



**Defending Euro-Atlantic Values:  
Capacity Building and Resilience Enhancement through Strengthening  
Research and Debating Capacities of Young Professionals in Bosnia and  
Herzegovina**

**This project is sponsored by NATO's Public Diplomacy Division.**



## Project implementation and assessment

### 1. Project Objectives

The project aimed to contribute to increasing the resilience of Bosnian and Herzegovinian (BiH) democracy by strengthening the capacity of local NGOs, think tanks, state institutions, the private sector, and the youth, primarily by strengthening liberal democracy and economic development. To achieve the aforementioned goal, the Foundation HIA BiH initiated and implemented the following activities:

- organizing a series of specialized training to enhance participants' research skills;
- facilitating the production of 3 policy papers on issues of concern to the Euro-Atlantic future of Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- organizing a public event to present the policy papers, supported by participants' videos

The project started with a selection procedure of participants and continued with five weekends of training that covered the following topics: quantitative analysis and data visualization, quantitative analysis, strategic country analysis, investigative research, and finally analyzing democratic change and stability in the context of hybrid threats. Each lecture was a combination of theoretical knowledge, followed by practical exercises. The lecturers and research mentors came from BiH as well as abroad, all intended to provide the participants with diverse perspectives and angles.

After the training, the participants were divided into three research groups. They worked together and under expert mentorship and supervision. They produced three policy papers titled:

- Application of the UN Resolution 1325 in the protection of women who suffered gender-based violence during the Bosnian war; [LINK](#)
- Bosnia and Herzegovina building friendships – who is who and who should be our BFF; [LINK](#)
- Winning the brains back – How can Bosnia and Herzegovina be more attractive in the race for its own talent. [LINK](#)

The final Advocacy event provided the participants with an opportunity to present their policy papers and discuss them with stakeholders and youth. To further promote policy papers, participants also recorded three videos where they shortly explained the topic and results of their research. The policy papers and the video materials have been promoted among the general and expert public.

The project targeted young professionals from NGOs, state institutions, private sectors, think tanks, and academia, altogether 15 participants.

Within the dissemination public event in Sarajevo, the project targeted stakeholders, media representatives, and participants from the general audience, with a special focus on youth.

The project also targeted a wider audience via social media: Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube profile of Humanity in Action Bosnia and Herzegovina that have more than 3900 regular followers.

The project's main objective was to increase the capacity of local NGOs and think tanks in BiH, state institutions, and also the private sector involved in the strengthening of liberal democracy and economic development on the country's Euro-Atlantic path.

## **Audience insight**

The targeted audience was young professionals with special attention to think-tankers: 15 participants; stakeholders from Bosnia and Herzegovina: more than 30 participants; general public reached through social media, at least 3900+ regular followers, and many more.

As a result, all targeted goals were achieved: 15 young professionals participated in the project, the final event was attended by a significant number of governmental, non-governmental, and media representatives along with a larger audience comprised of young people – students and young professionals. The general public was reached in the largest number through the paid Facebook ad/post which has reached almost 80 thousand people.

Humanity in Action Bosnia and Herzegovina has extensive experience with education projects and has well-working internal mechanisms for targeting participants and stakeholders for project involvement. Humanity in Action Bosnia and Herzegovina also closely cooperates with partners from the EU and NATO member countries while creating the syllables for the Skills Training.

The Advocacy event held on December 17, 2021, involved stakeholders from BIH institutions (SIPA, various ministries), foreign embassies, think tanks, BIH local and national media. The advocacy event was connected with the press conference. The outcomes of the project and of the advocacy event were further spread via media (interviews, guest appearances on TV, etc).

## **2. Project Outputs**

**PROJECT WEBSITE** - [link](#)

**Policy Paper 1** - Application of the UN Resolution 1325 in the protection of Women who suffered Gender-based Violence during the Bosnian War

**Policy Paper 2**- Bosnia and Herzegovina Building Friendships - Who is and who should be our BFF

**Policy paper 3** - Winning the Brains back - How can Bosnia and Herzegovina be more Attractive in the Race for its own Talent

\*(all available for download on the website)

Video explainer – policy paper 1 – youtube [link](#)

Video explainer – policy paper 2- youtube [link](#)

Video explainer – policy paper 3 - youtube [link](#)

## **Media and digital coverage**

RTVTK (Radio Television of Tuzla Canton News Portal) December 17, 2021 - [link](#)

FENA (Federal News Agency) - December 17, 2021 - [link](#)

SRNA (Republika Srpska News Agency) News Roundup - December 17, 2021 - [link](#)

Pogled.ba - December 17, 2021 - [link](#)

Oslobođenje - January 04, 2022 - [link](#)

NEZAVISNE NOVINE – January 04, 2022 - [link](#)

TVSA – television sarajevo youtube channel – january 05, 2022 - [link](#) (media appearance starts from 1:49:02)

### 3. **Project Outcomes**

The project involved 15 participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina and BiH youth currently studying abroad with strong connections to their country. The participants came from diverse backgrounds, including academia, private sector or NGOs. They attended five professional trainings on quantitative analysis and data visualisation, qualitative analysis, strategic country analysis, investigative research and analysing democratic change and stability in the context of hybrid threats. The participants evaluated the trainings positively (44% of participants marked as excellent and 56% as good), adding that it would not only enhance their skills and knowledge not only in the next project activity, but in their professional lives as well.

The participants used the acquired skills in the research part of the project during elaboration of policy papers, supervised and mentored by experts. Their policy papers reflected their interest, as well as issues relevant to the Euro-Atlantic integration of BiH. The project fulfilled the goal of providing the participants with a platform to discuss their policy papers and their content with stakeholders, media and youth representatives at the final event in Sarajevo, BiH. To enhance the policy papers, reach out, the participants recorded videos in which they summarised the content of their policy papers. These videos are being promoted on Humanity in Action Bosnia and Herzegovina website and have a great potential of reaching more people, who were unable to attend the event.

During the implementation, the project team had to deal with the Covid-19 restrictions that prevented a higher number of persons attending the event, also from the diplomatic corps and international institutions. However, the project team has compensated the Covid-19 restrictions by sending out the policy papers to relevant stakeholders who were unable to attend the event, referring to the videos and the project too. Moreover, within the advocacy campaign, as the number of media presentations suggests, there has been an increasing interest in interviews with the Humanity in Action Bosnia and Herzegovina Executive Director, Dr. Jasmin Hasić. The interest and the topic have shown a great potential for further continuation of the project.