



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM  
IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (TURIZAM)



Bosnia  
and  
Herzegovina

# BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

THE MOST EXCITING DESTINATION IN THE WORLD

Summary of Achievements



 Jajce, Bosnia and Herzegovina



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 Trnovačko lake, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Welcome!

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the activities of USAID Turizam since its launch in late 2020. With the aim of positioning Bosnia and Herzegovina as a competitive destination on the global market, the project is working on advancing human capital in the tourism sector, improving access to finance for tourism businesses, developing innovative tourism products, harmonizing policies and regulations and revolutionizing destination branding and promotion. Through a broad-based approach to sustainable tourism development, USAID Turizam is contributing to economic growth and social harmony in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In this brochure, you can read more about our achievements in the period between 2020 and 2022. For a quick overview of our most significant activities in 2022, please watch this video by visiting the QR below:

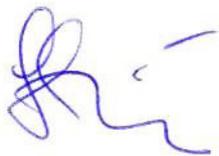


For the most up-to-date information, visit our website [www.turizambih.ba](http://www.turizambih.ba)!



These are some of the tangible results of the fast-paced USAID Turizam project, influencing the lives of thousands of Bosnians and Herzegovinians who make a living of tourism and related activities. With further support, they are the ones who will continue transforming Bosnia and Herzegovina into the most exciting destination in the world!

Sincerely yours,



Feđa Begović  
Chief of Party  
USAID Developing Sustainable Tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Turizam)



# USAID DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (TURIZAM)

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**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT USAID  
TURIZAM'S MOST RECENT ACTIVITIES**



The Most Beautiful Villages of  
*Bosnia and Herzegovina*



**TREBINJE WINS  
GLOBAL RECOGNITION  
AS SUSTAINABLE  
DESTINATION**



**AVIATION ROUTES  
BETWEEN BOSNIA  
AND HERZEGOVINA  
AND GLOBAL HUBS**

**BOSNIA AND  
HERZEGOVINA  
TRAVEL AGENT  
ACADEMY**



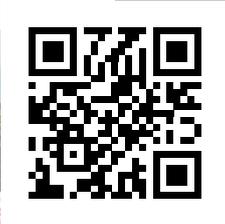
**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA  
#THE MOST EXCITING  
DESTINATION  
IN THE WORLD**



**EXCITING  
ITINERARIES  
AROUND SARAJEVO  
AND MOSTAR**



**CONNECT  
WITH A STRONG  
NETWORK OF DMCs  
IN BOSNIA AND  
HERZEGOVINA**



**HALAL TOURISM:  
EMERGING SEGMENT  
IN THE BOSNIA AND  
HERZEGOVINA TOURISM  
SECTOR**



**INCLUSIVE TOURISM IN  
BOSNIA AND  
HERZEGOVINA**



**BUILDING EXCELLENCE  
IN TOURISM EDUCATION  
WITH UNWTO TEDQUAL  
CERTIFICATION**



**PROMOTING BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA THROUGH TRIPADVISOR**



**DEVELOPING BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AS A LEADING ADVENTURE TOURISM DESTINATION**



**ADVANCE YOUR SKILLS AT THE ONLINE TURIZAM ACADEMY**



**KAYAKING WONDERLAND - PARTNESHIP WITH RED BULL**



**FACILITATING ACCESS TO FINANCE IN TOURISM SECTOR**



Prokoško lake, Bosnia and Herzegovina

# 2022 HIGHLIGHTS



# INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP IN CHARTING STRATEGIES FOR GROWTH

With the aim of creating harmonized policies that will contribute to the overall tourism sector performance in BiH, USAID Turizam has put great effort into charting tourism development strategies for two BiH entities – the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and Republika Srpska (RS). Both strategies prioritize defining the path for the development of new tourist products, destination marketing, and human resources, as well as enriching the current environment with more appealing and sustainable initiatives. USAID Turizam forged strong collaborative ties with ministries designated for tourism, trade, and the environment, as well as with FBiH and the RS Chambers of Commerce.

The USAID Turizam technical support was crucial for the strategy formulation, encompassing the periods from 2021 to 2027 (RS) and from 2022 to 2027 (FBiH). Through the implementation of strategies, there is a new driving force for the development of sustainable tourism, focusing on growth in tourist arrivals, stays, and consumption; an increase in the share of tourism in GDP; new employment creation; and the attraction of foreign direct investment in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Special emphasis was given to gender equality and the inclusion of people with disabilities through employment and the accessibility of tourism products. The newly formulated strategy for tourism development has been officially adopted in the RS, while the strategy for tourism development in FBiH is currently undergoing parliamentary procedure.

With the support of USAID Turizam, the Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism and the FBiH Chamber of Commerce held the FBiH Tourism Development Strategy 2021-2027 Kickoff Meeting.



USAID Turizam supported the organization of the RS Tourism Awareness Conference in Banja Luka, organized by the Union of Employer's Association of RS and in partnership with the RS Ministry of Trade and Tourism.





## PROMOTING BIH THROUGH TRIPADVISOR – THE WORLD’S LARGEST TOURISM PLATFORM

At an event held on the Olympic Mountain Trebević near Sarajevo, USAID Administrator Samantha Power and Federation Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) Minister of Environment and Tourism Edita Đapo officially launched Bosnia and Herzegovina’s (BiH) first ever promotional campaign on TripAdvisor, the world’s largest travel platform, aiming to position the country as an attractive tourism destination in Germany, Turkiye, Austria, Serbia and Croatia. The three-month campaign was funded by the FBiH Ministry of Environment and Tourism (FMoET) and implemented by the FBiH Chamber of Economy (FCoE) in partnership with USAID Turizam.

The campaign promoted 26 points of interests across the FBiH in three languages (English, German, Turkish) and thereby contributed to a series of USAID Turizam’s strategic goals, including propelling the brand of BiH in prioritized international markets, accelerating recovery of demand to pre-pandemic levels, setting arrivals on a growth trajectory, increasing the number of arrivals and reducing seasonality through targeted and effective marketing and promotion.



Samantha Power, USAID Administrator

*“Tourism can once again be an economic engine for Bosnia and Herzegovina and a source of domestic pride that unites people of all backgrounds.”* Samantha Power, USAID Administrator

USAID Turizam facilitated FMoET’s \$290,000 grant to the FCoE for the purposes of the campaign implementation and secured a 1:2 match by TripAdvisor to augment campaign reach and performance in the targeted source markets, as well as an additional \$30,000 in market intelligence. USAID Turizam also provided international expertise in digital destination marketing to advise on campaign design and performance and advised the FCoE on creating and delivering requiring content/materials. The project supported the FCoE in designing and launching an outreach and PR campaign to reach and inform local trade about the campaign and encourage enlisting on TripAdvisor, and secured participation of TripAdvisor in a webinar targeted at local trade (tourist boards, travel agents, lodging and service providers) on how to enlist on TripAdvisor, improve their existing listing, and best ways to capitalize on and benefit from the campaign.

Find out more at <https://bit.ly/3NZYgDF>



# HERZEGOVINA WINE ROUTE JOINS ITER VITIS EUROPEAN CULTURAL ROUTE

The Herzegovina Wine Route (HWR) consists of wineries, restaurants, accommodations, and cultural and natural attractions in the Herzegovina Region. HWR provides a unique tourism experience in Bosnia and Herzegovina, ranging from rustic dishes and rural households to exclusive hotels and modern gastronomy. On September 8, 2022, this unique tourist product was officially admitted to the Cultural Route of the Council of Europe Iter Vitis. USAID Turizam played a vital role in revitalizing the HWR, with the aim of highlighting its potential

as a leading international tourist destination.

Through partnership with the BiH Foreign Trade Chamber, active cooperation, and the engagement of the private sector, USAID Turizam charted a path towards Iter Vitis membership.

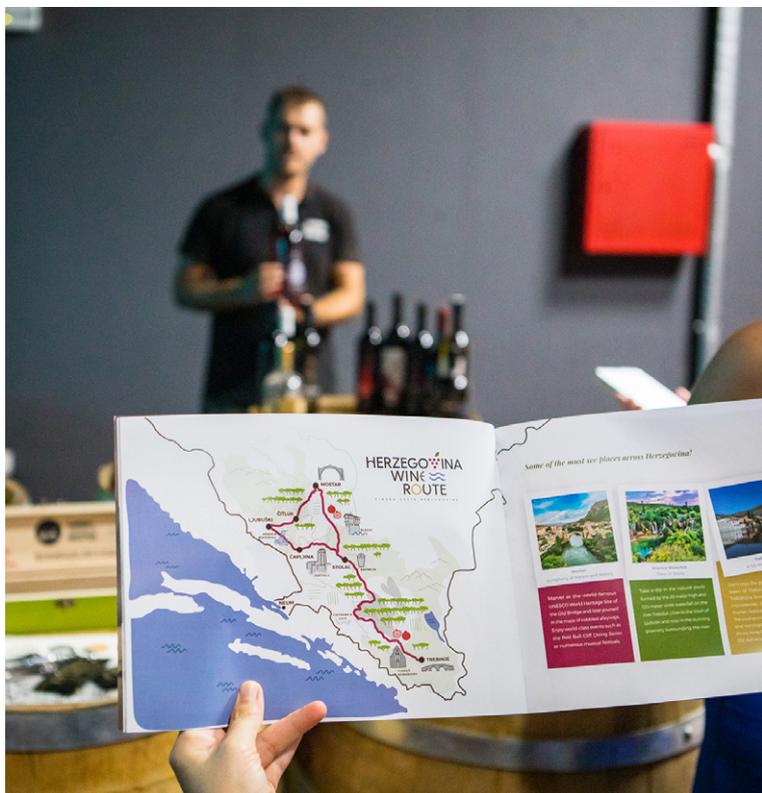
Today, wine tourism is gaining global prominence and attracting higher-spending and longer-staying guests, thereby contributing to resolving some of BiH tourism's most important challenges – seasonality and sustainability. USAID Turizam further developed this tourist product by combining the efforts of the public and private sectors and incorporating 30



wineries in six municipalities (Mostar, Čitluk, Ljubuški, Čapljina, Stolac, and Trebinje). This is a new travel perspective that revitalizes and enhances ecological and tourist offerings, while preserving the historical heritage of wines with a hundred-year long tradition and the biodiversity of the wine-producing regions. One of the most significant benefits of HWR is that it stimulates local growth, cultural integration, and sustainability.

The cultural route program was founded in 1987, and the European Cultural Route of the Council of Europe – Iter Vitis – Le Chemins de la vigne was established in 2009. The concept of Iter Vitis acknowledges that vineyards are more than just a location to consume wine and raises awareness of wineries in terms of their cultural attractions, as well as the tourism-based and culture-based valorization. Each route is an intrinsic part of the local identity, and the uniqueness of wine tourism lies in its vivid depiction of the lives of locals, its appreciation of human labor in vineyards, their stories, wine landscapes, and the cultural legacy of wine-producing regions.

*„Iter Vitis is one the 48 Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe. Each cultural route represents a topic that was important for the historical and cultural evolution of Europe. Today, wine tourism is an important aspect of cultural diplomacy. So, Iter Vitis is not only about international promotion because it has a big network, offering a plethora of opportunities for partnerships and project initiatives. This gives us a chance to change practice and learn from each other. On October 20, we have our General Assembly, where we will award Mostar and Trebinje the status of European Wine Cities! Welcome to Iter Vitis!”* **Emanuela Panke, Iter Vitis President**



Courtney Chubb, Mission Director for USAID Bosnia and Herzegovina

The newly developed HWR prospectus can be accessed at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3KV9oRJ>



# EXPANDING AVIATION ROUTES BETWEEN BIH AND GLOBAL HUBS

USAID Turizam has been actively working with the country's four airports to grow the country's airlift capacity by attracting new airlines, introducing new routes and increasing operational frequencies. One key result was the development of Sarajevo International Airport's operational incentive plan, which resulted in the LOT Polish Airlines launching their first ever yearly operations to Sarajevo.

USAID Turizam has also supported Banja Luka Airport in making a business case to Turkish Airlines to start a direct route from Istanbul, and the same with Tuzla Airport for Pegasus Airlines. Furthermore, USAID Turizam supported Tuzla International Airport

in attracting the largest European low-cost carrier, Ryanair, to start operations to Germany, Austria, and Sweden. In this way, USAID Turizam remains dedicated to its mission of increasing awareness and interest in BiH as a compelling and interesting tourism destination. These activities play a key role in achieving an overall increase in demand and reservations across consumer and business channels.

POLISH AIRLINES



A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER



**TURKISH AIRLINES**

International Airport Sarajevo (IAS) welcomed 1 million passengers in the first eight months of 2022, a 21% increase over the same period in 2019. In addition, August was the busiest month in the history of IAS business activities. IAS anticipates exceeding 2019's numbers, which was a record year for tourism in BiH.





POLETIŠTE	LET	STATUS	PRILJEV
STUTTGART	EW2496	NEW TIME	Lufthansa
WARSAW	L0579	NEW TIME	LOT
BEAUVAIS/TILLÉ	W64636		Wizz Air
DORTMUND	W64624		Wizz Air

# TREBINJE WINS 1ST PLACE IN GREEN DESTINATIONS AWARDS - TOP 100 DESTINATION SUSTAINABILITY STORIES

USAID Turizam has encouraged and facilitated Trebinje's application for the "Top 100 Destination Sustainability Stories", providing key support during the process of applying and advising on the necessary documentation. The aim was to promote Bosnia and Herzegovina as a country of unique and sustainable destinations.

After winning the first place in the international competition „Green Destinations Story Awards - Top 100 Destination Sustainability Stories" at the ITB Berlin, the largest tourism fair in the world, City of Trebinje and Herzeg House and local agricultural producers have received significant recognition and encouragement for further development of sustainable tourism.

USAID Turizam continued its technical support to the City of Trebinje for the Green Destination Top 100 Award. Trebinje has completed the procedure for the 2022 Top 100 competition with additional 15 criteria (30 in total) for the Sustainability Check and submitted 2 stories, for the Good Practice Story Award Competition, that was organized in Athens in October, at the Green Destination 2022 & Future of Tourism Summit. The story of Orjen Nature Park - Protected Area for Tourism and Sustainable Development was enlisted among 100 sustainable development stories. The Orjen and Bijela Gora Nature Park was established not just to protect the environment but also to achieve a balance between environmental preservation and the local economy's growth through resource consumption and the creation of new jobs.



Read the full story of Trebinje's award at: <https://bit.ly/3Ug4vqj>





# BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA RECEIVES SAFE TRAVELS STAMP

The USAID Turizam project began immediately after its launch to formulate COVID-19 Health and Safety Guidelines and Protocols by building on health and safety guidelines set by BiH institutions and adapting them to meet international best practice from global industry leaders. The document was developed in cooperation with the BiH Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations and entity ministries (Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism and Republika Srpska Ministry of Trade and Tourism).

Following a detailed analysis of documents prepared and adopted by BiH's institutions related to COVID-19, USAID Turizam

held private sector consultations, that included stakeholders from accommodation facilities, restaurants, adventure services and many others to explore their needs and capacities to introduce new measures or point out shortcomings. Through the adoption of COVID -19 protocols prepared by USAID Turizam in cooperation with local partners, BiH has fulfilled the conditions to obtain the WTTC Safe Travel Stamp, developed to optimize the efforts of the global tourism sector to restore trust among travelers and ensure coordination of public and private sector actors in this sector.

Watch the video to find out more about COVID-19 guidelines: <https://bit.ly/3zWYjfb>





HoldINA and Energopetrol, the largest fuel companies in Southeast Europe, deployed COVID-19 Guidelines developed by USAID Turizam. These two largest chains of service stations in BiH and their subsidiaries are considered regional leaders in the Balkans. The guidelines are fully implemented in Fresh Corners, HoldINA's and Energopetrol's food and beverage stores, and there is joint promotion of BiH as a Safe Travels destination. Through this partnership, USAID Turizam highlights the importance of making BiH a safer and more attractive international destination.



## ONLINE FINANCE DIRECTORY LAUNCHED

The Online Finance Directory (OFD) is a unique web platform available to all subjects who intend to improve their overall business performance in the tourism industry. For the first time, Bosnia and Herzegovina has a platform that is both educational and instructive for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) interested in creating sustainable tourist businesses. The main goal is to strengthen cooperative lines between the public, private, and non-governmental sectors using a variety of financial options.

The first version of the OFD was a PDF document including extensive information on potential financing sources for the tourism sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The newly developed OFD website will enable faster and updated information, including an optimized online environment with general instructions on how to apply for special subsidy lines and loans; clarifications on financing terminology; and a toolkit to assist applicants with project writing (drafting business plans, loan calculators, etc.).



#### Online Finance Directory:

- Educates tourism value chain enterprises on financial terminology
- Presents available funds with links to the financial resources which target the tourism sector or are suitable for the tourism sector
- Provides basic guidance on the process for loan applications and the standard required documentation

The best feature of the directory is that it provides an accessible listing of credit options available to MSMEs to navigate the financial landscape better and facilitate improved access to business credit. In this way, USAID Turizam contributes significantly to the establishment of sustainable tourism-based enterprises and ensures that every business will always make wise and sustainable financial decisions.

Visit the website at: <https://finance.turizambih.ba/>



# UNA NATURE PARK VISITOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

**BiH is on the verge of attracting a greater number of outdoor enthusiasts and nature lovers by protecting the natural heritage of its national parks!**

USAID Turizam worked on developing a sustainable visitor management and community engagement plan for National Park Una (NP Una), one of Bosnia and Herzegovina's four national parks, following the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) and green destination criteria. As an integral part of the Visitor Management Plan and Community Engagement Plan for the period 2023-2032, USAID Turizam recognized a need for the assessment of impediments to advance the conservation agenda and identify opportunities for conservation initiatives in NP Una. The plan facilitated the formulation of a practical approach which will result in doubling the percentage of protected areas in BiH. Turizam's efforts during the preparation of these plans were significantly supported by subcontractors Nature & Adventure and Wise for Nature. On September 28, the Una National Park visitor management plan and community engagement were presented to the public for the first time. In October 2022, USAID Turizam will start working on the development of the sustainable visitor management and community engagement plan for National Park Kozara. NP Kozara is the second oldest national park in Bosnia and Herzegovina, characterized by stunning landscapes and high biodiversity. Following its USAID-approved work plan, Turizam will support specific components to enhance the existing management plan.

A new travel perspective is emerging in light of climate change, biodiversity loss, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the USAID Turizam project puts great effort and supports effective energy efficiency policies and practices at municipal, destination, and enterprise levels throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. This will contribute to the overall destination's competitiveness at the international level and add value to the entire product market from the perspective of sustainable and responsible tourism. Moreover, it will contribute to improving conservation and revenue by attracting more responsible visitors.

Find out more about NP Una by visiting their website: <https://npuna.com/en/>





FBIH Minister of Environment and Tourism Edita Dapo, NP UNa Director Amarildo Mulić, USAID Turizam Chief of Party Ibrahim Osta and USAID BiH Head of Economic Development Office Karl Wurster



## PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY

USAID Turizam aims to increase broad-based tourism-driven economic growth and promote social harmony by capitalizing on BiH's cultural heritage and natural beauty. Strengthening gender equality is one of the goals of the project activities. To encourage tourism governing bodies, employers, tourism education and research institutions, and civil society organizations, USAID Turizam has published a Gender Assessment of the Tourism Sector to help increase understanding of women involved in various tourist activities. These include women from rural and urban areas with little education and advanced degrees, women at different nodes of the tourism value chain from agricultural producers



to business owners and their employees, to the consumers of tourism products and services, women living with disabilities, and LGBTIQ persons. USAID Turizam will continue with its efforts to make a more appealing and inclusive tourism industry culture.

Read the Gender Assessment Analysis by scanning the QR code: <https://bit.ly/3a2IGby>



# USAID LAUNCHES NEW PARTNERSHIPS WITH FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO IMPROVE TOURISM SECTOR'S ACCESS TO CAPITAL

USAID Turizam signed joint implementation plans (JIPs) with NLB Bank d.d. Sarajevo and Sparkasse Bank d.d. BiH to expand tourism enterprises' access to financing that will enable them to enhance their offers to attract more visitors and increase the industry's competitive advantage on a global scale. Over the following period, USAID Turizam is planning to sign JIPs with several other financial institutions in BiH. The JIPs were formulated after extensive consultations with hundreds of representatives of the tourism industry. Under these agreements, partners committed to promoting lending products to tourism enterprises throughout BiH, exchanging information on the performance and projections of the tourism industry, providing assistance in developing quality financing projects and proposals, as well as supporting product development and diversification, development planning, training, marketing and promotion.

“Access to finance is the key element driving economic development of micro-, small- and medium-enterprises (SMEs) in the BiH tourism industry and other related sectors,” noted **USAID BiH Economic Development Office Director Karl Wurster**. “USAID Turizam will collaborate with local financial institutions to provide tailor-made technical assistance and training in financial management and business development, create specialized tourism banking and leasing products, and promote existing and new sources of financing.”





# MOSTAR, TREBINJE AND TVRDOŠ MONASTERY WIN ITER VITIS AWARDS

Iter Vitis, the Cultural Route of the Council of Europe dedicated to wine, celebrated the fifth edition of the Iter Vitis Award in Santiago de Compostela in Spain and three awards went to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the newest member to have been admitted to the route.

The awards went to Mostar as the Best Wine City Iter Vitis 2022, Trebinje for the Best Sustainable Destination and the Tvrdoš Monastery for the best practice that enhances cultural and historical heritage and wine. The Herzegovina Wine Route is the first

route in the Western Balkans to be accepted into *Iter Vitis*, and the development and promotion of this project are supported by the USAID Tourism Project and the Chamber of Foreign Trade of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The criteria for receiving the 'Iter Vitis' awards are the best practices in the field of wine tourism, as well as initiatives that protect and promote the tradition of vines and wine and the landscape connected with them, innovation and respect for environmental sustainability, social and economic.



Cultural route  
of the Council of Europe  
Itinéraire culturel  
du Conseil de l'Europe







## USAID TURIZAM MAKING TOURISM IN BIH MORE INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE

USAID Turizam worked on the development of the **Disability Inclusion Plan for Tourism in BiH**, the first strategy of this kind in the country for the tourism private and public sector, as well as organizations representing persons with disabilities, schools and training centers. Tourism sector representatives were invited to use the presented recommendations with the aim of improving inclusion and representation of organizations and individuals in BiH tourism sector.

The plan encourages synchronized cooperation among government authorities, tourism sector representatives, and organizations representing individuals with disabilities. In the plan, initiatives are associated with governing authorities, supportive partners, and expected outcomes of implemented actions.



Watch the video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RrukJgIxYU>

Through this plan, the USAID Turizam project seeks to secure the path toward full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol in the BiH tourism sector by strengthening the “Tourism for All” principles of inclusion and access.

Read the DIP summary: <https://bit.ly/3fpub4g>



Read the complete version of the DIP:  
<https://bit.ly/3Cbu0IZ>





# FACULTY OF ECONOMICS PALE RECEIVES UNWTO TEDQUAL CERTIFICATE



Following intensive cooperation with and technical assistance provided by USAID Turizam, the Faculty of Economics Pale at the University of East Sarajevo has been awarded the prestigious UNWTO TedQual certificate for its “Tourism and Hospitality” study program. This is the first institution to receive this certificate in Bosnia and Herzegovina and only the fifth one in Southeast Europe.

The TedQual certificate is awarded by the UNWTO Academy and represents the gold standard for higher education in tourism. TedQual certified study programs are of great importance both for students in Bosnia and Herzegovina and for the tourism sector in order to obtain a high-quality workforce qualified according to international standards in tourism. UNWTO.TedQual is a comprehensive and continuous voluntary certification system for education, training and research programs in tourism that serves to recognize and support their quality.



Karl Wurster, USAID BiH Head of Economic Development Office

UNWTO's TedQual program recognizes young people as future leaders of sustainable tourism management and encourages talented and dedicated individuals to make a significant contribution to the tourism industry. The University of East Sarajevo has embarked on the path of excellence and continuous modernization, which is a confirmation of the educational system's readiness to adapt to the latest demands of the tourism industry, not only at the local, but also at the international level.

The University obtained this certificate with the technical support of the USAID Developing Sustainable Tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Turizam) with the aim of improving the study program and the environment in which it is carried out, improving cooperation with the economy and strengthening the role of students and alumni of the Faculty.

„Throughout the entire certification process, the team that led this process in front of the faculty brought its significance closer to us through both direct participation and conversations. Through gradual self-evaluation, we concluded this is fundamentally a student-centered approach. Also, we have realized that we can influence and actively shape the educational process. As the procedure continued, student passivity was replaced with activist vigor. At the very end of the certification procedure, we saw the range of possibilities that had been opened: from engagement with the economy on multiple levels, to the possibility of international exchange, to the hitherto unimaginable ability to attend international lecturers. To this day, we could only imagine this.,” stated Milica Kovač, third year student of the Tourism and Hospitality studying program.



A scenic view of a stone bridge over a river, with stone buildings and outdoor seating on a hillside in the background. The bridge is a large, single-arched stone structure spanning across the river. To the right, there are several stone buildings, some with tiled roofs, and an outdoor seating area with tables and chairs. The scene is set against a backdrop of a blue sky with scattered clouds and a rocky hillside.

# CREATING WORLD-CLASS TOURISM PRODUCTS AND EXPERIENCES

TOURISM PRODUCTS  
AND EXPERIENCES



# CONNECTING SARAJEVO AND MOSTAR WITH NEARBY DESTINATIONS

Sarajevo and Mostar are two of the most attractive tourism destinations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and for this reason, USAID Turizam chose to first cooperate with these cities on the unique Hub&Spokes model. The Hub&Spokes model is a program implemented by USAID Turizam aimed at connecting the cities of Sarajevo and Mostar (Hubs) as anchor destinations with nearby destinations, attractions, and experiences (Spokes). For this purpose, the program collaborated with municipalities and cities in the vicinity of Sarajevo Canton and Mostar City, offering full or half-day

trips, excursions, and organized visits. This activity will extend travelers' length of stay in BiH, support local area development and the growth of the economy in the selected municipalities. The selected spokes were promoted through grouped and themed itineraries highlighting available products and experiences, including nearby towns, villages, mountains, picnic areas, and protected natural resorts. To date, USAID Turizam has organized workshops in smaller destinations around the Sarajevo and Mostar areas and plans to extend this program to the City of Banja Luka.



Kraljeva Sutjeska, Bosnia and Herzegovina



Konjic, Bosnia and Herzegovina

# EXPANDING SALES AGENT'S NETWORK AND INCREASING INTEREST IN THE DESTINATION

To address the need for a more robust network of international tour operators and travel agents, USAID Turizam implemented a series of educational, information and business to business activities that resulted in growing the country's network with around 1,000 agents and tour operators. This included the launch of the country's first ever Online Travel Agent Academy (global network of 62,000 travel professionals), the country's first ever roadshow in the Gulf that featured three cities in UAE and Saudi Arabia in partnership with Flynas and Flydubai (85 agents), webinars with Qatar Airways (network of 100 sales agents), Rida International (network of 600 sellers around the world), Intrepid (Australia) and the Travel Corporation (UK). More such activities are planned over the coming few months in partnership with Turkish Airlines to include UK, Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Gulf, Malaysia, Singapore and Turkiye.



The roadshow in UAE and Saudi Arabia yielded immediate results for BiH by signing contacts with two big outbound agents from Saudi Arabia to back-to-back groups.



Find out more at <https://bit.ly/3xVvvCv>



## **Bosnia and Herzegovina – The Most Exciting Destination in the World!**

Together with the Mayor of Sarajevo, Benjamina Karić, and representatives from the Tourism Association of Sarajevo Canton Visit Sarajevo, USAID Turizam presented potentials for investment in tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the diversity of the tourism offer at Expo 2020 Dubai. Ibrahim Osta, USAID Turizam Chief of Party, presented reasons why Bosnia and Herzegovina is the most exciting destination in the world to many visitors of Expo 2020 Dubai, and Jusuf Jamakosmanović, Tourism Marketing Specialist at USAID Turizam, presented the rich cultural, historical, and natural heritage and tourist offer of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has won second place in the “Most Popular Course Collection” section on the Online Travel Training (OTT) platform, the leading e-learning provider for the global travel trade!



Kenan Magoda, the President of Canton Sarajevo Tourism Organization, Benjamina Karić, Mayor of Sarajevo, Ibrahim Osta, USAID Turizam Chief of Party

# PROMOTING JAJCE AS A REGIONAL CENTER OF TOURISM EVENTS

In 2022, the royal city of Jajce is implementing a promotional campaign with the aim of becoming the center of cultural, entertainment, and sports events in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider region. The promotional campaign is implemented by the Public Institution Agency for Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage and Development of Tourist Potentials of Jajce with the support of the Municipality of Jajce, in cooperation with the Sarajevo Film Festival, Holidays in BiH initiative, and USAID Turizam.

USAID Turizam supported Jajce in events promotion, staff social media training, and graphic design-related activities. Additionally, USAID Turizam conducted a training for “Agency for promotion - Jajce” on best practices in digital marketing and promotion. Such activities are aimed at optimizing digital channels and activating targeted campaigns to promote and sell a series of summer festivals and activities.



New visual identity of Jajce developed by USAID Turizam





📍 Ottoman fortress, Srebrenik, Bosnia and Herzegovina

A scenic view of a stone castle on a cliffside at sunset. The castle features several towers and a wooden staircase leading to an arched entrance. The sky is filled with dramatic, colorful clouds in shades of orange, yellow, and blue. The foreground shows a dirt path and some vegetation. A red text box is overlaid on the right side of the image.

# ESTABLISHING INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS AND CRITERIA



## PROMOTING EXCELLENCE THROUGH AWARDS FOR BIH TOURISM INDUSTRY

The Star of Tourism BiH is an annual award for the tourism sector implemented by the FBiH Chamber of Commerce. This year, USAID Turizam supported the creation of an upgraded award format, including the introduction of 10 newly designed categories incorporating criteria such as environmental protection and female participation as well as a transparent evaluation procedure, a new visual identity, and award design and significantly improved promotion and social media presence.

USAID Turizam has also supported the FBiH Chamber of Commerce in raising the award's profile across the country by organizing two promotional events in Sarajevo and Banja Luka with an online address by TripAdvisor's Director of Media, Destinations, Hotels and Growth, Justin Reid. USAID Turizam has partnered with the FBiH Chamber of Commerce to raise the expected standards for tourism products and services in BiH through supporting the development of the Star of Tourism award, thus publicly recognizing distinguished individuals, companies, and organizations and celebrating their achievements. The recognition of excellence will have a ripple effect in the tourism sector, enticing others to follow suit and work on raising the quality of their own products and services.



Find out more about: <https://www.facebook.com/zvijezdaturizma>



**Jedimo  
kvalitetno,  
jedimo  
lokalno!**

## PROMOTING GEOGRAPHIC AND QUALITY CERTIFICATION OF PRODUCTS

USAID Turizam is supporting the enrichment of the BiH tourism value chain through the certification of attractive local agricultural products. Examples include an organic mushroom producer near Banja Luka who sells their product to the Hotel Marriott, a potato producer from Nevesinje who obtained a protected geographical indication, and the support of a hotel operating within an ethno-village in order to obtain a halal certificate.

USAID Turizam has also supported the traditional craft Babić, who produces some of the most delicious charcuterie in BiH, to obtain Protected Geographical Indication and to create a brand-new visual identity. Babić is one of the producers who entered the tourism value chain with great success and continued with its expansion, including some of the most renowned restaurants in Sarajevo.

In addition to providing technical assistance to producer organizations to obtain one of the quality standards, Turizam also supported the organization of the First Organic Fest in Banja Luka, which was organized by the RS Ministry of Agriculture with the participation of 20 domestic organic certified producers from all over BiH, the organization of a B2B event with RS organic producers and hotels, and developed and promoted two practical sets of guidelines—one focused on obtaining geographical indications and another on certifications and trademarks.



# ENSURING SAFE FOOD HANDLING IN ADVENTURE AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

USAID Turizam collaborated with the BiH Food Safety Agency (FSA) to create a safe food handling guide and determine food safety guidelines for the adventure and hospitality industries. The materials encourage safe food handling in the adventure and hospitality industries across the country and raise awareness about the need to incorporate safe food handling methods into tourism businesses.

USAID Turizam is promoting food safety throughout the country and has held workshops with members of the hospitality industry and other relevant stakeholders in Jahorina, Bihać, Banja Luka, Tuzla and Travnik, including food producers, chambers of economy, FBiH and RS ministries of agriculture, RS Inspectorate, faculties, representatives of municipalities, and municipal centers for culture and tourism. By incorporating appropriate food safety standards, the BiH adventure and hospitality industries will become more attractive to discerning international travelers.

Find out more at <https://bit.ly/3NTyRf9>







# SUPPORTING WORLD-CLASS EVENTS

# SARAJEVO BUSINESS FORUM: THE POWER OF TOURISM TO FUEL ECONOMIC GROWTH

Sarajevo Business Forum (SBF) is an annual international business and investment conference, organized by Bosna Bank International (BBI) and other stakeholders (Islamic Development Bank, Dubai Islamic Bank, and Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank). The conference is positioned as one of the most important business and investment events for Southeastern Europe and represents a platform for business networking and the exploration of investment and business opportunities across the world. In the framework of the 2022 edition of SBF, USAID Turizam organized a panel entitled The Power of Tourism to Fuel Economic Growth, focusing on attracting international investments

and promoting the tourism industry as an integral component of economic growth in BiH. The panel was curated and moderated by USAID Turizam Chief of Party Ibrahim Osta and included participants such as MMCY Global Partner Alan Elliott Merschen, global strategic advisor, diplomat and author Anita Mendiratta, Oxford Economics managing director David Goodger; and many others.



Watch a recording of the entire session at <https://youtu.be/CbtfGrklAZ0>





DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM  
IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (TURIZAM)



**PANEL 3**

**THE POWER OF TOURISM TO FUEL ECONOMIC GROWTH**



Speakers at the Panel *The Power of Tourism to Fuel Economic Growth*

DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM  
IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (TURIZAM)

**PANEL 3**

**THE POWER OF  
TOURISM TO FUEL  
ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**ONLY A FEW DAYS LEFT!**

HILLS HOTEL AND CONGRESS CENTRE

THURSDAY  
MAY 12 / 2022  
10:50 - 12:30

# HOSTING THE WORLD RAFTING CHAMPIONSHIP IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

From 25 May to 1 June, Bosnia and Herzegovina hosted the International Rafting Federation (IRF) World Rafting Championship (WRC) 2022, with over 60 teams and more than 400 competitors representing 22 countries. The WRC was held on the rivers Vrbas, Drina, and Tara in the cities of Banja Luka and Foča.

USAID Turizam is proud to have been part of this global story by providing significant support to this historic event, which will promote Bosnia and Herzegovina as a must-see adventure destination across the world. The IRF WRC 2022

was officially opened at a spectacular ceremony held on the banks of the Vrbas within the Kastel Fortress in Banja Luka. During the ceremony, numerous visitors enjoyed watching a parade of teams rowing together on the Vrbas, and the famous Banja Luka basketball player Slađana Golić lighting a torch to mark the beginning of the championship. Karl Wurster, USAID/BiH Economic Development Office Director, greeted the audience and highlighted the heroic efforts of the championship director, Aleksandar Pastir, and thanked the International Rafting Federation for its support in the realization of the championship.



During the closing ceremony held in Foča, US Ambassador to BiH Michael J. Murphy awarded medals to women's and men's junior (U19) downriver teams, the main discipline that makes up 40% of the total result in the championship. The junior women's teams from the United States of America and the Czech Republic, as well as the junior men's teams from Croatia and the Czech Republic, were excited to receive the medals.

**USAID Turizam promotes safe rafting in Bosnia and Herzegovina** in accordance with the International Rafting Federation's (IRF) guidelines! As part of the support for the World Rafting Championship, we have also supported the IRF Guide Training & Education (GTE) program for 24 rafting guides from across Bosnia and Herzegovina. The training was organized by the Kanjon Rafting Club in partnership with the IRF.



Watch a testimonial at: <https://bit.ly/3Oir8H9>



USAID BiH Head of Economic Development Office Karl Würster speaking at the WRC opening ceremony



United States Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina - Michael J. Murphy awarding medals to WRC winners

# PROMOTING UNA REGATTA – THE OLDEST TRADITIONAL KAYAKING AND RAFTING EVENT

Una Regatta is an annual event connecting sport and culture and promoting the great potential of the Una River and National Park Una (NP Una). USAID Turizam supported NP Una in organizing this event and implementing a digital marketing plan, as well as securing the official endorsement of the International Rafting Federation (IRF). Support is aimed at promoting the beauty of both the river and the national park, not only at the local level but internationally as well.

IRF President Joseph Willis Jones met with rafting businesses on the Una River and Neretva River to promote the IRF Rafting Operator Accreditation

Program, which had its first world promotion on the Una and Neretva rivers. This is a significant contribution to the further professionalization and positioning of Bosnia and Herzegovina as the most exciting destination for adventure tourism in the international market. More importantly, it has enabled future rafting development to be aligned with international rafting standards, following the operator's accreditation program.

As part of the USAID Turizam efforts, this visit will contribute to the international visibility of BiH and plan formulation for improving rafting safety standards across BiH.



„I'm here to work with rafting agencies and rafting operators on the Una River, to help them reach international standards through the IRF Rafting Operator Accreditation Program. This is a new program we are launching here, helping organizations around the world to raise their standards, so they are able to attract more tourists and to bring people here from around the world to see places like this.” **Joseph Willis Jones, IRF President**)



Find out more at: <https://bit.ly/3QTTkkk>



Courtney Chubb, USAID Mission Director to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Amarildo Mulić, Director NP „Una”

# VERTICAL FUN WITH DRILL & CHILL FESTIVAL

Drill & Chill is an annual climbing and highlining festival taking place in the Vrbas canyon near Banja Luka. The founding idea is to connect climbers, highliners and outdoor enthusiasts from Western Europe, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the region through knowledge transfer and experience sharing.

USAID Turizam recognized this festival as the most significant climbing and highlining festival in southeast Europe with over 250 participants from over 20 countries and supported the Banja Luka-based Climbing club Extreme in organizing this event. Also, USAID Turizam supported the creation of compelling visual content for the purpose of continued communications and promotion of the destination. To add to the distinctive character of the festival's 2021 edition, USAID Turizam introduced interactive and immersive cultural experiences, including local gastronomy and embroidery workshops, which are part of the UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage.



Find out more at <http://drillandchillfestival.com/>

Local associations were included in the festival program through organizing workshops for international participants related to the UNESCO World Heritage inscribed “Zmijanje” embroidery and the making of traditional Bosnian pies. This was a unique opportunity to support the festival’s expansion and further propagate its premier positioning and the general brand of Bosnia and Herzegovina as an adventure tourism destination.



Find out more at <https://bit.ly/3xhXfO8>



 Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina

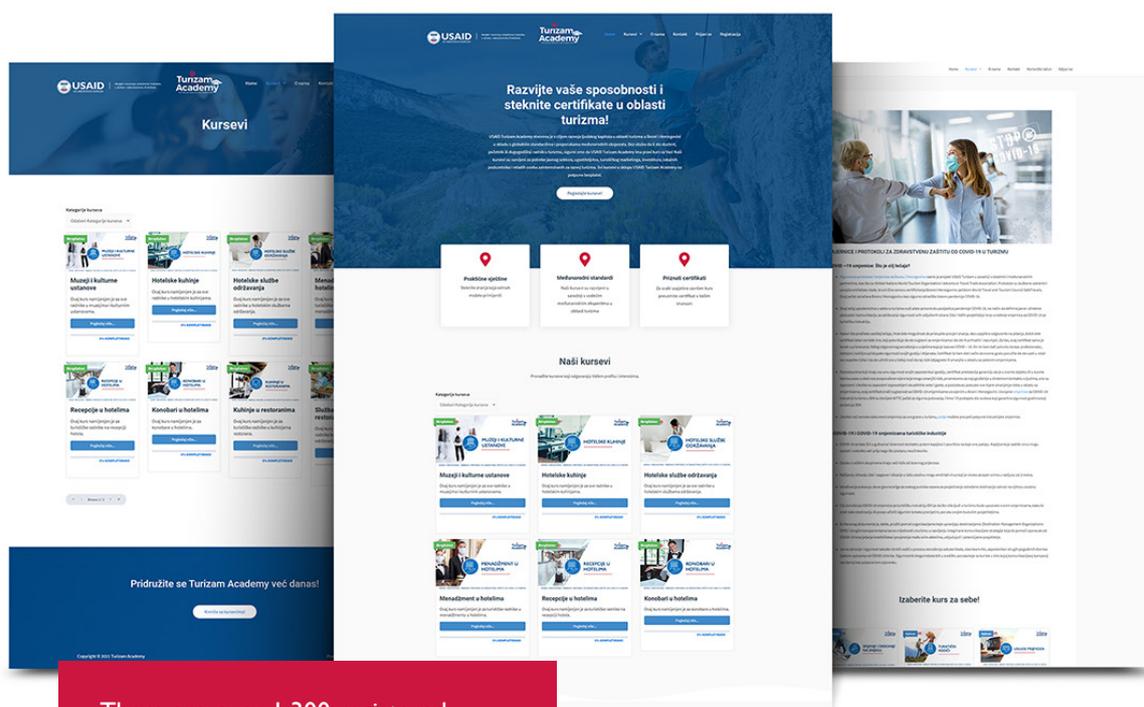
A scenic view of a stone fortress wall by a river. The wall is made of grey stone blocks and has a small arched doorway. In the foreground, a stone ledge runs along the riverbank, where several people are sitting. The river is calm, reflecting the sky and the wall. Lush green trees are visible on the right side, and some green leaves hang from the top left corner. A red flag is visible on the wall. The sky is blue with some clouds.

# DEVELOPING HUMAN CAPITAL IN TOURISM SECTOR

# TURIZAM ACADEMY (TA)

Turizam Academy (TA) is the first online platform established to develop human capital in the tourism industry in accordance with the most recent global standards and the advice of international experts. TA courses target the public sector, hospitality, tourism marketing, investors, local entrepreneurs, and youth engaged in tourism development. Recently, TA gained access to two new subsets of courses, which include access to two new online educational platforms – Typsy and FLOW Hospitality.

The platforms have been promoted to hotels, tour operators, restaurants, and similar hospitality industries. Typsy contains over 100 courses, and FLOW hospitality gives access to five additional curated courses: the Housekeeper, the Receptionist, the Waiter, Guest Service, and Services that Sell. The platforms have become popular through this promotion, and most openings have been filled.



There are over 1,300 registered learners at the Turizam Online Travel Academy. Turizam will continue adding new courses.

**All TA courses are free of charge.**

Visit the TA at: <https://academy.turizambih.ba/>



# MODERNIZING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR EXCELLENCE IN HOSPITALITY

USAID Turizam, in partnership with the GIZ BiH project, has successfully upgraded the curriculum and study program for cooks in two high schools in Canton Sarajevo. The program is founded on the idea of dual education that ensures each student will meet all the needs of modern hospitality, cuisine, and tourism. The joint effort of the USAID Turizam project, GIZ BiH project „Technical and Vocational Education and Training”, Secondary School for Tourism and Hospitality, Hadžići High School Center, Canton Sarajevo Chamber of Economy and numerous industry experts resulted in several positive attributions of the new program, among which the project would capitalize on responsiveness to industry needs, applicability of the dual education model, and practical work. In the long term, this will imply better learning outcomes and greater correspondence to the workplace.

**The curriculum has the potential to serve as a benchmark for vocational education reform in all cantonal units of Bosnia and Herzegovina, following the example of Sarajevo Canton.**



# MATCHING JOB SEEKERS WITH EMPLOYERS IN THE TOURISM SECTOR

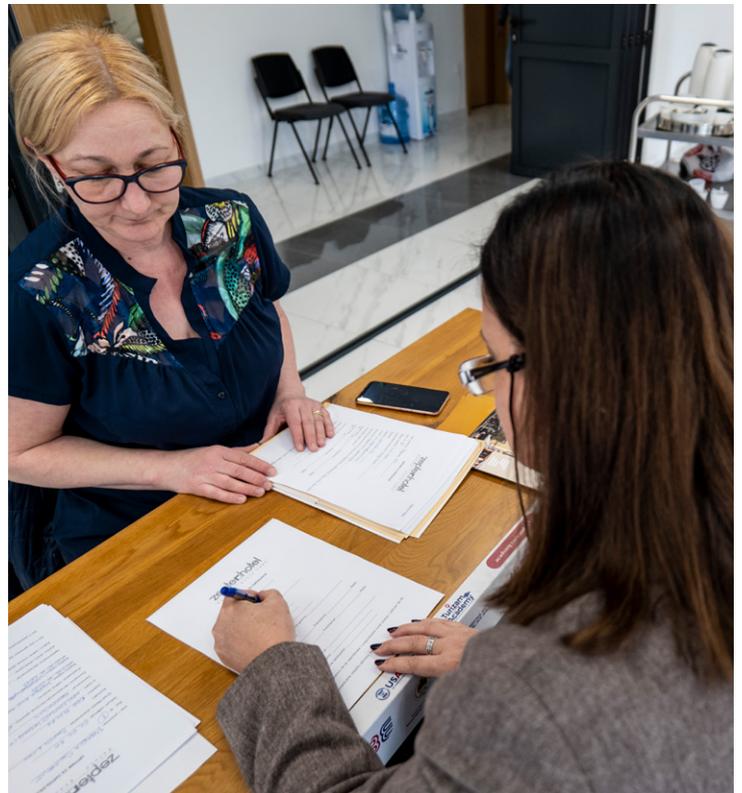
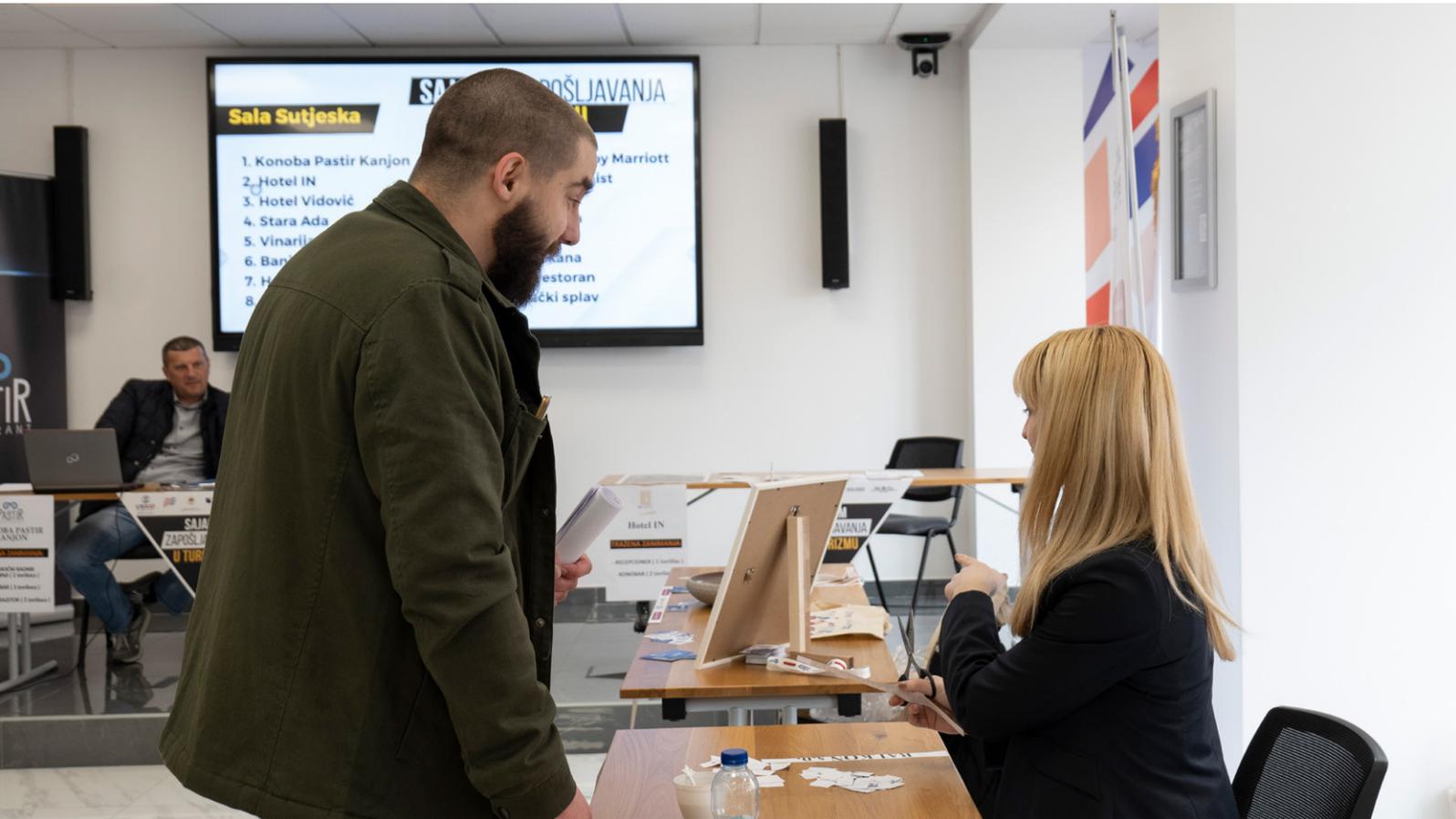
In cooperation with the Employment Bureau of Republika Srpska (RS), RS Chamber of Commerce, RS Ministry of Trade and Tourism, RS Association of Employers of Hospitality and Tourism HoReCa, USAID Turizam organized the first Tourism Job Fair in Banja Luka, with the aim of connecting the demand and supply of labor in tourism with a focus on targeted matching between the required and offered profiles of candidates. At the Tourism Job Fair, leading hotels, restaurants, and other touristic organizations from the Banja Luka region recruited new employees.

The fair was attended by 30 employers, advertising more than 200 vacancies. Over 200 people looking for work experience in the tourism sector took advantage of this unique opportunity to connect directly with hotels, restaurants, and spas in Banja Luka, Teslić and beyond, resulting in 33 new full-time employments shortly after the Fair.



Find out more at <https://youtu.be/INHzEJ36jxY>





# CREATING WORLD-CLASS UNIVERSITY TOURISM EDUCATION WITH UNWTO

USAID Turizam is working with three BiH universities (University of Tuzla, University of East Sarajevo, and University Herzegovina) to acquire the TedQual Certificate awarded by UNWTO, an international program for quality assurance and certification of study programs in tourism. It represents the gold standard of education in tourism, which seeks to facilitate the continuous improvement of tourism education and research programs by defining quality standards for tourism education. USAID Turizam activities included a series

of webinars with international guest speakers and resulted with one of the three institutions - Faculty of Economics Pale University of East Sarajevo, already completing the application, successfully passing the TedQual audit and obtaining the TedQual certification of their study program in tourism. The University of Tuzla is following suit - they secured the funds for the certification and are finalizing their application.



Find out more at <https://fb.watch/dGFNpjLb9P/>







 Lukomir Village, Bjelašnica, Bosnia and Herzegovina

A scenic view of a small village in a mountain valley. The village features stone buildings with various roof colors (red, grey, white) and is surrounded by green fields and a steep, rocky mountain slope. In the background, there are more mountains under a cloudy sky. A red rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text "FOSTERING RURAL TOURISM" in white, uppercase letters.

# FOSTERING RURAL TOURISM

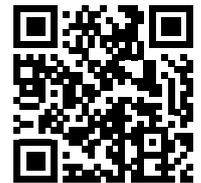
# MOST BEAUTIFUL VILLAGES OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The *Most Beautiful Villages (MBV)* designation was created in 1981 by the French organization *Les Plus Beaux Villages de France*. Its purpose is to preserve and enrich the heritage of its member communities in order to raise their profile and, as a result, encourage their economic development. Through a nationwide competition supported by a local selection committee and a team of local and international experts, USAID Turizam has introduced this concept and methodology in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The initial winners of the country's most attractive communities will be chosen to participate in this development and branding initiative. Through experience design workshops, training and advertising, entrepreneurs in chosen towns will be assisted in improving their

tourism products and service. USAID Turizam supported the Association for Rural Tourism Development in BiH Alterural and their network of partners in introducing the international concept of The Most Beautiful Villages of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and close to 30 villages applied in the first round of competition (for more information, see the section Grants Awarded by USAID Turizam)



The Most Beautiful  
Villages of  
*Bosnia and Herzegovina*



Find out more at: <https://www.facebook.com/mbvbih>



USAID Turizam in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations (MOFTER), worked with local authorities to support applications from Vrancici village (Kreševo municipality), Krupa on Vrbas (Banja Luka) and Blagaj (Mostar) to compete for the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Best Tourism Villages label. Results are expected by the end of 2022.

*„This initiative will contribute to the preservation of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s most valuable assets in rural areas - its natural beauty, cultural heritage, and tradition of hospitality - and transform it into a more authentic and attractive destination for discerning higher-yield international travelers in the post-pandemic period.”, stated **Dobriša Boba Vukmanović**, USAID/BiH Project Manager.*

# INTRODUCING BEST PRACTICES IN MANAGING, PROMOTING AND SELLING RURAL-BASED ACCOMMODATION AND EXPERIENCES

USAID Turizam has organized a two-part training program to provide best management practices to rural accommodation and experience providers, as well as all potential stakeholders eager to join the sector. The training aims to increase the levels of promoting and selling authentic and successful rural-based accommodations, including experiences for post-COVID-19 travelers that capitalize on focusing on aptitudes for business management advancements, market positioning, sales, and product design. The first part presented strategies, tactics, and international best practices

for extending the guest stay; achieving higher occupancy rates throughout the year; improving guest satisfaction and profit margins. The second part focused on social media marketing, digital sales platforms, quality service, and standards. The program was delivered by the regionally recognized tourism expert Nedo Pinezić and USAID Turizam's digital marketing expert, Harun Bavčić. The training was held in Banja Luka, Šipovo, East Sarajevo, Trebinje, Bihać, Jajce, Travnik, Tuzla, Sarajevo, Konjic, Mostar, Ljubuški and Livno, attracting over 200 participants.



# IMPROVING QUALITY OF ACCOMMODATIONS IN HOTELS AND RURAL HOUSEHOLDS

In mid-2021, the RS adopted new regulations on hotel classification criteria, which included several adjustments in line with international best practices. These upgrades were identified after initial benchmarking of RS categorization criteria against European HotelStars criteria was conducted by USAID Turizam. What ensued was a more comprehensive comparative analysis of entity-based classification systems targeting 3 categories of accommodation: hotels, residential spas, and rural guesthouses.

USAID Turizam produced an Accommodation Classification System Upgrade and Training Plan which will serve as a roadmap for future improvements to classification criteria in both FBiH and RS, but also overall management and capacities for carrying out effective classification of hospitality accommodation. The main purpose is to raise standards of excellence in accommodation services as perceived by international tourists.





Čvrsnica mountain, Bosnia and Herzegovina

A person wearing a green hooded jacket and dark pants stands on a rocky outcrop, looking out over a vast mountain landscape. The foreground is filled with green pine trees and rocky terrain. The middle ground shows a dense forest of trees with autumn-colored foliage. In the background, a sea of white clouds fills the valley, with distant mountain ranges visible under a clear blue sky. A large, dark red rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing white text.

# ADVANCING DIGITAL MARKETING IN TOURISM SECTOR

# INCREASING DESTINATION APPEAL IN THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETPLACE

USAID Turizam has continued advocacy for increased investment in promoting and positioning the country in the international marketplace, which resulted in launching BiH's first and biggest ever marketing campaign. In partnership with the Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism and Federal Chamber of Commerce, USAID Turizam supported the design and launch of a BAM 750,000 campaign on TripAdvisor, the largest travel platform in the world, to increase awareness of the country's tourism offer in priority source markets. The three-month campaign resulted in 16m impressions and exceeded TA's global average in all the key indicators and a substantial increase in direct bookings.

Furthermore, USAID Turizam featured BiH destinations in a number of trade and media familiarization trips such as with Intrepid (adventure, Australia), the Travel Corporation (among world's

biggest outbound operators, UK) and Ilay Erkok (top Turkish influencer), The Telegraph (Olympic heritage). In partnership with Turkish Airlines, tourism boards, and private sector with support valued at BAM 30,000, USAID Turizam organized a familiarization trip on June 23 this year. The trip hosted 10 best Incentive Travel agents from Turkiye based on their quality and volume. Incentive Travel is the best fit with the country's plans of attracting high-spend and longer stay arrival.

## TripAdvisor Campaign Results

(BAM 500k by Ministry with 50% match from TripAdvisor)

- 16,000,000 ad impressions
- 24,900 clicks on ads
- 0.18% video CTR
- 43% video completion rate
- 9.54% engagement rate destinations
- 99sec dwell time
- 17 – 34% Increase in bookings from targeted countries

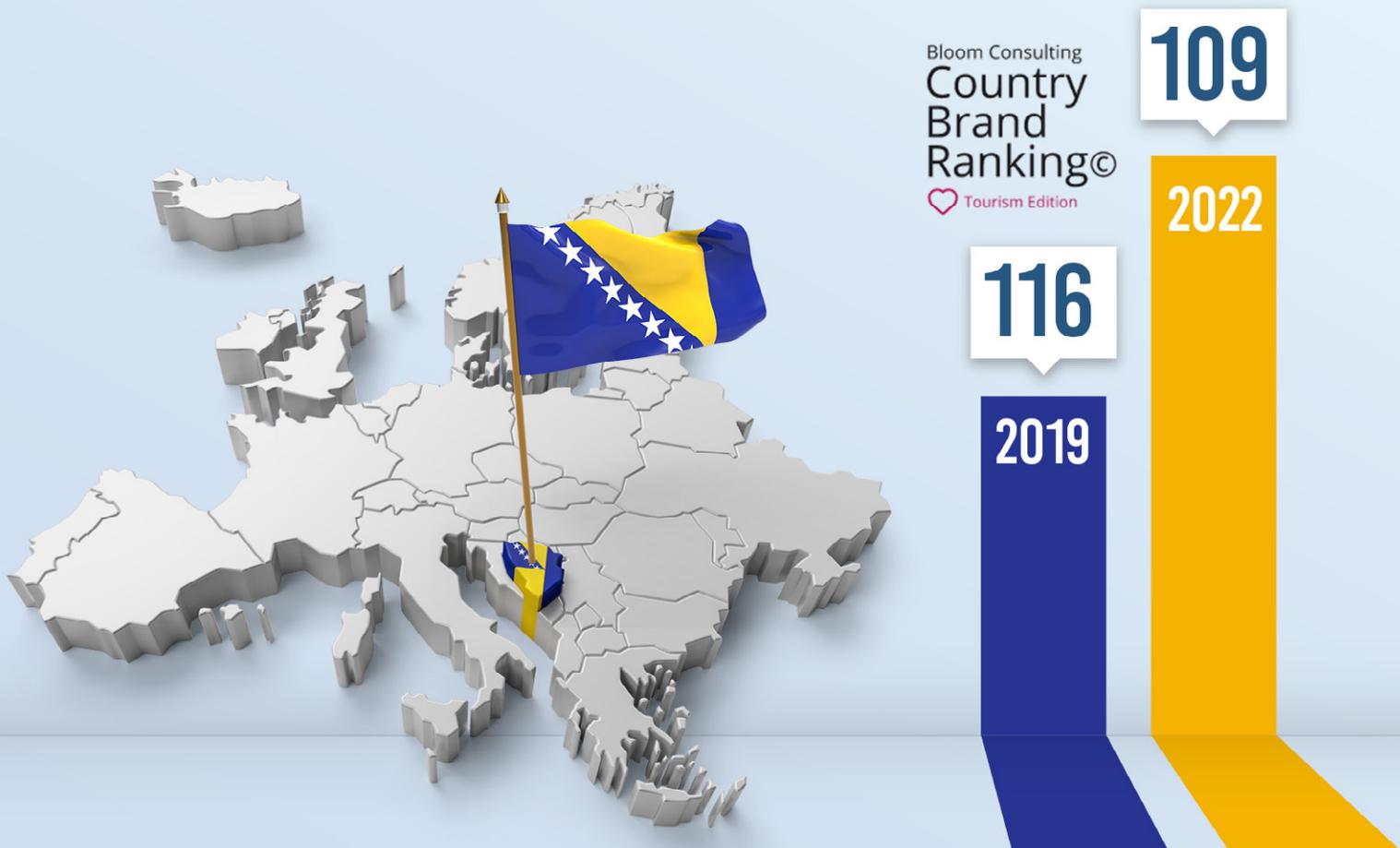




# EFFECTIVE BRAND POSITIONING TO IMPROVE THE COUNTRY'S IMAGE INTERNATIONALLY

The 2019 World Economic Forum Country Brand Index placed BiH at 116th out of 140. Bosnia and Herzegovina is challenged with limited international recognition as a tourism destination and a negative perception. To help elevate awareness and improve perception, USAID Turizam recently introduced a toolkit for the tourism boards to help them better understand the role of Place Brand in improving the country's attractiveness and appeal in the international marketplace.

The toolkit, and accompanying training workshops, are aimed at providing tourism boards with the necessary tools, best practices, and case studies to develop, curate, and communicate their respective place brands internationally and to enhance the role of the private sector in augmenting the brand's reach and effectiveness through their own communication and sales channels.



Bloggers, Vloggers and Journalists Improve BiH International Image Turizam hosted The Telegraph journalist Chris Leadbeater to promote Sarajevo's Olympic history in connection with the launch of the Beijing Winter Olympics, and social media influencers from Turkey and elsewhere to create interest in the destination.



Find out more at: <https://bit.ly/3SkrEqB>



On the occasion of promoting BiH's ranking improvement according to the Country Brand Index, leading BiH news website Klix, interviewed Mr. Ibrahim Osta, the USAID Turizam Chief of Party. Read the entire interview by scanning the QR code.



Find out more at: <https://bit.ly/3R9KXlj>



Kravjica waterfall, Ljubuski, Bosnia and Herzegovina



BRINGING BEST  
PRACTICES FROM  
GLOBAL LEADERS

# THE TRAVEL NARRATIVE WITH ALEX CREVAR

The Travel Narrative Design Workshop is aimed at facilitating authentic storytelling for efficient product development and media reporting. Delivered by the globally renowned travel journalist, Alex Crevar, the storytelling training was also delivered to local travel media, tourism boards, and travel agents to use as part of their communication with potential travelers. The workshops also introduced strategies and tactics for how to position and sell those experiences using the art of storytelling. The method of storytelling in tourism puts the way in which the destination is

presented to the world at the fore, focusing on its unique characteristics – history and tradition. This emphasizes the destination’s authentic character and supports the destination’s overall sustainability level. The workshops were focused on identification, development, and content creation based on real-life stories from the country. Ultimately, the belief in the power of stories successfully solves the issues of changing trends, consumerist oscillations, and short-term tourism success.

Find out more at <https://bit.ly/3xRuA65>

Alex Crevar is a journalist, editor, and consultant dedicated to responsible tourism. Reporting from the Balkans since the late 1990s, his writings have appeared in numerous publications, including the New York Times, National Geographic, Outside, Lonely Planet, Adventure Cyclist, The Washington Post, Paste and Bicycling. He had a significant role in creating Via Dinarica, a hiking trail that is a cultural corridor spanning eight countries in the Western Balkans countries in Southeast Europe.



# UNLOCKING SECRETS TO IMMERSIVE, RESPONSIBLE, AND EXPERIENTIAL TOURISM WITH INTREPID TRAVEL

To set the country on a path towards sustainable tourism growth, USAID Turizam, in partnership with Intrepid Travel, one of the leading responsible tourism tour operators in the world, presented market-proven tactics to tourism businesses in Bosnia and Herzegovina on unlocking secrets to growing demand from higher-spending travelers looking for more responsible and experiential-based travel. For over 30 years, Intrepid Travel has been taking travelers around the globe, offering clients bespoke programs focusing on sustainable, responsible, and immersive community-based experiences.

Intrepid Travel experts provided the best practices in designing and creating the most viable sustainable tourism experiences and itineraries that would appeal to the top international tour operators who cater to higher-spending travelers in the global marketplace.

Between October 3 and 8, with the support of USAID Turizam, Intrepid is organizing a fam trip through Bosnia and Herzegovina for leading international media representatives. The media trip aims to shed light on the country's efforts to position itself as a sustainable tourism destination in the international marketplace. In partnership with Intrepid Travel, a world leader in sustainable experience-rich travel, and The Global Travel and Tourism Resilience Council, the visiting international travel media journalists will take part in a trip that traces Intrepid's newest "Bosnia and Herzegovina Expedition". Some of the country's most interesting and unique tourist attractions will be part of the 6-day program.



Find out more at: <https://bit.ly/3BQ2OcI>



## CULTURAL HERITAGE EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND ENGAGING WITH THE WORLD'S LARGEST MUSEUM COMPLEX – THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

USAID Turizam supported the organization of a unique workshops led by the Smithsonian Institute. Ms. Halle Butvin, as a director of specialized projects in the Smithsonian Centre for Folklore and Cultural Heritage, talked about the creation of engaging festivals and cultural heritage tourism product development. The Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage is a research and educational unit of the Smithsonian Institution, promoting greater understanding and sustainability of cultural heritage across the United States and around the world through research, education, and community engagement.

The participants of these two series of different workshops ranged from festival organizers, cultural institutions, museums, to travel agencies, experience providers, accommodation providers, and tourism organizations. The workshops were held in Sarajevo, Banja Luka, and Mostar. Through a series of study-cases and practical exercises, this workshop aimed to provide extra knowledge on the tourism trade segmentation of cultural heritage and to promote a better understanding of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. In addition, the training raised awareness of cultural heritage mapping and cultural heritage products' limitations.

### Creating Engaging Festivals

This workshop aimed to improve the promotion of BiH's unique cultural heritage by providing information on how to better formulate the vision, objective, and interest of partners and stakeholders through smart methods of fund-raising; 360-degree marketing; financial management for the creation of sustainable tourism; and partnering with local communities in developing more engaging programs.



Find out more at: <https://academy.turizambih.ba/>



# DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATION OF THE UNIQUE BRAND IN THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET WITH SOLIMAR

USAID Turizam organized a virtual one-day workshop with Chris Seek, an expert in sustainable tourism and destination branding who assists tourism sector organizations in preserving and developing, as well as utilizing the power of sustainable tourism to provide support for biodiversity conservation and the well-being of the local community. Attendees included tourism organizations, national parks, protected areas, tourism development agencies, and tourism clusters.

This one-day workshop provided attendees with practical knowledge and best international practices for developing, curating, and communicating place brands in the international marketplace. Following the completion of the workshop, attendees received a Place Brand Development and Communication Toolkit, that serves as a step-by-step guide to assist organizations in developing the most successful brand for their destinations.



Find out more at <https://bit.ly/3LSVkJh>



 Jahorina mountain, Bosnia and Herzegovina



📍 Blagaj, Bosnia and Herzegovina

A scenic view of a river flowing through a rocky canyon. The river is a deep green color and flows from the background towards the foreground. On the left side, there is a small waterfall cascading over rocks. A small building with a white facade and a brown roof is visible on the left bank. The canyon walls are made of reddish-brown rock and are covered with green vegetation. The sky is not visible, but the overall scene is bright and sunny.

# GLOBAL PROMOTION AND B2B NETWORKING



## USAID TURIZAM IN ITALY: HERZEGOVINA WINE ROUTE PRESENTED AT THE WINE ROUTES CONFERENCE IN PIEDMONT

From 19 to 21 September 2022, a delegation consisting of USAID Turizam and Herzegovina Wine Route stakeholders attended the UNWTO Global Conference on Wine Tourism held in the town of Alba in the Italian region of Piemonte. Over the course of 3 days, panelists and speakers from 16 countries addressed an audience of some 300 wine tourism stakeholders from around the world. The Conference aimed to highlight innovations in wine tourism experiences, marketing and partnerships with the ultimate purpose of enhancing the value of wine tourism destinations and their environment. The Conference represented a unique opportunity for experts from across the growing field of wine tourism to work together to find concrete solutions to build back better and make tourism an enabler of the way forward towards a more sustainable, inclusive and resilient future for rural communities.

Prior to the UNWTO Conference, the first International Wine Routes Conference was also held in Alba. It was organized by the Iter Vitis Cultural Route of the Council of Europe (ITER VITIS Les Chemins de La

Vigne en Europe) and in collaboration with the Italian Federation of Wine, Oil and Flavors Roads. HWR was presented as a new Iter Vitis member by Ibrahim Osta, USAID Turizam Chief of Party, and Gorčin Dizdar, USAID Turizam Communications Manager. Through the presentation of best practices in connecting culture and resources in European wine tourism, they have discussed the future development of this tourist product.

“With the support of the USAID Turizam project and the BiH Foreign Trade Chamber, today we have an opportunity to present the potential of wine tourism in BiH, in the country and in the region considered as the home to wine tourism. We are proud, given the fact that we succeeded in promoting revitalized HWR with our winemakers and enshrined HWR on the world map as an important tourist product from BiH. Representatives coming from institutions, alliances, and affiliations with great interest want to meet the HWR and discuss the future of this tourist product. Wine tourism is worth 2,5 billion euros, which represents a golden chance for the HWR.”, said Ognjenka Laković from BiH Foreign Trade Chamber.





## USAID TURIZAM IN ISTANBUL: DEVELOPING AND GROWING SALES AGENTS NETWORK IN TURKIYE

From September 10 to September 13, USAID Turizam in the partnership with the Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FTC BiH), Tourism Organization of Republika Srpska (Republic of Srpska - Visit Srpska), Association of Turkish Travel Agencies (TÜRSAB), and Turkish Airlines (TK) organized a roadshow in Turkiye, aiming to develop and grow BiH trade's sales network in the market through direct business to business (B2B) with Turkish based outbound tour operators and travel agents.



The roadshow included presentations showcasing Bosnia and Herzegovina as an attractive and compelling year-round destination by USAID Turizam team including Chief of Party Ibrahim Osta; Tourism Marketing Specialist Jusuf Jamakosmanović and Tourism Visitor Experiences and Marketing Specialist Ruba Velagić.

BiH tourism trade needs to be proactive and develop strategies and tactics with Turkish based travel agencies to attract different types of travelers, to diversify and grow demand from Türkiye over the coming years. Presenting new itineraries and products and developing direct sales channels and expanding the sales network through roadshows and B2B meetings are key to achieving this goal.



## USAID TURIZAM IN KUALA LUMPUR: SPEAKING AT ISLAMIC TOURISM URBAN AND SUSTAINABILITY FORUM

From October 17 to October 19, USAID Turizam attended the World Islamic Tourism Conference at the World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The theme of this year's edition was "Islamic Tourism: Inspiring Balance, Transformations and Solutions". USAID Turizam Chief of Party, Ibrahim Osta, participated in the fifth session titled "Islamic Tourism Urban and Sustainability Forum", that brought together sustainable tourism industry leaders to share knowledge and experience in promoting and implementing sustainability and the ways in which Islamic tourist market be a growth enabler.

Mr. Osta emphasized Bosnia and Herzegovina's diverse offer for travelers of all motivations, including Islamic travelers, and USAID Turizam's people-centric and conservation-led tourism development approach to position BiH as a more sustainable and attractive destination in a competitive marketplace: "*Bosnia and Herzegovina has plenty to offer to Islamic travelers, given the rich Ottoman heritage and the fact that close*

to 50% of its population are Muslims. Lifestyle, gastronomy, architecture, and religious sites, combined with tremendous natural assets and a strong cultural heritage, already attract Muslim visitors from various destinations, mainly Arab and Asian markets.”

A delegation of the Sarajevo Canton Tourism Organization - Visit Sarajevo also participated in the conference and presented Bosnia and Herzegovina’s rich tourist offer in the session Islamic Tourism Destination Showcase. The conference gathered more than 300 participants from all over the world, including more than 80 exhibitors. Among them was Visit Sarajevo’s stand, which was visited by the Malaysian Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture YB Dato’ Sri Hajah Nancy Shukri. In nine core sessions, including destination showcase, tourist economy, sustainability, cultural exchange, etc., the conference brought together thought leaders, policy makers, industry captains, and travel specialists for a discussion and exchange of best practices in travel and tourism.





## USAID TURIZAM IN SINGAPORE: ATTENDING THE ITB ASIA 2022 – ASIA’S LARGEST TRAVEL TRADE SHOW

From October 19 to October 21, USAID Turizam and Sarajevo Canton Tourism Organization - Visit Sarajevo, along with seven tour operators, participated at the ITB Asia 2022 - Asia's largest trade show. This year, the trade show gathered over 180 industry heavyweights, top buyers and international exhibitors to share insights on key trends and how to stay competitive and quickly maximize growth potential in full trade show experience, business meetings and thought-provoking conference program with 100+ session themed agenda under the theme „Go Big & Go Forward: Travel Industry on the Road to Recovery and Growth”.

During the show, USAID Turizam organized several meetings, including those with ASEAN Tourism Association, representing 10 Southeast Asian Nation with a combined population of around 700 million people; with the Philippines Travel Agents Association (PTAA) representing over 500 companies, a market that produces a large number of Catholic pilgrims. Collaboration opportunities for presenting the Bosnia and Herzegovina tourism potential across the ASEAN region were discussed, with a focus on Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and Philippines. Additionally, there was a meeting with the leadership of Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents - (MATTA) it was agreed to sign a collaboration agreement at the upcoming World Travel Market 2022 London to promote Bosnia and Herzegovina to Malaysian visitors.





Neum, Bosnia and Herzegovina



GRANTS AWARDED  
BY USAID TURIZAM

NAME OF THE ACTIVITY	NAME OF THE GRANTEE	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION
<b>Fortica Nature Park</b>	Mountain Biking Association (MTBA) Mostar	The proposed grant activity promotes the sustainable growth of the Fortica destination and the creation of a Natural Park through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) as the next stage of its development. Destination development in Fortica will prioritize meeting public requirements in terms of environmental protection and sustainable rural tourism growth. This award will support the Rural Center's establishment and activities.	City of Mostar
<b>Education - Basis for Employment in a Strong Tourism Sector</b>	Institution for Adult Education Nova Zanimanja Sarajevo	The proposed grant activity aims to provide skilled workers to the tourism sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Companies will enhance the quality of existing and newly introduced services as a result of an increase in performance outcomes. Diversified tourism offerings, increased income, employment generation, and destination branding will add up to a quantifiable overall benefit.	City of Sarajevo
<b>Traditional reputation of food</b>	Una-Sana Canton Chamber of Crafts	The proposed grant activity will strengthen the tourist offer through strengthening gastro tourism. The overall goal is to facilitate access to finance for tourism service providers, agriculture, and other related SMEs, resulting in increased investments.	Una-Sana Canton
<b>Glamoč peasant leather shoemaking as the signature experience of BiH</b>	Association <i>Tropolje i Zapadne Strane</i>	The proposed grant activity aims to promote the local community through its authentic and unique product. All visitors to Glamoč and the surrounding area will have the opportunity to make their own leather shoes, capitalizing on product sustainability. The revival of Glamoč peasant leather shoemaking craft will strengthen tourism offerings and expand regional tourism programs through partnerships.	Glamoč Municipality

<b>Construction of Via Ferrata “Kuk” Volujak</b>	Mountaineering Association <i>Volujak Gacko</i>	The proposed grant activity includes the installation of Via Ferrata on the mountain “Kuk”. The installation will include 620 metres of rocky passage above the spring of Sutjeska River and near Jagodina Lake.	Gacko Municipality
<b>Adventure routes for tourists in the Tijesno Canyon</b>	Extreme Team d.o.o. Banja Luka	The proposed grant activity includes the development of an adrenaline environment, ensuring new job opportunities, and a larger number of visitors to the Tijesno Canyon. This will be an extra asset to the already established sports-climbing and rafting environment.	City of Banja Luka
<b>New edition of the “Rock Climbing Guide for Bosnia and Herzegovina”</b>	Association of Citizens <i>Balkan Colors</i>	The proposed grant activity is aimed at promoting BiH as an outdoor tourism destination. A new cutting-edge edition of the Rock-Climbing Guide for BiH will include all new climbing areas and routes with specified information. In addition, the applicant will launch a marketing campaign with a planned reach of 100,000 people.	City of Banja Luka
<b>World Rafting Championship 2022</b>	Rafting Club <i>Kanjon</i>	The proposed grant activity is aimed at supporting the World Rafting Championship 2022 by the International Rafting Federation, the first of this kind in BiH. The grant supports management, branding, media promotion, and the preparation of safety guides.	City of Banja Luka
<b>Mostar Retro Tours</b>	iHouse Travel d.o.o. Mostar	The proposed grant activity is aimed at creating valuable video and photo content to enrich daily tour offerings in the area of Mostar. In specific, applicant will promote two new experiences: “Mostar, the Great Escape” and “Mostar Culture Shock”.	City of Mostar
<b>East Herzegovina Cheese &amp; Honey Trail</b>	Lux Travel d.o.o. Trebinje	The proposed grant activity is aimed at increasing and strengthening tourist offerings in East Herzegovina in the light of creating a new Slow Food destination.	City of Trebinje

<p><b>Education of deficit staff in the hospitality industry and promotion and preservation of traditional food, dishes, and cuisine</b></p>	<p>MJB d.o.o. Banja Luka (Kuhinjica)</p>	<p>The proposed grant activity is aimed at educating 180 hospitality workers through non-formal training. In addition, Turizam Academy will provide 50 online video clips. Lastly, cooking will become a new tourist experience.</p>	<p>City of Banja Luka</p>
<p><b>Mapping of the Rivers of Bosnia and Herzegovina</b></p>	<p>Extreme Sports Association "Limit"</p>	<p>The proposed grant activity is aimed at launching a project called "BiH River Mapping". Hereby, the applicant will obtain equipment for exploration of rivers, conduct research, design websites, organize Kayak and Canoe Festival, and specialized training.</p>	<p>City of Bihać</p>
<p><b>Herzegovina Wine Route Point</b></p>	<p>MAJS d.o.o. Mostar (Stari Most Travel)</p>	<p>The proposed grant activity is aimed at promoting the Herzegovina Wine Route and local products from the Herzegovina Region. This will be accomplished through the agency "Via Vino" and their partners, combining both traditional and online marketing strategies.</p>	<p>City of Mostar</p>
<p><b>Artificial rock climbing and suspension bridge in the valley of mountain Prenj</b></p>	<p>Visit Konjic d.o.o. Konjic</p>	<p>The proposed grant activity is aimed at developing the rural areas of Prenj Mountain and the village of Bijela, where the Visit Konjic Adventure Resort is located. In specific, the applicant will create an artificial climbing wall, secure equipment, a suspension bridge, and an outdoor training area, thereby contributing to new employments.</p>	<p>City of Konjic</p>
<p><b>Hospitality Excellence Training – for Innovative Tourism Experiences in Una-Sana Canton</b></p>	<p>Center for Education and Research "Nahla" – branch Bihać</p>	<p>The proposed grant activity is aimed at improving the Una-Sana tourism environment through upskilling and training of hospitality workers, focusing on: English language knowledge, hospitality excellence training, standards and hygiene management in tourism accommodation.</p>	<p>City of Bihać</p>

<b>Media Fam Trip</b>	Association of Citizens "Salon žilavke" Trebinje	The proposed grant activity is aimed at assisting the logistics of the media fam trip during Žilavka Salon and providing technical assistance in promoting the Herzegovina Wine Route during this event.	City of Trebinje
<b>Blaž Enology Gastro Festival</b>	Association Blaž	The proposed grant activity is aimed at assisting the sommelier course, Žilavka and Blatina workshop sessions, fam trip, and Blaž Enology Gastro Festival.	Međugorje Municipality
<b>Most Beautiful Villages of BiH (MBV BiH)</b>	Alterural	The proposed grant activity is aimed at supporting Alterural in championing the MBV of BiH label. The applicant will promote rural development and build a network in rural areas across BiH.	City of Sarajevo
<b>Championing of Signature Experiences Approach in BiH</b>	Linden d.o.o. Sarajevo	The proposed grant activity is aimed at launching, marketing, and managing the BiH Signature Experiences (BiHSE) – a collection of higher-value, unique and distinctive experiences that are packaged, promoted, and sold to higher-spending and longer-staying visitors.	City of Sarajevo

### Exhibit B-3. Organizational Chart



# Meet the Team



**Feđa Begović**  
CHIEF OF PARTY



**Jasenka Ćorić**  
DEPUTY CHIEF OF PARTY



**Aleksandra Drinić**  
NORTHERN REGION  
DIRECTOR



**Blanka Bradvica**  
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT  
SPECIALIST IN  
HERZEGOVINA REGION



**Selma Laganin**  
BUSINESS ENABLING  
ENVIRONMENT AND POLICY  
SPECIALIST



**Velibor Trifković**  
TOURISM PRODUCT SPECIALIST



**Jusuf Jamakosmanović**  
DESTINATION MARKETING MANAGER  
- TRADE AND AVIATION



**Anesa Hadžić**  
MONITORING, EVALUATION,  
AND LEARNING (MEL)  
AND REPORTING MANAGER



**Selma Operhal**  
GRAPHIC/MULTIMEDIA DESIGNER



**Gorčin Dizdar**  
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER



**Sabina Sirćo**  
WEB, MULTIMEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA ASSOCIATE



**Imano Panjeta**  
GRANTS AND  
PROCUREMENT MANAGER



**Azra Džigal**  
DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS TEAM  
LEADER



**Olja Latinović**  
DESTINATION SUSTAINABILITY  
SPECIALIST



**Ivana Smiljanić**  
FINANCE MANAGER



**Amjad Sawalha**  
EXPERIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND  
DESTINATION MARKETING TEAM  
LEADER



**Katarina Sara Vučetić**  
TECHNICAL ASSISTANT



**Emina Fatić**  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT



**Berina Hamzić**  
CLERICAL/LEGAL ASSISTANT



**Ajša Katica**  
PROJECT TECHNICAL SUPPORT



**Ajša Hadžić**  
TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT  
TECHNICAL ASSISTANT



**Nina Kovač**  
TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT  
TEAM LEADER



**Sumeja Smajić**  
DESTINATION MARKETING PROJECT  
COORDINATOR



**Ruba Velagić**  
TOURISM VISITOR EXPERIENCES AND  
MARKETING SPECIALIST



**Harun Bavčić**  
DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA  
MARKETING ASSOCIATE



**Ahmed Muratović**  
DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS  
TECHNICAL ASSISTANT



**Aldin Hanjalić**  
LOGISTICIAN



**Darko Vapetić**  
FINANCE ASSOCIATE



**Amra Muratović**  
QUALITY ASSURANCE AND HUMAN  
CAPITAL MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST



**Sara Breko**  
TOURISM PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT  
TECHNICAL ASSISTANT



**Amna Aganović**  
COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT





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DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM  
IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA (TURIZAM)