

ADDRESSING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE BALKANS (With a reference to the young carers)

5th Annual IARS International Conference:
**Youth-led solutions to unemployment:
The voices of young, marginalised carers**

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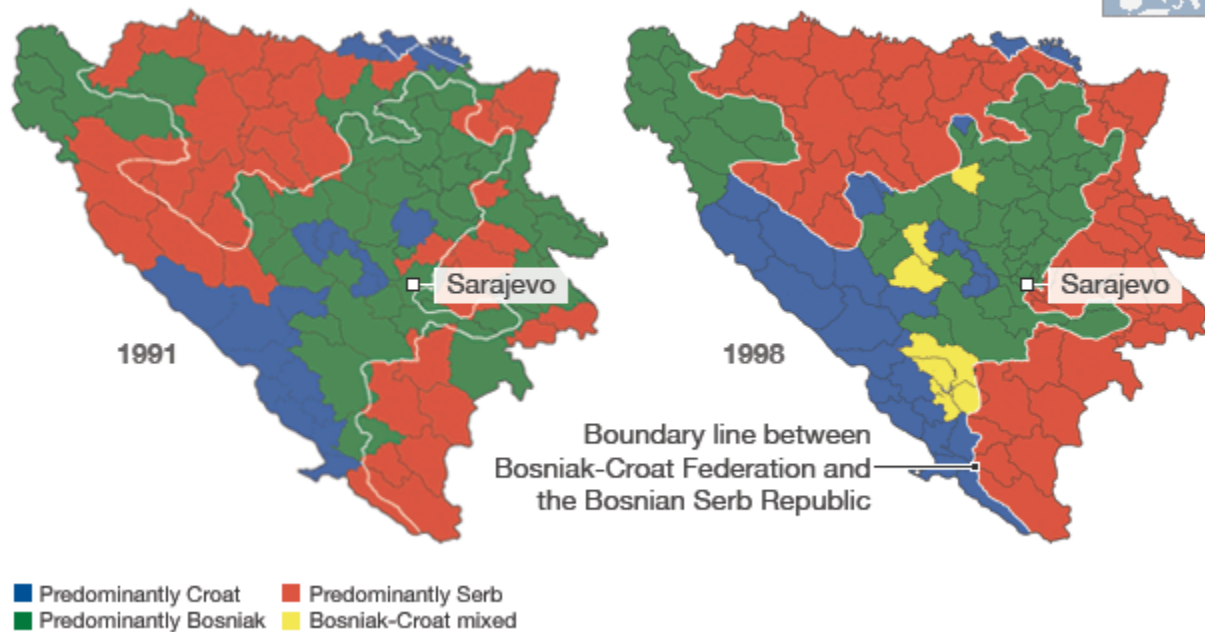
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The Balkans in Europe



A complex and difficult transition context – BiH

Ethnic make-up of Bosnia-Herzegovina, before and after the war



Source: Office of the High Representative

Balkan countries – Areas, populations, languages and religions

Country	Area (sq. km)	Population (mio.)	Main language(s)	Main religion(s)
<i>Albania</i>	27,400	3.0	Albanian	Islam Catholic
<i>Bosnia-Herzegovina</i>	51,200	3.9	Bosnian Serbian Croatian	Islam Orthodox Catholic
<i>Bulgaria</i>	108,560	7.1	Bulgarian	Orthodox
<i>Croatia</i>	55,960	4.3	Croatian	Catholic
<i>Greece</i>	128,900	10.8	Greek	Orthodox
<i>Kosovo</i>	10,887	1.9	Albanian	Islam
<i>Macedonia</i>	25,220	2.1	Macedonian Albanian	Orthodox Islam
<i>Montenegro FYR</i>	13,450	0.6	Serbian Montenegrin	Orthodox Islam
<i>Romania</i>	230,080	21.6	Romanian	Orthodox
<i>Serbia</i>	87,460	7.1	Serbian	Orthodox
<i>Slovenia</i>	20,140	2.0	Slovenian	Catholic Unspecified None
<i>EU</i>	4,324,782	515.1	German Italian French	Catholic Atheist/agnostic Protestant

Balkan countries – Key-economic, social and governance indicators

Country	GDP (billion USD)	GDP per capita (PPP USD)	Human Development Index	Gini coef. (%)	Poverty Rate (%)	Index of Perceived corruption	Ease of Doing Business Index
<i>Albania</i>	12.40	11,900	0.76 (75)	29.0	14.3	---	68.90 (58) Up
<i>Bosnia-Herzegovina</i>	16.53	11,000	0.75 (81)	36.2	17.2	---	63.87 (81) Up
<i>Bulgaria</i>	50.45	20,000	0.79 (56)	35.4	21.8	41 (75)	73.51 (39) Up
<i>Croatia</i>	49.86	22,400	0.82 (45)	32.0	19.5	49 (55)	72.99 (43) Up
<i>Greece</i>	195.90	26,800	0.86 (29)	36.7	36.0	44 (69)	68.67 (61) ----
<i>Kosovo</i>	6.56	10,000	0.71	30.0	30.0	---	68.79 (60) Up
<i>Macedonia</i>	10.49	14,500	0.74 (82)	30.4	43.6	---	81.74 (10) Up
<i>Montenegro</i>	4.24	17,000	0.80 (48)	26.2	8.6	---	72.08 (51) Up
<i>Romania</i>	186.50	22,300	0.80 (50)	27.3	22.4	48 (57)	74.26 (36) Up
<i>Serbia</i>	37.76	14,200	0.77 (66)	38.7	9.2	---	72.29 (47) Up
<i>Slovenia</i>	44.12	32,000	0.89 (25)	23.7	13.5	61 (31)	76.14 (30) Up
<i>EU</i>	16,270.00	37,800	--	30.9	9.8	---	

Balkan countries – High levels of youth unemployment

Countries	Labor force (mio.)	Total unemployment rate (%)	Youth unemployment rate (%)		
			Total	Male	Female
<i>Albania</i>	1.18	17.3	30.2	32.5	26.1
<i>Bosnia-Herzegovina</i>	1.48	43.2	62.8	62.8	62.8
<i>Bulgaria</i>	2.52	8.9	23.8	23.8	23.7
<i>Croatia</i>	1.61	15.8	45.5	44.9	46.4
<i>Greece</i>	4.76	24.6	52.4	47.4	58.1
<i>Kosovo</i>	0.48	35.3	55.3	52.0	63.8
<i>Macedonia</i>	0.96	24.9	53.1	52.0	55.0
<i>Montenegro</i>	0.26	18.5	41.1	42.3	39.7
<i>Romania</i>	9.13	6.7	24.0	23.6	24.7
<i>Serbia</i>	2.91	18.9	49.4	N/A	N/A
<i>Slovenia</i>	0.92	11.6	20.2	19.4	21.3
<i>EU</i>	232.90	9.5	--	--	--

Specific dimensions of youth unemployment

- Tendencies
- Age discrimination
- Gender
- Education and skills
- Demographic patterns
- Growth and employment (Okun's coefficient)
- (Grey economies)

Social costs of youth unemployment

- Brain drain and the loss of young talents
- Poverty and marginalization
- Mental and physical health
- Suicide
- ...

Youth employment policies

- Measures are implemented, however, results are limited.
- *Albania*. Public and private actions support the creation of jobs for the youth. Deficiencies are also reported. Thus, there is a lack of specific school programs to prepare young people for labor markets.
- *Serbia*. Labor market policy measures have been adopted and are implemented to support youth employment in Serbia; these measures do include the mobilization of so-called job clubs, specific trainings for active job search, carrier guidance, and the apprenticeship program entitled 'First Chance'. The final outcome of these measures in terms of jobs creation for the youth is somehow unclear.

Young carers in the Western Balkans

- Political context
- Displaced and disabled persons
- Poverty and unemployment
- The role of young carers...

The quest for more actions

- Countries with limited resources
- Governance
- Entrepreneurship and education
- E-learning
- Permanent education
- Vocational training
- Mobility within Europe
- Specific loans
- Working with the diasporas
- The social and solidary economy

Helping young carers in the Balkans

- The SSE does matter a lot for young carers.
- The lack of resources in the Western Balkans implies that the civil society has to play a key-role to assist people, including the youth, to educate and train, to offer internships, to find jobs, to create new companies or to support innovative initiatives. In that respect, specific networks, cooperatives and job sharing schemes should be promoted.
- Moreover, the use of the internet must be optimized, with adequate teaching/learning programmes, adapted to the needs of the youth, in particular the young carers. The use of the web can also help develop some home-based professions, which may require assistance from civil society (with NGOs), the state or international organisations. Gender dimensions must be fully analysed and taken into account.

Final words

- Most countries in the Balkans are characterized by high levels of youth unemployment, and tendencies are not very optimistic. To some extent, the grey economy absorbs some of the unemployed. There are also growing inequalities, partly related to the lack of job opportunities. De facto, labour policies do not seem very effective. Considering the lack of resources in the region, the so-called social and solidary economy, mainly based on civil society, should be expected to play a key-role.
- Considering young carers, the Western part of the Balkans (former Yugoslavia) is a specific region, with a war legacy in terms of disabilities and a lack of safety nets. It is suggested to use all the resources and possibilities offered by the internet to develop adequate actions to assist the youth – the young carers in particular. The internet allows the development of networks, which would help the youth share experiences and join efforts. The internet can support learning new skills. In addition, home-based work, including youth entrepreneurship, can be promoted with the internet.
- In addition to gender and social inequalities, discrimination between generations must be addressed and reduced. There should be equal chances, with a better sense of solidarity, and more support for youth creativity and innovation.

THANK YOU