



WESTERN BALKANS DIASPORA

**OPPORTUNITIES
FOR THE REGION**

Briefing
2020

Table 1: WB diaspora estimates

Units in Millions	Albania	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo	North Macedonia	Montenegro	Serbia
Diaspora Estimate	1.4 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) ⁴	2.0 (Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees) ⁵	0.74 (Kosovo Agency of Statistics) ⁶	0.7 (Government of the Republic of North Macedonia) ⁷	0.2 (The European Centre) ⁸	5.0 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) ⁹
Eurostat (2019)	2.9	3.5	1.8	2.1	0.6	7.0

3. Influence and Organization

A considerable proportion of WB diaspora, despite having fully integrated into their host countries, remain nostalgic about the culture, tradition, and language of their countries of origin. They are active in preserving these values by forming and joining various cultural, educational, political and other associations. This is one way to keep ties with their home countries, with diaspora contributing positively to the development of the host and home countries, economically and politically. Research suggests that migration can improve development in origin countries, with diaspora helping to reduce poverty through direct or indirect investments, such as the establishment of new businesses and trading networks, tourism activities and consumption, promoting new economic activity and employment.

One form of diaspora contribution is seen primarily in the delivery of large sums of remittances to home countries, which is an example of strong emotional ties and connections to home countries, but also the moral obligation felt by the diaspora to support friends and family, and to invest in the development of their home countries. As of 2015, the remittance flow has been sizable: the entire region received 8.6 billion USD, ranging from 3.1% of GDP in North Macedonia to 16.7% in Kosovo.¹⁰ This puts diasporas in powerful political position. Data in table 2 below indicate the remittance inflows in the recent years.

However, participants at the roundtable in Berlin cautioned that diaspora carries a notion of finance which is frequently being associated solely with monetary benefits, and that governments exploit diaspora communities for their political gains and influence, and for advancing their political and/or nationalist agendas. Less so utilizing the potential of diaspora as a bridge between countries of origin and of residence, and to bring knowledge and expertise to the region.

⁴ Albanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <https://punetejashtme.gov.al/en/shqiptaret-ne-bote/>

⁵ Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, <https://dijaspora.mhrr.gov.ba/category/zas-to-web-portal-za-dijasporu/>

⁶ Kosovo Agency of Statistics, <https://ask.rks-gov.net/media/1380/kosovan-migration-2014.pdf>

⁷ Government of the Republic of North Macedonia (2019) 'The National Strategy of North Macedonia for Cooperation with Diaspora 2019-2023, March 2019', at: <https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/strategii/strategijaiom.pdf> [last accessed 26.06.2020].

⁸ The European Centre, <https://www.euro.centre.org/downloads/detail/3411>

⁹ Republic of Serbia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Diaspora 'General Information', at: <http://www.mfa.gov.rs/en/consular-affairs/Diaspora/Diaspora-general-information> [accessed 26.06.2020]

¹⁰ The size and effects of emigration and remittances in the Western-Balkans: Forecasting based on a Delphi process", 10 December 2016. https://mpra.ub.unimuenchen.de/75512/1/MPRA_paper_75512.pdf.

Table 2: Data on remittance inflows

Migrant remittance inflows (US\$ million)	2017	2018	2019e	Remittances as a share of GDP in 2019 (%)
Albania	1,312	1,458	1,455	9.4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2,017	2,122	2,192	10.9
Kosovo	1,112	1,236	1,249	15.6
Montenegro	523	589	1,376	25.4
North Macedonia	314	344	317	2.5
Serbia	3,590	4,324	4,163	8.1

Source: World Bank staff calculation based on data from IMF Balance of Payments Statistics database and data releases from central banks, national statistical agencies, and World Bank country desks.
Date: April 2020

Diaspora investment in countries of origin is multidimensional and can be driven by individuals or families, and through formal or informal networks, with its mobilisation assuming various forms of financial and human capital, such as remittances, direct investments, philanthropy, and tourism. Other forms include knowledge transfer through the sharing of learnt skills and ideas, both in social and business circles. These forms of non-economic investment are just as important to development as the financial investments. For example, people with highly educated compatriots tend to follow a similar path and work towards completing a higher education degree. This inevitably leads to a more competent workforce and thus creates greater economic potential in the development of the country of origin. There are numerous examples of this kind that show positive contribution to the overall development of origin countries. The diaspora has the opportunity to acquire specialised knowledge and skills that can strengthen industries in their home countries, if they decide to return there. For instance, Albania's immigrants who later return home are the more likely to start a business than those who never left the country ¹¹. In light of this, policies aimed at mobilising the diaspora are also multidimensional, seeking to secure, not only remittances and direct investments, but to share human and social capital as well.

WB diaspora, like other diaspora, have organized themselves around political, cultural, and religious ideas. Due to a diverse range of associations, it can be hard to create a horizontal organizational setup. One example is the Macedonian umbrella association "United Macedonian Diaspora", which claims to be the sole representative of all Macedonian diaspora abroad. This claim was disputed by the Minister without portfolio in the Republic of North Macedonia in charge of Diaspora Affairs during the ongoing negotiation process to reach the Prespa Agreement. The Minister stated that one diaspora association cannot represent all and each can work separately.

Diasporas have a long history of engaging in politics in diverse ways, not only through voting and representation in parliament, but also through lobbying in host countries, and by financially backing political parties and civil society organizations. Several WB countries have accepted an ethnically exclusive citizenship policy and then secured seats in parliament for diaspora representatives. In doing so, these countries displayed their belief in the importance of the contributions made by the diaspora to their origin countries. Prime examples of this are North Macedonia and Croatia, which have been criticized for the inclusion of their diaspora for the fact that they are staunch supporters of the ruling parties.

¹¹Matloob Piracha and Florin Vadean, "Return Migration and Occupational Choice: Evidence from Albania", World Development, vol. 38, no. 8, August 2010.

diaspora, including the Diaspora Business Office to support investors and the Diaspora Publishing House to support Albanian language learning.

4.2. Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)

The Government of the Federation of BiH has approved strategic documents in relation to the Diaspora, namely: Guide to the BiH Diaspora – How to protect investor rights in BiH; Guide to BiH Diaspora – How to exercise rights in BiH; Analysis of needs for training of employees in institutions in BiH at different levels of government for strengthening capacities for cooperation with expatriates and proposal of training plan; Recommendations for incorporating the concept of migration and development in the design and implementation of public policies in BiH; and Mapping the Bosnia-Herzegovina Diaspora.

According to the BiH Federal Government Policy on Cooperation with Diaspora, numerous legislative and administrative decisions have been made to target the diaspora. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is directly responsible for BiH foreign policy and thus encouraging, developing, and coordinating cooperation with BiH émigrés through diplomatic and consular missions. The Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, which also works with international organisations, has exclusive jurisdiction over creating diaspora policies, and its Diaspora Department operates over two sectors, that of Status and Information and that of Economic, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation. The BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs administers support and materials for the diaspora to learn Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian (BHS) language. With institutional cooperation with diaspora lacking at state level, and diaspora needs requiring multi-sectoral involvement, many issues are solved at the entity, cantonal and municipal levels.

4.3. Kosovo

Until early 2020, Kosovo had a Ministry of Diaspora, which has now been merged into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora. A new law is currently being drafted. The previous Law on Diaspora aimed to preserve and cultivate national identity, language, culture and education of the diaspora members, and their relations with institutions of Republic of Kosovo. It also claimed to help with the organization of the diaspora in various countries where they live, and encourage and develop inter-cultural relations. Kosovo has created an online database to display estimates and communicate with its diaspora. Some political figures in Kosovo have expressed views to amend the constitution in order to create room for political inclusion of diaspora into the national parliament by reserving 5 seats out of 120.¹³

4.4. Montenegro

Montenegro interacts with its diaspora primarily via the Council for Cooperation with Diaspora. This is an advisory body to the government on strategies and laws of interest to the diaspora. It approves codes and rules of the council, and administers activities for the protection and promotion of the Montenegrin language, culture, and tradition. Council members include diaspora representatives from each country where citizens of Montenegro live abroad, proportional to the percentage of the diaspora in each country, as outlined in the 2018 Law on Cooperation of Montenegro with Diaspora Immigrants. There is also the Department of Diaspora, and the parliamentary Committee on International Relations and Immigrants. The latter monitors and approves proposals and initiatives for the adoption of laws and other acts within its scope of activities, and other issues under the obligations of the Parliament of Montenegro that relate to immigrants.¹⁴

¹³ Insajderi (2018) 'The Diaspora Minister of the Republic of Kosovo demands that the letter be granted several parliamentary mandates', at: <https://insajderi.com/ministri-i-diaspores-kerkon-qe-Diaspora-ti-kete-disa-ulese-ne-kuvend/> [last accessed 10.05.2020].

4.5. North Macedonia

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of North Macedonia is in charge of coordinating institutional activity to enhance the cooperation with its diaspora. This ministry has approved a strategic document which envisages the state cooperation with its diaspora: The National Strategy of North Macedonia for Cooperation with Diaspora 2019-2023. This strategy aims to address the following matters: the mapping of the diaspora, systematic acknowledgement of diaspora priorities, the establishment of a cooperation mechanism between the government and the diaspora, the acknowledgement of rights and obligations of diaspora in the political context; and the advancement of cultural, business and education cooperation between North Macedonia and its diaspora.¹⁵

4.6. Serbia

The Republic of Serbia has the Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region within its Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), which is responsible for diaspora matters. It performs public administration and professional activities set forth by the Law, including: preserving and developing the spiritual, national and cultural identity of Serbs outside the Republic of Serbia; improving ties between Diaspora, Serbian citizens living abroad and their organizations in Serbia, keeping diaspora informed about the policies of the Republic of Serbia, supporting the process of inclusion of diaspora into the political, economic and cultural life of the Republic of Serbia, and their return to the Republic of Serbia, among others. It also publishes a list of Serbian diaspora associations worldwide on the office's dedicated page. Until 2012, the Ministry of Religion and Diaspora was responsible for diaspora affairs, when it was amalgamated into the Ministry of Culture and Information. In 2014, the Serbian Parliament adopted the Law on the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region. This Law stipulates that the Assembly of the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region shall be the highest body of the diaspora and Serbs in the region, and that a Budget Fund and a Council for Diaspora should be established. To date, no concrete measures have been taken to establish these bodies, with alongside or to replace the Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the region.¹⁶

5. The Brain Drain

The "brain drain" here refers to the departure of academics, qualified individuals in various fields, and students studying at universities abroad. The "brains" of the WB countries are leaving for Canada, the United States, Germany and other EU member states, the United Kingdom, and other countries. The "loss" of qualified and educated citizens is detrimental to a country's socio-economic development, as these people are the driving force of any country. The best academics and businesspersons of the region tend to be found amongst the diaspora, having left to find better opportunities elsewhere. This inevitably leads to a brain drain in home countries. Even though there are ongoing efforts to bring back to the region the knowledge gained abroad and turn the brain drain into brain gain, these have not been very successful primarily due to the challenges to work with public institutions. The participants at the roundtable in Berlin voiced their concerns that the region is suffering from the brain drain (particularly youth emigration and exodus of medical staff), as statistics indicate that a large number of people are leaving their home countries in search for a better life.

¹⁴ Parliament of Montenegro, 'Cooperation with Emigrants', at: <http://www.skupstina.me/index.php/en/international-cooperation/bilateral-cooperation/friendship-group-with-the-parliament-of-france/55-saradnja-sa-iseljenicima-iz-crne-gore/161-saradnja-sa-iseljenicima>

¹⁵ Government of the Republic of North Macedonia (2019) 'The National Strategy of North Macedonia for Cooperation with Diaspora 2019-2023, March 2019', at: <https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/strategii/strategijaiom.pdf> [last accessed 26.06.2020].

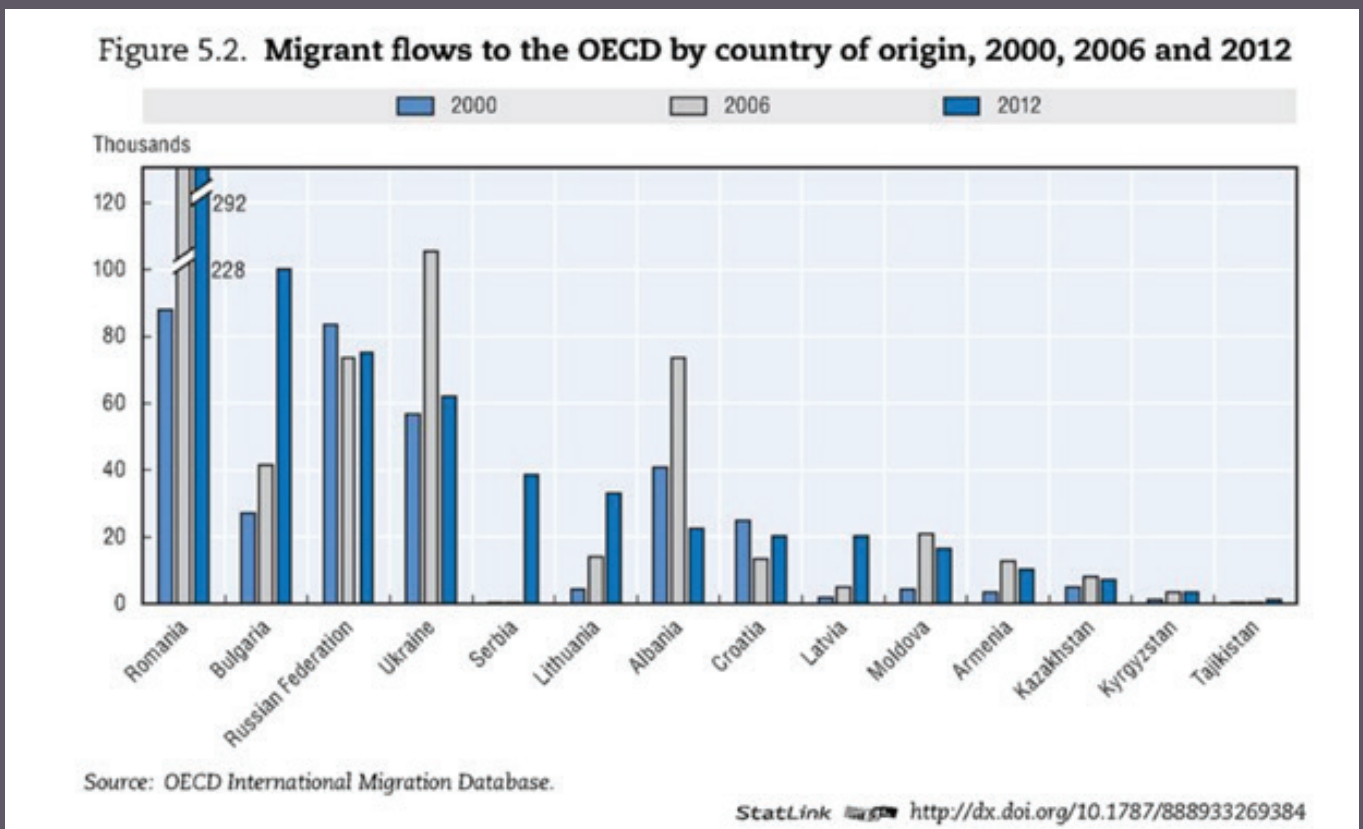
¹⁶ Republic of Serbia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 'Diaspora General Information', at: <http://www.mfa.gov.rs/en/consular-affairs/Diaspora/Diaspora-general-information> [accessed 26.06.2020];

However, there were views that government institutions in the region (for example Albania) are seeking to recruit people who return to their home country after graduating from the universities abroad.

The 2000s saw a surge in research into the WB diaspora as countries fought to combat the then newly publicized brain drain. Unfortunately, there is scarcity and conflicting data on the diaspora, mainly due to a lack of official registry data, leaving many countries to rely solely on statistics recorded by host countries and international organisations, or by their foreign missions which include only the diaspora who make contact. Not one of the WB countries in this briefing had published a definite number of diaspora, and the highest estimates can be more than double the lowest estimates.

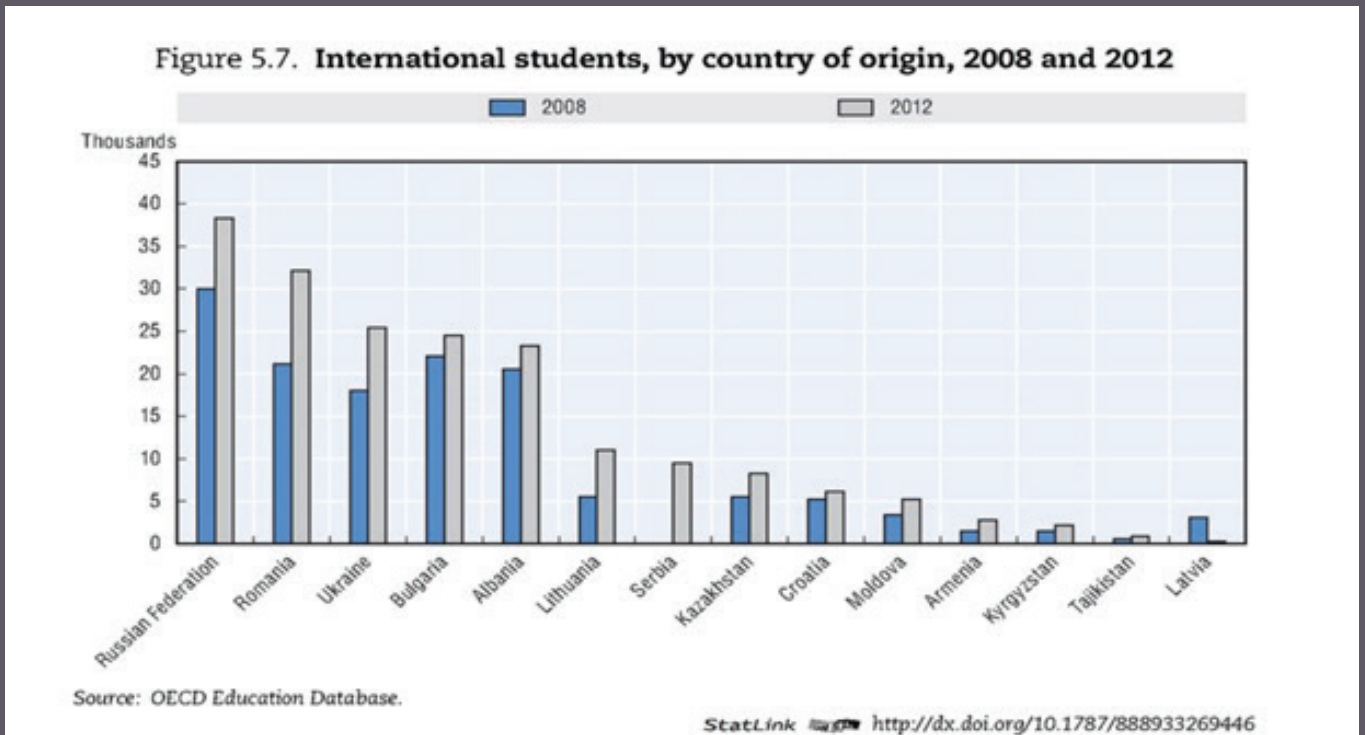
Figure 1 (5.2) below on migrant flows to the OECD for the period 2000 – 2012, shows the trends for Albania, Serbia, and Croatia.

Figure 1 (5.2): Migrant flows



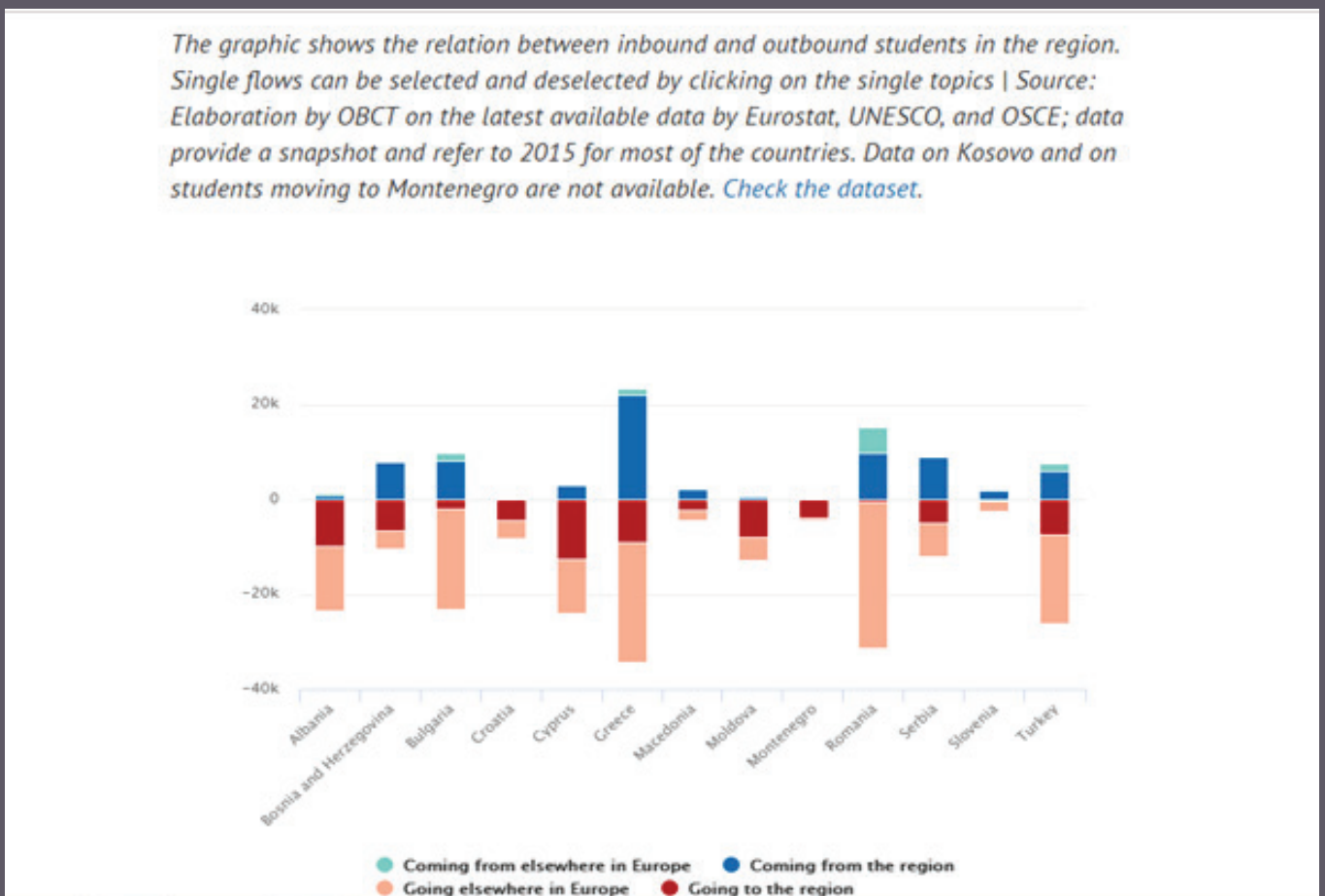
This can be clearly observed in the fact that although the emigration to OECD member states has been fairly consistent over the last decade, the numbers of international students from Albania, Croatia, and Serbia have been on the rise between 2008 - 2012 (see Figure 2 (5.7) below).

Figure 2 (5.7): International students, by country of origin 2008 and 2012



This trend seems to have continued as the data on the figure below indicate:

Figure 3: South-east europe: inbound and outbound student flows



This situation has left countries wondering how to prevent education and work becoming only gateways to emigration, and their citizens, particularly the educated, from permanently moving abroad.

WB countries need to examine the best ways to harnessing the financial, political, and academic potential of the diaspora, and should seek new and enticing ways to engage the diasporas and to collect (and publicise) meaningful data. Having a highly educated and skilled diaspora poses an opportunity for a potential gain to the home country in the form of human capital. The challenge lies in mobilizing these brains in order to involve them in promoting the economic growth of the region, building a sustainable brain circulation network.¹⁷

Simply put, how to turn the current brain drain into a brain gain?

Cooperation amongst the WB countries is crucial. The brain gain strategy should be twofold, focusing on both those who have left their countries of origin and on those who have remained. All WB countries have set objectives as to how to reap the benefits of their diaspora's potential to contribute to socio-economic development. From Croatia creating quotas for diaspora students in Croatian universities, to Montenegro and Serbia allocating funds to innovative diaspora projects, to North Macedonia supporting entrepreneurship between home-based and diasporic economic actors. These represent some good examples of how WB countries can gain traction in engaging their diasporas. All WB countries have formulated legal and political strategy documents that underpin their various diaspora-related programs and projects aimed at forging strong ties for improved socio-economic benefit.

Despite this progress, a lot remains to be done. Not only individual efforts by each country toward their diasporas, but also cross-regional efforts to effectively increase the diaspora contribution to socio-economic development, and to utilize the cross-regional approach with the diaspora to encourage greater regional cooperation between WB countries overall. All these endeavors need to rely on a sustainable and long-term strategies to promote and foster socio-economic growth and democratization in the region, leaving no way to corruption and nepotism, two of the main pitfalls that continue to hamper progress and serve as the main culprits for the long socio-economic status-quo of the countries of the region.¹⁸

It is the role of the policymakers to think collaboratively about what new strategies and policies could be implemented to improve the brain gain and brain circulation in the WB. It is vital to develop the region's competitiveness, and to focus on expanding the private sector and easing the administrative bureaucracy currently required to start a business. Supporting the creation of new businesses will improve investment opportunities, encourage further entrepreneurship, and positively impact the employment sectors.

6. Challenges to interacting with the Diaspora

While there may be several associations linked to the diaspora in each home country, regional cooperation has proven to be a challenge. This can be attributed to a number of factors. WB diasporas tend to be more culturally conservative than those back in their countries of origin, in a bid to maintain and not lose their identities, turning to the ideals and traditions that have shaped them. The WB is known for its political, ethnic and religious divisions and this can be even more prevalent among the different diasporic communities of the region. With religion being so tightly tied to identity and with the nationalistic rhetoric that often characterizes their political viewpoints, it can be a challenge to establish a functioning cross-regional diaspora cooperation. Members of one WB diaspora may hesitate to

¹⁷ R&D and Innovation in Western Balkans, Moving Towards 2020), http://wbc-inco.net/object/document/13962/attach/-PUBLIKATION_WBCINCO_web.pdf

¹⁸ "South-east European Scientific Diaspora". <https://wbc-rti.info/object/document/14693>

These and similar examples indicate that even though people have personal stories and experiences, and potentially different cultural backgrounds that define them, they are able to find common ground, solidarity and unity which remains crucial basis for better understanding and cooperation between the diaspora communities. They also show that members of diaspora communities together hold valuable potential, knowledge and skills, currently untapped due to a lack of communication and limited opportunities for cooperation.

There is high potential to build on the existing and create new opportunities. There is the possibility for the diaspora communities to create a bridge between their country of residence and their country of origin, and connect a cultural chasm that is currently in place. Such examples also demonstrate that it is important that professionals share their experiences and are enabled to coherently transfer their knowledge and expertise. And that collective action is needed to identify actors, leaders and agents of change among the diaspora communities who are able and motivated to contribute. Therefore, it is fundamental to give a voice to members of the diaspora and create new opportunities for participation and collaboration through for example building networks based on common values and interests, and creating channels that enable intellectual wealth transfer and support for different professionals.

Gaining full membership into the EU is a common aspiration for WB countries and societies. Each WB country is at a different stage, with regional cooperation being one of the key pillars in advancing the accession process. By involving the countries' diaspora to build stronger cross-regional ties, this process would undoubtedly gain more traction and pave the way for a sustainable shift from the current situation.

7. Conclusion

Despite integrating into their host countries, the WB diasporas have kept close ties with their home countries. They have been active in preserving their culture, tradition, and language by organizing themselves within various cultural, educational, and political associations and, as a consequence, influencing policies in both home and host countries. They are a diverse group, holding onto rather conservative ideals and traditions, more so than people in countries of their origin, and with identities being built strongly around ethnicity and religion. The contributions made by the region's diaspora have been multidimensional, with support going towards financial and human capital, remittances, direct investment, philanthropy, and tourism to name a few.

WB countries are yet to harness the potential of inter-diaspora initiatives and projects, which not only fuel economic development but also contribute to ethnic reconciliation and achieving the EU aspirations of the region. Although the benefits of involving the diaspora to improve socio-economic conditions and advancing democracy in the region have long been acknowledged, the focus has always been to rely on what the diaspora has to offer, and not vice versa. While sizable amounts of money are sent to the region, WB countries are still in the process of finding solutions to effectively tackle the brain drain and to fully utilise the intellectual and financial capital of their diaspora. A challenge to this seems to be the scarcity and often conflicting data in the region. Robust data collection systems (including access and publication), are likely to improve the credibility of data and better inform future research, policies and interventions.

Numerous projects with the diaspora have been implemented and are continuing. Yet, the cross-regional diaspora cooperation needs to be put higher on the agenda of the relevant authorities of the WB countries. While people have personal stories and experiences, and potentially different cultural backgrounds that define them, it is possible to find common ground which remains crucial basis for improving mutual understanding and lowering barriers that eventually lead to solidarity and cooperation. When drafting strategies and policy documents, it is critical for each country to emphasise that regional cooperation must be improved as a precondition of the countries moving forward in their road to EU accession.

Annex 1. Key policies, data, projects and organisations by country

Note: While the data on key policies and institutions are most recent in this Annex, a comprehensive list of all prominent organisations, projects, and statistic for each host country was not subject of this briefing.

Albania

According to the Albanian Government Policy for Diaspora, there are numerous legislative and administrative decisions that have been taken so far associated also with the establishment of several institutional bodies. Below are listed the institutional bodies that have been created in order to promote and advance ties with its diaspora:

- Subcommittee on Diaspora and Migration (part of Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Policy);
- State Committee on Diaspora;
- State Minister of Diaspora.

Key strategic official documents adopted by the Government of Albania, include the following:

- Law on Diaspora;
- Law on Establishment of the National Agency of Diaspora;
- Law on Albanian Fund for the Development of Diaspora;
- National Strategy on Migration 2019-2022 and Action Plan;
- Resolution on the State Policy Reform on Diaspora.

Apart from the institutional bodies and official strategic documents and legislation, the Government of Albania has so far achieved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with several countries. It is worth mentioning the MoU on the cooperation with the Republic of Kosovo on regards to matters of the diaspora, including the establishment of Cultural Centres, as well as encouraging entrepreneurship and creating information resources. Other MoU's were signed with other actors, such as the National Agency of Diaspora in Albania and Università degli Studi eCampus in Italy, to cooperate in the fields of research, teaching, technological development, and innovation.

Diaspora Organizations:

Australia	Albanian Australian Community Association Inc United Albanians of Australia Association Australian-Albanian Women's Association INC
Austria	Albanian Youth and Students Association of Austria
Italy	<u>Associazione Avvocati Albanesi in Italia - A.A.I.</u> National Federation of Albanians in Italy – FNAI Albanians in Italy Albanian <u>Herth</u> of Torino Albanian Teachers' Association in Italy National League of Albanian and <u>Arbëreshë</u> Associations in Italy
Netherlands	Albanian Netherlands Alumni Association Dutch Albanian Foundation
Norway	Norwegian-Albanian Friendship Association

Sweden	Albanska Riksförbundet Iliria
Switzerland	The Albanian Community in Switzerland Albanian intellectuals in Switzerland Institut Suisse d'Etudes Albanaises (ISEAL) The Society Switzerland-Albania
US	Albanian American Civic League National Albanian American Council Pan-Albanian Federation of America Vatra Massachusetts Albanian American Society Besa Albanian-American National Organization Albanian American Association Albanian-American Association of Cleveland Albanian American Open Hand Association Albanian-American Development Foundation

The table below shows the estimations of immigrants living in the following countries:

Country	No. of population (Diaspora)
Belgium	5,000
Canada	15,500
France	10,000
Germany	15,000
Greece	750,000
Italy	450,000
Turkey	5,000
UK	50,000
US	400,000

Source: NID (2010, pp.7-8)

Projects and Activities

The case of Arbëresh

This project, launched on 31 July 2014 and concluded on 18 March 2016, aimed to study the formation of the Arbëresh minority, currently one of Italy's twelve officially recognized linguistic minorities. It was carried out by [École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales](#) in Paris.

Engaging the Albanian Diaspora in the Social and Economic Development of Albania

In 2018, IOM launched a program intended to enhance the engagement of Albania's diaspora to the social and economic development of Albania. The program is funded by Italian Cooperation, with the political commitment of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI). It has three components: the first is to support the Government of Albania to implement a comprehensive approach towards diaspora engagement for sustainable development in line with the overall policy framework; the second and third are to facilitate the engagement of Albania's diaspora in the development of the country of origin through transfer of skills and knowledge, and through investment.

Diaspora Summits

Alongside these projects, in order to boost the networks of diaspora with the homeland, the Albanian Government has organized two Diaspora Summits so far: one from 18 - 20

November 2016, and another from 28 February - 2 March 2019. The summits invited Albanian diaspora from across the world to establish contacts and create networks. The Prime Minister of Albania presented awards to diaspora personalities who had made contributions to the development of diaspora.

Diaspora Business Office

The Council of Ministers approved the proposal of the Minister for Diaspora for the financing of project "Diaspora Business Office, fostering the Diaspora investments in Albania" as well as the implementation by the "*Albanian Development Fund for Diaspora*." The office supports the diaspora investors who wish to launch businesses or broaden the operations of existing businesses in Albania.

Diaspora Publishing House

Established by the Albanian Government's decision No. 468, its mission is to support the Albania diaspora to learn the Albanian language, to make the diaspora aware of and inform them about national culture through publishing social and historical textbooks and literature, and by organising and supporting of educational, cultural and social activities aimed at preserving and developing national identity.

The National Day of Diaspora

According to the Law on Diaspora, the 18th of December marks the National Day of Diaspora.

Bosnia & Herzegovina

The Government of the Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina has approved an official document *Policy on Cooperation with Diaspora*, with which it "*intends to recognize, nurture and develop ties between the immigrants of BiH and their own country, to create and informatively recognize the conditions for greater integration of immigrants into the socio-economic development of BiH, and to encourage diaspora to contribute to the international promotion of the country and the building of a positive image of BiH by linking and working on international projects, projects in their country of residence and projects in BiH*".

According to the BiH Federal Government Policy on Cooperation with Diaspora, there are numerous legislative and administrative decisions that have been taken so far to establish several institutional bodies:

- Within its competences to implement foreign policy, the BiH Presidency initiates the conclusion of bilateral agreements in the field of consular, labour and property protection of BiH citizens abroad;
- The BiH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees has direct communication, i.e. clear directions for action as set forth in BiH's Diaspora policy, within its competences;
- The Department of Diaspora operates through two sectors: the sector for Status and Information and the sector for Economic, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation;
- The BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in charge of encouraging, developing and coordinating cooperation with immigrants from BiH, with a network of diplomatic and consular missions;
- The BiH Ministry of Civil Affairs is in charge of supplementary teaching in diaspora;
- The competent institutions of the Federation of BiH, the Republika Srpska, the Brčko District of BiH, cantons and municipalities – given the competences and the matter of emigration is multi-sectoral, many issues are solved at the entity, cantonal and

municipal levels of government, so the participation of various actors from different sectors and levels of government are needed in defining a diaspora policy.

Key strategic official documents adopted by the Government of the Federation of BiH include the following:

- Guide to BiH Diaspora – How to protect investor rights in BiH;
- Analysis of needs for training of employees in institutions in BiH at different levels of government for strengthening capacities for cooperation with expatriates and proposal of training plan;
- Guide to BiH Diaspora – How to exercise rights in BiH;
- Recommendations for incorporating the concept of migration and development in the design and implementation of public policies in BiH;
- Diaspora Mapping.

Diaspora Organizations:

Australia	<u>Australian Union of <u>BiH</u> Associations*</u>
Austria	<u>The Center for Contemporary Initiatives</u> <u>HKD Napredak</u> <u>Association of Serbian Clubs</u> <u>Association for the Integration of Bosnian Citizens "Bosna"</u> <u>Institute for Professional Information and Cultural Activities</u>
Denmark	<u>Savez bosanskohercegovačkih udruženja u Danskoj – SBHUD</u>
Germany	<u>Islamic Cultural Center of <u>Bosniaks</u></u> <u>Bosnian Network of Students and Academics in Germany</u> <u>Umbrella Organization of Bosnian Schools in Germany</u>
Italy	<u>BiH izvan granica</u> <u>Association of Citizens of <u>BiH</u></u> <u>Association "Lilijan"</u> <u>Association of Citizens of <u>BiH</u> in Verona</u> <u>Association of Citizens of <u>BiH</u> "Most"</u> <u>Association of Citizens "Nema problema"</u> <u>BiH Community "Bosna u srcu"</u> <u>"Amici dej Bosnia"</u> <u>Union of <u>BiH</u> Citizen Associations**</u>
The Netherlands	<u>Business Club <u>BiH</u>-NL</u> <u>Mladi <u>BiH</u></u> <u>Naučno Akademijski Umetnički Klub NAUK <u>BiH</u></u>
Slovenia	<u>Cultural-Artistic Society "Behar"</u>
Sweden	<u>The Alliance of Bosnian and Herzegovinian Associations in Sweden</u> <u>Association of Banja <u>Lukans</u> in Sweden</u> <u>Association of <u>BiH</u> Woman in Sweden</u>
Switzerland	<u>Islamic Community of <u>Bosniaks</u> in <u>Zwitzerland</u></u>
US	<u>Community of <u>Bosniaks</u> <u>Georgia</u></u> <u>The Congress of North American <u>Bosniaks</u></u> <u>Bosnian-Herzegovinian American Academy of Arts and Sciences</u>

*It is a diaspora umbrella organization which represents 28 clubs and societies from five Australian states and the Australian Capital Territory (Canberra).

**It is a diaspora umbrella organization which represents all BiH diaspora associations in Italy.

The table below shows the estimations of immigrants living in the following countries:

Country	No. of population (Diaspora)
Australia	37,802
Austria	183,169
Croatia	373,838
Denmark	18,196
Germany	289,000
Italy	29,624
The Netherlands	966
Slovenia	107,677
Serbia	341,347
Sweden	59,939
Switzerland	57,373
US	137,688

Source: MHRR (2020, pp.66-67)

Projects and Activities

Diaspora for Development (D4D)

This project aims to strengthen the role of BiH diaspora in development processes in BiH. Further, it intends to increase socio-economic opportunities and perspectives for people in BiH, and to improve their livelihoods through increased diaspora engagement. This project is implemented by UNDP Office in BiH, and was funded by the Government of Switzerland, UNDP and IOM. Furthermore, this project entails implementation of three specific outcomes:

1. BiH Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees and BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with government institutions at different levels, use and further develop their instruments to actively connect, exchange, and engage with diaspora members and organizations;
2. Local governments align their development strategies to the diaspora policy framework at higher government levels, provide more and better services to diaspora members, and encourage community initiatives to attract Diaspora know-how and investment;
3. Diaspora partners transfer know-how and skills and make joint investments with private sector actors in BiH, contributing positively to key economic indicators.

List of Cultural and Scientific Projects in BiH

The Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of BiH provides a List of Cultural and Scientific projects in BiH to expatriates, to encourage the diaspora community to get involved, as well as to facilitate the finding of contacts and partners for implementation of these projects.

USAID Diaspora Invest

This program intends to provide funding for companies led by BiH diaspora and technical support, focusing primarily on assisting in the improvement of production processes and services, product development, staff training, certification process and other activities relevant to the business.

Interactive Portal for the BiH Diaspora

This web portal was launched with the aim to inform the BiH diaspora around the world regarding various initiatives and projects that may result in successful partnership of BiH diaspora. In addition, it provides the opportunity to register BiH diaspora so that there is a list of diaspora organizations settled as well as a list of projects which may attract BiH diaspora entrepreneurs to invest in their country of origin.

Kosovo

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Diaspora (previously the Ministry of Diaspora and Strategic Investment) is the governmental body that serves as an institutional backbone to formulating policies and setting up objectives to preserve and nurture of national identity, language, culture and education among Kosovo's diaspora and promote strong relationship between Kosovo and its diaspora. In parliament level, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Diaspora undertakes the role of supervision of the work of this Ministry.

Key legal and strategic/policy documents include:

- The Law on Diaspora;
- Strategy for Diaspora 2019-2023 and Action Plan 2019-2021

Diaspora Organizations & Population:

Note: *It is not possible to make a distinction nor comparison between the Kosovo's diaspora communities and organizations and those of Albania. Therefore the data on Kosovo diaspora organizations and communities could not be provided separately for Kosovo.*

Projects and Activities

The Cultural Centres

The following are the three cultural centres:

- The Cultural Centre in Turkey;
- The Cultural Centre in Switzerland;
- The Cultural Centre in Sweden.

The establishment of these cultural centres was envisaged by the Law on Diaspora, which stipulates the creation of Kosovo Cultural Centres abroad, to preserve and nurture the national identity, language, culture and education of diaspora, as well as to reinforce the relationship between Kosovo and its diaspora.

Among this scope of functions, they are also responsible to:

- Promote general knowledge regarding Kosovo;
- Encourage language and cultural learning, including cultural heritage;
- Encourage cooperation in the areas of science, technology, sports, economy;
- Provide to diaspora the relevant information and instructions regarding investments, fiscal policy etc.

Diaspora Engagement in Economic Development

UNDP Kosovo, together with IOM and with the financial assistance by the government of Finland, has launched this project which aims to support the government of Kosovo's efforts to facilitate increased contribution of the diaspora of Kosovo in the form of investments that can generate growth, and also to promote saving and investment among remittance-receiving households. Since 2012 twenty-five (25) diaspora business networks have been established in Europe, US, Canada, Turkey and Australia. Additionally, the Global Union of Diaspora Business Networks is the Umbrella institution for all diaspora business networks worldwide.

Diaspora Interactive Platform

The aim of this platform is to provide the diaspora organizations a virtual space in order to establish partnerships, to promote activities in countries where they reside and to advocate in a more structured manner for the interests of diaspora.

Kosovo Diaspora.org

This platform is crowd sourcing digital engagement and diplomacy platform that serves as a tool to nurture existing links between Kosovo and its diaspora community. It uses social and online media to highlight and celebrate achievements of individuals, groups and organizations related to Kosovo.

Diaspora School in Kosovo

It is an innovative initiative which aims to bring together young professionals from Kosovo, the Diaspora, and the Western Balkans region to jointly find solutions to some of the most pressing issues facing local communities in Kosovo.

"Woman in Diaspora – a strong backbone against assimilation" Conference

The Ministry of Diaspora and Strategic Investments organized in July 2019 a conference which primarily focused on the discussion of issues related to challenges faced today by women diaspora, including divorce and domestic violence, and how the successful diaspora woman can organize other women to emancipate themselves and integrate.

Montenegro

The Council for Cooperation with Diaspora is the main channel through which Montenegro interacts with its diaspora. It acts as an advisory body to the government on strategies and laws of interest to the diaspora, determines the codes and rules of the council, and runs activities for the protection of the Montenegrin language, culture, and tradition. The council itself is made up of representatives of the diaspora as outlined in the 2018 Law on Cooperation of Montenegro with Diaspora Immigrants. Additionally, there is another governmental body – the Department of Diaspora. Notwithstanding this, in parliament level, the Committee on International Relations and Immigrants monitors and considers proposals and initiatives for the adoption of laws and other acts within its scope of activities, and considers other issues within competences of the Parliament of Montenegro that determine life issues of immigrants living in other countries, in its entirety or in any of its segments.

In its attempt to forge conclusive diaspora involvement in socio-economic development of the country, the government has adopted the strategic document "Economic diplomacy and cooperation with Diaspora priorities".

Diaspora Organizations:

Albania	"AlbaMontenegro" Duklja
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	Montenegro Community in Albania
Australia	Montenegrin Ethnic Association of Australia Montenegrin Cultural Society NJEGOŠ Montenegrin Community of Western Australia <u>MonteAustralia Association of Emigrants and Friends</u>
Argentina	<u>Asociación Argentino Montenegrina</u> Our House Association The Montenegro Community of the Province Even "The King of <u>Nikol</u> "
Bolivia	Trust of the Montenegrin Mother in Bolivia
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Council of the Montenegro National Minorities in <u>BiH</u> Montenegro's Association in <u>BiH</u> " <u>Vuk Micunovic</u> " Association of Citizens originating from <u>Sandjak</u> Association of Montenegro and Friends "Luca" Montenegro Society Mostar
Canada	Montenegrin Cultural Society Toronto Montenegrin Society of British Columbia Montenegrin Cultural Association "Bishop Danilo" Montenegrin – Canadian Association
Czech Republic	Friends from Montenegro in Czech Republic
Croatia	National Community of Montenegro – Croatia National Community of Montenegro – Rijeka National Community of Montenegro – Split Zagreb Society of Montenegro and Friends of Montenegro National Community of Montenegro – Pula Association of Montenegro and Friends of Montenegro " <u>Obod</u> " Society of Montenegrins and Friends " <u>Onogošt</u> " Society of Montenegro and Friends of Montenegro – Osijek Montenegro – Croatian Friendship Society
Cyprus	Association of Montenegrins and Friends of Montenegro in Cyprus
Denmark	Cultural and Business <u>Center Association</u> "Montenegro"
France	Montenegro Association
Germany	Montenegro Associations of Germany Montenegro – German Cultural <u>Center</u> Montenegro – Hessen Citizens' Association Montenegro-Saxons Association " <u>Perper</u> " Club " <u>Sandzak</u> " Koln Club Montenegro-Eschweiler
Hungary	Montenegro-Hungary Society " <u>Vladika Danilo</u> "
Italy	Association of Montenegro and Friends of Montenegro in Italy Italian-Montenegrin Association "Regina Elena"
Luxembourg	Luxembourg – Montenegro Cooperation LMB Association <u>Bosniak-Democratic Fund</u> Club "Bihor"
North Macedonia	Community of Montenegro in the Republic of North Macedonia Macedonian-Montenegrin Friendship Association Union of Montenegrin Emigrants in the Republic of North Macedonia
The Netherlands	<u>Bosniak</u> Association of Swimmers and Caterpillars "Behar"
Norway	Norway-Montenegro Friends Association
Paraguay	Names of Montenegro in Paraguay
Russia	Montenegro Association in the Russian Federation

Serbia	Montenegro Cultural Center in Belgrade Montenegrin National Community Serbia-Montenegro Association "KRSTAS" Montenegro's Association of Vojvodina Montenegro Cultural and Information Center, Kruscic Montenegro Community Prokupie Montenegro Cultural and Educational Society "Princess Ksenija" Montenegro National Council
Slovenia	Montenegro Cultural, Educational and Sports Society "Moraca" Slovenia-Montenegro Friendship Society Society of Montenegro and Friends of Montenegro – Ljubljana Montenegro Society "Duklja" Association of Montenegrin Societies of Slovenia Montenegrin Society "Komovi"
South Africa	Montenegro – Africa Community Association
Switzerland	Montenegrin Diaspora in Switzerland Jamaat Wattwil Islamic Cultural Center The Bosnian Diaspora of Montenegro in Switzerland
Turkey	Association of Social Solidarity and Culture of the Emigrants of Montenegro
United Kingdom	Montenet Organization Montenegro – British Society in UK
Uruguay	Montenegro Community of Uruguay
US	Montenegro San Francisco Association "Dover" Detroit Association "His" Cultural Society Florida Montenegro Independent New York Cultural and Information Center Primorje Association Montenegro Association of America and Canada Albanian-American Association "Malësia e Madhe" Montenegro Association of America The Bosniak Alliance of Montenegro Montenegro Emigrants Association

The table below shows the estimations of immigrants living in the following countries:

Country	No. of population (Diaspora)
Albania	2,000
Australia	766
Austria	2,000
Canada	4,000-5000
Croatia	4,926
Cyprus	500
Germany	20,000 - 30,000
Latin America	20,000
Serbia	69,049
Scandinavian countries	10,000
Slovenia	2,667
Switzerland	25,000
US	30,000

Source: IOM (2007, pp.17)

Projects and Activities

Economic Conference – Montenegro 2017: A meeting with Montenegrin scientists from Diaspora

About thirty scientists and researchers currently working in the US, the UK, France and other European countries were asked to get actively involved and to indicate the ways in which the effectiveness of the measures taken by the state could be increased, proposing ventures based on their experiences.

2nd Convocation of the Council for Cooperation with Diaspora

In this event (2019), the government of Montenegro urged the diaspora to come up with innovative ideas which could be funded by the authorities.

Web app for record of immigrants originating from Montenegro

In April 2019, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched the web application for the record of immigrants.

North Macedonia

The Ministry without portfolio in charge of Diaspora Affairs coordinates institutional activity to enhance the cooperation between the diaspora and their country of origin.

This ministry has approved a strategic document which envisages the state cooperation with its diaspora. The National Strategy of North Macedonia for Cooperation with Diaspora 2019-2023, aims to address the following issues:

- The Diaspora Mapping;
- Systematic acknowledgement of Diaspora priorities;
- The establishment of cooperation mechanism between the government and Diaspora;
- Acknowledgement of rights and obligations of Diaspora political context;
- The advancement of cultural cooperation between North Macedonia and its Diaspora;
- The establishment of business cooperation between North Macedonia and its Diaspora;
- The establishment of education cooperation and youth policies between North Macedonia and its Diaspora.

Diaspora Organizations:

Albania	Ilinden
Austria	Austrian Macedonian Association World Macedonian Congress
Australia	Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee Australian–Macedonian Advisory Council Macedonian human right committee of Melbourne and Victoria
Canada	The United Macedonians' Organization of Canada Macedonian Human Rights Movement International Macedonian Centre for Cultural and Social Integration Canadian Macedonian Business and Professional Association. Ryerson Association of Macedonian Students Canadian Macedonian Historical Society

Denmark	Macedonian association "Macedonia"
France	Association, France-Macedonia – Paris
Germany	Macedonian Community for the North Germany Macedonian Community for the Middle Germany Macedonian Community for the South Germany
Switzerland	Community of Macedonia associations
United Kingdom	Association of Macedonian Citizens in United Kingdom Macedonian Cultural and Information Centre
US	The Macedonian American Friendship Association United Macedonian Diaspora

The table below shows the estimations of immigrants living in the following countries:

Country	No. of population (Diaspora)
Austria	16,587
Australia	81,989
Bulgaria	5,071
Canada	31,270
France	2,560
Germany	62,474
Italy	78,090
Serbia	25,847
Switzerland	60,509
Turkey	31,515
US	51,955

Source: Osteuropa-Institut Regensburg (2010, pp.14)

Projects and Activities

Research Center for Diaspora

The Minister without portfolio in the Republic of North Macedonia in charge of Diaspora Affairs has signed a memorandum of understanding with Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje to establish the Research Center for Diaspora and Migration. The parties also agreed to foster cooperation in the areas of policy formulation by assisting the government in drafting strategic policy documents in order to effectively engage the diaspora in the areas of significant interest for the state, as well as undertaking other activities through a coordinated approach.

Public Call for Projects Financing

The Minister without portfolio has called upon all the interested organizations, associations, interested individuals that originate from the diaspora, to apply for funding of their projects.

Serbia

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in charge of performing public administration and professional activities related to monitoring the position of Serbian citizens living outside of Republic of Serbia.

The Serbian Parliament has adopted the Law on the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region which stipulates that the Assembly of the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region shall be the highest body of the diaspora and Serbs in the region, and that a Budget Fund and a Council for Diaspora should be established.

Diaspora Organizations:

Albania	Serbian Orthodox Society "Sveti Jovan Vladimir" Serbian Association "Jedinstvo"
Australia	Serbian National Association of South Australia Serbian National Council Tasmanian Serbian Union Serbia National Union – Canberra Australian-Serbia Health Association Serbian Community Center for Western Australia Serbian Serbs Society
Austria	Union of Serbs in Austria Organization of the Independent Serbian Associations of the Lower Austria Organization "Blockfrei" Community of Serbian Clubs in Vienna Austrian-Serbian Business Forum Austrian-Serbian Society Austrian-Serbian Woman Initiative Serbian Educational and Cultural Society Diaspora Media Association
Belarus	Belarusian-Serbian Friendship Society
Botswana	Serbian Society in Botswana
Brazil	Serbian Club in Brazil
Bulgaria	The Serbian Association in Bulgaria
Canada	Serbian Unity Congress - Toronto Serbian Heritage Academy of Canada Serbian Young Professionals Association of Serbian Women Canadian Serbian Council Serbian League of Canada Serbian National Shield Society of Canada Serbian Community Center
China	Serbia and Friends Association - Beijing
Croatia	North-West Croatia Community Serbian National Council in Republic of Croatia Organization for Citizens' Initiative Karlovac Human Rights Committee Civil Human Rights Committee Initiative for Serbian National Congress
Cyprus	Serbian-Cyprus Business Council
Czech Republic	Serbian Association "Sveti Sava"
Denmark	Serbian-Danish Organization "Halsnaes" Danish-Serbian Association "Svetost" Serbian Cultural and Education Forum "Saint Georgia" Cultural Association "Balkan"
Equatorial Guinea	Serbian Association in Equatorial Guinea

Finland	Serbian-Finland Friendship Society
France	Assembly of Serbian Diaspora in France Community of Serbian French Associations – Paris Serbian Community of France Organization of Serbian Students Abroad “ <u>Ossi</u> ” Association of Young Professionals of Serbian Origin in France “Mosaic” French-Serbian Association “ <u>Kozara</u> ”
Germany	Serbian-German Society German-Serbian Cooperation Society Serbian Association for Culture, Family and Youth Work
Greece	Serbian-Greek Association Greek-Serbian Trade and Industrial Association Greek-Serbian Business World
Hungary	Serbian Cultural and Documentation <u>Center</u> in Hungary Serbian Pedagogical <u>Center</u> in Hungary
India	Indian-Serbian Friendship Society
Ireland	Serbian Community Cork Ireland
Italy	Serbian Association “ <u>Vuk Karadzic</u> ” Trieste SKUD “Pontes – Bridges” Trieste Association of the Serbian Diaspora <u>Sloga</u> Serbian Cultural Community “ <u>Arziniano</u> ”
Luxembourg	<u>Vidoydan</u> Serbian Cultural Club
Montenegro	Professors of Serbian Language and Literature Association of Serbian Librarians of Montenegro and Herzegovina Serbian Educational and Cultural Society “ <u>Enlightenment</u> ” Foundation “Serbian Voice of Boke”
New Zealand	Serbian Club Auckland
North Macedonia	Serbian Cultural <u>Center</u> – <u>Skopje</u> Central Association of Serbian Organizations in Macedonia Serbian Community in Macedonia
Norway	Council of Serbian Associations in Norway Serbian Association “ <u>Serbia Kruna</u> ” Association of Serbian Doctors in Norway Serbian Association “ <u>Nikola Tesla</u> ”
Poland	Polish-Serbian Friendship Association
Qatar	Serbian-Qatar Friendship Association
Romania	Council of Serbs in Romania Romanian-Serbian Friendship League
Russian Federation	Serbian-Russian Club
Slovakia	Serbian Association in Slovakia
Slovenia	Union of Serbian Society in Slovenia Council of Serbian Diaspora in Slovenia
South Africa	Serbian Club “ <u>Zavičaj</u> ” Serbian Cultural and Arts Society “Africa” “Serbian Style” Association
Spain	Casa Serbia Casa <u>Eslava</u> Casa Del Este
Sweden	Union of Serbs in Sweden Serbian Association – Malmo

	Serbian Cultural and Sports Association "Kozara"
Switzerland	Serbian Cultural Union in Switzerland Association of Serbian Cultural and Arts Societies in Switzerland
United Kingdom	The Serbian Society The Laza Kostic Foundation Serbian Benevolent British-Serbian Medical Association Serbian Council of Great Britain
United States	The Tesla Science Foundation Serbian Association of New York Serbian Academic Club Serbian American Medical and Dental Society Serbian National Defense Council of America Serbian National Federation

Note: It was not possible to identify data for Serbia's immigrants from a single credible source similar to the other five WB countries provided in this Annex. In the case of Serbia, it was common that research from various actors either cited the same sources but provided conflicting data, or the sources that were referenced were inaccessible.

Projects and Activities

Open Competition for Partially Financing projects

In 2018, the government of Serbia has allocated budget to fund around 100 projects for the Diaspora and for Serbs in the region.

Project "Serbia for the Serbs of the Region"

At the recommendation of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, in line with the Strategy of maintaining and strengthening relations between the mother country and diaspora, as well as between the mother country and the Serbs of the region, the Government of the Republic of Serbia has approved the Project "Serbia for the Serbs of the Region", providing scholarships for young people belonging to the Serbian ethnic communities in the countries of the region.

Blockchain-based Diaspora remittances in the city of Niš (2018)

UNDP Serbia designed this project to test how this type of advanced technology can be of use to the government, while making the financial transfer services cheaper, more transparent and tailored to citizen's needs. Most recently, the National Bank of Serbia fully endorsed the test to be conducted by UNDP, since the Bank itself has been planning to also test and potentially induce blockchain technologies for diaspora remittances.

Linking Serbian banks and Serbian Diaspora in Germany

As a result of a survey amongst Serbia's migrants in Germany, GIZ found out that neither do banks in Serbia target their potential diaspora customers specifically nor do the migrants have information about the banks' offerings. GIZ brought Serbian banks and other stakeholders into dialogue with Serbian migrant organizations and started a financial literacy campaign via a Serbian diaspora newspaper.

Serbian Diaspora Census project

First step towards the countrywide Census project realization was recently made in the Nišava District, the region surrounding City of Niš. The Census in Nišava District is organized by the Association for Diaspora Cooperation "Matica" with the support of the

Directorate for Diaspora of the Serbian Foreign Affairs Ministry. The Diaspora Census aims to further strengthen the relationship between Serbia and Serbs who live abroad.

About The Balkan Forum

The Balkan Forum works to create a new vision for the Balkan region. It is a regional, multisector platform designed to advance cross-border dialogue and create a shared regional vision and agenda for cooperative action in the Balkan region based on economic integration, prosperity, and sustainable peace. We adopt a positive approach as the guiding principle for our activities; rather than re-emphasizing the problems that have divided the Balkan populations for many years now, we focus heavily on the positive elements that unite them.

We highlight good practices of regional cooperation to policy discussions and promote existing efforts to connect grassroots initiatives, knowledge, and successes to the decision-making levels that are responsible for policymaking and regional and/or EU integration. Together with our partners we focus our efforts on filling gaps and mobilizing action; facilitating consensus building and dialogue; and building political will for policy action on regional cooperation initiatives.

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