

— Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European Social Charter —

Signatures, ratifications and accepted provisions

Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified the Revised European Social Charter on 07/10/2008, accepting 51 of its 98 paragraphs.

It has not accepted the system of collective complaints.

The Charter in domestic law

According to Article III paragraph 3(b) of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, general principles of international law shall be an integral part of the law of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its Entities.

Table of accepted provisions

1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	3.1	
3.2	3.3	3.4	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	5	6.1	6.2	6.3	
6.4	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	7.10	8.1	
8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	9	10.1	10.2	10.3	10.4	10.5	11.1	11.2	
11.3	12.1	12.2	12.3	12.4	13.1	13.2	13.3	13.4	14.1	14.2	15.1	
15.2	15.3	16	17.1	17.2	18.1	18.2	18.3	18.4	19.1	19.2	19.3	
19.4	19.5	19.6	19.7	19.8	19.9	19.10	19.11	19.12	20	21	22	
23	24	25	26.1	26.2	27.1	27.2	27.3	28	29	30	31.1	
31.2	31.3						Grey = accepted provisions					

Reports on non-accepted provisions

The European Committee of Social Rights ("the Committee") examines the situation of non-accepted provisions of the Revised Charter every 5 years after the ratification. It adopted [reports concerning Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) in 2013 and in 2019.

Further information on the reports on non-accepted provisions is available on the [relevant webpage](#).

Monitoring the implementation of the European Social Charter ¹

I. Reporting system ²

Reports submitted by Bosnia and Herzegovina

Between 2011 and 2024, Bosnia and Herzegovina has submitted 14 reports on the application of the Revised Charter.

The [13rd report](#), which was submitted on 13/06/2023, concerns the accepted provisions relating to thematic group 4 "Children, families and migrants" (Articles 7, 8, 16, 17, 16, 19, 27 and 31).

Conclusions with respect to these provisions have been published in March 2024.

On 5 September 2023, an [ad hoc report on the cost-of-living crisis](#) was submitted by Bosnia and Herzegovina³.

¹ The Committee monitors compliance with the Charter under two procedures, the reporting system and the collective complaints procedure, according to Rule 2 of the Committee's rules: « 1. The Committee rules on the conformity of the situation in States with the European Social Charter, the 1988 Additional Protocol and the Revised European Social Charter. 2. It adopts conclusions through the framework of the reporting procedure and decisions under the collective complaints procedure ».

Further information on the [procedures](#) may be found on the [HUDOC database](#) and in the [Digest of the case law of the Committee](#).

² Detailed information on the Reporting System is available on the [relevant webpage](#). The reports submitted by States Parties may be consulted in the [relevant section](#).

³ In accordance with the [decision of the Ministers' Deputies](#) adopted on 27 September 2022 concerning the [new system](#) for the presentation of reports under the European Social Charter, the European Committee of Social Rights and the Governmental Committee have decided to request an *ad hoc* report on the cost-of-living crisis to all State parties.

Situations of non-conformity ⁴

Thematic Group 1 "Employment, training and equal opportunities" - Conclusions 2020

► *Article 1§1 - Right to work - Policy of full employment*

Employment policy efforts have not been adequate in combatting unemployment and promoting job creation.

► *Article 1§2 - Right to work – Freely undertaken work (non-discrimination, prohibition of forced labour, other aspects)*

- Nationals of other States Parties do not have access to civil service jobs;
- It has not been established that the national authorities have fulfilled their obligations to prevent forced labour and labour exploitation, to protect victims, to effectively investigate the offences committed, and to punish those responsible for forced labour offences.

► *Article 1§4 - Right to work - Vocational guidance, training and rehabilitation*

- It has not been established that the right to vocational guidance within the education system and labour market is guaranteed;
- It has not been established that the right to vocational guidance is guaranteed to persons with disabilities.

► *Article 9 - Right to vocational guidance*

It has not been established that:

- the right to vocational guidance within the education system and labour market is guaranteed;
- the right to vocational guidance within the education system and labour market is guaranteed to persons with disabilities.

► *Article 20 - Right to equal opportunities and equal treatment in employment and occupation without sex discrimination*

- Women are not permitted to work in all professions which constitutes discrimination based on sex;
- The obligation to ensure pay transparency has not been satisfied;
- The obligation to make measurable progress to reduce the gender pay gap has not been fulfilled.

Thematic Group 2 "Health, social security and social protection" - Conclusions 2021

► *Article 11§2 - Right to protection of health - Advisory and educational facilities*

Screening policies are not systematically implemented in the country.

► *Article 11§3 - Right to protection of health - Prevention of diseases and accidents*

- Efficient immunisation and epidemiological monitoring programmes are not in place;
- The necessary measures were not taken to ban smoking in public places.

► *Article 12§1 - Right to social security – Existence of a social security system*

- It has not been established that the personal coverage of social security risks is adequate;
- It has not been established that the minimum levels of social security benefits are adequate;
- The duration of unemployment benefit, for the insurance period of up to 5 years is too short, in all entities.

► *Article 12§2 - Right to social security - Maintenance of a social security system at a satisfactory level at least equal to that necessary for the ratification of the European Code of Social Security*

It has not been established that Bosnia and Herzegovina maintains a social security system at a satisfactory level at least equal to that necessary for the ratification of the European Code of Social Security.

► *Article 13§1 - Right to social and medical assistance - Adequate assistance for every person in need*

- Social assistance is not provided in all Entities to any single person on the sole ground that he/she is without resources and is unable to obtain adequate resources by any other means;

⁴ Further information on the situations of non-conformity is available on the [HUDOC database](#).

- It has not been established that appropriate medical assistance is provided to all persons in need in all Entities.;
- It has not been established that the level of social assistance paid to a single person without resources is adequate.

► *Article 13§3 - Right to social and medical assistance - Prevention, abolition or alleviation of need*

- It has not been established that there are mechanisms in place to ensure that persons in need can benefit from free counselling and personal advice services.
- It has not been established that the competent services and institutions are adequately distributed on a geographical basis.

► *Article 14§1 - Right to benefit from social welfare services - Promotion or provision of social services*

- It has not been established that the quality of social welfare services meets users' needs.
- It has not been established that the monitoring arrangements for guaranteeing the quality of the social services provided by the various providers are adequate and effective.

► *Article 14§2 - Right to benefit from social welfare services - Public participation in the establishment and maintenance of social services*

It has not been established that:

- user involvement in social services is ensured and promoted in legislation, in budget allocations and decision-making at all levels and in the design and delivery of services in practice;
- a mechanism is in place to monitor the quality of services provided by public and private institutions in the different entities;
- dialogue with civil society is ensured with regard to social services.

► *Article 23 - Right of the elderly to social protection*

It has not been established that:

- adequate measures have been taken to combat the abuse of older persons;
- the levels of the minimum pensions are adequate;
- the level of social assistance available to older persons not in receipt of a pension is adequate.

Thematic Group 3 "Labour rights" - Conclusions 2022

► *Article 2§1 - Right to just conditions of work - Reasonable working time*

There are no reference periods in flexible working time arrangements.

► *Article 2§2 - Right to just conditions of work - Public holidays with pay*

- Work performed on a public holiday is not adequately compensated;
- It has not been established that the circumstances under which work on public holidays is permitted are sufficiently defined.

► *Article 2§3 - Right to just conditions of work - Annual holiday with pay*

The minimum period of paid annual leave for police officers in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, is less than four weeks or 20 working days.

► *Article 2§4 - Right to just conditions of work - Elimination of risks in dangerous or unhealthy occupations*

It has not been established that all workers exposed to residual risks are entitled to adequate compensatory measures (reduced working hours, additional leave or similar measures).

► *Article 2§5 - Right to just conditions of work - Weekly rest period*

It has not been established that there are sufficient safeguards to prevent all workers from working for more than twelve consecutive days without a rest period.

► *Article 2§7 - Right to just conditions of work - Night work*

- As regards the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is no provision by law for workers assigned to night work to be given a free compulsory medical check-up prior to taking up their duties;
- As regards the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, it has not been established that domestic law or practice includes a definition of who is considered to be a "night worker";

- As regards the Republika Srpska, there is no provision by law for workers assigned to night work to be given a compulsory medical check-up prior to taking up their duties and regularly thereafter;
- As regards the Republika Srpska, it has not been established that domestic law or practice includes a definition of who is considered to be a "night worker";
- As regards the Brčko District, it has not been established that there is a provision by law for workers assigned to night work to be given a compulsory medical check-up prior to taking up their duties and regularly thereafter.

► *Article 4§3 - Right to a fair remuneration - Non-discrimination between women and men with respect to remuneration*

The obligation to ensure pay transparency is not complied with.

► *Article 6§1 - Right to bargain collectively - Joint consultation*

Joint consultation is not sufficiently promoted (other than the Brčko District).

► *Article 6§2 - Right to bargain collectively - Negotiation procedures*

It has not been established that the promotion of collective bargaining is sufficient.

► *Article 6§3 - Right to bargain collectively - Conciliation and arbitration*

It has not been established:

- that in Bosnia and Herzegovina there are conciliation or mediation machinery for the settlement of labour disputes in the collective bargaining process;
- that in the Republika Srpska, there is a system of voluntary arbitration for the settlement of labour disputes in the collective bargaining process;
- that there are conciliation or mediation machinery for the settlement of labour disputes in the collective bargaining process in the civil service in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and Brčko District.

► *Article 6§4 - Right to bargain collectively - Collective action*

- In the Republika Srpska, the right to call a strike is limited to the representative trade unions;
- In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republika Srpska and the Brčko District, the range of sectors in which the right to strike may be restricted is too extensive and the restrictions on the right to strike go beyond the limits set by Article G of the Charter.

► *Article 21 - Right of workers to be informed and consulted*

- It has not been established that there are legal remedies in Brčko District when the rights to be informed and consulted are not respected;
- It has not been established that the supervision of respect of the right to information and consultation is guaranteed in Brčko District.

► *Article 22 - Right of workers to take part in the determination and improvement of working conditions and working environment*

- It has not been established that the right to participate in the decision-making process within undertakings with regard to working conditions, work organization and working environment, is effectively guaranteed in all three entities;
- The right of workers to take part in the determination and improvement of the protection of health and safety in Brčko District is not effective;
- It has not been established that the right of workers to participate in the organisation of social and socio-cultural services and facilities is guaranteed in practice;
- It has not been established that there are sanctions for employers who fail to fulfil their obligations with regard to the right of workers to take part in the determination and improvement of working conditions and working environment in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Republika Srpska.

► *Article 28 - Right of workers' representatives to protection in the undertaking and facilities to be accorded to them*

- The protection granted to workers' representatives against dismissal in the Brčko District is not extended for a reasonable period after the expiration of their mandate;
- Workers' representatives, in Brčko District, are not protected against prejudicial acts short of dismissal; – it has not been established that workers' representatives are afforded adequate protection against prejudicial acts short of dismissal in Republika Srpska;

- There are no legal remedies in Brčko District to allow workers' representatives to contest their dismissals and other prejudicial acts short of dismissal;
- Adequate facilities are not afforded to workers' representatives in all three entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Thematic Group 4 "Children, families, migrants" - Conclusions 2023

► *Article 7§1 - Right of children and young persons to protection- Prohibition of employment under the age of 15*

The prohibition of employment of persons under the age of 15 is not guaranteed in practice.

► *Article 7§2 - Right of children and young persons to protection - Prohibition of employment under the age of 18 for dangerous or unhealthy activities*

- In the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (fbih) and in the the Brčko District legislation does not define or provide a list of dangerous activities prohibited to workers under 18;
- Legislation prohibiting employment under the age of 18 for dangerous or unhealthy activities is not effectively enforced.

► *Article 7§3 - Right of children and young persons to protection - Prohibition of employment of children subject to compulsory education*

The prohibition of employment of children still in compulsory education is not guaranteed in practice.

► *Article 7§5 - Right of children and young persons to protection - Fair pay*

- Young workers' wages are not fair;
- The right of young persons to fair pay is not effectively enforced.

► *Article 7§9 - Right of children and young persons to protection - Regular medical examination*

In the Brčko District, young workers under 18 years of age employed in occupations prescribed by national laws or regulations are not subject to regular medical control.

► *Article 7§10 – Right of children and young persons to protection - Special protection against physical and moral dangers*

Not all forms of sexual exploitation of children are criminalised.

► *Article 8§1 – Right of employed women to protection of maternity - Maternity leave*

The minimum level of maternity benefits is not adequate in some cantons of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

► *Article 8§2 - Right of employed women to protection of maternity - Illegality of dismissal during maternity leave*

In the Brčko district, the compensation awarded in the event of unlawful dismissal during pregnancy or maternity leave is inadequate.

► *Article 8§4 - Right of employed women to protection of maternity - Regulation of night work*

Night work of pregnant women, women having recently given birth and women who are nursing is not adequately regulated in the Brčko District.

► *Article 8§5 - Right of employed women to protection of maternity - Prohibition of dangerous, unhealthy or arduous work*

The regulations on dangerous, unhealthy and arduous work in respect of pregnant women, women who have recently given birth or who are nursing their infant are inadequate.

► *Article 16 - Right of the family to social, legal and economic protection*

- Equal treatment of nationals of other States Parties regarding the payment of family benefits is not ensured due to the excessive length of residence requirement;
- Family benefits do not constitute a sufficient income supplement for a significant number of families.

► *Article 17§1 - Right of children and young persons to social, legal and economic protection - Assistance, education and training*

Not all forms of corporal punishment are prohibited in all settings in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Brčko District.

► *Article 17§2 – Right of children and young persons to social, legal and economic protection – Free primary and secondary education; regular attendance at school*

- The net enrolment rate in secondary education is too low;
- There is no equal access to education for all children.

The Committee also considered that the failure to provide requested information on Articles 7§5, 7§10, 8§1, 16 and 17§1 amounts to a breach by Bosnia and Herzegovina of its reporting obligations under Article C of the Charter.

The Committee has been unable to assess compliance with the following rights:

Thematic Group 1 "Employment, training and equal opportunities"

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Thematic Group 2 "Health, social security and social protection"

▶ Article 11§1 - Conclusions 2021

Thematic Group 3 "Labour rights"

▶ Article 5 - Conclusions 2022

Thematic Group 4 "Children, families, migrants"

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II. Examples of progress achieved in the implementation of rights under the Charter

(non-exhaustive list)

Thematic Group 1 "Employment, training and equal opportunities"

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Thematic Group 2 "Health, social security and social protection"

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Thematic Group 3 "Labour rights"

► Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina – The new Labour Code that came into force on 14 April 2016 provides for a minimum of twenty working days [of annual holiday with pay], which may be increased under the provisions of the collective agreement or the relevant internal company rules or employment contract. Employees may not waive their right to annual leave, or be denied that right, and they may not be granted financial compensation instead of taking unused days of annual leave (Articles 47-52 of the Labour Code).

► In the Republika Srpska, the new Labour Code has been enacted and came into force on 20 January 2016. Articles 78-80 entitle employees to annual leave of at least 20 working days after six months of uninterrupted work. Employed minors are entitled to a minimum of 24 working days of holiday and persons working in certain specific conditions to a minimum of 30 working days.

Thematic Group 4 "Children, families, migrants"

► In accordance with the Council of Minister's decision, as of 29 September 2010 all employees of the Bosnia and Herzegovina State Institutions, regardless of their place of residence, are entitled to maternity benefits in the amount of the average net salary earned in the last three months before the maternity leave.

► Article 45 of the Brčko District (Bosnia and Herzegovina) Labour Law had been amended on 23 August 2014 and a Decision on the Conditions and Manners of Payment of Compensation of Salary during Maternity Leave (No. 34-000890/13 of 15 January 2014) had come into force on 22 January 2014. During maternity leave, employees are entitled to salary compensation equal to the average net wage earned over the last six months prior to maternity leave (and not 12 months).