

Independent Reporting Mechanism

Results Report:
Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022-
2024

Open
Government
Partnership



Independent
Reporting
Mechanism

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Executive Summary

Bosnia and Herzegovina’s second action plan resulted in a modernized national public procurement portal with open data access. Some commitments faced technical hurdles and lack of institutional consensus during implementation, such as the open data portal. Despite a challenging political context, the multi-stakeholder forum continued to meet throughout the action plan and implementing agencies and civil society organizations have maintained a constructive dialogue around OGP.

Implementation

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)’s second action plan included 10 commitments. It continued several of the first action plan’s policy areas, such as open data, public procurement, anti-corruption, budget transparency, and access to information, and introduced a new commitment on beneficial ownership.¹ Six of the 10 commitments were substantially or fully completed, which was similar to the rate of completion in the first action plan (four of seven substantially or fully completed).² Of three commitments identified as promising in the IRM Action Plan Review,³ one achieved significant results: Commitment 6 launched a modernized national public procurement portal with open data access contributing to its usability for accountability purposes.

Factors that supported progress were strong institutional leadership, active civil society involvement, and enabling policy and legal frameworks in place. Specifically, the adoption of laws (Law on the Protection of Personal Data, the Law on Border Control), a Public Procurement Strategy (2024-2028), and national policies on transparency and anti-corruption aligned with the EU integration process were enabling factors.

Several commitments faced delays due to technical hurdles, lack of institutional consensus, and policy fragmentation, as in the previous cycle. For example, Commitment 8 on anti-corruption digitization and Commitment 7 on the anti-corruption e-platform showed no notable results, due to lack of institutional agreements, technical and capacity deficits, and financial constraints.

At a Glance

LEVEL OF COMPLETION

6/10	Complete or substantially complete commitments
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EARLY RESULTS

2/10	Commitments with early results
1/10	Commitments with significant results

KEY OBSERVATIONS

- BiH’s decentralized government structure has limited the scope and ambition of national commitments
- Technical hurdles and lack of institutional consensus delayed commitment implementation
- Improved dialogue and collaboration between government and civil society supported commitment implementation
- Communication of OGP reforms to the wider population remains a challenge

Compliance with minimum requirements during implementation:
Yes

Participation and Co-Creation

In BiH, the Advisory Council of the Open Government Partnership Multi-Stakeholder Forum Initiative (MSF) oversees implementation of the action plan and includes representatives from CSOs and public administration bodies. Overall, the level of engagement in the co-creation and implementation of the second action plan improved compared to the first action plan, based on the frequency of meetings and stakeholders engaged. Public institutions and civil society frequently engaged each other both in-person and online throughout the design and implementation of the action plan. For example, CSOs were able to suggest improvements and some implementing agencies consulted CSOs individually during the implementation of commitments, such as Commitment 9 on improving transparency of public funds allocated to media and CSOs.

Implementation in Context

During implementation, several domestic and international developments impacted progress. In October 2022, BiH held general elections which delayed the adoption of the action plan. Two years later, the BiH Presidency unanimously decided to initiate negotiations with Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, fulfilling a key requirement for opening EU accession talks. In March 2024, EU leaders agreed to commence accession negotiations with BiH, conditional on the implementation of further reforms.

At the end of December 2024, BiH adopted two key laws for opening negotiations with the EU: the Law on the Protection of Personal Data⁴ and the Law on Border Control.⁵ Additionally, a Public Procurement Strategy for 2024-2028 and action plan for its implementation⁶ was adopted together with amendments to the Law on Public Procurement harmonized with EU standards.⁷ This created a supportive environment for the procurement commitment (Commitment 6).

¹ Bosnia and Herzegovina Transitional Results Report 2019 - 2021, p 15, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Bosnia-Herzegovina_Transitional-Results-Report_2019-2021_EN.pdf

² Bosnia and Herzegovina Transitional Results Report 2019 - 2021, p 15, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Bosnia-Herzegovina_Transitional-Results-Report_2019-2021_EN.pdf

³ Open Government Partnership, Bosnia and Herzegovina Action Plan Review 2022–2024, 2023, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/bosnia-and-herzegovina-action-plan-review-2022-2024/>

⁴ Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina, no. 12/2025, 28 February 2025. This law aims to align with EU standards in the field of privacy protection and data security of citizens.

⁵ Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina, no. 7/25, 14 February 2025. This law concerns the management and control of the state border, which is crucial for security and cooperation with neighboring countries.

⁶ Public Procurement Agency of BiH, The Public Procurement Strategy for the period 2024–2028 with the accompanying Action Plan, <https://www.javnenabavke.gov.ba/bs-Latn-BA/news/386/vijece-ministara-bosne-i-hercegovine-usvojilo-strategiju-javnih-nabavki-za-period-2024-2028>

⁷ Primarily Directive 2004/17/EC, which coordinates procurement procedures of entities operating in the water, energy, transport, and postal services sector, and Directive 2004/18/EC which focuses on the coordination of procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts, and public service contracts, as well as Directive 2007/66/EC that amends earlier directives to improve the effectiveness of review procedures concerning the award of public contracts.

Section I. Key Observations

The key observations below offer reflections from the second action plan cycle. These lessons aim to support Bosnia and Herzegovina's future action plans and broader open government journey.

Observation 1: BiH's decentralized government structure limited the scope and ambition of commitments.

BiH is a highly decentralized country where policies and services that are of interest to citizens and CSOs are mostly provided at the entity, cantonal, and local levels. The OGP process in BiH is limited to state-level institutions. While this does not influence the quality of dialogue in the MSF, it does limit the scope and ambition of commitments. According to the BiH point of contact, in the current political situation in BiH, "we had other more advanced ideas and concepts, however, it is better to have a set of measures that is not too ambitious than to have no measures at all."⁸ The national OGP process in BiH could have more impact by finding closer synergies with BiH's OGP Local members or by encouraging greater expansion of OGP Local in BiH.

Observation 2: Technical hurdles and lack of institutional consensus delayed commitment implementation.

Implementation of OGP commitments in BiH faces multiple obstacles. Policy fragmentation and limited technical and human capacities complicated commitment implementation.⁹ For example, Commitment 5 had limited implementation because of the lack of a professional workforce to regularly update the Agency for Statistics' website.¹⁰ Moreover, open government reforms often faced resistance or were delayed due to lack of consensus between institutions.¹¹ For example, although the open data portal (Commitment 1) was developed and presented to institutions and non-governmental organizations, no agreement was reached with the Service for Maintenance and Development of Electronic Business and e-Government (General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers of BiH) regarding the technical and financial maintenance of the portal.

Observation 3: Improved dialogue and collaboration between government and civil society supported commitment implementation.

CSOs were actively included in the monitoring and oversight of the action plan through the multi-stakeholder forum (MSF). The MSF met regularly during the implementation period, which allowed organizations to contribute to commitment monitoring and implementation where possible.¹² For example, the Agency for Prevention of Corruption and Coordination of the Fight against Corruption has formed a working group for the preparation of criteria for the improvement of proactive transparency in the processes of allocating financial resources from the budget of BiH institutions, which, in the process of developing guidelines for the application of criteria in the allocation of financial resources from the budget of BiH institutions (Commitment 9), has consulted the legal team of Transparency International BiH outside of regular MSF meetings.¹³ However, apart from meetings and e-consultations, shortcomings were identified in inclusion of wider civil society in implementation, especially marginalized groups like persons with disabilities or national minorities.

Observation 4: Communication of OGP reforms to the wider population remains a challenge.

Despite some progress in OGP's visibility in BiH, wider outreach remains a challenge. The OGP website is not maintained regularly. According to a civil society representative, most citizens are not aware of the country's OGP commitments or their potential impact on accessibility and transparency of public service delivery.¹⁴ For example, Commitment 6 on public procurement open data involves centralizing public procurement data in open data format. There is a need for coherent and effective communications and outreach strategy to involve citizens in open data monitoring and in providing feedback on datasets. This could involve workshops, training, and hackathons for civil society and researchers on using the new e-procurement system.

⁸ Selma Džihanović-Gratz (Head of the Section for Legal Aid to Civil Society, Ministry of Justice), interview by the IRM, 11 February 2025.

⁹ Interview with the Office of the Coordinator for Public Administration Reform, Interview with the CIN. Aleng Mrgud (Head of the Editorial and Publishing Department, Agency for Statistics), interview by the IRM, 14 February 2025; Samra Filipovic-Hadžiadbić (Director, BiH Agency for Gender Equality), correspondence with the IRM, 26 February 2025.

¹⁰ Alen Mrgud (Head of the Editorial and Publishing Department, Agency for Statistics), interview by the IRM, 14 February 2025.

¹¹ Mubera Begić, Kenan Silajžija, Sabahudin Suljević (Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office/PARCO), interview by the IRM, 5 February 2025; Lejla Bičakčić (Center for Investigative Reporting), interview by the IRM; Emsad Dizdarević (Transparency International Bosnia and Herzegovina - TI BiH), interview by the IRM, 22 March 2023.

¹² Lejla Bičakčić (Center for Investigative Reporting - CIN), interview by the IRM; Emsad Dizdarević (TI BiH), interview by the IRM, 22 March 2023.

¹³ Mevludin Džindo (Assistant Director, Anti-Corruption Coordination Sector), correspondence with the IRM, 3 March 2025.

¹⁴ Lejla Bičakčić (CIN) interview by the IRM; Alen Vejzagic (Center for Advocacy of Citizens' Interests -CPI) interview by the IRM.

Section II. Early Results

This section analyzes commitments that achieved the strongest early results in the action plan. To assess early results, the IRM considers commitments' objectives, the country context, the policy area, and the evidence of changes. The IRM early results assessment is determined by the depth of change that occurred and evidence that the change is expected to be sustained in time.

Table 1. Commitments with Early Results

Commitment 6: Public procurement data available on new modern portal: The Public Procurement Agency launched a modernized national public procurement portal with open data access. The portal provides real-time, structured procurement data, aiding transparency, administrative oversight, and anti-corruption efforts.

Commitment 6: Open Data on Public Procurement in BiH

Implementers: Public Procurement Agency of BiH

Context and Objectives

Under this commitment, the Public Procurement Agency (PPA) aimed to publish all public procurement data collected through the national public procurement portal in open data format. It was carried forward from a commitment in the first action plan which saw limited implementation due to funding shortages and lack of legislative support.¹⁵ For the second action plan, the PPA secured funding for the portal to be used as a technical solution to overcome the legislative barriers from the previous cycle. According to Freedom House, the awarding of public procurement contracts in BiH was not transparent, and procurement processes often contained discrepancies.¹⁶ The data also shows a lack of oversight to ensure an efficient public procurement system, eroding public trust and the effective allocation public funds.¹⁷

Early Results: Significant results

This commitment achieved significant early results in public procurement transparency. The PPA launched a new portal (<https://next.ejn.gov.ba/en>) in December 2023 with data on public procurement published in open format. The old portal (www.ejn.gov.ba) will remain active while the two are being merged.¹⁸ Since the launch of the new website, there are around 20,000 bidders and over 3,000 contracting authorities registered on procurement to the new portal.¹⁹ The data on the new portal is available in open format, and not in 'read only format'. As foreseen in the commitment, this data includes data from the register of contracting authorities, data from the register of bidders, data on published notifications, data on allocations (Chapters I and V), data on allocations from annual notifications (Annex II, Part B, Framework Agreements), and data on exemptions from the LPP application Auction data.²⁰ The data on the portal in Excel format show public funding spending by contracting authority across all levels of government.¹¹

The data published on the two portals are updated in real time as soon as they are ready for publication in the e-procurement system. In addition, the PPA has enabled all data published in the public part of the e-procurement system to be offered to the public via Open Data Protocol (OData) (machine-readable application/json, application/atom+xml, application/xml, text/plain,

text/xml JSON format, xml) for processing by interested individuals and organizations.²¹ Beyond what was foreseen in the commitment, the PPA also added a search function for the Decisions of the Appeals Office by enabling searching by the content of published documents.²² The PPA also offers all data published in several formats for processing by CSOs, journalists, academics, and companies.²³ According to a civil society representative that uses the new portal for procurement monitoring, this portal allows for easier insights into the procedures and, given the open data, much faster data collection and processing.²⁴

As a result of this commitment, public procurement data is available in open format and in a single searchable portal for the first time in BiH. The new portal offers better functions and has considerably simplified the process of accessing procurement data.²⁵ The proactive publication of data ensures that the data is available to everyone, not just those who request it. Open data on public procurement enables the transparency of spending public funds, and facilitates the work of administrative inspections, financial audit offices, and prosecutors' offices and other law enforcement bodies, which may reduce corruption. CSOs were regularly consulted about the progress but did not take part in the creation of the portal as this was technical work.¹⁷

Looking Ahead

BiH has taken additional steps to improve public procurement transparency. BiH approved the Public Procurement Strategy 2024 - 2028²⁶ and amended the Law on Public Procurement in July 2024 to improve the legal protection mechanisms in public procurement procedures.²⁷ According to the European Commission's 2024 report for BiH, the country needs to align its procurement practices with EU standards and improve capacities for effective data management, as the exchange of information and submission of tenders is not conducted electronically.²⁸ The report emphasizes the importance of cooperation of the PPA with civil society and courts, noting the PPA has invested some efforts to strengthen this cooperation by organizing specialized training to ensure monitoring violation of procurement rules.

The IRM recommends that the PPA publish all data on the new portal according to the Open Contracting Data Standard.²⁹ OCDS would improve on existing data publication by providing standardization across the procurement cycle. By aligning with an international standard, the data becomes more easily comparable across countries, regions, and sectors. This reduces the burden on users, like civil society, journalists, researchers, and businesses to interpret custom formats. While the demand for open data in BiH remains modest, interest among citizens, companies, and organizations is growing.³⁰ To increase demand, the PPA could promote the new portal to a wider audience to facilitate stakeholder understanding and adherence to public procurement regulations, reducing legal risks and inefficiencies. The PPA could also support civil society and others to use the data for monitoring and accountability purposes, such as workshops, training, and hackathons.

¹⁵ Dario Kihli (Head of Information Technology Group, Public Procurement Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina), interview by the IRM, 14 February 2025.

¹⁶ Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2022, Bosnia and Herzegovina, <https://freedomhouse.org/country/bosnia-and-herzegovina/freedom-world/2022>

¹⁷ Audit Office of the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Performance Audit Report: Problems and shortcomings of the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the public procurement system, December 2021, <http://www.revizija.gov.ba/Content/OpenAttachment?Id=028f7eae-3164-4a48-bfe4-7c6e7c5b16cc&langTag=hr>

¹⁸ Minutes of the 10th session of the advisory board of the Initiative "Partnership for the Open Government", Sarajevo, Room 2/19, Friendship Building between Greece and Bosnia and Herzegovina, 28 May 2024.

¹⁹ Dario Kihli (Head of Information Technology Group, Public Procurement Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina), interview by the IRM, 14 February 2025.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Dario Kihli (Head of Information Technology Group, Public Procurement Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina), correspondence with the IRM, 28 February 2025.

²² Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Report on the implementation of the Action plan of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the implementation of the “Open Government Partnership” initiative for the period 2022-2024, December 2023,

<http://www.mpr.gov.ba/reload/default.aspx?id=10936&langTag=bs-BA>

²³ Dario Kihli (Head of Information Technology Group, Public Procurement Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina), correspondence with the IRM, 28 February 2025.

²⁴ Emsad Dizdarević (Transparency International BiH-TI BiH), correspondence with the IRM, 21 March 2025.

²⁵ Dario Kihli (Head of Information Technology Group, Public Procurement Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina), interview by the IRM, 14 February 2025.

²⁶ Public Procurement Agency of BiH, The Public Procurement Strategy 2024-2028,

<https://www.javnenabavke.gov.ba/bs-latn-ba/news/386/vijece-ministara-bosne-i-hercegovine-usvojilo-strategiju-javnih-nabavki-za-period-2024-2028>

²⁷ Law on Public Procurement, Official Gazette of BiH no. 39/14, 59/22 and 50/24,

<http://www.mpr.gov.ba/biblioteka/zakoni/bs/Zakon%20o%20javnim%20nabavkama%2049%20-%2004.pdf>

²⁸ European Commission, Bosnia and Herzegovina Report 2024, 30 October 2024,

https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/451db011-6779-40ea-b34b-a0eeda451746_en?filename=Bosnia%20and%20Herzegovina%20Report%202024.pdf

²⁹ Open Contracting Partnership, Open Contracting Standard, <https://standard.open-contracting.org/latest/en/>

³⁰ Open Government Partnership, Bosnia and Herzegovina Action Plan 2022-2024, November 2021,

www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Bosnia-Herzegovina_Action-Plan_2022-2024_December_EN.pdf

Section III. Participation and Co-Creation

There has been improved rapport and communication between implementing agencies and civil society organizations. The Advisory Council of the Open Government Partnership multi-stakeholder forum (MSF) met regularly during 2023-2024 in accordance with the implementation of activities.

OGP in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Department for Providing Legal Aid to Civil Society in the Ministry of Justice of BiH oversees the OGP process in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The Advisory Council of the Open Government Partnership Initiative is BiH's multi-stakeholder forum (MSF) for OGP. Formed in 2018, the MSF comprises representatives from four civil society organizations (CSOs) - Transparency International (TI BiH), the Center for Investigative Reporting (CIN), the Center for Advocacy of Citizens' Interests (CPI) Foundation, and the Association "Why Not?" - alongside the implementing ministries and agencies. The CSO members were the same organizations that participated in BiH's first action plan (2019-2021). According to the MSF's rules of procedure, CSO members can veto any decision and have equal decision-making power.³¹ During the co-creation process of the second action plan, the MSF met three times between July and December 2021, but did not meet again until December 2022, while it waited for the Council of Ministers to approve the action plan.³²

BiH is a highly decentralized country where policies and services that are of interest to citizens and CSOs are mostly provided at the entity, cantonal, and local levels. The OGP process in BiH is limited to state-level institutions. While this does not influence the quality of dialogue in the MSF, it does limit the scope and ambition of commitments.

Action Plan Co-Creation

Civil society stakeholders interviewed for the IRM Action Plan Review confirmed that there was iterative dialogue with government representatives during the co-creation process. Civil society provided feedback that was used to design and implement activities as part of commitments and government representatives responded to their input with augmented answers and/or accepted their proposals when possible. Before MSF meetings, members could suggest agenda items for discussion. After each meeting, the Ministry of Justice of BiH prepared the minutes, shared them with members, and published them online. CSOs could freely express their opinions, and their suggestions were discussed in the meetings. Due to political, budgetary, and capacity constraints, the MSF opted for including commitments that mostly continued incomplete or partially completed activities from the previous plan.

The Ministry of Justice of BiH held an online consultation on the draft action plan from 24 November to 9 December 2021 on BiH's e-consultation platform.³³ The ministry then submitted the draft action plan along with a Consultations Report to the Council of Ministers with a summary of the discussions from the consultations, the positions advocated by the participants, and the explanation of the positions taken by the institutions.³⁴ However, political deadlock paralyzed high-level political decision-making in BiH, delaying the adoption of the action plan until 9 November 2022. Due to the delay, the dates of the action plan were changed from 2021-2023 to 2022-2024.³⁵

Participation during Implementation

During the implementation period, the MSF met four times (May 2023, December 2023, May 2024, and October 2024) where the lead institutions shared details on implementation.³⁶ CSOs were able to suggest improvements⁷ and some implementing agencies consulted CSOs individually during the implementation of commitments (such as Commitment 9 on improving transparency of public funds allocated to media and CSOs).

Overall, the level of stakeholder engagement in the co-creation and implementation of the second action plan improved compared to the first action plan. Public institutions and civil society frequently engaged each other both in-person and online throughout the design and implementation of the action plan. Civil society stakeholders appreciated the efforts of the Ministry of Justice to engage them in developing and implementing the action plan. However, they noted that political deadlock, as well as budget and capacity restraints of public institutions limited the ambition of commitments and the possibilities for including new topics in the action plan.³⁷

The IRM uses the OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards to assess countries' participatory practices throughout the action plan cycle.⁹ Countries are encouraged to aim for the full ambition of the standards and to comply with the minimum requirements under each standard.¹⁰ Due to a grace period, a country's failure to comply with the minimum requirements does not currently have implications for their OGP status.

Table 2. Compliance with Minimum Requirements

Minimum requirement	Co-creation	Implementation
1.1 Space for dialogue: The Advisory Council of the Open Government Partnership Initiative of the Council of Ministers of BiH is the multi-stakeholder forum (MSF) in BiH. During the co-creation process, the MSF met three times between July and December 2021 but did not meet again until December 2022 while waiting for the Council of Ministers to adopt the action plan. It met four times during the implementation period (8 May 2023, 6 December 2023, 28 May 2024, and 16 October 2024). The minutes of the MSF's meetings are available on the Ministry of Justice's website. ³⁸ The MSF's rules of procedure (including amendments from 2019) are available on the website of the Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office ³⁹ and on the website of the Ministry of Justice. ⁴⁰	No	Yes
2.1 OGP website: The Ministry of Justice maintains a website with the latest OGP action plan. ⁴¹ However, it is not updated regularly. The Ministry of Justice also publishes all relevant reports, minutes of MSF meetings, and a brief description of the co-creation process on the OGP section of its website. ⁴²	Yes	Yes
2.2 Repository: The Ministry of Justice publishes the current and past action plans, relevant reports, and minutes of MSF meetings on the OGP section of its website. The website was updated at least twice a year during the implementation period (December 2022 – December 2024) with evidence to support implementation of the commitments. ⁴³	No	Yes

3.1 Advanced notice: See IRM Action Plan Review. ⁴⁴	No	Not applicable
3.2 Outreach: See IRM Action Plan Review.	Yes	Not applicable
3.3 Feedback mechanism: See IRM Action Plan Review.	Yes	Not applicable
4.1 Reasoned response: See IRM Action Plan Review.	Yes	Not applicable
5.1 Open implementation: The MSF met four times during implementation (see minimum requirement 1.1). ⁴⁵ During these meetings, implementation progress was presented, and civil society could comment and suggest changes. ⁴⁶	Not applicable	Yes

³¹ "Rules of Procedure on Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Advisory Council of the "Open Government Partnership" Initiative", <https://parco.gov.ba/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Poslovnik-Savjetodavno-vijece-lzmijene.pdf>

³² Open Government Partnership, Bosnia and Herzegovina Action Plan Review, p 19, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Bosnia-Herzegovina_Action-Plan-Review_2022-2024_EN.pdf

³³ Open Government Partnership, Bosnia and Herzegovina Action Plan Review 2022–2024,

<https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/bosnia-and-herzegovina-action-plan-review-2022-2024/>

³⁴ Open Government Partnership, Bosnia and Herzegovina Action Plan Review 2022–2024,

<https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/bosnia-and-herzegovina-action-plan-review-2022-2024/>

³⁵ Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Minutes of the seventh meeting of the Advisory council of the initiative "Open Government Partnership", Sarajevo, 27 December 2022, <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/reload/default.aspx?id=10936&langTag=hr-HR>

³⁶ <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/reload/default.aspx?id=10936&langTag=hr-HR>

³⁷ Lejla Bičakčić (Center for Investigative Reporting), interview by the IRM; Emsad Dizdarević (TI BiH), interview by the IRM, 22 March 2023; Darko Brkan (Zašto ne), interview by the IRM, 28 March 2023.

³⁸ Ministry of Justice website, <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/reload/default.aspx?id=10936&langTag=hr-HR>

³⁹ Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office, OGP, <https://parco.gov.ba/hr/ogp/>

⁴⁰ "Rules of Procedure of the Advisory Council of the Open Government Partnership Initiative", <https://parco.gov.ba/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Poslovnik-Savjetodavno-vijece.pdf>

⁴¹ <https://ogp.ba/>

⁴² Ministry of Justice website, <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/reload/default.aspx?id=10936&langTag=hr-HR>

⁴³ Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Report on the implementation of the Action plan of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the implementation of the "Open Government Partnership" initiative for the period 2022-2024, December 2023, <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/reload/default.aspx?id=10936&langTag=bs-BA>

⁴⁴ Open Government Partnership, Bosnia and Herzegovina Action Plan Review 2022-2024,

<https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/bosnia-and-herzegovina-action-plan-review-2022-2024/>

⁴⁵ Ministry of Justice website, <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/reload/default.aspx?id=10936&langTag=bs-BA>

⁴⁶ Bičakčić, interview by the IRM; Emsad Dizdarević, interview by the IRM; Alen Vejzagić, interview by the IRM.

Section IV. Methodology

This report supports countries' accountability and learning through assessment of the action plan's level of completion and early results. The report provides in-depth analysis of commitments or clusters that achieved the strongest early results in the action plan. It also assesses the country's participation and co-creation practices throughout the action plan cycle.⁴⁷

The IRM products provided during a national action plan cycle include:

- **Co-Creation Brief:** A concise brief that highlights lessons from previous IRM reports to support a country's OGP process, action plan design, and overall learning.
- **Action Plan Review:** A technical review of the characteristics of the action plan and the strengths and challenges the IRM identifies to inform a stronger implementation process.
- **Midterm Review:** A review for four-year action plans after a refresh at the midpoint. The review assesses new or significantly amended commitments in the refreshed action plan, compliance with OGP rules, and provides an informal update on implementation progress.
- **Results Report:** An overall implementation assessment that focuses on policy-level results and how changes happen. It also checks compliance with OGP rules and informs accountability and longer-term learning.

In Results Reports, the IRM assesses commitments using two indicators:

Completion

The IRM assesses the level of completion for each commitment in the action plan, including commitments clustered in the Action Plan Review.⁴⁸ The level of completion for all commitments is assessed as one of the following:

- No Evidence Available
- Not Started
- Limited*
- Substantial
- Complete

Early Results

The IRM assesses the level of early results from implementation for each commitment or cluster. To do so, the IRM considers commitments' objective, the country context, the policy area, and the evidence of changes. The Early Results indicator is determined by the depth of change that occurred and the evidence of whether the change will be sustained in time. The early results indicator establishes three levels of results:

- **No Notable Results:** According to the evidence collected (through desk research, interviews, etc.), the implementation of the open government commitment led to little or no positive results. After assessing the activities carried forward during the period of implementation and its outcomes (if any), the IRM did not find meaningful changes towards:
 - improving practices, policies, or institutions governing a policy area or within the public sector,

- enhancing the enabling environment to build trust between citizens and the state.
- **Moderate Results:** According to the evidence collected (through desk research, interviews, etc.) the implementation of the open government commitment led to positive results. After assessing the activities carried forward during the period of implementation and its outcomes, the IRM found meaningful changes towards:
 - improving practices, policies, or institutions governing a policy area or within the public sector, or
 - enhancing the enabling environment to build trust between citizens and the state.
- **Significant Results:** According to the evidence collected (through desk research, interviews, etc.) the implementation of the open government commitment led to significant positive results. After assessing the activities carried forward during the period of implementation and its outcomes, the IRM found meaningful changes towards:
 - improving practices, policies, or institutions governing a policy area or within the public sector, or
 - enhancing the enabling environment to build trust between citizens and the state.

Significant positive results show clear expectations for these changes (as defined above) will be sustainable in time.

This report was prepared by the IRM in collaboration with Svjetlana Ramic Markovic and was reviewed by Andy McDevitt, IRM external expert. The IRM methodology, quality of IRM products and review process is overseen by the IRM's International Experts Panel (IEP).⁴⁹ For more information, refer to the IRM webpage⁵⁰ or the glossary of IRM and OGP terms.⁵¹

⁴⁷ For definitions of OGP terms, such as co-creation and promising commitments, see "OGP Glossary," <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/glossary/>

⁴⁸ The IRM clusters commitments that share a common policy objective during the Action Plan Review process. In these instances, the IRM assesses "Potential for Results" and "Early Results" at the cluster level. The level of completion is assessed at the commitment level. For more information on how the IRM clusters commitments, see Section IV on Methodology in the Action Plan Review.

⁴⁹ Open Government Partnership, Independent Reporting Mechanism, International Experts Panel, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/about/who-we-are/international-experts-panel/>

⁵⁰ Open Government Partnership, IRM Overview, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/irm-guidance-overview>

⁵¹ Open Government Partnership, OGP Glossary, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/irm-guidance-overview/>

Annex I. Commitment Data⁵²

Commitment 1: Coordination of the open data ecosystem development

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verifiable: Yes • Does it have an open government lens? Yes • Potential for results: Substantial | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion: Limited • Early results: No notable results |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Under this commitment, the Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office (PARCO) aimed to develop BiH's first centralized government open data portal. PARCO planned to pilot the portal in eight institutions of the Council of Ministers, then expand it to other administrative levels.⁵³ This commitment required PARCO to submit a Decision to the Council of Ministers that would specify the sustainability of the portal.⁵⁴ PARCO drafted the Decision but could not reach an agreement with the Service for Maintenance and Development of Electronic Business and e-Government within the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers of BiH (milestone 2).⁵⁵ As this agreement was not reached, PARCO could not submit the Decision to the Council of Ministers of BiH and did not pilot the portal in eight institutions.⁵⁶

Commitment 2: Improving transparency in the institutions of BiH

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verifiable: Yes • Does it have an open government lens? Yes • Potential for results: Unclear | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion: Complete • Early results: Moderate Results |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

This commitment continued a commitment from BiH's first action plan for PARCO to measure and track progress of government institutions in proactive transparency. Since 2018, government institutions of BiH are required to proactively publish 38 categories of information, including annual budgets, public procurement documents, and work plans.⁵⁷ PARCO aimed to increase the involvement of institutions in the annual survey on the implementation of proactive transparency standards. The commitment also involved upgrading the software for monitoring proactive transparency.

PARCO completed this commitment. 55 institutions participated in the survey in 2022, 65 participated in 2023, and 56 participated in 2024 (milestone 1).⁵⁸ The 2024 survey showed that, on average, compliance with the standards was 73.78 percent. This was an improvement of 1.5 percent compared to 2023⁵⁹ and an improvement of 6.21 percent compared to the 2021 results, where average compliance with the standards was 67.57 percent (from 62 surveyed institutions).⁶⁰ Some institutions fail to publish essential information, while five institutions meet 100 percent of the standards: the Directorate for European Integration, the Agency for Statistics, the Agency for Higher Education and Quality Assurance, the Office of the Coordinator for Public Administration Reform, and the Agency for Market Supervision.⁶¹ Several institutions expressed interest in proactive transparency and data publication, citing PARCO as an example. According to PARCO, the challenge remains the frequent turnover of staff who must be trained in data entry, which slows the publication process.⁶²

PARCO took part in training on proactive transparency and open data for civil servants organized by the Civil Service Agency of BiH in April 2023 and in May 2024 (milestone 2).⁶³

PARCO also conducted three annual surveys on the fulfilment of proactive transparency standards for the period 2022-2023 (milestone 3).⁶⁴ Finally, in cooperation with the Agency for Statistics, PARCO upgraded the measurement and research software on proactive transparency (milestone 4).⁶⁵ The previous software slowed the data entry process by requesting certain data be re-entered.

Beyond the commitment, PARCO contributed to a series of trainings for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in 2023 for representatives of local government units in proactive transparency, as part of the public administration reform in BiH.⁶⁶ CSOs advocated for the adoption of the concept of proactive transparency within institutions, and in strategies and plans at local levels. In 2022, the Anti-Corruption Strategy of the Zenica-Doboj Canton included proactive transparency as a goal.⁶⁷ Moreover, the 2023 Law on Freedom of Access to Information on the Institutional Level of BiH obliges institutions to proactively publish and update their websites, information about institutions, work plans, strategies, annual budgets, and public procurement, in an easily accessible manner.⁶⁸

Commitment 3: Raising awareness and familiarizing civil society organizations with the importance of beneficial ownership issues

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● Potential for results: Unclear | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion: Substantial ● Early results: No notable results |
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This commitment, funded by the EU4CivilSociety project, aimed to raise awareness about beneficial ownership transparency among CSOs through eight workshops. The Ministry of Justice published a call on its website and on the EU contact network to participate in the workshops (milestone 2). The Ministry of Justice held four workshops in Banja Luka, Brčko, Mostar, and Sarajevo, engaging over 70 CSOs (milestone 3).⁶⁹ Participants were introduced to the concept of beneficial ownership and potential risks of money laundering and financing of terrorist activities.⁷⁰ The ministry did not conduct the other four workshops during the action plan period due to a lack of available trainers.⁷¹

Commitment 4: Improving budget transparency

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● Potential for results: Modest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion: Complete ● Early results: No notable results |
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This commitment aimed to introduce a citizens’ budget in 10 additional public institutions. It continued a commitment from the first action plan in which the Ministry of Finance and Treasury developed the Budget for Citizens with information on budget users, allocations of the budget by institutions and programs, and visual data (infographics, statistics, etc.).⁷² For the current commitment, the Ministry of Finance and Treasury published a manual for the preparation of citizens’ budgets on 27 December 2024 (milestone 1).⁷³ The manual contains the definition, basis, purpose, and main principles of the Citizens’ Budget; the legal basis for the preparation of the citizens’ budget; the list of actors in the process of preparing and

publishing the citizens' budget; the template/content of the citizens' budget; and the basic steps in the preparation and publishing of the citizens' budget document.

Seven institutions produced a citizens' budget in 2023, and seven institutions produced one in 2024.⁷⁴ Four institutions produced a citizens' budget for 2023 and 2024 and six produced one for one of these years. This was an improvement from before the action plan where only one institution produced a citizens' budget. It also met the commitment's stated goal of having 10 institutions producing citizens' budgets. However, it is unclear whether these citizens' budgets were used by civil society or citizens for accountability purposes, and the practice of producing citizens' budgets has not yet been institutionalized across all government institutions. Therefore, the IRM assesses it as having no notable results.

Commitment 5: Increasing the availability and use of statistics

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● Potential for results: Modest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion: Limited ● Early results: No Notable Results |
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This commitment continued an incomplete initiative from the first action plan of the Agency for Statistics to publish statistics and hold workshops on using and interpreting statistics.⁷⁵ The agency would establish an online database for users to create and download custom data tables, as well as the preconditions for automatic data exchange with the central open data portal for BiH (milestone 1). Transferring and loading time series into the online database and testing is progressing slowly due to limited human capacities. The agency held two workshops with users from public institutions and the media on data exchange (milestone 2). For milestone 3, the agency planned to revise its publications and announcements to support correct interpretations of statistical data. According to milestone 3, the agency published two flagship reports in February and July 2024, Women and Men in BiH and BiH in numbers.⁷⁶ The reports are published with the goal of making statistical data more accessible, engaging, and easy to use for a wide range of users, including the media.⁷⁷

Commitment 6: Open data on public procurement

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● Potential for results: Modest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion: Complete ● Early results: Significant Results |
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This commitment is assessed in Section II above.

Commitment 7: Establishing an anti-corruption e-platform in BiH

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● Potential for results: Unclear | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion: Limited ● Early results: No Notable Results |
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Under this commitment, the Agency for the Prevention of Corruption and Coordination of the Fight against Corruption of BiH (APIK) aimed to create a website to consolidate anti-corruption information at all levels of government. APIK created the website (milestone 1) by combining its own website and the website of the EU project Institutional Support to Anti-Corruption in BiH (IPAK) for 2019-2021.⁷⁸ The agency held two meetings with government bodies on what data should be available on the website (milestone 2). The collection and processing of information on the website is ongoing (milestone 3).⁷⁹ APIK also established a web editorial office with the aim of publishing data (statistical/analytical) related to the fight against corruption (part of milestone 4).⁸⁰ However, the website is still not publicly available.

Commitment 8: Digitization of anti-corruption

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● Potential for results: Modest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion: Limited ● Early results: No notable results |
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Under this commitment, APIK aimed to digitize the integrity plan development process for public institutions. APIK put into operation the system for electronic creation of integrity plans after a test phase but has not launched the system due to lack of funds (milestone 1).⁸¹ APIK also established and tested an electronic register of corruption risks in BiH institutions (milestone 2) but has not published it. APIK is currently working to collect, process, and publish information in the register (milestone 3).

Commitment 9: Improving budget allocation transparency in the process of allocating financial resources from the budget

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● Potential for results: Modest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion: Complete ● Early results: No notable results |
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Under this commitment, APIK aimed to establish voluntary criteria for state institutions on publishing information on the amount and purpose of public funds allocated to media and CSOs. APIK would also develop voluntary criteria for media outlets and CSOs to publish information on how they use public funds.

APIK, in cooperation with Transparency International (TI) BiH, developed the criteria for state institutions to publish information on funding allocated to CSOs and media and provided implementation guidelines (milestone 1).⁸² APIK carried out consultations and presented the document to competent institutions, including the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Finance and Treasury, the Directorate for European Integration, and the Office of the Coordinator for Public Administration Reform. In cooperation with TI BiH, APIK distributed the document to institutions in stages focusing on institutions involved in allocating funding opportunities to CSOs and the media.⁸³

The government has not adopted the criteria and state institutions are not obliged to act accordingly. Therefore, the IRM assessed this commitment as having no notable results at the end of the implementation period.

Commitment 10: Establishing the system for exchanging information with the citizens of BiH and increasing the transparency of information on the website

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verifiable: Yes ● Does it have an open government lens? Yes ● Potential for results: Modest | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completion: Substantial ● Early results: No notable results |
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Under this commitment, the Agency for Gender Equality (ARS BiH) aimed to add new content on its website and provide two-way communication with stakeholders. The ARS BiH redesigned its website (<https://arsbih.gov.ba>) (milestone 1) to introduce new content such as marking important events (for example, International Men’s Day), to publish more information on gender equality in BiH, as well as to make the work of the ARS BiH and the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees (MHRR BiH) more accessible (milestone 2).⁸⁴ The previous website was outdated and data were not generated in open data format, as is the case with the new website.⁸⁵ Due to technical and financial limitations, the website does not provide a system for users to report cases of possible discrimination on the grounds of sex (milestone 2). The promotion of the information exchange system with interested parties is ongoing, and contacts are maintained via the email addresses of the ARS BiH and the MHRR BiH (milestone 3).⁸⁶

⁵² **Editorial notes:**

For commitments that are clustered, the assessment of potential for results and early results is conducted at the cluster level, rather than the individual commitment level.

1. Commitments’ short titles may have been edited for brevity. For the complete text of commitments, please see BiH action plan, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/bosnia-and-herzegovina-action-plan-2022-2024-december/>
2. For more information on the assessment of the commitments’ design, see BiH’s Action Plan Review, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/bosnia-and-herzegovina-action-plan-review-2022-2024/>

⁵³ Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Report on the implementation of the Action plan of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the implementation of the “Open Government Partnership” initiative for the period 2022-2024, December 2023, <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/reload/default.aspx?id=10936&langTag=bs-BA>

⁵⁴ Open Government Partnership, Bosnia and Herzegovina Action Plan 2022-2024, November 2021, www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Bosnia-Herzegovina_Action-Plan_2022-2024_December_EN.pdf

⁵⁵ Mubera Begic, Kenand Silajdzija, Sabahudin Suljevic (Public Administration Reform Coordinator’s Office/PARCO), interview by the IRM, 5 February 2025.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Open Government Partnership, Bosnia and Herzegovina, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/members/bosnia-and-herzegovina/commitments/BA0006/>

⁵⁸ Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Report on the implementation of the Action plan of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the implementation of the “Open Government Partnership” initiative for the period 2022-2024, <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/reload/default.aspx?id=10936&langTag=bs-BA>

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Open Government Partnership, p 11, https://www.opengovpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Bosnia-Herzegovina_Action-Plan_2022-2024_December_EN.pdf.

⁶¹ Kenand Silajdzija, correspondence with the IRM, 10 February 2025.

- ⁶² Mubera Begic, Kenand Silajdzija, Sabahudin Suljevic (Expert advisor for public administration reform, Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office/PARCO), interview by the IRM, 5 February 2025.
- ⁶³ iLearn, Agenda of the 2024 training, <https://ilearn.gov.ba/Training/ViewTraining/4455>
- ⁶⁴ Mubera Begic, Kenand Silajdzija, Sabahudin Suljevic (Expert advisor for public administration reform, Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office/PARCO), interview by the IRM, 5 February 2025.
- ⁶⁵ Mubera Begić (Expert advisor for public administration reform, Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office/PARCO), interview by the IRM, 5 February 2025.
- ⁶⁶ Mubera Begic, Kenand Silajdzija, Sabahudin Suljevic (Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office/PARCO), interview by the IRM, 5 February 2025.
- ⁶⁷ Emsad Dizdarević (Transparency international BiH-TI BiH), interview by the IRM, 5 March 2025.
- ⁶⁸ Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Law on Freedom of Access to Information at the Institutional Level of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Official Gazette of Bosnia and Herzegovina no. 16/23, article 14, http://www.mpr.gov.ba/pristup_info/default.aspx?id=2574&langTag=bs-BA
- ⁶⁹ List of participants and workshop materials available to researcher, correspondence with the IRM and Vildan Hadžihanović (Ministry of Justice), 11 February 2025.
- ⁷⁰ Selma Džihanović-Gratz (Head of the Section for Legal Aid to Civil Society, Ministry of Justice), interview by the IRM, 11 February 2025.
- ⁷¹ Ibid.
- ⁷² "Citizens Budget, Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and International Obligations of Bosnia and Herzegovina", https://vijeceministara.gov.ba/home_right_docs/default.aspx?id=34547&langTag=bs-BA
- ⁷³ Ministry of Finance and Treasury, Manual for preparing budget documents for citizens of budget beneficiaries at the level of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2024, <https://www.mft.gov.ba/Content/OpenAttachment?id=b62cb255-90c5-49fd-9bf8-fbf4a54e4905&lang=bs>
- ⁷⁴ In 2023, these were the Ministry of Defense of BiH, the Court of BiH, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of BiH, the Veterinary Office of BiH, the Ministry of Communications and Transport of BiH, the Ministry of Finance and Treasury of BiH, and the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH. In 2024, they were the Ministry of Defense of BiH, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of BiH, Ministry of Finance and Treasury of BiH, Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH, Ministry of Security of BiH, Regulatory Agency for Communications of BiH, Agency for Preschool, Primary and Secondary Education of BiH.
- ⁷⁵ Open Government Partnership, Bosnia and Herzegovina, <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/members/bosnia-and-herzegovina/commitments/BA0004/>
- ⁷⁶ Agency for Statistics, Women and Men in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo 2023, https://bhas.gov.ba/data/Publikacije/Bilteni/2024/FAM_00_2023_TB_1_BS.pdf; Agency for Statistics, Bosnia and Herzegovina in numbers, Sarajevo 2024, https://bhas.gov.ba/data/Publikacije/Bilteni/2024/NUM_00_2023_TB_1_BS.pdf; Aleng Mrgud (Head of the Editorial and Publishing Department, Agency for Statistics), interview by the IRM, 14 February 2025.
- ⁷⁷ Aleng Mrgud (Head of the Editorial and Publishing Department, Agency for Statistics), interview by the IRM, 14 February 2025.
- ⁷⁸ Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Minutes 8. Session Advisory Council OGP, <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/reload/default.aspx?id=10936&langTag=bs-BA>
- ⁷⁹ Ibid.
- ⁸⁰ Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Minutes 9. Session Advisory Council OGP, <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/reload/default.aspx?id=10936&langTag=bs-BA>
- ⁸¹ Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Report on the implementation of the Action plan of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the implementation of the "Open Government Partnership" initiative for the period 2022-2024, December 2023, <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/reload/default.aspx?id=10936&langTag=bs-BA>
- ⁸² Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Report on the implementation of the Action plan of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the implementation of the "Open Government Partnership" initiative for the period 2022-2024, December 2023, <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/reload/default.aspx?id=10936&langTag=bs-BA>
- ⁸³ Mevludin Džindo (Assistant Director, Anti-Corruption Coordination Sector), correspondence with the IRM, 3 March 2025.
- ⁸⁴ Samra Filipovic-Hadžiadbdić (Director, BiH Agency for Gender Equality), correspondence with the IRM, 26 February 2025.
- ⁸⁵ Ibid.
- ⁸⁶ Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Report on the implementation of the Action plan of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the implementation of the "Open Government Partnership" initiative for the period 2022-2024, December 2023, <http://www.mpr.gov.ba/reload/default.aspx?id=10936&langTag=bs-BA>