 4).

### **Republic of Srpska**

Link on all laws and regulations: <https://rzsm.org/tehprop/151-mpuge>

Law on Spatial Planning and Construction:

<https://www.paragraf.ba/propisi/Republic-of-srpska/zakon-o-uredjenju-prostora-i-gradjenju.html>

Law on Construction Products

Law on the implementation of the decisions of the Commission for the Protection of National Monuments established in accordance with Annex 8 of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In addition to the Law on Spatial Planning and Construction, the Ordinance on the Content and Control of Technical Documentation was adopted, which prescribes the parts and content of technical documentation, types of projects, formation of technical documentation, control, fees for preparation, revision and certification of technical documentation. Also, the Rulebook on the content of drafting and adoption of spatial planning documents prescribes the procedure for drafting and adopting spatial planning documents, the content of spatial planning documents and the formation of the document. The link is here:

[http://www.podaci.net/\\_gB&H/propis/Pravilnik\\_o\\_sadrzaju/P-sktdok03v1108.html](http://www.podaci.net/_gB&H/propis/Pravilnik_o_sadrzaju/P-sktdok03v1108.html)

These are the basic regulatory acts in the field of spatial planning that are applied in the Republic of Srpska. Spatial planning documents can be strategic and implemented.

### **2.6.3 Urban planning regulations in Albania**

In March 2006, the Law for Legalization of Illegal Settlements and Construction was passed by the Albanian Parliament to support the legalization process of informal developments.

The main characteristics of the legalization procedure according to this law are the following:  
Legalization: issuing of ownership titles for land and buildings;



Equality: fixed land values for land are adopted in order to calculate the legalization fees.  
Compensation: by law, the previous registered owners are to be given compensation.

Urbanization: infrastructure for informal settlements that are legalized will be provided through state funds.

The law was based mainly on economic aspects e.g. activating dead capital, increasing local revenue from taxes and avoiding further social and managerial problems like criminality, health risks, and traffic congestion.

In order to manage and realize the process of Legalization, the Law enables the establishment of a network of legalization offices at the district level headed by the General Directory of Legalization of Informal Buildings and Construction in Tirana (known as ALUIZNI).

By applying the Law, it was made possible that the process of Legalization after 10 years achieve distinguished progress.

Referring to the urban and territory situation described, it was estimated that were created basic conditions for designing of Urban Regulatory Plane in all the main cities and in the lower level to support the development of infrastructure and modernization of Albania, even in the context of integration in EC.

So, on 31 July 2014, the Albanian Parliament approved LAW 107/2014 on: “For Planification and Developing of Territory”, which was made operative by two DCM (Decision of the Council of Ministers):

DCM 671 “For the approval of the territorial planning Regulations”

DCM 408 “For the approval of territory developments regulations”.

This law enables establishing of The National Territory Planning Agency (AKPT), networking with Authorities of Territory Planning in collaboration with Authorities of Construction Inspection in each district municipality. The National Territory Planning Agency is dependent on the line Ministry, currently, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy.

The law and DCM put clear the obligations, and responsibilities in the context of developing, protecting, and saving territory based on Urban Plans, all the authorities to avoid informal construction and to support the oriented development of Territory in Albania. The main product which the Law requires is the designing and compilation of General Local Territory Plans (GLPT).

Those documents were headed by the Law of Urbanity, approved by Parliament in 1988, and amended some time till 2010. It should be underlined this law is becoming more efficient as the process of legalization is at the end and the Law Territory planning is becoming operative.

The Law of Urbanity, which is the basic document for their activities for urbanistic offices in each municipality of Albania, enables today designing the Urban Regulatory Plane (URP) at each level, in coherence with the principles to support the modern development of cities and other areas, to give the solutions developments in the future till in 10 years advance. The design is based on using advanced methods of planning as Urban Spatial Planning.



At present, the Urban Regulatory Plans designed based on the law should be accompanied by the documents as follows:

- The territory Strategy,
- Urban Territory Plan,
- Regulations,
- Environmental,
- Assessment.

## 2.7 Sustainable urban planning

### 2.7.1 Sustainable urban planning in Montenegro

In December 2015, the Government of Montenegro adopted the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSSD) until 2030 [5]. The NSSD considered national circumstances and obligations when defining strategic goals and measures for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and harmonising sectoral policies with the SDG.

By participating in the international dialogue on the goals of sustainable development and Agenda 2030, Montenegro expressed its total commitment to the priority issues of sustainable development, structured into five priority topics, such as:

- the introduction of a green economy;
- strengthening the efficiency of the natural resources use;
- climate change;
- preservation of sensitive ecosystems and coastal areas;
- sustainable production and consumption.

To achieve sustainable territorial development and solve problems such as regionally uneven unplanned development and issues of the so-called "investor planning", which has become increasingly widespread in recent decades, Montenegro adopted the Law on Spatial Planning and Construction (2017). It was designed to transform the planning system, introducing order into urban and territorial development.

Without a doubt, the Law changed the urban policy of Montenegro. With the adoption of the Law, the planning system became centralised, so spatial planning is not considered at the local level. Furthermore, the planning process also includes regional development - an aspect not recognised in the previous Montenegrin laws - which should be by international agreements, declarations, and conventions [28].

Achieving sustainable urban and territorial development in Montenegro is possible through planning compact and connected cities and regions and a planning system more aligned with decentralisation.

Urban and territorial planning can contribute to sustainable development in different ways. It should be closely related to three complementary dimensions of sustainable development:

- social development and inclusion

- sustainable economic growth
- environmental protection and management.

The integration of these three dimensions in a synergistic way requires political commitment and the involvement of all stakeholders, who should participate in urban and territorial planning processes [29].

At the international and European levels, the aim is to achieve sustainable cities and sustainable development of more expansive urban and populated areas, with greater use of an integrated urban development policy approach focusing on the interrelationship of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Territorial priorities that can help strengthen the urban dimension are:

- stimulating polycentric and balanced territorial development;
- stimulating integrated development in cities, rural and specific regions;
- new multilevel management models, etc.

Harmonising urban development with sustainable development is necessary to prevent further urban expansion and pay more attention to the relationship between the city and ecology. Furthermore, as urbanisation progresses, achieving more compact, socially inclusive, better integrated and connected towns and territories is increasingly essential, fostering sustainable development of cities resilient to climate change.

Adapting the planning system of Montenegro to the new planning system approach is considered through the analysis of the following:

(1) the new planning system approach and its essential components, grouped into three parts: policies, the planning system and resources, and planning processes and phases;

(2) urbanisation problems

The area of Montenegro (area of 13,812 km<sup>2</sup>) is divided into three geographic regions: North, Central and Coastal, based on their geographical characteristics (coastal - southern and lowest; central - plain and hilly-mountainous; and northern - predominantly hilly-mountainous). By examining the current state of spatial planning documentation and analysing the methodology, the urban policies, access to resources, and the planning system process slightly differ among the three regions of Montenegro. Therefore, the problem of urbanisation can be solved through a new planning system approach by solving its essential components:

- (a) policies,
- (b) planning system and resources, and
- (c) planning processes and phases.

The sustainable urban development of Montenegro depends on the harmonisation of the above components at the level of the state and not at the level of its regions. Their separation is the result of the current planning practice in Montenegro. By identifying the shortcomings in the existing approach to the planning system, phases and processes and performing a comparative analysis using reputable

examples of sustainable spatial development, possible methods and principles of further development of sustainable urbanism would be activated.

The urban policy was changed with the development of the Spatial Plan of Montenegro. Now it enables the perception of space as a whole from the aspect of different areas (natural characteristics, demography, forestry, agriculture, nature protection, protection of cultural heritage, social activities, spatial planning, tourism, industry, transport, water management, etc.), and inclusion of all inputs, resulting in more promising outcomes.

With such urban policy, the discourse of multidisciplinary is of great importance, which is one of the criteria for sustainable spatial development.

The urban policy of Montenegro (The Law on Spatial Planning and Construction of Buildings [14]) defines the principle of harmonisation of planning documents with ratified international agreements, declarations, and conventions – legal acts that can enhance the process of the sustainable spatial development of the state.

The Law on Spatial Planning and Construction adoption identified a new, substantially modified spatial planning system. As a result, types of planning documents were reduced to the Spatial Plan of Montenegro and the Plan of General Regulation of Montenegro (at the national level), i.e., an urban project and a subdivision study (at the local level) that represent the instrument for implementing the plans.

It should be noted that the Planning Law from 2017 and special regulations specified that the planning documents should also include a strategic assessment of the environmental impact of the planning document. That was mandatory in the previous period, as it should contribute to a better understanding of planning solutions and ecological aspects. In this regard, the planning system and resources have mostly stayed the same. However, despite some progress made in recent years, especially concerning the application of GIS and related techniques in spatial and urban planning and environmental protection, in many respects, the available IT and other knowledgeable materials in this field haven't met all the needs of systematic and sustainable development management, landscaping and environmental protection yet; thus, the validity of the planning resources is volatile, which further affects the permanence of the planning system [28].

When it comes to institutional organisation in the field of spatial planning, the key stakeholders in the preparation of planning documents at the national level are:

- the Parliament of Montenegro,
- the Government of Montenegro,
- the Ministry of Ecology, Spatial Planning and Urbanism,
- local self-government units, and
- legal entities and non-governmental organisations.

For the sustainable urban development of Montenegro, the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) until 2030 is essential.

The Spatial planning results should stop space devastation and improve its quality. These problems lead to a permanent reduction of both the visual/aesthetic and the economic and other values of the space.

The strengthening of spatial-planning analytics at all levels stands out among these mechanisms, from national reporting on the spatial planning state, through the preparation of program tasks for the preparation of individual planning documents and the practice of high-quality expert input studies, to the evaluation of planning documents in the approval process.

On the other hand, to ensure the objectivity of spatial planning analytics, it is necessary to use quantified indicators because they enable exact measurement of space changes and comparability with similar or more developed environments (e.g., countries and regions in the EU). Therefore, using indicators is particularly important for determining and monitoring the implementation of quantified planning goals.

Mechanisms are necessary to enable more efficient plan implementation, which is an essential prerequisite for achieving the quality of built space. The biggest challenge in realising planning documents is the timely preparation and arrangement of the construction land.

The sustainability of cities is primarily conditioned by improving the spatial planning system as an essential element of the overall management system of urban environments. Therefore, local governments must better monitor the indicators of urban development sustainability, constantly improve them, and use all available capacities in cities to ensure that development is stable, sustainable, and adequately controlled. Furthermore, a responsible housing policy, which recognises the right to an apartment, regulated by numerous international agreements and conventions, to which Montenegro is a contracting party, is essential to raising the life quality in urban areas.

The spatial plan of Montenegro until 2040. will be an essential planning document in the spatial planning system in Montenegro, which plans the development and general basis of the organisation, use and arrangement of space in Montenegro until 2040.

The tendency to convert agricultural land into construction land is also a significant problem.

### 2.7.2 Sustainable urban planning in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In September 2015, Bosnia and Herzegovina, together with 192 United Nations Member States, committed to implementing Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (Agenda 2030), which consists of 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has recognized the importance and potential for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030 as an opportunity to significantly improve social, economic and environmental aspects of life within the country and to enhance regional cooperation.

Sustainable development is in the core of the policies of the European Union and its member states, and the accession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the European Union is an overarching priority for B&H. The Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA), which came into force in 2015, defines Bosnia and Herzegovina as a “potential candidate” for accession to the European Union. Bosnia and Herzegovina formally submitted its application for membership in the European Union in February 2016. The

European Commission's opinion as of May 2019 on B&H's candidate status says: "The negotiations for accession to the European Union should be opened with Bosnia and Herzegovina once the country has achieved the necessary degree of compliance of the membership criteria and in particular the Copenhagen political criteria requiring the stability of institutions guaranteeing the notable democracy and the rule of law". The emphasis of the European Union on ensuring "the European perspective" for B&H is additionally demonstrated with the liberalization of the visa regime for B&H in 2014, as well as by publishing the Western Balkan Strategy in February 2018, and with the continuation of the operations of the EUFOR Mission/Althea and EUSR Office.

The first step for the implementation of Agenda 2030 in Bosnia and Herzegovina was to develop the SDGs Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a joint document of governments at all levels.

The document named The SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been produced in 2020. The document represents a broader framework to achieve Agenda 2030 and the SDGs and as such it will serve for steering the current and upcoming processes of strategic planning in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Srpska, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The governments at all levels in B&H will define their priorities, measures, and activities in compliance with the constitutional competencies and will provide their contribution to achieving Agenda 2030.

The document defines the following key principles of the SDGs Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

- The governments at all levels are committed to jointly achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, in compliance with their constitutional competencies and international principles and standards of human rights.
- Agenda 2030 is a driver of change for B&H in many ways. The selection of the moment and its universal character offer a unique opportunity for a holistic approach to development, as well as an opportunity for governments at all levels to work together, learn from each other and establish strong and open partnerships.
- B&H strives to become a family member of the European Union. The accession to the European Union and Agenda 2030 are processes which are complementary and mutually reinforcing, which encourage institutions and citizens to strive for a better society and future, where no one will be left behind and where people, prosperity, peace, partnership and care for our planet are at the core of a better and common future.
- The SDGs Framework in B&H is at the core of Agenda 2030 for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The framework responds to the existing and new challenges by defining broader development pathways, through which the governments at all levels and the society in B&H strive to contribute to accomplishing the SDGs.
- The SDGs Framework informs future strategic planning processes at the level of B&H, the Republic of Srpska, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through these processes, all levels of government will define their priorities, measures, and activities in compliance with the constitutional competencies and will ensure the contribution to the implementation of Agenda 2030.

- All levels of government in B&H will strive to additionally foster the strategic development planning and management systems, because the coherent systems, strong inter-sectoral links and coordination are of paramount importance for efficient planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting on Agenda 2030
- While mainstreaming Agenda 2030 in strategic documents, the governments at all levels will endeavour to encourage a participatory approach, in which all stakeholders will have a role for creating a sustainable society. In that sense, efforts will be made to focus on women's real needs and perspectives and also on all those who are in an unfavourable position and who often have the least benefits from the development processes.
- The governments at all levels commit themselves to target funds for the implementation of the priorities determined in their strategic documents, aligned with the SDGs. At the same time, governments at all levels will explore the ways for financing Agenda 2030 through establishing partnerships with global partners, the private sector, and other financial sources, with an aim of determining and using new business models and long-term investments.
- The governments at all levels in B&H are committed to establishing a functional system for long-term coordination of implementation as well as monitoring and reporting on Agenda 2030.

The document defines broader development directions, through which the governments at all levels and the society in Bosnia and Herzegovina strive to contribute to the accomplishment of the SDGs. Based on the situation analysis regarding sustainable development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, that is, the key development trends, opportunities, and obstacles, particularly within the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina's accession to the European Union and extensive consultations held with representatives from institutions at all levels of government and socio-economic stakeholders from 2018-2019, three pathways of sustainable development in Bosnia and Herzegovina were determined:

- Good Governance and Public Sector Management;
- Smart Growth;
- Society of Equal Opportunities,

and two horizontal themes,

- Human Capital for the Future and
- the "Leave no one behind" Principle.

Within each of the mentioned development pathways, the accelerators and drivers which have to lead to the desired changes by 2030, are defined. In addition, in compliance with Agenda 2030 and commitments taken by Bosnia and Herzegovina, the SDG Framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina also determines concrete targets and indicators to measure the progress.

Development pathway "Good Governance and Public Sector Management" should be reached through the following accelerators: Efficient, open, inclusive and accountable public sector, Rule of law, security and fundamental rights and Resilience to disasters.

Development pathway Smart growth is aimed to ensure the transformation of innovative and productive ideas into products and services which may create highly-paid jobs and accelerate economic growth and, at the same time, preserve natural capital and reduce social inequalities. This development pathway should be reached through the following accelerators:

- Enabling an environment for entrepreneurship and innovations, increasing investments in infrastructure,
- Smart natural resources and environmental management,
- Green growth and clean energy, and
- Enhancing access and quality of education and training.

Accelerators under the development pathway “Society of Equal Opportunities” are:

- Enhancing social protection policies,
- Activation and employment of vulnerable categories,
- Ensuring access to efficient health care, Improving inclusiveness of the educational system and
- Financial inclusion.

The Council for the implementation of the SDGs in Bosnia and Herzegovina is assigned to overall monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the SDGs Framework, coordination of the preparation of annual reports and voluntary reviews towards the United Nations.

Under the sustainable development cooperation Framework Bosnia and Herzegovina and the UN have adopted a Declaration of commitment, committed to working together to achieve priorities in B&H. These are expressed by:

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and selected Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets as expressed in the emerging SDG Framework in B&H and domesticated SDG targets; Future accession to the European Union, as expressed in the Action Plan for implementation of priorities from the European Commission Opinion and Analytical Report;
- The Joint Socio-Economic Reforms (‘Reform Agenda’), 2019-2024; and
- The human rights commitments of B&H and other agreed international and regional development goals and treaty obligations and conventions.

Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF) was adopted by the B&H Council of Ministers at its 22nd Session on 16 December 2020 and reconfirmed by the B&H Presidency at its 114th Extraordinary Session on 5 March 2021, will guide the work of authorities in B&H and the UN system until 2025.

In line with the Law on Development Planning and Management in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in September 2018 the Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina passed the Decision on Developing the Development Strategy of the Federation 2022-2027. The new FB&H Development Strategies reflect the globally accepted Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Strategy is an integrated, multi-sectoral strategic document which defines public policies and guides the socio-economic development of the FB&H towards reaching 4 strategic goals and 18 priorities: Accelerated Economic Growth, Prosperous and Inclusive Social Development, Resource Efficient and Sustainable Development and Transparent, Efficient and Accountable Public Sector.

### 2.7.3 Sustainable urban planning in Albania

Sustainable urban planning is an important consideration in Albania, where rapid urbanization and economic growth have placed increasing pressure on natural resources, ecosystems, and social structures. The country has taken a number of steps to promote sustainable urban planning, including [3]:

- Promoting compact and mixed-use development: Albania's urban planning regulations encourage the development of compact, walkable neighbourhoods with a mix of residential, commercial, and cultural uses. This approach reduces reliance on cars and promotes sustainable transportation options such as public transit, cycling, and walking [4], [5], [12]
- Protecting natural resources and ecosystems: Albania's regulations aim to protect natural resources and ecosystems, including forests, waterways, and coastal areas. The country has established protected areas and natural parks to preserve these resources and promotes the use of green infrastructure and sustainable building practices to minimize environmental impacts [1], [9], [12].
- Encouraging energy efficiency and renewable energy: Albania's regulations promote the use of energy-efficient building design and construction methods and encourage the use of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power [13].
- Enhancing public transportation: Albania's regulations encourage the development of efficient and reliable public transportation systems, including buses and trams. This approach helps to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution, while also promoting social equity and accessibility [4].
- Promoting public participation and engagement: Albania's regulations encourage public participation in the planning and development process, with a focus on engaging diverse groups of stakeholders and communities. This approach helps to ensure that development is aligned with community needs and priorities.

In addition, Albania has committed to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which include several targets related to sustainable planning and urban development [1], [12], [13]. These targets include:

- Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.
- Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
- Goal 15: Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and biodiversity loss.

Overall, Albania's urban planning regulations recognize the importance of sustainable planning and have taken steps to incorporate sustainable practices into the planning and development process.

There are many benefits of applying sustainable planning in the context of Albania. Some of the main benefits include:

- Environmental protection: Sustainable planning can help to protect Albania's natural resources and ecosystems by reducing pollution, preserving open spaces, and promoting the use of renewable energy sources [1], [12], [13].



- Social well-being: Sustainable planning can improve the quality of life for Albania's citizens by promoting walkable communities, increasing access to public transportation, and improving access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and affordable housing [1], [12], [13].
- Economic growth: Sustainable planning can support economic growth in Albania by creating a more attractive environment for investment and entrepreneurship, promoting sustainable development practices, and reducing the long-term costs associated with environmental degradation and social inequities [1], [12], [13].
- Resilience to climate change: Sustainable planning can help Albania's communities become more resilient to the impacts of climate change, including sea level rise, increased temperatures, and more frequent extreme weather events [1], [12], [13].
- Improved public health: Sustainable planning can improve public health outcomes by reducing air and water pollution, promoting active transportation, and increasing access to green spaces [1], [12], [13].
- Enhanced community engagement: Sustainable planning can increase community engagement and participation in the planning and decision-making processes, leading to more equitable and inclusive development outcomes [1], [12], [13].

Sustainable planning is being applied and considered across various sectors in Albania, with a particular focus on the urban development sector as the country works to address the challenges of urbanization and promote long-term sustainability in its cities and towns [13]. The Territory Strategy document in Albania is a planning document that provides a long-term vision for the sustainable development of Albania's territory and sets out the policies, strategies, and actions needed to achieve this vision [14]. The Territory Strategy covers a range of topics, including land use, transport, housing, natural resources, and environmental protection [14] [4], [6], [15].

The main objectives of the Territory Strategy are to promote balanced regional development, ensure the sustainable use of natural resources, and improve the quality of life for Albania's citizens. The document is based on a participatory approach, with input from a range of stakeholders including government agencies, civil society organizations, and local communities.

The Territory Strategy is divided into several chapters, each of which focuses on a specific theme or topic [14]. Some of the main chapters in the document include:

- Vision and principles: This chapter outlines the overall vision for the development of Albania's territory and the guiding principles that will be used to achieve this vision [6], [12], [14], [16]
- Regional planning: This chapter outlines the policies and strategies for the spatial development of Albania's regions, including the identification of priority areas for development and the promotion of regional economic integration [1], [6], [12], [14], [16]
- Land use: This chapter sets out the policies and strategies for the sustainable use of land in Albania, including the protection of natural resources, the promotion of urban densification, and the development of rural areas [1], [6], [7], [9], [10], [12], [14], [16]
- Transport: This chapter outlines the policies and strategies for the development of Albania's transport infrastructure, including the promotion of sustainable transport modes and the integration of transport with land use planning [4], [5], [12–14], [16]

- Housing: This chapter sets out the policies and strategies for the provision of affordable and sustainable housing in Albania, including the promotion of social housing and the rehabilitation of existing housing stock [1], [9], [10], [14], [16]
- Natural resources and environment: This chapter outlines the policies and strategies for the sustainable management of Albania's natural resources, including the protection of biodiversity, the promotion of sustainable agriculture, and the management of water resources [12–14], [16]

Sustainable urban planning is an important priority for Albania, as the country seeks to balance economic growth with social and environmental sustainability. The country has made significant strides in this area but continues to face challenges related to rapid urbanization, infrastructure development, and environmental degradation.

Some of the main challenges include:

- Limited financial resources: Albania is a developing country with limited financial resources, which can make it difficult to invest in sustainable urban infrastructure and services. Sustainable urban planning often requires significant upfront investments, which can be difficult to justify in the short term [6], [16].
- Lack of political will: Sustainable urban planning requires political commitment and leadership to prioritize long-term sustainability goals over short-term economic gains [6], [16]. In Albania, political instability and corruption have been a challenge, which can hinder progress towards sustainable urban planning.
- Limited technical expertise: There is a shortage of technical expertise in sustainable urban planning in Albania, including among policymakers, urban planners, and designers. This can make it difficult to implement sustainable urban planning practices and initiatives and can also result in inadequate or poorly designed infrastructure and services [6], [7], [16].
- Informal urbanization: Albania has a high rate of informal urbanization, which can make it difficult to apply sustainable urban planning practices. Informal settlements often lack basic infrastructure and services and can be difficult to retrofit or upgrade to meet sustainability standards [6], [7], [9], [14], [16].
- Cultural barriers: Albania has a rich cultural heritage and strong local identities, which can make it challenging to implement sustainable urban planning practices that are perceived as foreign or in conflict with local traditions and values [6], [16].

While sustainable urban planning is important in Albania, addressing these challenges will be critical to its successful implementation. Policymakers and urban planners will need to work together to build political support, increase technical expertise, and design sustainable urban infrastructure and services that meet the needs and values of local communities.

### 3. Issues in Urban development – national perspective

#### 3.1 Summary from a national perspective Montenegro

In Montenegro, the problems are related to:

- unsustainable patterns of management and consumption of renewable natural resources, mitigating or eliminating the negative effects of natural and anthropogenic hazards on the state of natural resources and reducing the impact of pollution on human health.
- Lack of awareness: among the general public and decision-makers regarding sustainable urban development principles and practices. It can lead to a lack of political will to invest in sustainable development initiatives and limit the public's ability to demand sustainable urban planning and development.
- insufficient of using non-renewable natural resources - space, metals, and non-metals. The best available practices can significantly help eliminate or reshape existing unsustainable patterns of behaviour, consumption, and production and improve existing knowledge, skills and experiences to find an optimal answer to the challenges that characterise the current circumstances of the development of Montenegro.
- Irrational and inefficient use of water (which, for example, manifests itself in significant losses in water supply systems [29], unintended consumption of water, absence of recycling, i.e. reuse of water on a considerable scale, etc.), insufficient construction of infrastructure for wastewater treatment (sewage systems and wastewater treatment facilities), inadequate control of numerous sources of pollution, inconsistent application of strategic and project impact assessment in exploitation planning (e.g. in the valorisation of hydro potential and exploitation of materials from riverbeds), inadequate protection against flooding and erosion, non-application of the best available techniques (BAT), weaknesses in the information system (including the absence of a unified national water information system), non-adoption of river basin management plans, etc.
- Effective use of resources and reduction of their consumption is needed in the context of introducing the concept of circular economy, as well as minimising the impact of their exploitation, industrial processing. In the context of the NSSD, the introduction of the green economy implies the application of the UNEP approach, according to which the green economy is low-carbon, resource-efficient and socially inclusive, i.e. the achievement of strategic goals structured in the following priority areas: mitigation of climate change, resource efficiency, waste management by applying approaches within the framework of the circular economy, sustainable management of the resources of the coastal area and encouragement of the blue economy, sustainable production and consumption and social responsibility, as well as the growth of the competitiveness of the Montenegrin economy.
- By the intended nationally determined contribution to the global reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (INDC), Montenegro's strategic goal in mitigating climate change is to reduce GHG emissions by 2030 by 30% compared to 1990. An essential prerequisite for achieving this goal is integrating climate policy and measures to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions into all relevant sectoral policies, the associated growth of dedicated budget allocations, and improving

existing sectoral inventories. Also, it should be borne in mind that for the introduction of most measures to reduce GHG emissions, it is necessary to change the habits of the population, through education, in the first place, about energy savings and low-carbon technologies, then to raise public awareness of the problems generated by climate change and the measures for their mitigation, strengthen personnel and institutional capacities for mitigating the impact of climate change, but also for the adaptation to the effects of climate change and early warning.

- It is necessary to improve spatial urban planning, improve the quality of construction works and the use of sustainable construction products, raise standards in terms of energy efficiency and greater use of energy from renewable sources in residential buildings, etc.
- It is necessary to stimulate a more resource-efficient use of construction materials and the production of the materials themselves, consider options for longer-term use and duration of construction materials: reduce the amount of waste from construction, enable the recycling of construction materials, which are primarily disposed of in landfills, enable the recycling of asphalt, concrete and other materials that are suitable for recycling, apply recommendations on the construction of buildings with minimal emissions, introduce energy-efficient design and construction, ensure the use of building materials and products that improve the energy characteristics of buildings, ensure appropriate maintenance of facilities, enable and encourage the reconstruction of existing buildings, ensure adequate infrastructure planning, ensure the use of ecological materials in construction. Also, the use of construction materials with lower environmental impacts can be encouraged by setting criteria in procurement contracts, setting the minimum standards that the building must have, which are by the EU directives on the energy performance of the building 2010/31/EU and which focus on energy efficiency [30].
- Montenegro is one of the most inefficient energy users in Europe. Between 16,000 and 30,000 energy-poor households are identified in Montenegro [31]. Furthermore, the European Commission (EC) proposed expanding the EU Renovation Wave to the western Balkans [32]. Therefore, improving the energy efficiency of new and existing buildings would have significant socioeconomic implications for Montenegro. Addressing climate-adapted building retrofits is particularly interesting, as Montenegro has many energy-inefficient facilities [33].
- Waste management: Montenegro needs help in adequately managing waste, including inadequate infrastructure and public awareness. Sustainable urban development must include strategies to reduce waste generation, promote recycling and reuse, and develop adequate waste management infrastructure. Waste selection (primary and secondary) should serve as a prerequisite for reusing and recycling waste materials. Although the implementation of the recycling of waste components, which have their reusable value, is set as an imperative in sustainable waste management in Montenegro, the results are still at a low level. In the Report on the Implementation of the State Waste Management Plan for 2013 [34], it is stated that even though in most local self-government units, containers for the primary selection of municipal waste components (paper, cardboard, metal, plastic, and glass) were installed, individually or within recycling islands and/or yards, the collection of selected fractions was not done separately. Still, containers with fixed and mixed waste were emptied simultaneously. It means that the selected part of the waste ended up in one of the sanitary landfills [35]. In the Report above [34], it is stated that for that period, the municipalities of Podgorica and Tivat were

exceptions, in which this activity was carried out with relative success. From 2013 to today, the situation in this matter has mostly stayed the same. Montenegro has a certain number of recycling centres, but some only work at a partial capacity. Therefore, in the following period, it is necessary to carry out a series of activities so that the most significant amount of recyclable material in the waste can be found in the re-production process.

- Sustainable transportation: Montenegro highly depends on automobiles, contributing to air pollution, congestion, and carbon emissions. Sustainable urban development must promote the use of public transportation, biking, and walking, as well as the development of sustainable transportation infrastructure.

### 3.2 Summary from a national perspective Bosnia and Herzegovina

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the problems are related to:

- Due to the complex administrative and political structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina, spatial planning, land management, energy sector, air pollution and all other nationally important issues have been reduced to the entity level. This leads to insufficient systems of control, monitoring, and huge administration with very slow communication.
- The political climate in the country is still occupied by numerous other issues, ignoring the fact that natural resources are a national asset that needs to be uniquely managed.
- There are unsustainable patterns of management and consumption of renewable natural resources, mitigating or eliminating the negative effects of natural and anthropogenic hazards on the state of natural resources and reducing the impact of pollution on human health.
- Lack of financial resources for efficient using non-renewable natural resources - space, metals, and non-metals.
- Lack of financial resources for efficient water management including cleaning, wastewater treatment, protection against flooding and erosion, etc.
- Lack of financial resources for adequate actions to start solving the issue of waste and landfills correctly, as well as the disposal of toxic substances.
- Insufficient promotion and, through laws, the imposition of appropriate principles and steps of the circular economy, which would increase the need for specialized knowledge.
- Lack of stimulation of a more resource-efficient use of construction materials and the production of the materials themselves, consider options for longer-term use and duration of construction materials: reduce the amount of waste from construction, enable the recycling of construction materials, which are primarily disposed of in landfills.
- Lack of stimulation and impositions through laws obligation of regular buildings maintenance, retrofit and energy efficiency buildings upgrade, proper planning documentation, etc.
- Absence of spatial planning documentation and spatial planning strategies at the state level.
- Lack of sustainable planning in local communities (with the exception of the canton of Sarajevo) in all areas (transportation, urban greenery, land use, etc.)

### 3.3 Summary form a national perspective Albania

In Albania, the problems are related to:

- Albania faces several challenges with its urban planning regulations that require comprehensive and coordinated efforts by the government, civil society, and private sector to address. Therefore, the recent reform in urban planning regulations in Albania aims to provide a more effective and integrated approach to urban development by promoting sustainable growth and protecting the environment while also improving the quality of life for citizens.
- Although there are regulations in place, the enforcement of these regulations can be weak due to limited resources, corruption, and political influence. This can lead to a lack of accountability and uneven application of the law, which can undermine the effectiveness of urban planning regulations.
- Albania faces challenges in providing adequate infrastructure and services to support urban development, such as water supply, waste management, and transportation. This can make it difficult to attract investment and encourage sustainable development.
- While the law requires public participation in the urban planning process, in practice, this can be limited, and the public can feel excluded from decision-making processes. This can lead to a lack of trust in the government and a lack of public support for urban planning initiatives.
- The Territory Strategy document in Albania is a planning document that provides a long-term vision for the sustainable development of Albania's territory and sets out the policies, strategies, and actions needed to achieve this vision. The Territory Strategy covers a range of topics, including land use, transport, housing, natural resources, and environmental protection. The main objectives of the Territory Strategy are to promote balanced regional development, ensure the sustainable use of natural resources, and improve the quality of life for Albania's citizens. The document is based on a participatory approach, with input from a range of stakeholders including government agencies, civil society organizations, and local communities.
- Sustainable urban planning is an important priority for Albania, as the country seeks to balance economic growth with social and environmental sustainability. The country has made significant strides in this area but continues to face challenges related to rapid urbanization, infrastructure development, and environmental degradation. Some of the main challenges include limited financial resources, lack of political will, limited technical expertise, and cultural barriers.
- Promoting social cohesion in Albania requires a holistic approach that considers the interrelationships between urban planning, community engagement, and social services, while also tackling the challenges of informal settlements, quality of education, access to affordable housing, marginalized groups. Some social cohesion in terms of urban development challenges can be summarized. Informal settlements are a common feature of urban areas in Albania, particularly in Tirana and Durrës. These settlements often lack basic infrastructure and services, such as water and sanitation facilities, and residents may be at risk of eviction. Addressing the needs of residents in informal settlements is important for promoting social cohesion. Urban development can have a positive impact on social cohesion by providing public spaces for residents to interact and engage in community activities. However, public space in Albania is often limited and poorly maintained, which can negatively impact social cohesion. Urban

development that promotes social mix, or the integration of residents from different socioeconomic backgrounds, can contribute to social cohesion. However, in Albania, there is often a lack of affordable housing options in newly developed areas, which can lead to socioeconomic segregation and hinder social cohesion.

- A high priority for more sustainable forms of transport will drive more efficient use of road space, enhance the attractiveness of non-motorized modes, and improve the accessibility of specific locations. It will also reduce environmental damage, make street space more attractive and improve road safety for non-motorists. Therefore, it's very crucial for this point to be a priority in the planning documents.
- Policies that allow population density to increase can also sometimes curb growth in the cost of housing.
- Regarding land distribution and registration started there was a wave of emigration to the neighbouring countries with Western-style free market economies. This was accompanied by a massive urbanization movement, with the population of greater, Tirana increasing from 275,000 to 800,000 citizens in a short time. So, those informal developments cause the tremendous changes in the urban configuration of the main cities in middle Albania, mainly in Tirana and Durrës. It is estimated that approximately more than 40,000 hectares of land were occupied either illegally or informally by over 300,000 informal buildings or constructions. The government does still face many challenges to address these issues to an adequate solution.



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