

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Information for applicants

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a heart-shaped country at the heart of South-East Europe. Over the centuries, Eastern and Western civilizations and diverse traditions have left their mark on the country. One of those traditions is its legendary hospitality, something you notice as soon as you enter the country.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's surface area is just around 50,000 km². Despite its small size, the country has nevertheless made outstanding international contributions, producing two Nobel laureates, for example. The Olympic games of 1984 conjure up wonderful memories. And the people of Sarajevo are rightly proud of the film festival that each summer transforms their city into a global metropolis of cineastes. During the festival, it is not uncommon to meet some world-famous people here.

But some very sad events have also made Sarajevo famous, not least the assassination on 28 June 1914 of Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, and the siege by Bosnian Serb troops during the war in Bosnia from 1992 to 1995.

In 2013, Bosnia and Herzegovina had a population of just under 3.5 million. Sarajevo is the capital city; other larger towns and cities include Banja Luka, Tuzla, Zenica, Bijeljina and Mostar. The official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina are Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian.

Climate and sights

The interior of Bosnia and Herzegovina has a continental climate, with cold winters and hot summers, while closer to the coast the climate is Mediterranean, with less extreme fluctuations in temperature.

With the Pannonian Basin in the north, the Bosnian Dinaric Alps extending from the south-east to north-west, and finally the Adriatic coastal region to the south, the country offers a wonderful mixture of mountains, sea and flatlands. It is a land that has something for everyone. Above all, it is ideal for hikers, nature lovers and winter sports fans.

While some visitors might find the name Sarajevo or Baščaršija hard to pronounce, it is undoubtedly one of the most impressive and attractive of the country's old trading centres. Its many beautiful historic buildings form an inviting backdrop to an extended stroll through the provincial capital.

The bridge and old town of Mostar were included in the UNESCO World Heritage List on 15 July 2005, not only because of their unique architecture, but also for their great symbolic value and historic setting, making this the first World Heritage Site in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Medical care

Most towns in Bosnia and Herzegovina have health care facilities and hospitals, some of them with outstanding medical specialists. The GIZ country office will provide you with a list of recommended doctors.

Nevertheless, the overall medical care in the country does not yet compare to European standards and there is sometimes room for improvement (technical equipment, hygiene, specialist training). There are few German/English/French-speaking doctors or therapists, especially outside the larger towns.

In the villages and smaller towns you cannot rely on finding well-stocked pharmacies, so we recommend that you take an appropriate supply of medicines with you when travelling in the country. Even in the larger towns and cities, special (modern) medicines are not always available. It is therefore advisable to bring a suitable supply with you.

Accommodation and quality of life

Hotels of different standards and price categories can now be found in almost all parts of the country. With options from five-star hotels to modest hostels, you can arrange your stay according to your wishes and needs.

When you first come to Sarajevo you can find furnished flats at affordable rates, from which you can then look for longer-term accommodation. You will find a wide range of flats and houses, and there are many reliable estate agents who can help you find accommodation.

In summer, daily life takes place outside, especially in Sarajevo's old town. In Sarajevo, residents and visitors alike enjoy meeting in street cafés, but you should watch out for pickpockets when doing so. The same is true when walking around the city, which is very lively when the weather is good, or when riding on trams.

Whether in the city or in the country, you should always take care when walking or driving on the country's roads, as many local road-users seem to drive without any trepidation or consideration for others.

Shops and everyday services

Shopping options which match the standards of other European countries are available, either in the big shopping malls or other shops in the city. However, we also recommend that you do your shopping at the local markets, which are simple. Enjoy the many excellent local products, from fruit, vegetables, cheeses and dried meats, to wines made from local grape varieties. As many people speak German or English, communication is no problem. For many everyday items, prices are lower than in Germany, although prices can differ by up to 150 per cent from region to region. In most cases, the bigger the town or city, the higher the price.

Accompanying partners and children

Citizens of the European Union, the United States and Canada may enter without a visa. Most visitors from other countries require a visa, which they can obtain from the consulates and embassies of Bosnia and Herzegovina worldwide.

Foreign nationals travelling here are required to register their presence. If you have not booked a hotel in advance, and if you plan to stay longer than three days, you must contact the nearest police station within 12 hours. If you have a hotel booking, this registration is completed automatically by the hotel (you must fill in a registration form).

If you enter the country as a GIZ employee, the German Embassy will complete your registration. You and your family will receive an identity card from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The GIZ country office will assist you with these formalities.

In order to obtain a work permit outside GIZ, you must first find a potential employer who is willing to assist you with securing the permit. The whole process is quite complex (it takes about three months), but it is possible. First, your university degree must be recognised. Then the employment office will check if there are any unemployed Bosnian-Herzegovinian citizens who meet the job requirement profile. A work permit can only be issued to a foreigner if this is not the case.

There are international schools and kindergartens in Sarajevo (English, French, German). We advise you to get your own impression of the local schools first hand, and to benefit from the experiences of GIZ colleagues. The country office will be happy to provide you with contacts.

Useful links

<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/laenderinformationen/bosni-enherzegowina-node>

Bosnia and Herzegovina country pages (GIZ)
<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/289.html>

http://www.come-enjoy-bosnia.com/news_top-10-tourist-destinations-and-activities-in-bosnia-and-herzegovina_17

Published by
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices
Bonn and Eschborn

Address
Postcode, town/city, country
T +49 61 96 79-0
F +49 61 96 79-11 15
E info@giz.de
I www.giz.de

Eschborn 2017

Responsible/edited by
Ulrich Heise, Eschborn

URL references:
All responsibility for the contents of any linked external websites lies with the operator of that website. GIZ expressly distances itself from the content of any such sites.

GIZ is responsible for the contents of this publication.