

In 2015, Bosnia and Herzegovina made a moderate advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. The Government adopted the Action Plan for Children of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which calls for the improvement of coordination on addressing forced begging and other forms of child labor; the expansion of social services to children living and working on the street, and the improvement of birth registration rates in the Roma community. The State of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) increased the penalties for individuals convicted of international trafficking of children. In addition, the State Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Persons collaborated with the State-level Prosecutorial Training Center and the OSCE to develop curricula on human trafficking that can be used to train judges and prosecutors. However, children in Bosnia and Herzegovina are engaged in child labor, including in street work, particularly begging. Children are also engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation as a result of human trafficking.



The Government lacks a mechanism to coordinate its efforts to address child labor, including all its worst forms. In addition, the minimum age protections in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska, and Brčko District labor codes do not apply to children who are self-employed or working outside formal employment relationships.

I. PREVALENCE AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHILD LABOR

Children in the State of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) are engaged in child labor, including in street work, particularly begging.(1-6) Children are also engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in commercial sexual exploitation as a result of human trafficking.(5, 7, 8) Table 1 provides key indicators on children's work and education in BiH. Data on some of these indicators are not available from the sources used in this report.

Table 1. Statistics on Children's Work and Education

Children	Age	Percent
Working (% and population)	5-14 yrs.	8.9 (44,017)
Attending School (%)	5-14 yrs.	83.7
Combining Work and School (%)	7-14 yrs.	10.6
Primary Completion Rate (%)		Unavailable

Primary completion rate was unavailable from UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2015.(9)

Source for all other data: Understanding Children's Work Project's analysis of statistics from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 3, 2006.(10)

Based on a review of available information, Table 2 provides an overview of children's work by sector and activity.

Table 2. Overview of Children's Work by Sector and Activity

Sector/Industry	Activity
Services	Street work, including begging, vending,* washing car windows,* and scavenging for scrap metal* (1-7)
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor‡	Forced begging* and forced domestic work,* each sometimes as a result of human trafficking* (5, 7, 8, 11) Commercial sexual exploitation as a result of human trafficking* (5, 8, 11)

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Table 2. Overview of Children's Work by Sector and Activity (cont)

Sector/Industry	Activity
Categorical Worst Forms of Child Labor†	Use in illicit activities, including for pickpocketing* (2, 6, 11)
	Use in the production of pornography* (3, 12, 13)

* Evidence of this activity is limited and/or the extent of the problem is unknown.

† Child labor understood as the worst forms of child labor per se under Article 3(a)–(c) of ILO C. 182.

Begging on the streets, often at busy intersections or near tourist attractions and religious institutions, is the most common form of child labor in BiH.(1, 2, 6, 14) Organized groups sometimes traffic groups of children to lucrative locations both domestically and internationally and force them to beg. For example, some Romani girls were forced into marriages in BiH and were then trafficked to Paris, France, where they were forced to pickpocket and steal for their BiH traffickers.(2, 8, 11, 15) BiH lacks recent, comprehensive data on the extent and nature of the worst forms of child labor in the country.(1, 6)

Children from the Roma community, the largest minority group in BiH, remain vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor.(1, 2, 4-8, 11) The Roma custom of paid and arranged marriages between families has resulted in the exploitation of some Roma girls as domestic workers.(5, 7, 8, 11) Many Roma children are not enrolled in school, which increases their vulnerability to the worst forms of child labor.(5, 15-17) Sources indicate that Roma children face numerous obstacles to accessing education, including discrimination by teachers and peers, long traveling distances to schools, and the inability to afford appropriate clothing and food to eat during school hours.(13, 18, 19) Additionally, research found that discrimination against Roma children by school administrators has led to disproportionately high enrollment rates of Roma children in schools for children with intellectual disabilities.(5, 20)




Although the Government of BiH, in collaboration with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and local NGO Vasa Prava, has made significant efforts to register undocumented individuals for citizenship, UNHCR estimates that approximately 60 people, primarily Roma, were still at risk of statelessness in the country during the reporting period.(5, 11) Children who lack identity documents may face barriers to accessing public education, which increases their vulnerability to engaging in child labor.(5, 15, 18, 21)

Children with disabilities also face barriers to accessing education, which may make them vulnerable to child labor. Although children with disabilities are required to attend class regularly, many schools are unable to provide accommodations for their disabilities.(5) While the number of school programs for children with disabilities is increasing, parents, particularly those of children with severe disabilities, often receive little support from the Government and are left to provide education for their own children.(5)

II. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

BiH has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labor (Table 3).

Table 3. Ratification of International Conventions on Child Labor

Convention	Ratification
 ILO C. 138, Minimum Age	✓
ILO C. 182, Worst Forms of Child Labor	✓
 UN CRC	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on Armed Conflict	✓
UN CRC Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	✓
 Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons	✓

The State of BiH is a democratic republic with a bicameral parliament. Many governmental functions are the responsibility of two entities within the state, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS), as well as the self-governing

Brčko District.(5, 20)Criminal laws at the State, entity, and district levels regulate issues pertaining to the worst forms of child labor. The entities and the district are responsible for regulating labor issues.(22) BiH has established laws and regulations related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 4).

Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor

Standard	Related Entity	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Work	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH)	Yes	15	Article 15 of the Labor Law of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (23)
	Republika Srpska (RS)	Yes	15	Article 14 of the Labor Law of Republika Srpska (24)
	Brčko District (BD)	Yes	15	Article 10 of the Labor Law of Brčko District (25)
Minimum Age for Hazardous Work	FBiH	Yes	18	Article 51 of the Labor Law of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (23)
	RS	Yes	18	Article 69 of the Labor Law of Republika Srpska (24)
	BD	Yes	18	Article 41 of the Labor Law of Brčko District (25)
Prohibition of Hazardous Occupations or Activities for Children	FBiH	Yes		Articles 36, 51, and 140 of the Labor Law of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (23)
	RS	Yes		Articles 42, 45, 46, 69, and 150 of the Labor Law of Republika Srpska (24)
	BD	Yes		Articles 28, 41, and 111 of the Labor Law of Brčko District (25)
Prohibition of Forced Labor	Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)	Yes		Articles 185, 186, and 186a of the Criminal Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina; Article II of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina (22)
	FBiH	No		
	RS	Yes		Article 198b of the Criminal Code of Republika Srpska (26)
	BD	Yes		Article 207a of the Criminal Code of Brčko District (27)
Prohibition of Child Trafficking	Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)	Yes		Articles 185, 186, and 186a of the Criminal Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina (28)
	FBiH	No		
	RS	Yes		Article 198b of the Criminal Code of Republika Srpska (26)
	BD	Yes		Article 207a of the Criminal Code of Brčko District (27)
Prohibition of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	BiH	Yes		Articles 186(5) and 187 of the Criminal Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina (28)
	FBiH	Yes		Articles 210 and 211 of the Criminal Code of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (29)
	RS	Yes		Articles 198 and 198b–200 of the Criminal Code of Republika Srpska (30)
	BD	Yes		Articles 186 and 207–209 of the Criminal Code of Brčko District (31)
Prohibition of Using Children in Illicit Activities	BiH	No		
	FBiH	Yes		Article 219 of the Criminal Code of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (29)
	RS	Yes		Articles 198b and 224 of the Criminal Code of Republika Srpska (26, 30)
	BD	Yes		Article 216 of the Criminal Code of Brčko District (31)
Minimum Age for Compulsory Military Recruitment	BiH	N/A*		
	FBiH	N/A*		
	RS	N/A*		
	BD	N/A*		

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Table 4. Laws and Regulations Related to Child Labor (cont)

Standard	Related Entity	Yes/No	Age	Related Legislation
Minimum Age for Voluntary Military Service	BiH	Yes	18	Article 9 of the Law on the Service in the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (32, 33)
	FBiH	Yes	18	Article 9 of the Law on the Service in the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (32, 33)
	RS	Yes	18	Article 9 of the Law on the Service in the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (32, 33)
	BD	Yes	18	Article 9 of the Law on the Service in the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (32, 33)
Compulsory Education Age	FBiH	Yes	15‡	Article 16 of the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (34)
	RS	Yes	15	Article 3 of the Law on Primary Education of Republika Srpska; Article 16 of the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (34, 35)
	BD	Yes	15	Article 55 of the Law on Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in the Brčko District; Article 16 of the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (34, 36)
Free Public Education	FBiH	Yes		Article 16 of the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (34)
	RS	Yes		Article 16 of the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (34)
	BD	Yes		Article 16 of the Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (34)

* No conscription.(33)

‡ Age calculated based on available information.(34)

The entities of FBiH and RS and the BD all prohibit the employment of minors in activities that may be harmful to their health and moral development, including work conducted underwater, underground, and at night, with certain exceptions.(23-25) However, neither of the entities nor BD have enacted legislation that defines the types of hazardous occupations and activities prohibited for children in a manner that is comprehensive and specific enough to facilitate effective implementation of penalties for hazardous work violations and the removal of children from these situations.(37, 38)

BiH law prohibits international trafficking in persons for forced labor and sexual exploitation. In 2011, the Governments of BiH, the entities, and BD agreed that BiH law would be used in cases of international human trafficking, but that entity and BD laws should be adopted to cover domestic human trafficking.(28, 39) In 2015, this change was codified by amendment to Article 186 of the BiH Criminal Code, which prohibits trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation and forced labor. The amendment reflected that the BiH Criminal Code covers only international human trafficking.(6, 11, 28) Additionally, the amendment increased penalties for trafficking of people under 18 years of age from a minimum of 5 years to a minimum of 10 years of imprisonment. (6, 11, 28) In 2013, RS and BD adopted amendments to their criminal codes to prohibit all forms of human trafficking and to ensure that convicted violators of these laws receive a sentence of at least 5 years of imprisonment, thereby harmonizing RS and BD laws with BiH law. In 2016, the FBiH amended the law to criminalize all forms of human trafficking, but this law was not effective during the reporting period.(26) As a result, during the reporting period, the FBiH did not have a law criminalizing domestic human trafficking.(6, 8)

The Criminal Codes of BiH, FBiH, RS, and BD prohibit the commercial sexual exploitation of children through legal provisions that forbid incitement to prostitution, forced prostitution, and turning a person over to a third party for the purpose of prostitution. Despite these protections, some areas consider juvenile prostitution a misdemeanor, which may result in minors engaged in commercial sexual exploitation being charged with a crime.(5, 40, 41) The law does not sufficiently prohibit the use of children for prostitution. The anti-trafficking amendment to the Criminal Code of BD penalizes the use of services provided by a child trafficked for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation, and the amended Criminal Code of RS penalizes the same

offense if the perpetrator is aware that the child is a victim of human trafficking. Neither BD nor RS penalize the use of children who have not been trafficked for prostitution.(27, 30-31) The Criminal Code of FBiH does not prohibit the use of children for prostitution.(26, 28-31)

Laws related to illicit activities are not sufficient as the use of children for the production and trafficking of drugs is not criminally prohibited in BiH.

Minimum age protections in FBiH, RS, and BD labor codes do not apply to children who are self-employed or working outside formal employment relationships. This means that most children engaged in street work, the most common form of child labor, are not protected by the law.(1-6, 23-25)

The Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina makes primary education mandatory, beginning at age 6 and continuing for 9 years. As a result, children are typically 15 years old when they complete compulsory education.(34) Both RS and BD have passed additional legislation establishing 15 as the age at which compulsory education ends.(35, 36)

III. ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government has established institutional mechanisms for the enforcement of laws and regulations on child labor, including its worst forms (Table 5).

Table 5. Agencies Responsible for Child Labor Law Enforcement

Organization/Agency	Role
FBiH Ministry of Labor and Social Policy Federal Inspection Agency and Cantonal-Level Labor Inspectorates	Enforce labor laws, including those on child labor, in FBiH.(6, 42, 43)
RS Ministry of Labor and Veterans Labor Inspectorate	Enforce labor laws, including those on child labor, in RS.(6, 43)
BD Administrative Support Department	Enforce labor laws, including those on child labor, in BD.(6)
Entity and Cantonal-Level Police	Enforce criminal laws against human trafficking, forced labor, prostitution, and begging.(39)
Ministry of Security (MoS)	Enforce national policy to prevent the worst forms of child labor. Collect data on human trafficking.(42) Ensure that victims are placed in government-approved shelters.(42)
State Investigative and Protection Agency (SIPA) and State Border Police (SBP)	Investigate human trafficking crimes and enforce anti-trafficking laws across the entire country (SIPA).(39, 40, 42) Identify victims of human trafficking at the border (SBP).(40)
State, Entity, and FBiH Cantonal-Level Prosecutors' Offices	Prosecute human trafficking, forced labor, prostitution, and forced begging cases at their respective levels, based on applicable laws.(39, 40, 42)

Labor Law Enforcement

In 2015, labor law enforcement agencies in BiH took actions to combat child labor, including its worst forms (Table 6).

Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement		2014	2015
Labor Inspectorate Funding	FBiH	Unknown* (42)	Unknown* (6)
	RS	Unknown* (42)	Unknown* (6)
	BD	\$1,576,265 (42)	Unknown* (6)
Number of Labor Inspectors	FBiH	Unknown	78 (6)
	RS	Unknown	36 (6)
	BD	Unknown	7 (6)
Inspectorate Authorized to Assess Penalties	FBiH/RS/BD	Yes (42)	Yes (6)

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Table 6. Labor Law Enforcement Efforts Related to Child Labor (cont)

Overview of Labor Law Enforcement		2014	2015
Training for Labor Inspectors	FBIH/RS/BD		
■ Initial Training for New Employees		No (42)	Unknown
■ Training on New Laws Related to Child Labor		No (42)	Unknown
■ Refresher Courses Provided		No (42)	Unknown
Number of Labor Inspections	FBIH/RS/BD	Unknown	Unknown
■ Number Conducted at Worksites		Unknown	Unknown
■ Number Conducted by Desk Reviews		Unknown	Unknown
Number of Child Labor Violations Found	FBIH/RS/BD	0 (5, 42)	0 (6)
Number of Child Labor Violations for Which Penalties Were Imposed	FBIH/RS/BD	N/A	N/A
■ Number of Penalties Imposed That Were Collected		N/A	N/A
Routine Inspections Conducted	FBIH and RS BD	Unknown	Yes (6)
■ Routine Inspections Targeted	FBIH/RS/BD	Unknown	Unknown
Unannounced Inspections Permitted	FBIH/RS/BD	Yes (42)	Yes (6)
Unannounced Inspections Conducted	FBIH/RS/BD	Yes (42)	Yes (6)
Complaint Mechanism Exists	FBIH/RS/BD	No (42)	No (6)
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Labor Authorities and Social Services	FBIH/RS/BD	No (42)	No (42)

*The Government does not make this information publicly available.

All three labor inspectorates are authorized to inspect any formal sector site without receiving prior approval, and approximately 30 percent of these inspections are unannounced. Inspectors who find violations of the child labor law are allowed to assess administrative penalties or issue fines of up to \$555.⁽⁶⁾

Criminal Law Enforcement

In 2015, criminal law enforcement agencies in BiH took actions to combat the worst forms of child labor, (Table 7).

Table 7. Criminal Law Enforcement Efforts Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor

Overview of Criminal Law Enforcement		2014	2015
Training for Investigators	BiH/FBiH/RS/BD		
■ Initial Training for New Employees		Yes (20)	Yes (11)
■ Training on New Laws Related to the Worst Forms of Child Labor		Unknown	Unknown
■ Refresher Courses Provided		Yes (42, 44)	Yes (45)
Number of Investigations	BiH	Unknown	1 (11)
	FBiH	Unknown	Unknown
	RS	1 (42)	Unknown
	BD	6 (42)	Unknown
Number of Violations Found	BiH/FBiH/RS/BD	37 (46)	16 (11, 20)
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	BiH	14 (42)	8 (11)
	FBiH	8 (42)	Unknown
Number of Prosecutions Initiated	RS	Unknown	Unknown
	BD	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Convictions	BiH	0 (42)	1 (11)
	FBiH	6 (42)	Unknown
	RS	1 (42)	Unknown
	BD	Unknown	Unknown
Reciprocal Referral Mechanism Exists Between Criminal Authorities and Social Services	BiH/FBiH/RS/BD	Yes (6)	Yes (6)

The three police academies in BiH provide training, in cooperation with the International Center for Migration Policy Development, on combating human trafficking; this includes 5 hours of basic training for police officers, 10 hours of training for inspectors, and 1 week of training for investigators. In 2015, the International Center for Migration Policy Development also held two train-the-trainer workshops for law enforcement personnel on the practical application of educational materials on combating human trafficking.(11) Officials from the judiciary, prosecutor's offices, Centers for Social Welfare, inspections agencies, and the Border Police also received training in order to assist the Government's research efforts on combating human trafficking and protecting victims. Although law enforcement personnel received training on human trafficking during the reporting period, Government authorities continue to struggle with recognizing forced begging and forced labor as human trafficking issues.(11) Furthermore, a government official acknowledged that while judges and prosecutors receive some basic training on human trafficking through the Agency for Education and Training, more training is needed, especially on how to properly prosecute cases involving child begging as a result of human trafficking.(44, 47)

In 2015, police and prosecutors at various levels of the Government were responsible for investigating human trafficking crimes and compiling information about them through the multiagency Strike Force for Combating Trafficking in Persons and Organized Illegal Migration (Anti-Trafficking Strike Force). Labor inspectors are not part of the Anti-Trafficking Strike Force.(6) Authorities refer children detained for begging to appropriate social services providers. NGOs that receive funding from either the Ministry of Security or the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees may provide shelter to these children.(6)

During the reporting period, the Government identified 16 child trafficking victims.(11) Of these victims, 13 were girls who were subjected to either forced servile marriage or forced begging, and three were boys who were engaged in forced begging.(11) BiH and French criminal law enforcement authorities received support from Eurojust to create the first-ever joint investigative team to respond to a case involving some Romani girls who were forced into marriages before being trafficked to Paris, France, where they were forced to pickpocket and steal for their BiH traffickers. This joint investigation resulted in the arrests of seven traffickers in BiH, mostly from the Zenica region, and 11 traffickers in France, all of whom were members of the same Roma clan.(11) The BiH Prosecutor's Office issued its first-ever indictment against a BiH Government official, the Consul General at the BiH Embassy in Paris, on a charge of illegally issuing travel notes to more than 30 Roma women and girls returning to BiH, some of whom were the Romani girls who were trafficked to Paris and forced to pickpocket and steal, in exchange for financial compensation.(11) Through the National Referral Mechanism, some child victims may have been referred to Government-funded shelters, social welfare centers, or assistance programs.(20, 39, 42)

IV. COORDINATION OF GOVERNMENT EFFORTS ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Although the Government has established the Department of the State Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Persons, research found no evidence of mechanisms to coordinate its efforts to address child labor, including all its worst forms (Table 8).

Table 8. Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
Department of the State Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Persons (State Coordinator) within the Ministry of Security (MOS)	Coordinate human trafficking victim protection efforts among relevant ministries at the entity level, and among prosecutors at the state, entity, and local levels, and NGOs.(11, 40, 48) Oversee the human trafficking database, which includes data from NGOs, the State Investigative and Protection Agency (SIPA), the State Border Police (SBP), and police agencies and Prosecutors' Offices at all levels.(39) Publish data from this database in its annual report on trafficking.(11) Oversee shelter management and monitor NGOs' compliance with the agreed-upon provisions on victims' assistance.(39) In 2015, the State Coordinator, in partnership with the International Forum on Solidarity, held four training sessions on combating trafficking for 120 members of the regional monitoring teams. The State Coordinator also collaborated with the State-level Prosecutorial Training Center, State Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Persons, and the OSCE, to develop curricula that can be used to train judges and prosecutors.(11) The OSCE used this curricula to train nine judges and prosecutors, who will train their colleagues on this curricula in the future.(11)
Strike Force for Combating Trafficking in Persons and Organized Illegal Migration (Anti-Trafficking Strike Force)	Coordinate human trafficking investigations across government agencies.(11) Convene once a month, with additional meetings scheduled as needed.(11, 47) Chaired by the Chief State Prosecutor, includes the following agencies: BiH Prosecutor's Office, State Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Persons, Federation Prosecutor's Office, RS Prosecutor's Office, BD Prosecutor's Office, Federation Ministry of Interior, RS Ministry of Interior, SIPA, BD Police, SBP, and Federation and RS Tax Administrations.(11, 42)

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Table 8. Mechanisms to Coordinate Government Efforts on Child Labor (cont)

Coordinating Body	Role & Description
Inter-Ministerial Working Group	Monitor implementation of the Strategy to Counter Trafficking in Human Beings, the Action Plan, and the National Referral Mechanism.(11, 40) Comprises appointed representatives from the State and entity governments, including labor inspectors and elected representatives from NGOs active in anti-human trafficking.(3)
Regional Monitoring Teams	Facilitate coordination among State, entity, and cantonal-level institutions responsible for combating human trafficking, as well as coordination among NGOs and intergovernmental organizations. In 2015, there were Regional Monitoring Teams in Sarajevo, Mostar, Banja Luka, and Tuzla, all of which met regularly.(11, 20)

The Government of BiH maintains the Council for Children, which is responsible for coordinating children's issues among state-level agencies and institutions under the Action Plan for Children of BiH. Although the Council may address issues related to the worst forms of child labor, research did not find evidence that it functions as a mechanism to specifically coordinate efforts to prevent and eliminate child labor in BiH.(49, 50)

A source indicated the need for the Regional Monitoring Teams to improve their coordination efforts regarding the referral and protection of human trafficking victims.(11)

V. GOVERNMENT POLICIES ON THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

The Government of BiH has established policies related to child labor, including its worst forms (Table 9).

Table 9. Policies Related to Child Labor

Policy	Description
National Action Plan to Counter Trafficking (2016–2019)†	In 2015, the Council of Ministers adopted this plan drafted by the State Coordinator and the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees (MHRR). These bodies used recommendations from the evaluation of the previous plan's implementation and from relevant international monitoring mechanisms in order to create a structure that meets BiH's international obligations.(6, 11) The plan has five strategic goals, which include improving the provision of Government assistance to human trafficking victims, more efficiently prosecuting trafficking crimes, preventing trafficking in persons, and strengthening the collaboration and coordination among all stakeholders involved in combating human trafficking in BiH.(11)
Strategy to Counter Trafficking in Human Beings and Action Plan (2013–2015)	Focuses on comprehensive support, prevention, victim protection and assistance, criminal prosecution, and international cooperation. Follows international standards set by the Council of Europe Convention on Actions Against Trafficking in Human Beings and the Palermo Protocol on Trafficking in Persons.(40, 51) Implemented and monitored by a team of representatives from the Ministry of Security, Ministry of Justice, MHRR, Ministry of Civil Affairs, High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council, and NGOs.(39, 48)
Action Plan for Child Protection and Prevention of Violence Against Children Through Information-Communications Technologies (2014–2015)	Aims to develop efficient mechanisms to protect children from exploitation in child pornography and other forms of sexual exploitation through information and communications technology. Includes 40 activities in the categories of legislation, institutional capacities and cooperation, and prevention.(52) Developed as part of BiH's commitments under the Global Alliance Against Child Sexual Abuse Online initiative.(3)
Action Plan for Children of BiH (2015–2018)*†	Based on recommendations from the Committee for the Rights of the Child and in response to the poorest results achieved while implementing previous Action Plans, this Action Plan for Children of BiH is designed to take a multidisciplinary approach that aims to continue improving the Government's efforts to protect children's rights.(53)
Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005–2015) and Action Plan (2013–2016)*	Aims to improve the socioeconomic status and social inclusion of Roma. Joint initiative of 12 European countries.(6)
Policy for the Protection of Children Deprived of Parental Care and Families at Risk of Separation in FBiH (2006–2016) and Action Plan (2013–2016)*	Calls for the development of social protection systems to provide sufficient protection to children without parental care and children separated from their parents.(7)
Council of Europe Action Plan for BiH (2015–2017)*†	Approved by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in 2015, outlines a comprehensive strategy for cooperation efforts between the Government and the Council of Europe. Includes components designed to increase inclusivity and access to quality education for all children and decrease discrimination against Roma.(54)

* Child labor elimination and prevention strategies do not appear to have been integrated into this policy.

† Policy was approved during the reporting period.

Although the Government of BiH has adopted the National Action Plan to Counter Trafficking and the Action Plan for Child Protection and Prevention of Violence Against Children Through Information-Communications Technologies, research found no evidence of an overall policy to combat child labor or the worst forms of child labor, including commercial sexual exploitation, forced labor, and illicit activities.(3, 6, 11, 52)

Some progress has been made toward improving conditions for the Roma population through the Decade of Roma Inclusion; however, sources indicate that the Government has not allocated adequate financial resources for effective implementation of inclusive education initiatives.(19, 55-57)

VI. SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS CHILD LABOR

In 2015, the Government of BiH funded and participated in programs that include the goal of eliminating or preventing child labor, including its worst forms (Table 10).

Table 10. Social Programs to Address Child Labor

Program	Description
MHRR Funding†	\$2.1 million Roma assistance project funded by the MHRR and various donors and implemented by MHRR and 23 NGOs.(48) Aims to address issues related to housing, health care, and employment for Roma people.(46)
Registration Project	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees-funded project, implemented by NGO Vasa Prava, that promotes registration of Roma people to increase their access to social benefits and to enable Roma children to enroll in schools.(11, 42, 58) Since its initiation in July 2009, has helped 1,300 Roma individuals to register for citizenship and has enabled 19,000 individuals to apply for social inclusion programs.(46, 49)
Daily Centers and Crisis Centers†	Center for Social Welfare-supported and NGO-operated long- and short-term day care centers for vulnerable children, especially those who live or work on the street.(40, 49) Provide direct assistance for children, including educational activities, counseling, food, and hygiene.(2, 16) Daily Centers operate in nine locations across the country. In four locations, NGOs also maintain Crisis Centers to provide protection to children found in exploitative labor situations who need emergency access to accommodation and social services.(14) In 2015, daily centers in Banja Luka, Tuzla, Mostar, Bijeljina, Bihac, and Sarajevo assisted 129 children at risk of human trafficking, most of whom were engaged in begging and other types of street work.(11)
Enhancing the Social Protection and Inclusion System for Children in BiH (2008–2015)	EU-funded program implemented by UNICEF, government ministries, and NGOs that seeks to improve social protection systems at all levels of Government, strengthen the capacity of government agencies to provide for social protection and inclusion of children, and enhance coordination and communication between providers of social services and the responsible authorities at the local level.(59)
Assistance for Trafficking Victims†	Government program that allocates small grants to local NGOs for the provision of shelter and social services to victims of human trafficking. In 2015, MHRR distributed \$34,000 to assist domestic victims, while the Ministry of Security distributed \$68,000 to assist foreign victims and allocated \$5,681 for the commemoration of European Anti-Trafficking Day.(44) Services include counseling, educational assistance and job training for domestic victims, and providing visa and legal services for foreign victims of human trafficking.(44)
Implementation of the Strategy to Counter Trafficking in Human Beings (2013–2015)†	\$409,630 USAID and Government-funded project to implement the new Strategy to Counter Trafficking in Human Beings. Activities include conducting research to estimate the extent of trafficking in the country, strengthening the capacity of institutions to investigate and prosecute cases of human trafficking and to assist victims, and raising public awareness of human trafficking issues in the framework of the Strategy.(39, 60) In 2015, the State Coordinator concluded the implementation of this program, which included 280 judges, prosecutors, law enforcement personnel, NGO workers, and journalists receiving training on human trafficking issues through regular regional monitoring and national referral meetings. The University of Sarajevo's Criminal Policy Research Center completed the comprehensive academic study on the scope of human trafficking in BiH, which the State Coordinator commissioned through this program.(11) This study will be translated into English. Additionally, the State Coordinator partnered with marketing agency BORAM, in partnerships with digital and print media, to carry out a nationwide public awareness campaign focused on reducing labor exploitation, sexual exploitation, begging, and forced marriages, by distributing video spots, audio clips, and leaflets.(11)
Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings and Organized Crime—Phase 2 (2014–2017)	EU-funded project, implemented by the International Center for Migration Policy Development in six countries, including BiH. Aims to build the capacity of participating governments to prevent transnational organized crime, particularly human trafficking, by providing policy, legal, and technical assistance.(61) Focuses on improving victim identification, increasing prosecution of traffickers, and strengthening coordination among EU and non-EU stakeholders.(61)

† Program is funded by the Government of BiH.

As labor inspectors do not have a mandate to inspect the streets, staff from Daily Centers are often the first to identify children engaged in hazardous street work. In Sarajevo, an institutionalized Mobile Team with a staff of three individuals

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engages in daily outreach to children on the streets and to families in vulnerable communities.(4) The Mobile Team staff stated, however, that they lack sufficient resources for their work, especially reliable transportation.(2) Government support for outreach to street children in areas outside of Sarajevo varies significantly, depending on the location. While the majority of Daily Centers collaborate with local Centers for Social Welfare, most Daily Centers are not institutionalized, and, therefore, lack consistent financial and technical support.(14) This may limit the ability of Daily Centers to identify and assist children working on the streets. Research also found that although the Government provides some social services for low-income families through the Center for Social Welfare, many families do not receive enough assistance to reduce their reliance on child labor, especially begging, as a source of income.(2)

Government officials noted that although the number of domestic human trafficking victims identified in BiH is significantly higher than the number of foreign human trafficking victims identified, Government funding is disproportionately allocated to assist foreigners. As a result, some organizations that provide services to victims of domestic human trafficking may lack adequate financial resources.(3, 50)

VII. SUGGESTED GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR

Based on the reporting above, suggested actions are identified that would advance the elimination of child labor, including its worst forms, in BiH (Table 11).

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Legal Framework	Ensure that laws exist in all entities that clearly and comprehensively describe the hazardous occupations and activities prohibited for children.	2009 – 2015
	Ensure that BiH law prohibits the use of children in illicit activities, including the use, procurement, and offering of children for the production and trafficking of drugs.	2015
	Ensure that children engaged in commercial sexual exploitation are treated as victims rather than criminals under FBiH law.	2013 – 2015
	Ensure that BiH law criminally prohibits the use of a child for prostitution, even if that child has not been trafficked.	2015
	Ensure that all children are protected by labor law, including those who work in the informal sector, such as children engaged in street work.	2015
Enforcement	Collect and publish information on labor law enforcement efforts, including labor inspectorate funding, training labor inspectors receive, and the number of labor inspections.	2015
	Establish a referral mechanism between labor authorities and social services.	2013 – 2015
	Collect and publish data on the number of investigations and individuals prosecuted, convicted, and sentenced for crimes related to human trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, disaggregated by age and sex of the victim, in FBiH, RS, and BD.	2013 – 2015
	Increase training for prosecutors and judges on how to properly apply criminal law in cases of child labor trafficking, forced labor, and forced begging.	2014 – 2015
	Ensure that all children identified as engaged in child labor are referred to appropriate social services.	2013 – 2015
Coordination	Establish coordinating mechanisms to combat child labor, including in all its worst forms.	2009 – 2015
	Improve the coordination among Regional Monitoring Teams on referral and protection of human trafficking victims.	2015
Government Policies	Integrate child labor prevention and elimination strategies into new and existing policies.	2009 – 2015
	Adopt a policy designed to address child labor and the worst forms of child labor other than child trafficking, including in commercial sexual exploitation, forced labor, and illicit activities.	2015
	Expand and provide adequate funding for existing programs aimed at improving access to education for Roma children and implementing the commitments of including Roma into society by providing for basic needs.	2010 – 2015

Table 11. Suggested Government Actions to Eliminate Child Labor, Including its Worst Forms (cont)

Area	Suggested Action	Year(s) Suggested
Social Programs	Collect data on children involved in the worst forms of child labor in order to enhance policymakers' ability to identify problems more accurately and to address them more effectively.	2009 – 2015
	Promote inclusive education for minority children, including Roma, by expanding efforts to reduce discrimination in schools, to mitigate the costs associated with education, and to assist Roma and other families at risk of statelessness to register for citizenship documentation that entitles their children to access to school.	2011 – 2015
Social Programs	Ensure inclusive education for children with disabilities, particularly children with extensive disabilities, by ensuring that all schools have enough resources to provide necessary accommodations for them.	2015
	Increase funding for programs that provide social services, including housing, for child trafficking victims.	2015
	Institutionalize and provide sufficient funding for Daily Centers to ensure that they have the resources and technical support necessary to assist children involved in child labor and those who are at risk of involvement.	2014 – 2015
	Strengthen social protection programs that provide support to economically vulnerable families in order to reduce their reliance on child labor.	2014 – 2015
	Ensure that resources for human trafficking victims are sufficient to meet the needs of domestic victims.	2014 – 2015

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