

SOCIAL RIGHTS ARE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS



The European Pillar of Social Rights and its 20 principles need to be at the heart of the Western Balkans enlargement process.



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCESS TO THE LABOUR MARKET

1. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND LIFE-LONG LEARNING
2. GENDER EQUALITY
3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
4. ACTIVE SUPPORT TO EMPLOYMENT



FAIR WORKING CONDITIONS

5. SECURE AND ADAPTABLE EMPLOYMENT
6. WAGES
7. INFORMATION ABOUT EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS AND PROTECTION IN CASE OF DISMISSALS
8. SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND INVOLVEMENT OF WORKERS
9. WORK-LIFE BALANCE
10. HEALTHY, SAFE AND WELL-ADAPTED WORK ENVIRONMENT AND DATA PROTECTION



SOCIAL PROTECTION AND INCLUSION

11. CHILDCARE AND SUPPORT TO CHILDREN
12. SOCIAL PROTECTION
13. UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS
14. MINIMUM INCOME
15. OLD AGE INCOME AND PENSIONS
16. HEALTH CARE
17. INCLUSION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
18. LONG-TERM CARE
19. HOUSING AND ASSISTANCE FOR THE HOMELESS
20. ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES

ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION REPRESENTS A CHALLENGE IN THE WESTERN BALKANS REGION.

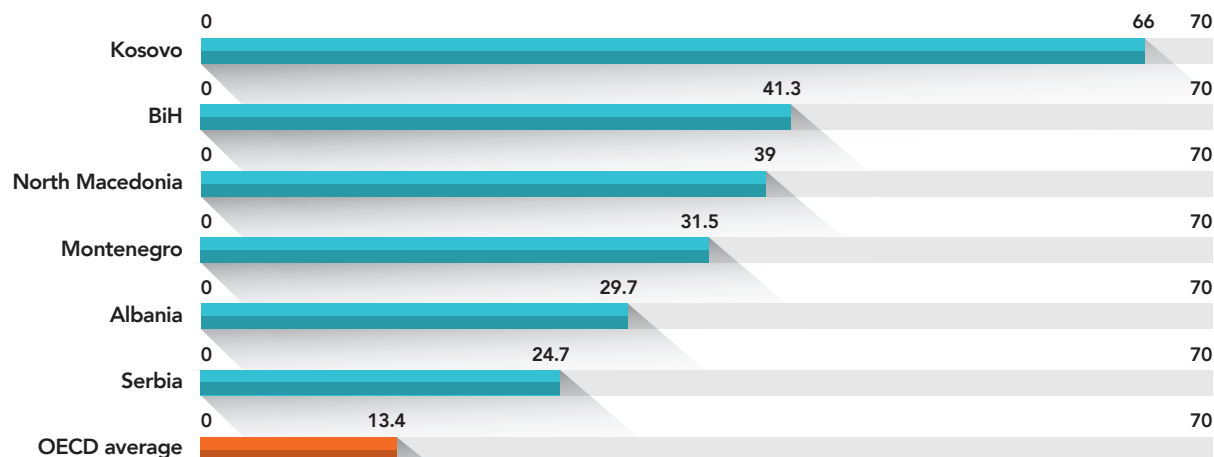
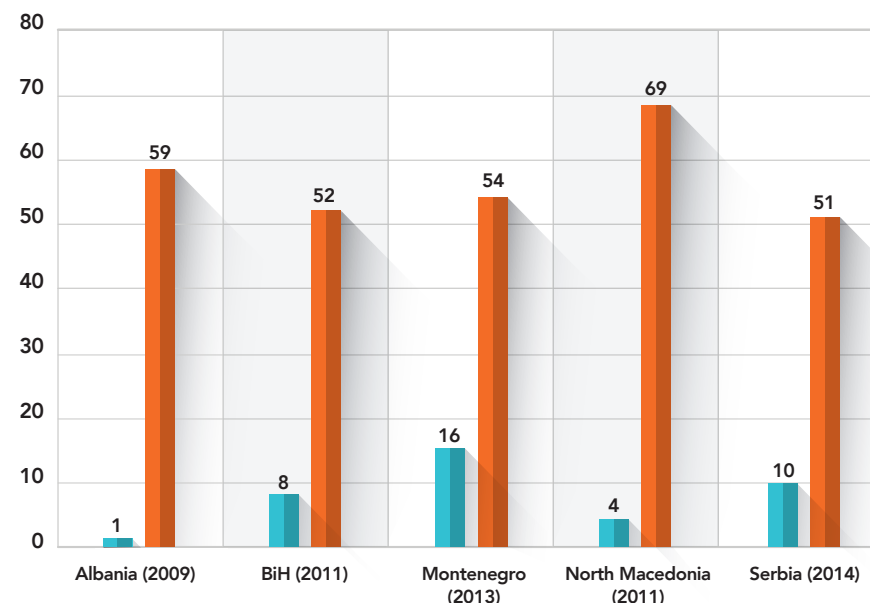
Inclusive, quality education needs to become a strategic priority of Western Balkan governments.



Graph 1.
Tertiary completion rates, percentage of pupils from poorest and richest 20% of the population, at least 2 years of education

Source:
World Inequality Database on Education
(www.education-inequalities.org)

■ Poorest 20% ■ Richest 20%



Graph 2.
PISA 2018: Share of students below Level 2 in three subject areas (reading, maths, science)

Source:
OECD, 2019.

Read more at: [Five Points on The Social Dimension of Enlargement Policy](#)

THE LABOUR MARKETS OF THE WESTERN BALKANS REGION ARE WEAK, WITH HIGH LEVELS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND WIDESPREAD PRECARIITY OF WORK.

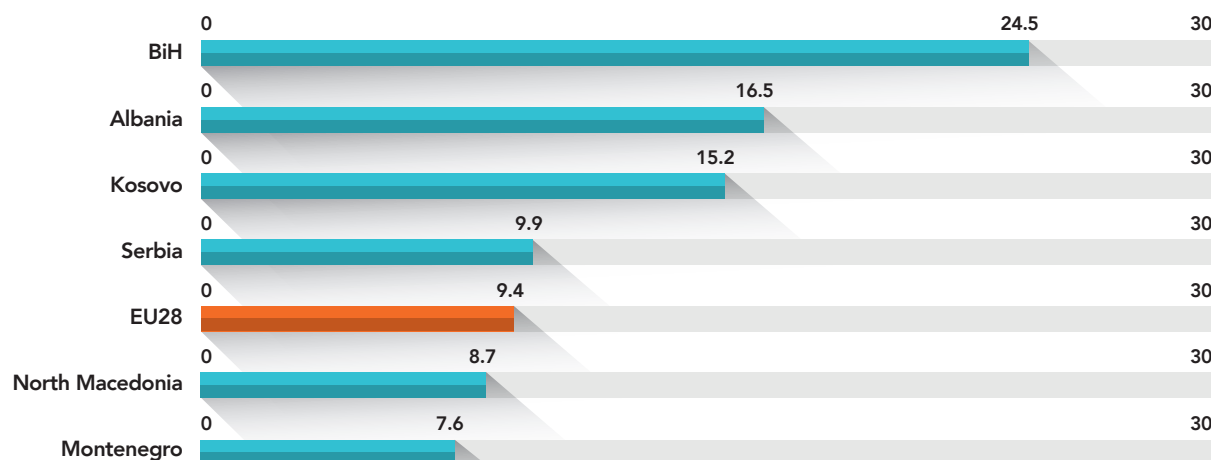
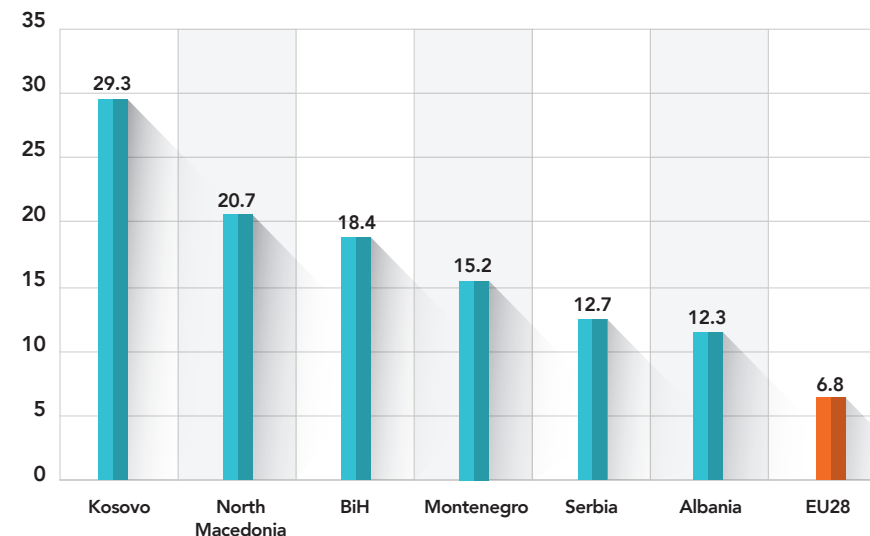


Job quality should be improved by enhancing social dialogue and collective bargaining, strengthening workers' rights, raising the minimum wage, lowering the tax burden on low-wage earners, regulating temporary work agencies, and ameliorating occupational safety standards.



Graph 1.
Unemployment rate, total (age 15+), 2018

Note: Ages 15-74 for EU28.
Source: Jobs Gateway in South Eastern Europe Database (www.seejobsgateway.net); Eurostat for EU28 [une_rt_a]



Graph 2.
In-work at-risk-of-poverty rate of employed persons (age 18-64), 2018

Note: 2015 for BiH; 2017 for Kosovo and Montenegro; age 18+ for Albania. Source: European Social Policy Network (ESPN) 2019 reports on in-work poverty for BiH and Kosovo; Institute of Statistics of Albania, Income and Living Conditions in Albania (2017-2018); for EU28, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, Eurostat [ilc_iw01]. Estimates for BiH and Kosovo based on Household Budget Surveys.

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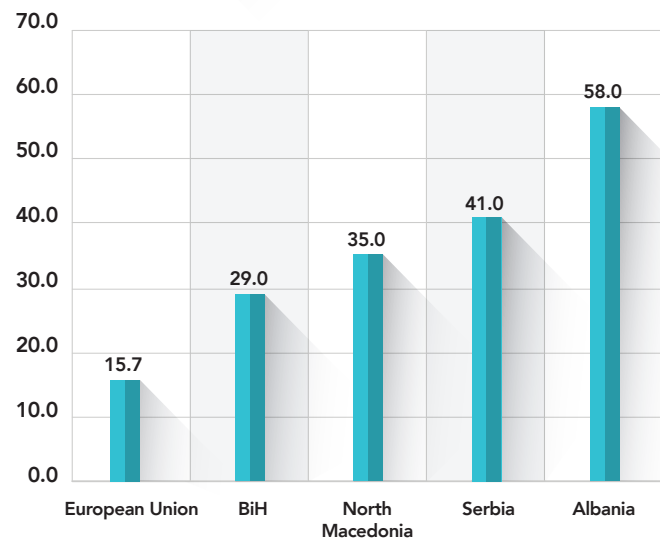
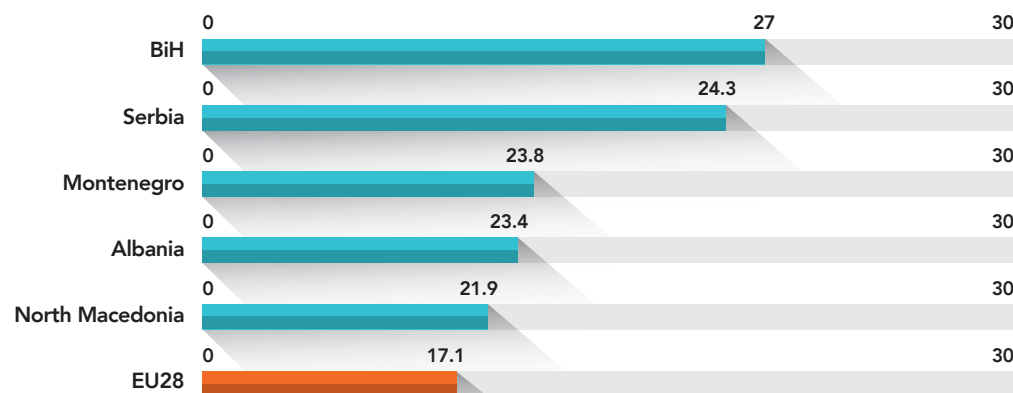
SYSTEMS OF SOCIAL PROTECTION ARE NOT SUFFICIENTLY EFFECTIVE IN TACKLING HIGH RATES OF INCOME INEQUALITY AND AT-RISK-OF POVERTY RATES IN THE WESTERN BALKAN REGION.

Western Balkan governments should seek to improve social outcomes through the provision of more universal social benefits and services.



Graph 1.
At-risk-of poverty rates (2018)

Note: 2015 for BiH.
Source: Eurostat [tessi010]; Institute of Statistics of Albania, Income and Living Conditions in Albania, 2017-2018; Statistical Office of Montenegro, Survey on Income and Living Conditions 2018; Nikolina Obradović, Mirna Jusić and Nermin Oruč, ESPN Thematic Report on in-work poverty - BiH, Brussels, European Commission, 2019. Estimate for BiH based on Household Budget Survey.



Graph 2.
Households' out-of-pocket health expenditure (% of current health expenditure), 2016

Source: World Health Organization Global Health Expenditure database (apps.who.int/nha)

Government spending on healthcare in the region is low. With substantial out-of-pocket household expenditure on healthcare, these services remain costly and unavailable to all.

Read more at: [Five Points on The Social Dimension of Enlargement Policy](#)

Strategic structural social reforms promoted through Economic Reform Programmes

Substantial funds for strategic social reforms

More inclusive policy development



**THE EU ENLARGEMENT TOOLBOX
NEEDS TO BE RECONFIGURED TO FEATURE
A STRONGER SOCIAL DIMENSION.**



Monitoring of countries' adherence to social rights



Improving policy-making capacities



Intensifying regional cooperation on common social policy targets and mutual learning

Read more at: [Social Rights are Fundamental: Expanding the Social Dimension of Enlargement](#)