

EU INTEGRATION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA WITH A SPECIFIC FOCUS ON THEMATIC CLUSTER INTERNAL MARKET FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF INSTITUTIONAL COMMUNICATION

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Abstract. *Besides the introduction and concluding remarks, research on the challenges of institutional communication regarding the EU integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be structured into three interconnected and interdependent parts. The first part will briefly review the historical development of relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU. In the next part, we will elaborate on the governance structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the modalities of communication used to inform the public about EU integration. The focus will be on the coordination system of European Integration related to the thematic cluster (2) Internal Market. The third part of the research will address institutional performances based on Reports for Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations related to the selected thematic cluster. Concluding remarks address research results and indicate suitable recommendations.*

Keywords: *EU integration, Thematic cluster Internal Market, The Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina Directorate for European Integration, Institutional communication, Institutional performances.*

1. Introduction

The article titled *EU Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina with a Specific Focus on Thematic Cluster Internal Market from the Perspective of Institutional Communication* aims to elaborate on the complex process of institutional communication with public and governance challenges in this process. In the first part of the article the authors chronology elaborates on Bosnia and Herzegovina's path towards EU. The authors emphasize a complex and challenging political system with a reflection on the development of the coordination system of European Integration and focusing on mechanisms used to communicate with the public. Without diminishing the importance of other clusters within the revised methodology of the European Union Accession negotiations process, our focus is on cluster Internal Market. Institutional performance analysis is based on Reports for Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Directorate-General for

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Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations. Overall findings are summarized in concluding remarks and recommendations.

2. Review of the Historical Development of Relations Between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU

Bosnia and Herzegovina have a long historical continuity that can be traced from the tenth century to the present. It went through complex processes of crisis, occupation, and wars but managed to survive and maintain its statehood. The last challenge to its survival was the aggression in the period 1992 - 1995. In that political context, aggression was ended by the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton Agreement). Dayton Agreement has 11 Annexes¹. Without diminishing the importance of all aspects of the Dayton Agreement, we will focus on Annex IV, the Constitution². The new Constitution has modified the internal institutional structure and created a complex political system.

Internal structure modification made by the Dayton Constitution is explained in (article I, section 3): *"Bosnia and Herzegovina shall consist of the two Entities, the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska"*. Dayton Constitution did not define the inter-Entity Boundary Line in the Brčko area (Annex 2, Article V). All parties agreed to use the Arbitral Tribunal that issued the Final Award and Annex in 1999, establishing the Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Office of the High Representative, 2015). The Decision on the Brčko District of BiH was published in 2000. With this Decision, internal structural modification of the state was finished, and due to this process, a complex political system³ of Bosnia and Herzegovina emerged.

Review EU path of Bosnia and Herzegovina based on combined data from the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Directorate for European Integration (2023b) and Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (n.d). Bosnia and Herzegovina's efforts on the path toward the EU can be traced back to 1997. Almost immediately after the Dayton political system began functioning, there was an apparent effort toward the EU.

¹ "General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton Agreement) consists of 11 Annexes on Military Aspects, Regional Stabilization, Inter-Entity Boundary Issues, Elections, Constitution, Arbitration, Human Rights, Refugees and Displaced Persons, Commission to Preserve National Monuments, Public Corporations, Civilian Implementation and on the International Police Task Force" United Nations Peacemaker (2019). Document Retrieval General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton Agreement) link: peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/BA_951121_DaytonAgreement.pdf (Accessed 12.12.2023).

² Based on the Constitution, *"The Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the official name of which shall henceforth be "Bosnia and Herzegovina," shall continue its legal existence under international law as a state, with its internal structure modified as provided herein and with its present internationally recognized borders. It shall remain a Member State of the United Nations and may as Bosnia and Herzegovina maintain or apply for membership in organizations within the United Nations system and other international organizations"* (article I, section 1).

³ For more information on the political system of Bosnia and Herzegovina, see Banović, D., Gavrić, S., & Mariño, M. B. (2021). *The political system of Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

The following significant process was the establishment of the EU-BiH Consultative Task Force (CTF) in 1998. The Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) indicated the EU perspective for Western Balkan states in 1999.

Parallel with this process, in 1999, the EU confirmed its readiness to provide opportunities for Western Balkan countries to integrate fully and join the European Union based on the Treaty on European Union and criteria from Copenhagen (1993) and Madrid (1995). During 1999, the EU, with international partners, continued with efforts to stabilize South-Eastern Europe. These efforts have resulted in establishing the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe.

The next important step was made in 2000 with the introduction of the Autonomous Trade Measures (ATMs). In March of 2000, the EU Road Map was published with 18 key steps that BiH must undertake to start working on the Feasibility Study for opening negotiations on the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA). The Stabilization and Association Process (SAP) was actively analyzed and discussed in 2000. The focus was on developing pathways from potential candidates for EU membership towards full integration. This process got the full support of all parties.

The implementation of 18 critical steps in the EU Road Map was mainly done in 2002. Preparation of the previously mentioned Feasibility Study started in March 2003, and it was based on a questionnaire consisting of 346 questions on the economic and political set-up of Bosnia and Herzegovina and other fields relevant to concluding the Stabilization and Association Agreement. The European Commission appointed this questionnaire to the Council of Ministers of BiH. In November 2003, the European Commission adopted the assessment of the Feasibility Study. Based on the Feasibility Study, 16 priority areas for reforms were identified. Implementing these reforms was a prequest for the European Commission to propose to the Council of the EU to open negotiations with BiH on the Stabilization and Association Agreement.

In March 2004, the Council of the European Union adopted the first European Partnership with Bosnia and Herzegovina. European Partnership with Bosnia and Herzegovina defines the key (short- and mid-term) priorities in the country's accession to the European Union.

Evident progress in implementing short- and mid-term priorities was made, resulting in the opening of negotiations on the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) on 25.11.2005. In 2006, the first round of SAP negotiation resulted in the adoption of the second European Partnership with Bosnia and Herzegovina. EU initiated the Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA)⁴ in 2007.

A similar dynamic level in developing relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU can be seen in 2008 when two essential agreements were agreed upon and signed: Stabilization and Association Agreement and Interim Agreement on Trade and Trade-related issues. Although both agreements were agreed upon and signed in the same year, only the Interim Agreement on Trade and Trade-related issues entered into force in 2008. SAA with Bosnia and Herzegovina entered into force in 2015. Requirements for visa liberalization were met in 2009 and 2010. EU - BiH structural Dialogue on Justice was held in 2011. The following year, in 2012, BiH got the Roadmap for its EU membership application.

⁴ See more at (Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Directorate for European Integration, 2023a).

In 2014, the EU established a new Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II) for 2014-2020. This year, 2014, was important for two agendas: the Connectivity Agenda⁵ and the Reform Agenda⁶.

In May 2015, Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the Framework Agreement with the European Commission on arrangements to implement the Union's financial assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina within the Instrument of Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II). Later that year, in June 2015, SAA entered into force. SAA brought new opportunities, and an advanced set of responsibilities and obligations emerged for the Bosnian and Herzegovina government. In this context, joint bodies of the European Union and Bosnia and Herzegovina were established to monitor the SAA application and implementation.

The following year, 2016, was very dynamic. In February, Bosnia and Herzegovina submitted an EU membership application. In August, the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted the Decision on the EU integration coordination system⁷ in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Decision⁸ defines the institutional and operational coordination of institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina within the EU integration process, as well as joint bodies, their composition, competencies, and mutual relations (Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Directorate for European Integration, 2023b).

In 2017 and 2018, Bosnia and Herzegovina answered questions and follow-up questions from the European Commission. At the beginning of 2019, institutions were dedicated to answering additional questions. In May 2019, the European Commission adopted its Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for EU membership.

Bosnia and Herzegovina received the candidate status in 2022. Opening accession negotiation is conditioned on achieving the necessary degree of compliance with membership criteria.

In 2023, the EU presented a Growth plan for the Western Balkans based on four pillars: enhancing economic integration with the EU single market (1), boosting

⁵ "The first conference in Berlin initiates the Berlin Process, which is an intergovernmental initiative aimed at revitalizing the multilateral ties between the Western Balkans and the EU, and at improving regional cooperation in the Western Balkans on the issues of infrastructural and economic development (Connectivity Agenda)" (Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Directorate for European Integration, 2023b).

⁶ "The British-German initiative for BiH calls upon the elected representatives of the BiH government to make a written statement to commit to institutional reforms at all the levels and to cooperate with the EU on drafting an extensive reform plan (Reform Agenda) that Bosnia and Herzegovina is to use to progress towards the integration process" (Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Directorate for European Integration, 2023b).

⁷ The legal framework for the system of coordination is (Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Directorate for European Integration, (2023c): Decision on the system of coordination of the European integration process in BiH (Official Gazette of BiH, 72/16, 35/18); Decision establishing the Commission for European Integration (Official Gazette of BiH, 79/16, 93/16, 71/17, 14/18, 72/19, 58/20, 45/21, 2/23); Decision establishing working groups for European integration (Official Gazette of BiH, 46/21); Decision establishing members of the Standing Delegation of BiH to the Stabilization and Association Council (Official Gazette of BiH, 2/17); Instruction on ministerial conferences in the system of coordination of the European integration process in BiH (Official Gazette of BiH, 43/17).

⁸ Decision on the system of coordination of the European integration process in BiH (Official Gazette of BiH, 72/16, 35/18).

economic integration through a common regional market (2), accelerating fundamental reforms (3) and increased financial assistance (4) (European Commission n.d).

Western Balkan countries can use this new financing instrument from 2024 to 2027. The available funds are 6 billion euros (2 billion in grants and 4 billion in loans). In March 2024, EU leaders gave the green light to open accession negotiations, based on the recommendation by the Commission on 12 March 2024 (European Council - Council of the EU, 2024).

Based on this brief review of Bosnia and Herzegovina's efforts towards the EU, with specific consideration of the political environment in the analyzed period, we can see that Bosnia and Herzegovina has made progress by creating a foundation for institutional realignment within the system of coordination⁹. The complex political system of Bosnia and Herzegovina shows the interconnectivity and interdependency of the institutions. Establishing a coordination system shows that Bosnia and Herzegovina is going through slow but evident political development, considering that political development requires changes in institutions, regulations, and policies induced by societal needs. In our case, changes are induced both within society and by pressures from the EU. In essence, that means that the political development of Bosnia and Herzegovina has hybrid driving forces, where external (EU) is driving internal forces.

In the next part of this article, we will elaborate on the institutional communication regarding EU integration used by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Directorate for European Integration.

3. EU Integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the Perspective of Institutional Communication

Combining cognitive, linguistic, and communicative theories with institutional theory provides solid theoretical basis of institutional communication (Cornelissen et.al, 2018). There are different forms of institutional communication (formal, informal, written, verbal, horizontal, vertical, internal and external) that can be analyzed individually or in combination. Our focus is on analyzing institutional external communication through websites that combines several forms of communication. Institutional communication in the context of EU integration was analyzed based on web page user-friendliness in combination with traffic light assessment¹⁰. Since DEI is a crucial directorate of the Council of Ministers, the user-friendliness of this institution's

⁹ For more information, see the links containing documents related to the coordination system of the European integration process.

¹⁰ Traffic Light Assessment is a rating system for evaluating performance in relation to predefined goals. It allows to communicate of performance information clearly and effectively. It can be understood universally as performance results are indicated using the real traffic light colors (red, yellow, and green). Good and poor performance can easily be identified, allowing to make appropriate decisions to achieve performance excellence. Traffic light systems are widely used in performance, visual, and project management (CIToolkit, 2022). In essence, it is a rating system that evaluates performances in relation to the set goals by using specific traffic light colors (red, yellow, and green). Usually, the red color represents performance that is below target. In our case, red represents missing website aspects of user-friendliness. Yellow represents performances below targets in our case; it is a partially present feature of the website. Light green is the first modification to describe the significant presence of analyzed features of the website. Finally, darker green represents performances that are expected or better than expected, in our case, a fully present feature of the website.

website was analyzed according to the method developed by Darvishy and Good (2013)¹¹.

Table 1. Source: (Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Directorate for European Integration, 2024).

1. part is the user-friendliness aspect of the web page	
A fully present feature of the website	<i>Directorate for European Integration</i>
A significant feature of the website	
Partially present feature of the website	
The website feature is not present	
Clarity and Structure	x
User Guidance and Navigation	x
Text and Language (local and English)	x
Graphics, Animated Features, and Multimedia	x
Search	x
Currentness, Consistency, and Robustness	x
Contact Information and Support	x
Registration and Forms	x
2. part is EU integration informations, publications, and processes related to Thematic Cluster Internal Market	
Regular updates of cluster information	x
Adequate positioning of cluster information on the website	x
Adequately positioned information about Accession negotiations according to the revised methodology of the European Union	x
Adequately positioned on the web and regularly updated public relations sector	x

¹¹ “**Clarity and Structure:** The clarity and good structure of a website are important, if not, in fact, the most important prerequisites for achieving user-friendly web design. **User Guidance and Navigation:** User guidance, which provides simple step sequences, enables users to use the Internet independently. **Text and Language:** The text is designed in such a way that it comprises a content component and a design component. **Graphics, Animated Features, and Multimedia:** Graphics and multi-media content are design elements and are used to display information and operate the web application. If they are reduced exclusively to their creative benefits, they can have a diverting influence or be very off-putting. **Search:** The search engine makes it easier to locate web content. Older people appreciate this function; **Currentness, Consistency, and Robustness:** Websites that are kept up-to-date usually provide a range of information of a very high standard. The structure and presentation of the entire website should, therefore, be as stable as possible. For users, finding their way on a newly designed page always involves a degree of learning. If the layout of websites changes constantly, this reduces users' motivation to use the website. **Contact Information and Support:** To be able to support users of a website in the event of questions or problems, they must have some contact options. **Registration and Forms:** Registrations and online forms require a self-explanatory design. The purpose and benefits of the data entry should make sense to the users immediately” (Darvishy and Good, 2013: 227-230).

Based on the presented results of the analysis, it is evident that institutional communication with the public about EU integration is realized through an adequately structured and managed website. The motivation for this analysis is based on the need to determine the availability of relevant information to citizens and other professionals. The research results indicate that the DEI website is a holistic source of information on EU integration. The website is completely structured in a way that facilitates searches both in the local Languages and in English.

However, due to the complexity of the coordination mechanism of the EU integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina these results are limited. Some future research could be based on this methodology for an extended analysis of the websites of all institutions from the coordination mechanism related to the cluster single market.

Moving forward from domestic institutional communication, in the next part of the article, we analyze the progress reports published on the website of Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations. These reports as a part of written and online communication of European Commission can be seen as a holistic review of progress made by Bosnia and Herzegovina towards EU.

4. Institutional performances related to the thematic cluster Internal Market

Analysis of institutional performances will be based on the Reports¹² for Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2011 -2023¹³. It will cover previously mentioned clusters with

¹² Report for 2023: "This Report covers the period from June 2022 to June 2023" (Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2023:4); Report for 2022: "This Report covers the period from June 2021 to June 2022" (Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2022); Report for 2021: "This Report covers the period from June 2020 to June 2021" (Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2021:4); Report for 2020 did not provide information on period that it covers (Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2020); Report for 2019 did not provide information on the period it covers (Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2019); Report for 2018: "This Interim Report covers the period from October 2016 to February 2018"(Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2018:2); Report for 2016: "This Report covers the period from October 2015 to September 2016" (Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2016:4); Report for 2015: "This Report covers the period from October 2014 to September 2015" (Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2015:4); Report for 2014: "This Report covers the period from October 2013 to September 2014" (Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2014:3); Report for 2013:" This Report covers the period from October 2012 to September 2013" (Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2013:3); Report for 2012: "This Report covers the period from October 2011 to September 2012" Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2012:4); Report for 2011: "This Report covers the period from October 2010 to September 2011" (Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2011:3).

¹³ (Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2011:23-42; Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2012:23-42; Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2013:28-39; Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2014:25-41; Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2015:37-48; Directorate-General for

corresponding chapters. In evaluating progress “made during the reporting period, the following scale has been used: backsliding, no progress, limited progress, some progress, good progress, and very good progress” (Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2021:4).

Cluster 2. The internal market consists of nine chapters. More precisely, it covers progress made in the following chapters (Chapter 1 - Free movement of goods, Chapter 2 - Freedom of movements for workers, Chapter 3 - Right of Establishment Freedom and freedom to provide services, Chapter 4 - Free Movement of Capital, Chapter 6 - Company law, Chapter 7 - Intellectual property law, Chapter 8 - Competition Policy, Chapter 9 - Financial Services, Chapter 28 - Consumer and health protection). Analysis for this cluster contains brief elaborations on the progress made in each chapter.

The analyzed period has two time frames: one from 2011 until 2016 (individual reports); then, we have Report 2018 covering the period from October 2016 to February 2018. The second time frame covers 2019 until 2023 (individual reports). Most reports cover several months in two years (the previous and the year it was published). In the context of this analysis, the year that we refer to is the year of publication of the Report (for more details, see footnote 12).

Overall, the institutional performance review for the first chapter (Free movement of goods) in the analyzed period showed some progress in 2011 and 2012, then limited progress in 2013. Good but uneven progress was made in 2014 and 2015. Unfortunately, for 2017 and 2018, there is a missing date since that Report did not cover progress for all individual chapters¹⁴. In 2016, as well as in 2019 and 2021, limited progress was achieved. Progress was registered in the period from 2020 to 2023.

Institutional performances for the second chapter, Freedom of Movement of Workers, indicate that improvements in analyzed reports were mainly limited. There was limited progress at the beginning of the analyzed period, 2011. Then, in the next year, 2012, there was no progress in this chapter. From 2013 until 2016, there was limited progress. Unfortunately, for 2017 and 2018, there is a missing date since that Report did not cover progress for all individual chapters. In 2019, some progress was made. However, in the next year, 2020, the progress was limited. Next year, 2021, no progress was made in this chapter. In 2022, there was limited progress, but there was no progress made in 2023.

Institutional performances for the third chapter, Right of Establishment Freedom and Freedom to Provide Services, were dominantly without progress. There was some progress at the beginning of the analyzed period in 2011. Then, there was no progress in 2012, 2014, 2015, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. Limited progress was made in 2013, 2016, and 2019. Unfortunately, for 2017 and 2018, there is a missing date since that Report did not cover progress for all individual chapters.

Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2016:39-52; Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2019:84-102, 160-163; Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2020:58-69,103-105; Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2021:66-77; Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2022: 70-80; Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 2023:84-97). The research was initially conducted for the needs of the PoSIG Teaching Academy in 2024 and was updated for this article.

¹⁴ The Report from 2018 covered chapters 16, 26, and 29.

Institutional performances for the fourth chapter, Free Movement of Capital, are mostly without progress. There was no progress in all the analyzed years except 2019 and 2020. Unfortunately, for 2017 and 2018, there is a missing date since that Report did not cover progress for all individual chapters.

Institutional performances for the sixth Company Law chapter are dominantly limited. Limited progress was made in 2011, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2020, and 2021. Some progress was made in 2012, 2013, and 2019. Unfortunately, for 2017 and 2018, there is a missing date since that Report did not cover progress for all individual chapters. In the final analyzed year, 2023, no progress was made.

Institutional performances for chapter seven, Intellectual Property Law, were dynamic. Some progress was made in 2011 and 2012. This progress was the foundation for improvement marked as significant progress in 2013. Good progress was made in 2014. In 2015, there was some progress. No progress in chapter seven was reported for 2016, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. In 2019, there was limited progress. For 2017 and 2018, the Report that covers this period did not address progress by chapters, so as a result, there is no date.

Institutional performances for chapter eight, Competition Policy, are mostly marked with some or limited progress. There was some progress at the beginning of the analyzed period in 2011 and 2012. Then, in the next year, 2013, limited progress was made. Analysis shows that no progress was made in the five analyzed years (2015, 2016, 2020, 2022, and 2023). Some progress was made in 2014, 2019, and 2021. The data for 2017 and 2018 are missing for the same reason mentioned in the analysis of previous chapters.

Institutional performances for chapter nine, Financial Services, dominantly indicate that improvements in analyzed reports ranged from some progress to limited progress. More precisely, there was some progress at the beginning of the analyzed period in 2011. Then, from 2012 until 2016, there was limited progress. Some progress was made from 2019 until 2021. No progress was made in the last analyzed year, 2023. Unfortunately, for 2017 and 2018, there is a missing date since that Report did not cover progress for individual chapters.

Institutional performances for the twenty-eight-chapter Consumer and Health Protection dominantly indicate that improvements in analyzed reports ranged from some to no progress. Institutions made some progress in the five analyzed years (2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, and 2019). In the last four analyzed years (2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023), the institution did not make any progress. Data for this chapter is missing in reports in 2014 and 2016. Also, the data for 2017 and 2018 are missing for the same reason mentioned in the analysis of previous chapters.

5. Concluding remarks

Bosnia and Herzegovina's statehood can be traced from the tenth century to the present. It went through complex processes of crisis, occupation, and wars but managed to survive and maintain its statehood. The last challenge to its survival was the aggression in the period 1992 – 1995, which ended with the signing of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton Agreement). Internal structure modifications made by the Dayton Constitution have created a complex political system that, in combination with a lack of political leadership, generates political underdevelopment. Considering all of these limitations, the system of coordination of EU integration can be seen as an attempt to combine existing institutions and match them

based on their responsibilities. However, institutional performances are mostly limited due to a specific long-term political environment. Another potential source of institutional underperformance is understaffed institutions lacking the necessary competencies to navigate a coordination system.

The second part of research on institutional communication related to EU integration has limitations since it is based on analyzing a single website. However, the results indicate that DEI has a comprehensive and user-friendly website. Since numerous institutions are represented in the working groups that can be connected to the analyzed cluster, the existing research needs to be extended to their websites.

Results from the Reports are expected considering the political environment and that Bosnia and Herzegovina did not create a suitable governing system for almost half of the analyzed period. Preparation for establishing the coordination system has shifted attention from improving regulations and policies to institutional matching. It is not surprising that since the establishment of the coordination system, the results in the reports have worsened. Every actor in the EU coordination system needs time to adjust to their position and role; combining that with a lack of political leadership makes these results understandable but unjustified.

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