

## Agricultural Policy Forum 2022

### ***Agriculture and Rural Development in the context of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans: Overcoming the Impact of the Global Challenges***

*Working Group 4: The role of youth in the rural development in the Western Balkans*

#### *Current youth situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina*

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Table 1. Major macroeconomic indicators for BiH (2015-2019)

Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Population (thousands inhabitants)	3 518	3 511	3 504	3 496	3 488
Density (inhabitants/km <sup>2</sup> )	68.7	68.6	68.4	68.3	68.1
GDP per capita (EUR)	4 148	4 354	4 601	4 891	5 425
GDP (at current prices, million EUR)	14 592	15 287	16 121	17 100	18 012
GVA of all activities (million EUR)	12 028	12 605	13 293	14 593	15 359
Inflation (%)	-1.0	-1.1	1.2	1.4	0.6
Total employment (thousand persons)	822	801	816	822	830
Unemployment (%)	27.7	25.4	20.5	18.4	15.7
Total export of goods (million EUR)	4 595	4 815	5 821	6 268	6 069
Total import of goods (million EUR)	8 105	8 263	9 432	10 018	10 163
Trade balance (million EUR)	- 3 510	-3 448	-3 611	-3 750	-4 094
Proportion of food, beverages and tobacco in total household expenditure (%)	41.6	41.2	40.9	40.7	40.8

- 361 774 unemployed person in July 2022, 209 754 women;
- Highly skilled and skilled most among unemployed persons, followed by high school and unskilled (without official diploma) persons;
- Unemployment rate 15.22% (2021);
- Employment rate 35.24% (2021);
- Migrations – 107 926 citizen leave the country, which is 8.12% of total working force (in 2015)

Data availability and accuracy remain questionable!

Source: WB&TR StatDatabases, Eurostat (2020), CAP context indicators (EC, 2020) as cited in Stojceska et al., 2021.

# SDGs progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Table 2. BiH Progress towards achieving the SDGs

SDG	Level of achievement
1 – No Poverty	SDG achieved
2 – Zero Hunger	Significant challenges remain
3 – Good Health and Well-Being	Significant challenges remain
4 – Quality Education	Information unavailable
5 – Gender Equality	Significant challenges remain
6 – Clean Water and Sanitation	Significant challenges remain
7 – Affordable and Clean Energy	Significant challenges remain
8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth	Significant challenges remain
9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	Significant challenges remain
10 – Reduced Inequalities	Significant challenges remain
11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities	Major challenges remain
12 – Responsible Consumption and Production	Significant challenges remain
13 – Climate Action	Significant challenges remain
14 – Life Below Water	Challenges remain
15 – Life on Land	Significant challenges remain
16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	Significant challenges remain
17 – Partnership for the Goals	Challenges remain

Note: the order of progress (from greatest to least) is as follows: SDG achieved; challenges remain; significant challenges remain; major challenges remain.

Source: (Sachs et al, 2021)

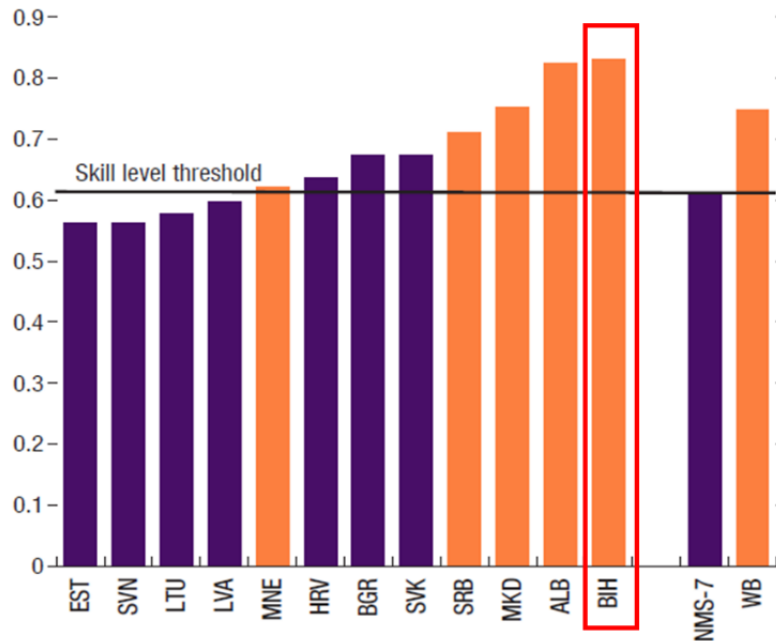
Many obstacles that youth are directly or indirectly affected by.

- Transition from school to labor market
- Starting new business
- Complex/inadequate support mechanisms
- Lack of support



# Lack of skills in Bosnia and Herzegovina

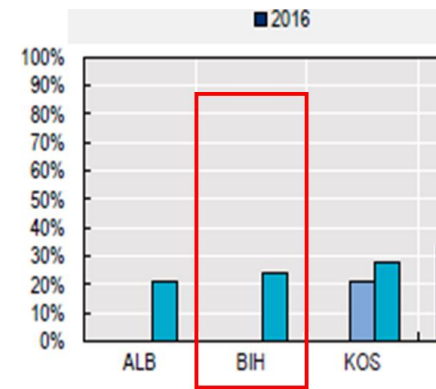
Fig. 1. Ratio of Low/Medium Skill Labor (in percent; low means higher skills)



Note: NMS-7 = BGR, EST, HRV, LTU, LVA, SVK, SVN; WB = ALB, BIH, MKD, NME, SRB.

Sources: ILOSTAT, World Integrated Trade Solutions, World Development Indicators (WB), WEO, and IMF staff calculations as cited in Ilahi et al., 2019

Fig. 2. Percentage of individuals with low digital skills (2016-2019)



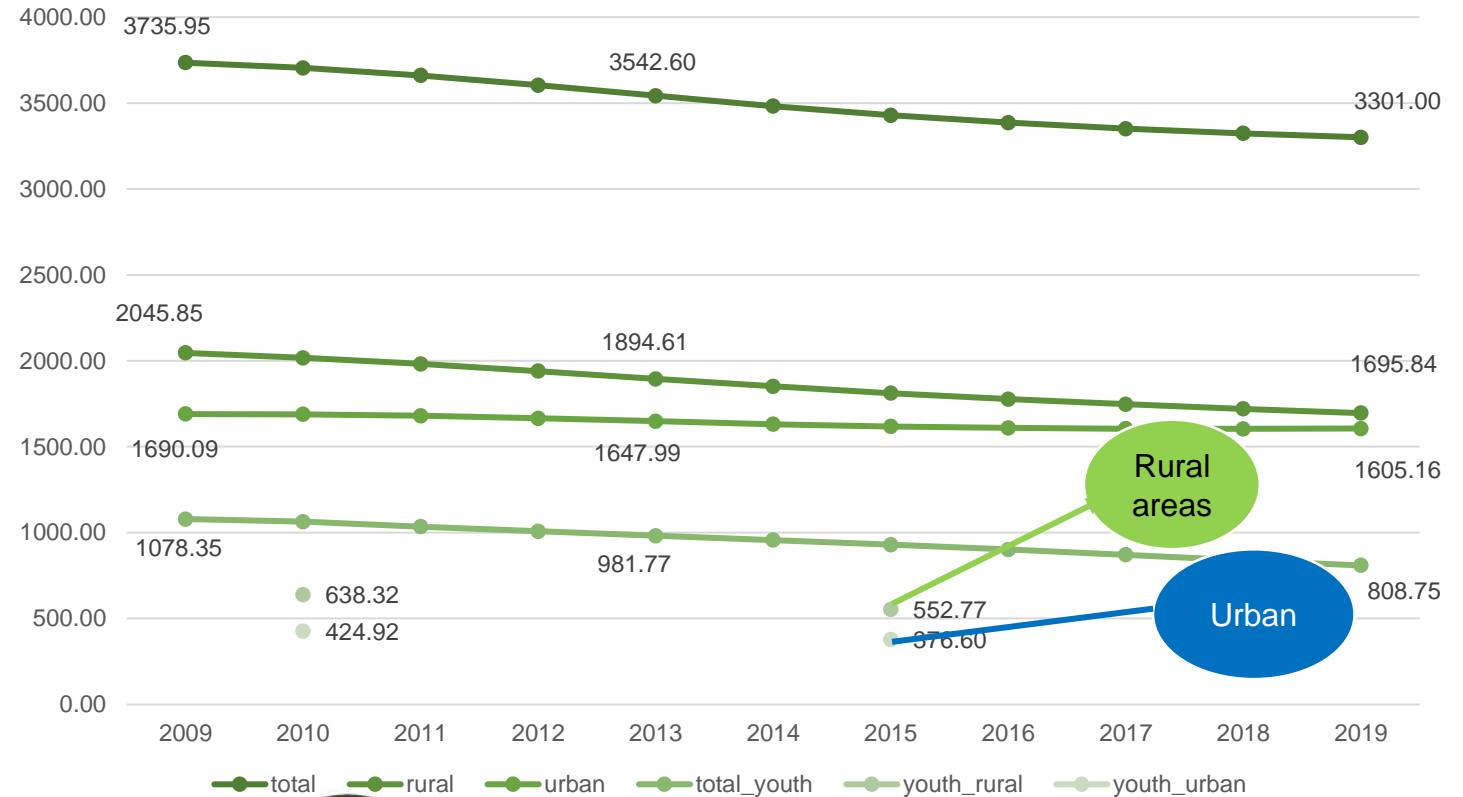
Note: EU includes all EU Member States. CEEC-11 countries are Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Data for 2018 are unavailable.

Source: Eurostat (2019), "Individuals' level of digital skills", [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/isoc\\_sk\\_dskl\\_i/default/table?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/isoc_sk_dskl_i/default/table?lang=en).

- Lack of adequate skills may be a major obstacle for further employment options, innovativeness and diffusion of innovations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Lack of digital skills could also nullify efforts to digitalize many sectors.
- This is particularly prominent in agricultural sector.

# Population and youth population

**Fig. 3.** Total population and youth population 2009-2019 by degree of urbanization (in thousands)



A strong decline in the youth population is evident in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the most prominent decline is observed in rural areas.

Source: calculation is done using data from ILO modeled estimates (Population by sex and age -- UN estimates and projections, July 2019 (thousands) – Annual, POP\_2POP\_SEX\_AGE\_NB\_A; Population by sex, age and rural/urban areas -- UN estimates, July 2019 (thousands) – Annual, POP\_2POP\_SEX\_AGE\_GEO\_NB\_A), data extracted on 12.06.2020

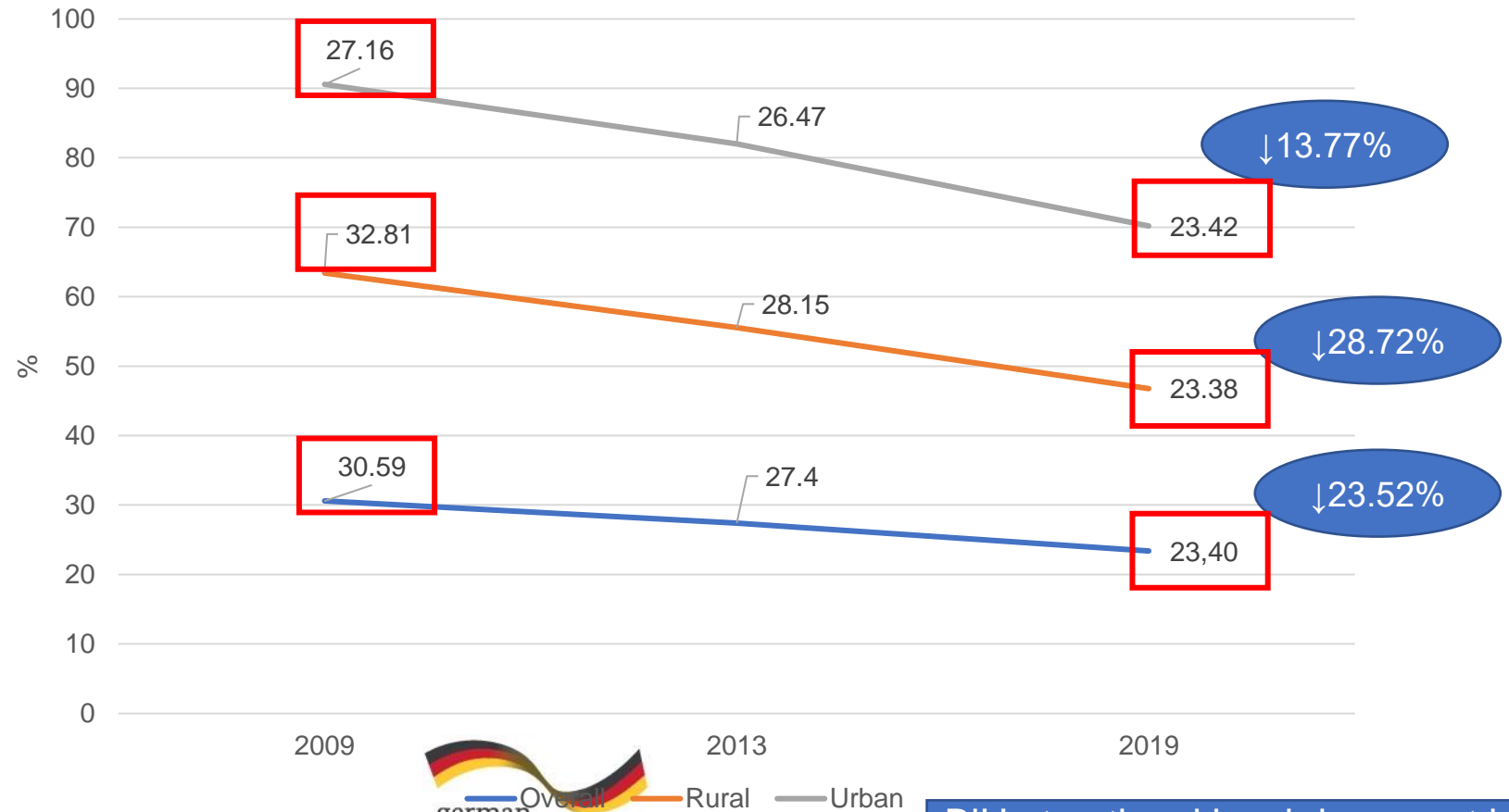




# Youth employment

At the state level, there has been a strong decline in youth employment between 2009 and 2019 (23.52%). A similar trend is evident in rural and urban regions, where a stronger decline in total youth employment is evident within rural regions (28.72%), comparing to the urban regions (13.77%).

**Fig. 4.** Employment age group 15-34 years old (%) by the degree of urbanization (2009-2019)

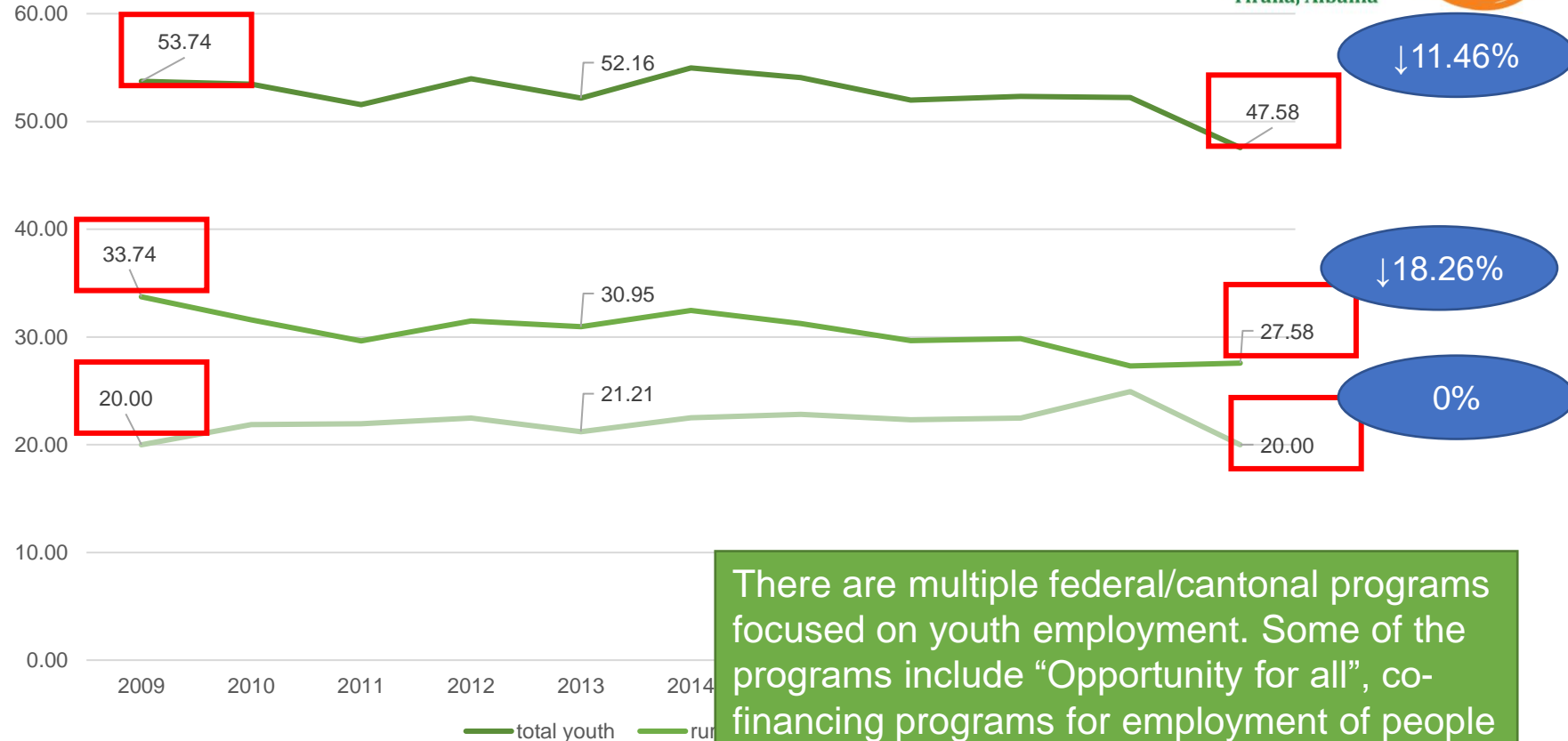


BiH at national level does not have a national youth strategy. Republika Srpska (entity) adopted Youth Policy for 2016-2020.

# Youth unemployment

The youth unemployment rate in Bosnia and Herzegovina is decreasing over the observed period, while overall, a higher percentage of the youth population from rural regions is unemployed.

**Fig. 5.** Unemployment age group 15-34 years old (%) by the degree of urbanization (2009-2019)



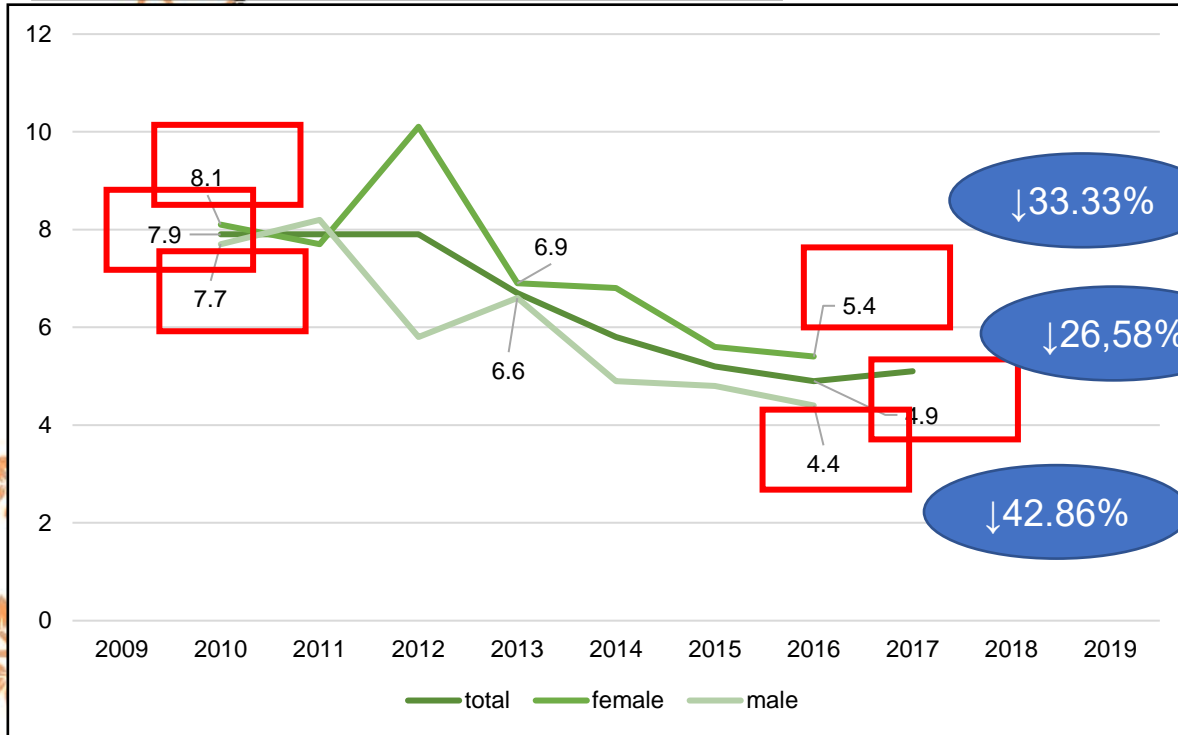
Source: calculation is done using data from ILO modeled estimates (thousands) – Annual, UNE\_TUNE\_SEX\_AGE\_GEO\_NB\_A, data extracted from ILO database

There are multiple federal/cantonal programs focused on youth employment. Some of the programs include “Opportunity for all”, co-financing programs for employment of people under 35 years old, programs for interns, programs for additional training and obtaining different qualifications, but consistency and transparency of funds remain a big issue.



ESLET (Early School Leavers) rate decrease for both female and male population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. EU Member States goal to reduce ESLET rate below 10% by 2020.

**Fig. 6. Early school leavers (%) 2010-2017**



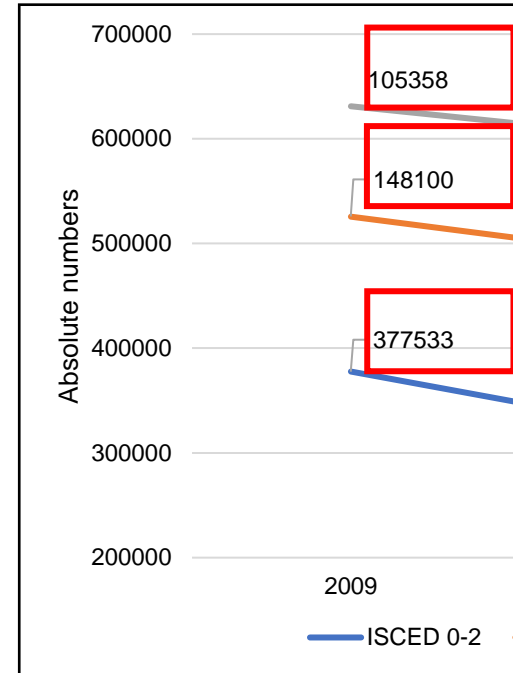
Source: EC (2019), BHAS (2017)



## Education

The number of students and pupils by education level significantly decreased during the observed period for all education levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Fig. 7. Number of students and pupils**



Source: BHAS (2010; 2011; 2019; 2020)

Youth mobility case of University of Sarajevo  
 In 2016 - 50 mobility agreements, 300 exchange students  
 In 2020 – 160+ agreements, 1300+ students and staff

Mobility (ISCED 5-8) is granted through Erasmus+, Erasmus Mundus, CEEPUS, MEVLANA, DAAD, FULBRIGHT, VISEGRAD FUND, MARIE SKLODOWSKA-CURIE and numerous other opportunities as a result of multiple bilateral agreements.

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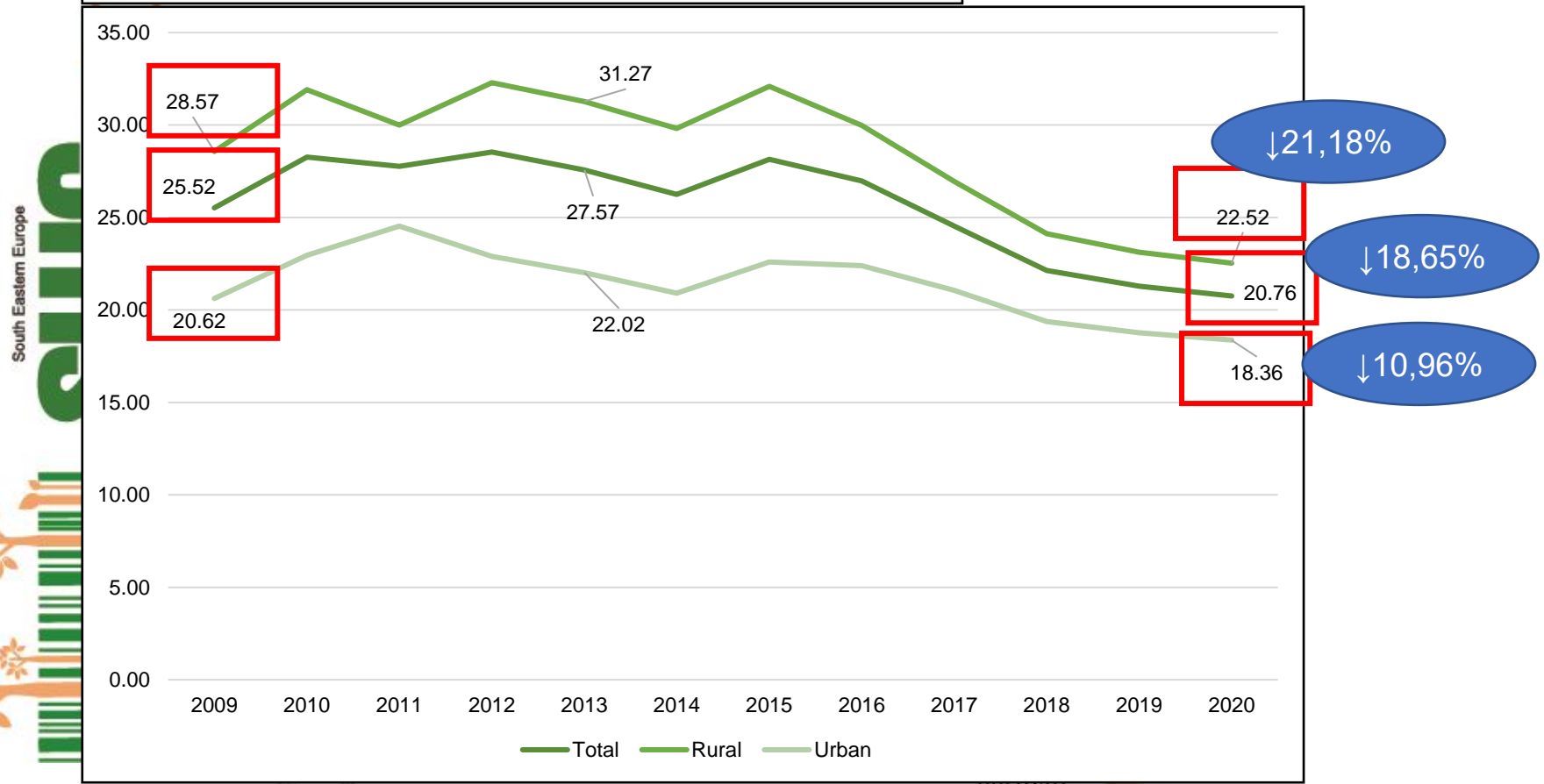




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# NEET (Youth not in education, employment or training) rate

Fig. 8. NEET rate in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2009-2019)



NEET rate decreased overall in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the NEET rate is higher within the rural youth population. An almost identical decrease of NEET rate is evident between females (16.26% for the 2009-2019 period) and male (16.04% for 2009-2019 period) groups. Data were not available for different age groups.



## Instead of conclusion



Political  
context

The complex political situation along with very complicated institutional set-up continues to be a major burden for a more progressive/intensive economic growth of the country.

Migration

The negative trend of “brain drain” still remain big issue. The rural-to-urban movements (deruralization) within the country continue as well, which threatens the biological sustainability of the countryside.

Unemploy  
ment rate

Total unemployment rate is 15,7%, among youth 34% in 2019 according to the ILO report (ILO, 2020).

Employme  
nt rate

Youth employment in general decrease, but there are an increase for age group 15-19 that can be seen as a warning signal as youth may choose work over education.

Education

The number of students and pupils by education level significantly decreased during the observed period for all education levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina

NEET

NEET rate tend to decrease but percentage of youth within this category is still high.



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**Thank you for  
your attention!**



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