

**PAR Monitor Report
Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC
ADMINISTRATION REFORM**

2024/2025



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ABOUT WEBER 3.0

Building upon the achievements of its predecessors, the WeBER (2015 – 2018) and WeBER 2.0 (2019 – 2023) projects, the **Western Balkan Enablers for Reforming Public Administrations – WeBER 3.0** project is the third consecutive EU-funded grant of the largest civil society-led initiative for monitoring public administration reform (PAR) in the Western Balkans. Its implementation period is February 2023 – July 2026. Guided by the SIGMA/OECD Principles, the first two phases of the initiative laid the foundation for WeBER 3.0's ambition **to further empower civil society organisations (CSOs) to contribute to more transparent, open, accountable, citizen-centric and thus more EU-compliant administrations in the WB region.**

WeBER 3.0 continues to promote the crucial role of CSOs in PAR, while also advocating for broader citizen engagement in this process and inclusive reform measures which are user-tailored and thus lead to tangible improvements. By grounding actions in robust monitoring data and insights, WeBER 3.0 will empower civil society to more effectively influence the design and implementation of PAR. To foster collaborative policymaking and bridge the gap between aspirations and actionable solutions, the project will facilitate sustainable policy dialogue between governments and CSOs through the WeBER Platform and its National PAR Working Groups. Finally, through small grants for local CSOs, WeBER 3.0 bolsters local-level PAR engagement, amplifying the voices of citizens – the final beneficiaries of the public administrations' work.

WeBER 3.0 products and further information about them are available on the project's website at www.par-monitor.org.

WeBER 3.0 is implemented by the Think for Europe Network (TEN), composed of six EU policy-oriented think tanks in the Western Balkans:



By partnering with the Centre for Public Administration Research (KDZ) from Vienna, WeBER 3.0 has ensured EU-level expert support, especially for developing citizen-centred methodology for solving PAR issues at local level.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The first Strategy for PAR Bosnia and Herzegovina 2023/2024 is a product of a month and a half long monitoring process, which relied on different data collection techniques and thus resulted in an abundance of findings.

As in the case of the previous editions of the National PAR Monitor reports, published for 2017/2018, 2019/2020 and 2021/2022, special acknowledgements also go to members of the WeBER Platform and the National Working Group in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and other stakeholders in Bosnia and Herzegovina that shared their experiences through interviews, who immensely contributed to the content of this report and its quality, and who will not be identified due to the respect of the principle of anonymity.

Lastly, the WeBER3.0 team would also like to thank its main partners and associates, who have supported the project in research and other activities. Most notably, these are the SIGMA (Support for Improvement in Governance and Management – a joint initiative of the European Union and the OECD), the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA), and the Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office, as a project associate.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The assessment of transparency and inclusiveness of the PAR agenda in this report focuses on two critical issues – 1) participatory development of PAR planning documents, that includes non-state actors, and 2) involvement of CSO in the work of the governmental PAR coordination and monitoring mechanisms. For the former, the assessment briefly emphasises basic regulatory requirements for conducting consultations, continuing with the assessment of practices in involving external stakeholders and the public in the different stages of policy development for a sample of 1 PAR planning document adopted since the PAR Monitor 2021/2022. For the latter, this report examines the extent and methods of CSOs' and other non-state actors' involvement in the PAR coordination and monitoring, both at the political and at the administrative levels, highlighting how institutionalised, and how meaningful, any such involvement is in practice. Findings of this report reflect the period since the publication of the PAR Monitor 2021/2022, starting from the second half of 2022, and until the end of 2024.¹

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has made efforts to integrate Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) into the process of developing legal and planning documents, particularly through the 2017 Charter on Cooperation between the Council of Ministers and CSOs. This initiative aimed to foster transparency, inclusivity, and public participation in policymaking. However, the Charter does not impose binding obligations on institutions to involve non-state actors throughout the policy development process. The Ministry of Justice has introduced rules requiring public consultations before finalizing legislative proposals, with public participation largely confined to the eConsultations portal. Despite this framework, CSOs are mostly allowed to comment on final drafts, rather than being included in the early stages of policy development.

This limited engagement stems from the lack of legal requirements for institutions to involve CSOs in drafting processes or expert commissions. As a result, decision-making remains predominantly an internal governmental process, with external actors restricted to providing feedback on finalized proposals. The only example of CSO engagement in the process during the measurement period was through the eConsultations portal for the Annual Action Plan for 2024 of the Strategy for Enhancing Public Financial Management in BiH, where their involvement was again limited to commenting on the final draft.

¹ For 2022, only developments not captured by the PAR Monitor 2021/2022 are included.

Further analysis of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Public Administration Reform (PAR) structures reveals that CSOs are not included in the core administrative and political monitoring and coordination bodies. These bodies, responsible for overseeing and guiding the reform process, are composed solely of government representatives, such as civil servants, ministers, and deputy ministers. The Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office (PARCO), established in 2004, plays a central role in coordinating reforms but does not formally include CSOs in its structure or activities, nor does the State Strategy for Public Administration Reform or Action Plan.

The absence of CSOs from these key decision-making bodies signals a lack of formal recognition of civil society's role in the reform process. This exclusion limits CSOs' ability to contribute to the early stages of policy development and weakens the overall transparency and inclusivity of the reforms. While informal or ad-hoc participation may occur, there is no structured mechanism for CSO involvement in shaping or overseeing the reforms. Consequently, the PAR process in BiH is largely government-driven, missing the valuable input of non-governmental actors, which diminishes its effectiveness and accountability.

In conclusion, the lack of formalized CSO involvement in the administrative and political coordination structures of BiH's Public Administration Reform highlights a critical gap in the inclusivity and transparency of the reform process. To improve governance, it is essential for future revisions of PAR documents to explicitly incorporate mechanisms for active CSO participation in both administrative and political bodies. Engaging CSOs in these areas would enhance the legitimacy, effectiveness, and overall quality of public administration reforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AP	Action Plan
BD	Brčko District
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DEI	Directorate for European Integration
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
EU	European Union
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
FOI	Freedom of Information
PAR	Public Administration Reform
PARCO	Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office of BiH
PFM	Public Financial Management
ReSPA	Regional School of Public Administration
RS	Republika Srpska
SFPAR	Strategic Framework for Public Administration Reform
SIGMA	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management
WB	Western Balkans
WeBER3.0	Western Balkan Enablers for Reforming Public Administrations
WG	Working Group

I. WEBER PAR MONITOR: What we monitor and how

I.1 WeBER's approach to monitoring PAR

The Public Administration Reform (PAR) Monitor methodology was developed in 2015-2016, as part of the first Western Balkans Enabling Project for Civil Society Monitoring of Public Administration Reform (WeBER) project. Since the onset, WeBER has adopted a markedly evidence-based approach in its endeavour to increase the relevance, participation and capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) in the Western Balkans to advocate for and influence the design and implementation of PAR. The PAR Monitor methodology is one of the main project results, seeking to facilitate civil society monitoring of PAR based on evidence and analysis.

In line with WeBER's focus on the region's EU accession process, once the SIG-MA *Principles of Public Administration*² were revised in 2023, the WeBER PAR Monitor methodology was also redesigned in 2024. This was done in order to keep the focus of WeBER's recommendations on EU-compliant reforms, thus guiding the governments in the region towards successful EU accession and future membership. The main changes in the revised PAR Monitor methodology are briefly listed below.³

² Available at: <https://www.sigmaxweb.org/publications/principlesofpublicadministration.htm>.

³ For detailed information on the scope and process of methodology revision please visit <https://www.par-monitor.org/par-monitor-methodology/>.

Table 1: Main changes in the PAR Monitor methodology

STRUCTURE

- Introduction of single indicator per PAR area, divided into sub-indicators, further consisting of several sub-indicator elements (specific criteria assessed)
- Introduction of types of indicator elements, meaning that each element has a specific focus on one of the following aspects of reform:
 - 1) Strategy and Policy
 - 2) Legislation
 - 3) Institutional Set-up
 - 4) Practice in Implementation, and
 - 5) Outcomes and Impact
- Introduction of a 100-point scale, allowing for a more nuanced assessment of progress in each PAR area

DATA SOURCES

- Introduction of interviews with “key informants”, i.e. key non-state actors engaged and familiar with the processes. These interviews serve as a data source for the “Outcomes and impact” elements instead of the formerly implemented survey of civil society organisations.
- Use of public perception survey results as a data source for “Outcomes and Impact” elements, and expanding its scope to complement the assessment in five PAR areas, except for “Strategy for PAR”
- Removal of survey of civil servants as a data source due to persistent issues with ensuring adequate response rates across the region’s administrations.

PAR MONITOR REPORTING

- Six national PAR Monitor reports, one per PAR area (36 in total for the entire PAR Monitor), in order to facilitate timely publication and advocacy for the monitoring results rather than publishing the results of 18 months of research at the end of the process.
- Six regional Western Balkan overview reports, one per PAR area (6 in total)

I.2 Why and how WeBER monitors the “Strategy for PAR” area

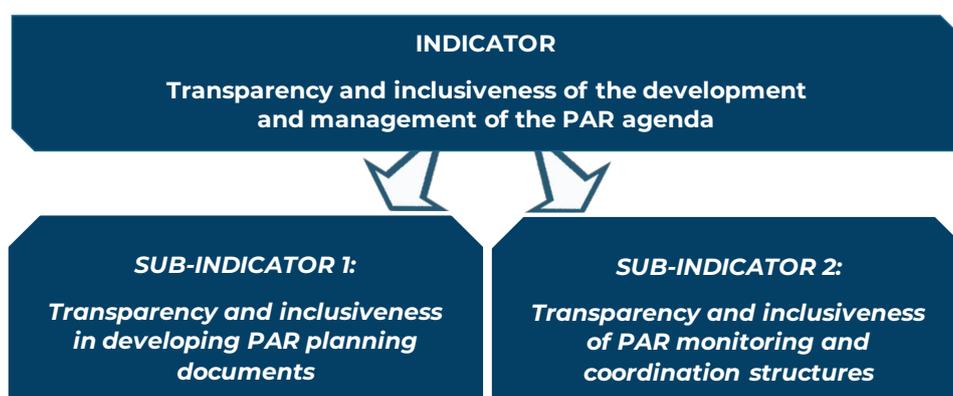
WeBER’s focus on PAR policy development and coordination is crucial for several reasons. A well-developed strategic framework for PAR – clear framework of PAR planning documents that define goals, measures, activities, and funding – provides for a clear roadmap for reforming the way public institutions interact with citizens. In order to keep reform process on track and ensure meaningful progress, external monitoring of government commitments to transparency and inclusiveness in this area is essential. This is where the role of non-state actors comes to the fore, by applying external pressure on governments to meet their commitments and regularly report on progress. Moreover, allowing non-state actors to participate in both the development and monitoring of PAR planning documents’ implementation strengthens the principles of transparency and inclusiveness - core tenets of good governance. Without these principles, no policy, including PAR as an overarching reform, can be effectively implemented for the society’s benefits. Ensuring civil society and other non-state actors’ engagement in processes of PAR policy development and coordination is, therefore, not only beneficial but essential for government accountability and long-term public administration improvement.

Monitoring in **the Strategy for PAR** is based on the one SIGMA Principle in this area:



Principle 1: A comprehensive, credible and sustainable public administration reform agenda is established and successfully implemented, fostering innovation and continuous improvement.

This Principle is entirely assessed from the perspective of quality of civil society and public involvement in the processes of developing PAR strategic documents and participation in the monitoring and coordination structures that should ensure their purposeful implementation. A focus on inclusivity and transparency aims to determine the extent to which relevant stakeholders’ needs and views are consulted and taken into consideration when developing and implementing PAR agendas.



The monitoring period for the Strategy of PAR covers developments since the last PAR Monitor cycle, that lasted from January until November 2022. Thus, this report focuses primarily on 2023 and 2024, as well as the end-of-2022 developments not covered in the previous cycle. Although this report provides comparison of findings with previous PAR Monitor editions, country scores are incomparable to the previous monitoring due to methodological changes.

The first sub-indicator focuses on the existence and quality of consultation processes in the development of PAR planning documents - official strategies/strategic plans, plans/programmes, their action plans, or any other type of PAR planning document with a minimum two-year implementation period, formally approved/adopted by the government or parliament. It assesses whether transparency and inclusiveness in the development process are legally regulated, continuing with the practical aspects of administering consultations – whether non-state stakeholders were engaged early, invited openly and proactively, provided with complete information, and given publicly disclosed feedback on their contributions. Additionally, it examines whether the public had the opportunity to contribute on draft documents through public debates, and finally, assesses the perceived impact of consultations on transparency and inclusiveness from the view of consultees.

Monitoring of legislation and practice aspects is performed by combining data sources to ensure reliability of results, including qualitative analysis of strategic documents, and official data that is publicly available or obtained from PAR responsible institutions. For the assessment of the outcomes and impact, researchers conduct key informants' interviews with non-state actors who participated in consultative processes.

Indicator elements that are assessed under the first sub-indicator are listed in the Table 2.

Table 2: Indicator elements under the sub-indicator 1

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E1.1 Regulations envisage transparency and inclusiveness of PAR planning documents development process	Legislation
E1.2 Consultations with non-state actors are conducted during the development of PAR planning documents	Practice in implementation
E1.3 Invitations to non-state actors to participate in the consultations are open	Practice in implementation
E1.4 Responsible institutions are proactive in ensuring that a wide range of external stakeholders become involved in the process	Practice in implementation
E1.5 Responsible institutions provide complete information in preparation for consultations	Practice in implementation
E1.6 Responsible institutions publish their feedback on the comments received in the consultation process	Practice in implementation
E1.7 Public debates are organised during the development of PAR planning documents	Practice in implementation
E1.8 Key informants consider that PAR planning documents development process is transparent and inclusive	Outcomes and impact

The assessment is done on a sample of PAR planning documents adopted in 2023 and 2024, along with those adopted in late 2022 after the completion of the last PAR Monitor’s monitoring period. The analysis of this sub-indicator for Bosnia and Herzegovina includes:

- *The Annual Action Plan for 2024 of the Strategy for Enhancing Public Financial Management in the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina*

The second sub-indicator monitors civil society participation in PAR coordination and monitoring structures at both the political and administrative levels. It focuses exclusively on bodies established for the most comprehensive PAR strategic document (e.g., PAR strategies). The assessment first examines whether the strategic PAR agenda provides for civil society participation in these structures. It then analyses the institutionalisation of this participation — specifically, the format of CSO involvement in administrative and political PAR coordination bodies and whether selection processes are open and competitive. When it comes to practice, the sub-indicator assesses the regularity

of meetings with CSO participation and the transparency of communication regarding the work of PAR coordination and monitoring bodies. Finally, it assesses whether CSOs can meaningfully contribute to these bodies' work, as an indication of outcome of participatory approach to PAR agenda coordination and monitoring.

The assessment is based on the review of official documents and designated websites related to the organisation and functioning of PAR coordination and monitoring structures. To assess outcomes and impact, researchers conduct key informant interviews with civil society representatives who are members of these bodies or have attended their sessions as invitees.

Indicator elements that are assessed under the sub-indicator 2 are listed in the Table 3.

Table 3: Indicator elements under the sub-indicator 2

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E2.1 Participation of civil society in monitoring and coordination structures is envisaged in the PAR agenda	Strategy and policy
E2.2 Format of CSO involvement in administrative structures for PAR coordination and monitoring enables their regular and substantive participation	Institutional set up
E2.3 Format of CSO involvement in political structures for PAR coordination and monitoring enables their regular and substantive participation	Institutional set up
E2.4 Involvement of CSOs is achieved based on an open competitive process	Institutional set up
E2.5 Meetings of the PAR coordination and monitoring structures are held regularly with CSO involvement	Practice in implementation
E2.6 The work of PAR monitoring and coordination structures is communicated transparently	Practice in implementation
E2.7 Key informants consider that they can meaningfully contribute during the meetings of monitoring and coordination structures	Outcomes and impact

II. TRANSPARENCY AND INCLUSIVENESS OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF THE PAR AGENDA

Transparency and inclusiveness of the development and management of the PAR agenda (score 0-100)

17

83

■ Awarded ■ Not achieved

II.1 Transparency and inclusiveness in developing PAR planning documents

Principle 1: A comprehensive, credible and sustainable public administration reform agenda is established and successfully implemented, fostering innovation and continuous improvement.

Sub-indicator 1: Transparency and inclusiveness in developing PAR planning documents⁴

Indicator elements	Element type	Score
E 1.1 Regulations envisage transparency and inclusiveness of PAR planning documents development process	Legislation	2/5
E 1.2 Consultations with non-state actors are conducted during the development of PAR planning documents	Practice in implementation	0/9
E 1.3 Invitations to non-state actors to participate in the consultations are open	Practice in implementation	0/8
E 1.4 Responsible institutions are proactive in ensuring that a wide range of external stakeholders become involved in the process	Practice in implementation	0/6
E 1.5 Responsible institutions provide complete information in preparation for consultations	Practice in implementation	0/9
E 1.6 Responsible institutions publish their feedback on the comments received in the consultation process	Practice in implementation	0/9
E 1.7 Public debates are organised during the development of PAR planning documents	Practice in implementation	10/10
E 1.8 Key informants consider that PAR planning documents development process is transparent and inclusive	Outcomes and impact	4/4
Total score for sub-indicator 1		42.5/60

Bosnia and Herzegovina has mechanisms for involving Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in policymaking, such as the 2017 Charter on Cooperation. However, these mechanisms lack legal requirements for early involvement of external actors, limiting participation to commenting on final drafts. The Ministry of Justice has established consultation rules, primarily using the eConsultations portal, but CSOs are mostly excluded from the early stages of policy development. The 2024 PAR planning document consultation followed this pattern, meeting transparency requirements but offering minimal public input. This limits the depth of engagement and affects overall policy transparency.

⁴ Through the first sub-indicator, the following SIGMA sub-principle is monitored: All relevant stakeholders are regularly consulted and involved in PAR planning and monitoring; PAR is effectively communicated, and values of good public administration are promoted.

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) has established certain formal mechanisms for involving Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and other stakeholders in the process of developing and adopting legal and planning documents. One of the key steps in this direction was the signing of the Charter on Cooperation between the Council of Ministers of BiH and CSOs⁵ in November 2017. This document was intended to enhance the institutional framework for cooperation between the government and civil society, emphasizing the importance of transparency, inclusivity, and public participation in policymaking. However, while the Charter sets a broad framework, it does not impose legally binding obligations on institutions to actively engage non-state actors throughout the entire policy development process.

The Ministry of Justice of BiH, as the main institution responsible for civil society development, has undertaken initiatives to create a more enabling environment for CSOs. The Rules for Consultations in Legislative Drafting⁶, adopted by the Council of Ministers, outline the basic procedures for public consultations. According to these rules, institutions drafting laws and other strategic documents are required to conduct public consultations before finalizing their proposals. However, in practice, public participation is mostly limited to the eConsultations portal⁷, the main online platform for engaging the public in legislative processes. Through this platform, CSOs and other stakeholders are usually only given the opportunity to comment on the final draft version of a document, rather than being actively involved in its initial development.

One of the key reasons for the limited participation of non-state actors is the fact that there is no legal obligation for institutions to involve them in the early phases of drafting legislation and policy documents. While public consultations are formally required, there is no strong legal framework mandating the proactive inclusion of CSOs, experts, and other stakeholders in working groups or expert commissions tasked with drafting policies. As a result, decision-making remains largely an internal governmental process, with external actors only given the opportunity to react to final drafts rather than shape policies from their inception. This lack of a robust participatory framework has contributed to inconsistent and often superficial engagement of CSOs in policymaking, reducing the overall transparency and inclusiveness of governance in BiH.

The only document that fits within the methodology and was adopted during the measurement period is the *Annual Action Plan for 2024 of the Strategy for Enhancing Public Financial Management in the Institutions of Bosnia*

5 Charter on Cooperation between the Council of Ministers of BiH and CSOs. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/4wt nabje>

6 The Rules for Consultations in Legislative Drafting. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/3epb5juv>

7 eConsultations Portal: <https://ekonsultacije.gov.ba/>

*and Herzegovina*⁸. This document is adopted annually, and non-state actors are included in the adoption process every year. However, their involvement is limited to the eConsultations portal, where they can only provide comments on the final draft version.

A review of consultation reports and official data from responsible institutions shows that no consultations with civil society and other non-state actors took place during the early phase of the development of PAR planning documents valid at the time of measurement, which was confirmed by the Ministry in their FOI response. The Action Plan 2024 of the Strategy for Enhancing Public Finance Management in the Institutions of BiH was adopted as part of the Annual Report on the Implementation of the Strategy for 2023. No consultations were held in the early phase of its development, meaning that consultations did not last at least 15 days for written contributions or provide at least 7 days for preparation in cases other than written consultations. Additionally, no working documents, such as inception or concept documents, were published through the responsible institution's website or any public consultation portal, and no open calls for participation were issued. Furthermore, there were no face-to-face or virtual meetings with external stakeholders, including participation in working groups, focus groups, or interviews.

The review also focused on evaluating whether the public consultations for the development of PAR planning documents were accessible to the broader public. The consultation process was assessed based on key requirements that ensure transparency, inclusivity, and public participation. The first requirement was that a call to participate in the public debate should be published on both the sponsoring institution's website and the relevant portal for online public consultations. In this case, the consultation was held from 22.07.2024 to 06.08.2024, and the call for participation was confirmed through the FOI response and the report, ensuring that the public had the necessary information to engage.

Additionally, the draft PAR planning document needed to be published along with the call for participation. This was indeed the case, as the draft was made publicly available on the eConsultations portal, confirming the requirement was fulfilled. Another important requirement was that the consultation process should provide clear information on how the public could submit comments and inputs, whether through online portals, email, postal mail, in-person events, or any combination of these, along with relevant contact details. The review confirmed that all necessary information was provided, including the contact details of the consultation coordinator, allowing for seamless public engagement.

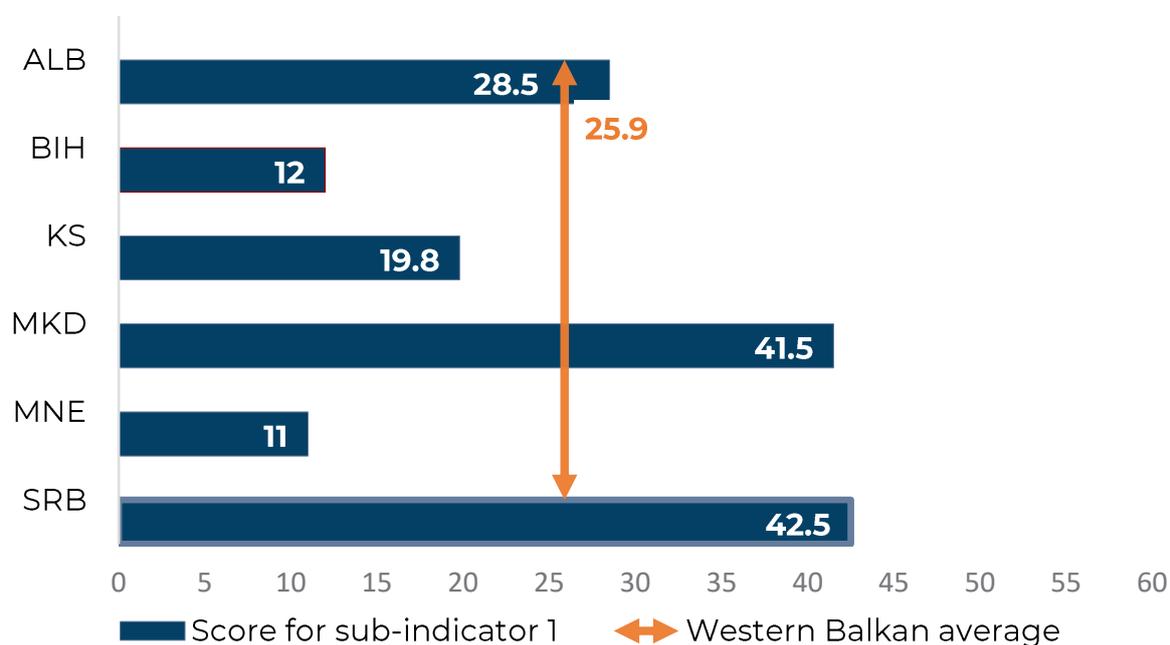
⁸ Annual Action Plan for 2024 of the Strategy for Enhancing Public Financial Management in the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2beamtrt>

The consultation period was also required to last for at least 15 days for written contributions, or participants should have been given at least 15 days' notice before events for public participation. The consultation for this document met this requirement, with the period running from 22.07.2024 to 06.08.2024, providing ample time for written feedback and public involvement. Finally, the consultation process required the publication of a report after the debate, summarizing the comments and inputs received from the public and providing feedback on how these comments were addressed. The report was indeed published after the consultation period, containing the necessary information and available on the eConsultations portal. In conclusion, the public consultation process for the PAR planning document adhered to all the essential requirements, ensuring that it was transparent, inclusive, and allowed meaningful participation from the public, even though it was the case only in the final part of the consultations.

How does Bosnia and Herzegovina do in regional terms?

Sub-indicator 1:

Transparency and inclusiveness in developing PAR planning documents



II.2 Transparency and inclusiveness of PAR monitoring and coordination structures

Principle 1: A comprehensive, credible and sustainable public administration reform agenda is established and successfully implemented, fostering innovation and continuous improvement.

Sub-indicator 2: Transparency and inclusiveness of PAR monitoring and coordination structures⁹

Indicator elements	Element type	Score
E 2.1 Participation of civil society in monitoring and coordination structures is envisaged in the PAR agenda	Strategy and policy	0/2
E 2.2 Format of CSO involvement in administrative structures for PAR coordination and monitoring enables their regular and substantive participation	Institutional setup	0/3
E 2.3 Format of CSO involvement in political structures for PAR coordination and monitoring enables their regular and substantive participation	Institutional setup	0/3
E 2.4 Involvement of CSOs is achieved based on an open competitive process	Institutional setup	0/4
E 2.5 Meetings of the PAR coordination and monitoring structures are held regularly with CSO involvement	Practice in implementation	0/10
E 2.6 Work of PAR monitoring and coordination structures is communicated transparently	Practice in implementation	5/10
E 2.7 Key informants consider that they can meaningfully contribute during the meetings of monitoring and coordination structures	Outcomes and impact	0/8
Total score for sub-indicator 2		5/40

⁹ Through the second sub-indicator, the following SIGMA sub-principle is monitored: PAR is coordinated at political and administrative levels; sufficient resources are allocated, and the planned reforms are effectively implemented and monitored.

The review of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Public Administration Reform (PAR) structures shows that CSOs are not formally involved in the monitoring and coordination bodies in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Despite the crucial role of the Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office (PARCO) in overseeing the reform process, the organizational structure outlined in relevant documents, such as the Rulebook on Internal Organization and Systematization of Posts, does not foresee CSO participation. Similarly, the State Strategy for Public Administration Reform and Action Plan developed by PARCO do not mention CSOs in the decision-making bodies. The monitoring and coordination structures are composed solely of government officials, without any formal mechanisms for CSO engagement. This lack of CSO involvement limits the transparency and inclusivity of the reform process.

In the review of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Public Administration Reform (PAR) structures, it was found that the administrative and political monitoring and coordination bodies are predominantly composed of government representatives, with no explicit provision for the involvement of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). The Public Administration Reform Coordinator's Office (PARCO), established in 2004, serves a crucial role in coordinating reform efforts between the Council of Ministers, the Entities, and the Brcko District Government. Its main responsibility is to ensure the implementation of reforms in alignment with Bosnia and Herzegovina's European integration process. However, despite its significant role, the organizational structure outlined in the *Rulebook on Internal Organization and Systematization of Posts*¹⁰ does not mention or foresee the inclusion of CSOs in any formal capacity. Furthermore, the *State Strategy for Public Administration Reform*¹¹ and Action Plan developed by PARCO are similarly silent on the matter, detailing the structures responsible for PAR implementation without mentioning any mechanism for CSO involvement.

In these documents, the monitoring and coordination structures are exclusively made up of civil servants from various administrative bodies, as well as political officials such as ministers, deputy ministers, and secretaries, depending on the level of the structure. These bodies are tasked with overseeing and guiding the reform process but are entirely composed of government representatives. The absence of CSOs in these official coordination and decision-making bodies is significant, as it indicates a lack of formal recognition of civil society's role in the process. This exclusion prevents CSOs from engaging in the early stages

¹⁰ Rulebook on Internal Organization and Systematization of Posts. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/5xnk4ac6>

¹¹ *State Strategy for Public Administration Reform and Action Plan*. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/5e6zpsrk>

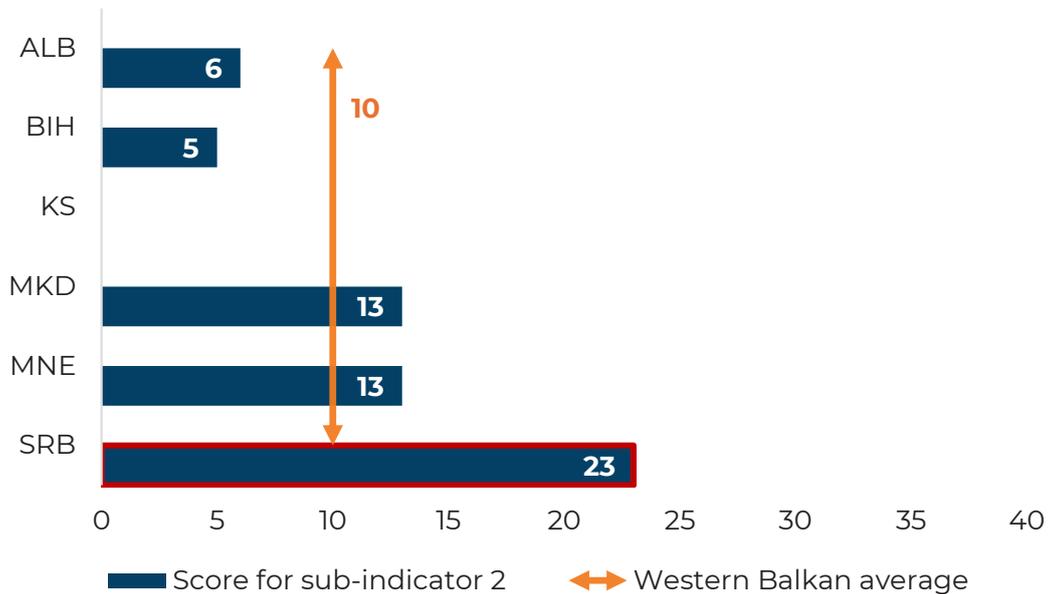
of policy development and limits their capacity to influence the design and execution of reforms.

The findings suggest that, at the time of measurement, there was no formal or explicit inclusion of CSOs in any of the monitoring or coordination structures at the administrative or political levels of the Public Administration Reform process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The involvement of CSOs, while potentially present on an informal or ad-hoc basis, is not clearly defined or incorporated into the core structures responsible for shaping and overseeing the reforms. As a result, the PAR process in Bosnia and Herzegovina is largely confined to government institutions, which limits its transparency and inclusivity. This exclusion is problematic because CSOs often play a critical role in enhancing the accountability and transparency of governance, bringing in expertise, and representing the interests of the broader public. By not involving CSOs, the reform process misses an important opportunity to incorporate diverse perspectives, which could strengthen both the design and the implementation of public administration reforms.

In conclusion, the lack of formalized CSO involvement in the administrative and political coordination structures of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Public Administration Reform highlights a significant gap in the inclusivity of the reform process. This exclusion restricts the ability of the reform process to benefit from the valuable input of non-governmental actors, reducing its effectiveness and accountability. To improve the transparency, inclusiveness, and overall quality of governance, it is essential for future revisions of PAR documents to explicitly include mechanisms for the active participation of CSOs in both administrative and political monitoring and coordination bodies. Engaging civil society in these critical areas would not only enhance the legitimacy of the reforms but also ensure a more balanced and comprehensive approach to public administration reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

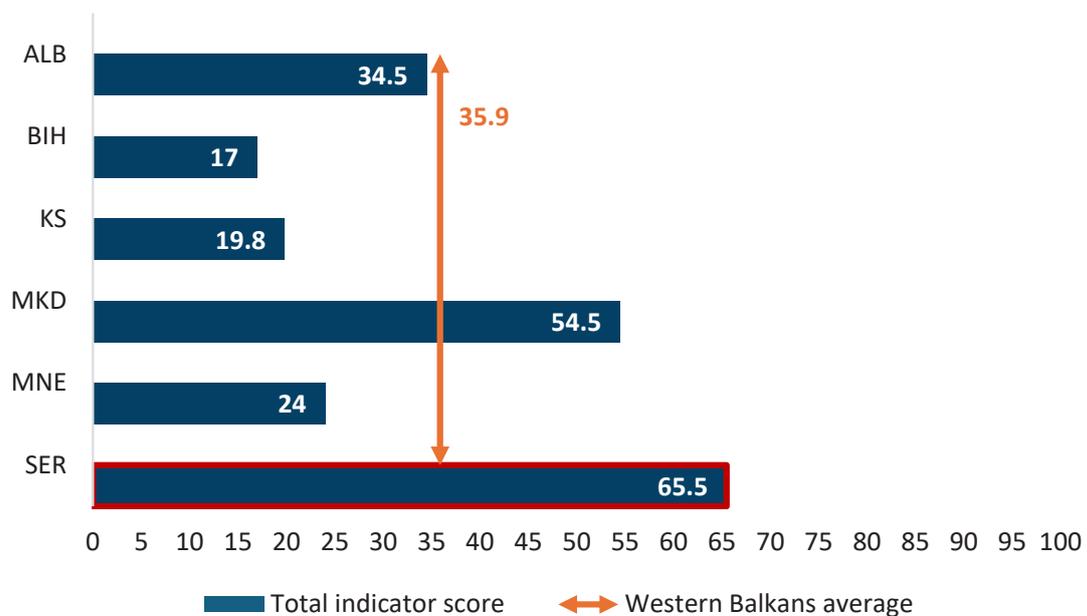
How does Bosnia and Herzegovina do in regional terms?

Sub-indicator 2: Transparency and inclusiveness of PAR monitoring and coordination structures



Overall scores comparison in the Strategy for PAR

Indicator: Transparency and inclusiveness of the development and management of the PAR agenda



Regional overview report for Strategy area, with results for all WB administrations, is available at: www.par-monitor.org

II.3 Recommendations for the Strategy for PAR

II.3.1 TRACKING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PAR MONITOR 2021/2022

Recommendations	Type (short term/ medium term/ long term)¹²	Status	Explanation
Institutions should organise consultations with CSOs as early as possible in the development process of documents.	Short term	No action taken	
A strong advocacy campaign is needed in order to make the platform E-Konsultacije (E-Consultations) be used in its full capacity and as an integral part of the mechanism in regulatory and policy development and adoption.	Short term	No action taken	
Broadly advertised consultations, as well as proactively addressing diverse group of stakeholders to partake in the consultations should become a regular practice in institutions.	Short term	No action taken	
Adopt the new PAR Strategy on all levels along with the The Operational Plan for PAR which provide for quality, effectiveness, financial sustainability, accountability and coordination of PAR.	Long term	No action taken	

¹² Recommendations for which the time needed for implementation is deemed to be up to one year are labeled as short term. Medium-term recommendations are those which can be implemented in a period from one year up to three years. Long-term require more than three years to be implemented.

<p>Increase the effectiveness of PAR implementation and comprehensiveness of monitoring and reporting. There is a necessity to update the methodology for annual reporting on the implementation of PAR in order for it to be able to provide more objective, and accurate data and make the monitoring of PAR through measures implemented and objectives reached easier and more visible nationwide.</p>	<p>Medium term</p>	<p>No action taken</p>	
<p>Provide for financial sustainability and effectiveness of the reforms. PAR Fund cannot be the only source of financing for the reforms. A more substantial estimate needs to be made regarding costs of each reform measure.</p>	<p>Long term</p>	<p>No action taken</p>	
<p>Improve the effectiveness of the coordination mechanisms in order to provide for better implementation of activities and objectives of the new PAR strategy. Increase Institutional responsibility for PAR implementation on all levels of Government.</p>	<p>Long term</p>	<p>No action taken</p>	
<p>Institutional, individual and managerial responsibility for PAR needs to be clearly established. There is a need for further involvement of all relevant stakeholders in this as well, particularly the CSO sector, as an additional verification factor.</p>	<p>Long term</p>	<p>No action taken</p>	

II.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 2024/2025 PAR MONITOR REPORT

- **Early Engagement of CSOs:** Institutions should organize consultations with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as early as possible in the document development process to ensure their involvement from the outset. (Short term)
- **Amend Regulations to Include Non-State Actors in Early Stages:** Revise existing regulations to mandate the inclusion of non-state actors, including CSOs and experts, in the early stages of drafting laws and planning documents. This would ensure more inclusive policymaking and allow external stakeholders to contribute to the development process from the outset, enhancing transparency and accountability. (Medium term)
- **Maximize the Use of E-Consultations:** A comprehensive advocacy campaign is needed to fully utilize the E-Konsultacije (E-Consultations) platform, ensuring it becomes an integral tool in the regulatory and policy development process. (Short term)
- **Promote Broad and Inclusive Consultations:** Consultations should be widely advertised, and institutions should proactively engage a diverse range of stakeholders to ensure inclusive participation throughout the policy development stages. (Short term)
- **Adopt a Comprehensive PAR Strategy:** The new Public Administration Reform (PAR) Strategy should be adopted at all levels of government along with the Operational Plan for PAR, ensuring quality, financial sustainability, accountability, and coordination in reform efforts. (Long term)
- **Enhance PAR Monitoring and Reporting:** The methodology for annual PAR implementation reporting should be updated to provide more accurate, objective, and comprehensive data on reform progress and outcomes. (Medium term)
- **Ensure Financial Sustainability of Reforms:** The PAR Fund should not be the sole source of financing for reforms. A more substantial financial estimate is required for each reform measure to ensure sustainability and adequate resources. (Long term)
- **Improve Coordination Mechanisms:** Strengthen the coordination mechanisms for better implementation of PAR activities and objectives, with a focus on increasing institutional responsibility for PAR implementation across all government levels. (Medium term)
- **Clarify Responsibility for PAR:** Clearly establish institutional, individual, and managerial responsibility for PAR, while ensuring further involvement of relevant stakeholders, particularly CSOs, to serve as an additional verification and accountability measure. (Medium term)

METHODOLOGY APPENDIX

For producing this report for Bosnia and Herzegovina, the following research methods and tools were used for data collection and calculation of elements:

- Analysis of official documentation, data, and official websites
- Requests for free access to information
- Interviews with stakeholders and key informants.

Monitoring heavily relied on the analysis of official documents publicly available on the websites of administration bodies and on the data and information contained therein. However, in cases where the data was not available, researchers sent requests for free access to information to relevant institutions in order to obtain information necessary for awarding points for the elements.

Table 6. FOI requests sent in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Institution	Date of request	Date of reply to the request
Ministry of Finance and Treasury of Bosnia and Herzegovina	13.11.2024.	20.11.2024.

Interviews with key informants were not conducted. Since there were no comments during the consultations (element 1.8) and only the representatives of the institutions are included in the administrative and political level of PAR monitoring and coordination structures (element 2.7), the key informants could not be identified.

LIST OF REFERENCED SOURCES IN THIS REPORT

Legal acts, by-laws and public policy documents

Annual Action Plan for 2024 of the Strategy for Enhancing Public Financial Management in the Institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/2beamtrt>

Charter on Cooperation between the Council of Ministers of BiH and CSOs. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/4wt nabje>

The Rules for Consultations in Legislative Drafting. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/3epb5juv>

Rulebook on Internal Organization and Systematization of Posts. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/5xnk4ac6>

State Strategy for Public Administration Reform and Action Plan. Available at: <https://tinyurl.com/5e6zpsrk>

Reports

Ćutahija, H. 2023. *National PAR Monitor 2021/2022 Bosnia and Herzegovina* - <https://tinyurl.com/mnhzddxx>

Websites

eConsultations Portal - <https://ekonsultacije.gov.ba/>



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