



# DIKTAS II

Implementation of the strategic action program (SAP) of the Dinaric karst aquifer system:  
improving groundwater governance and sustainability of related ecosystems.



2nd in-person EXPERT MEETING

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# Gender Analysis of Water Sector Bosnia and Herzegovina

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## Overview of Objectives and Goals

Objective: Comprehensive gender analysis of water sector management in Bosnia, serving as a core component (Output 6.2) of the DIKTAS II project.

Applied "Water as an Asset, Service, and Space" framework to conduct an initial, high-level assessment of gender dynamics within BiH's water sector, with a specific focus on their intersection with water governance.

Detailed analysis by consolidating and critically examining existing official literature and data from government agencies,

**Highlighting key gender issues within Bosnia and Herzegovina's water sector, exploring **policy gaps** and offering **recommendations for inclusive governance** and sustainable management practices.**

3 dimensions  
Asset (economic resource)  
Service: use that burdens and health impacts.  
Space: social and political arena



## Comprehensive Approach to Gender Analysis

This analysis utilized a combination of **qualitative** and **quantitative** methods, leveraging existing literature, surveys, and official data to assess gender gaps in water governance effectively.

Population estimated at 3,269,516

Life expectancy 77.98 years overall  
(81.15 years women)

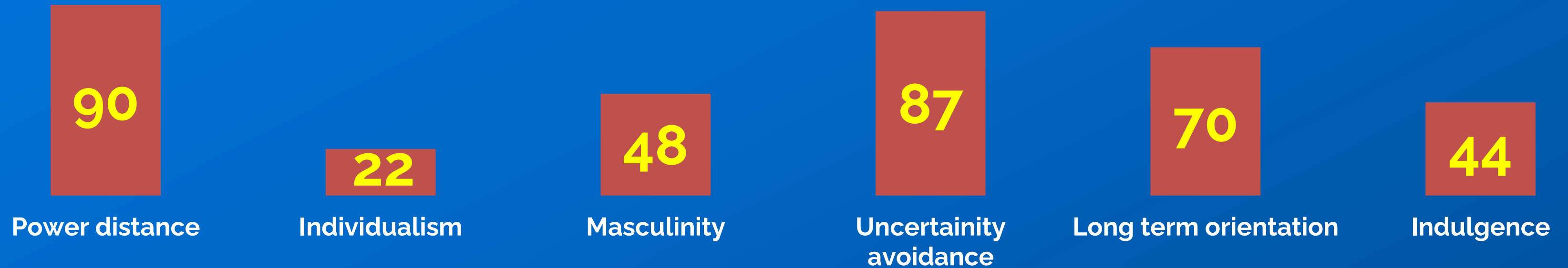
High adult literacy rates  
(98.3% for individuals aged 15 and above)

Gender - intl. ranking

Rank 73 in the Global Gender Gap Index 2022  
116th for economic participation and opportunity

Female NEETS 23.0 percent

# Gender Norms



Extra-ordinary power distance => power holders, **society members accept hierarchy**

Collectivist culture => long-term commitment to a strong, **cohesive 'in-group'**.

Uncertainty avoidance => reluctance to changes and **risk averse** societal culture.

Long term orientation => truth depends very much on the situation, context, and time.

# How Gender Norms Translated into Inequality Forms

## Cultural Influences on Inequality shaping Water Management Practices

**78.8 percent of married men** feel that they are the head of the household

Only women use parental leave

**42 percent women** with younger children are employed on full-time basis

Women are those that perform **unpaid work in 9/10 households**

Men are owners of **70 percent lands** and **74 percent dwellings**

**77 percent motor vehicles** are registered by men (mobility) and **63 percent driving** licenses are obtained by men.



## An Overview of Gender Equality Laws

Bosnia and Herzegovina has established a **strong legal foundation** for gender equality; however, implementation remains inconsistent, indicating a disparity between policy intentions and actual practices in water governance.

BIH Agency for gender equality issues opinions on strategies/plans before Council of Ministers review

River Basin Management Plans, water strategies, flood-risk plans and tariff frameworks **should include gender analysis**, indicators and measures (service access for women-headed households, safety, participation in water councils).

GAP & GRB **enable budgeted gender measures** in the water sector (tariff design, subsidies, investment prioritization).

Cost-reflective but socially sensitive water **tariffs** supported => **struggling**

EU WFD planning obligations public participation and social considerations in RBMPs provide entry points to require sex-disaggregated data, stakeholder engagement of women, and gender-aware risk/impact assessments => implementation **gaps remain**.

# 24%

Women's participation in Bosnia's labor market

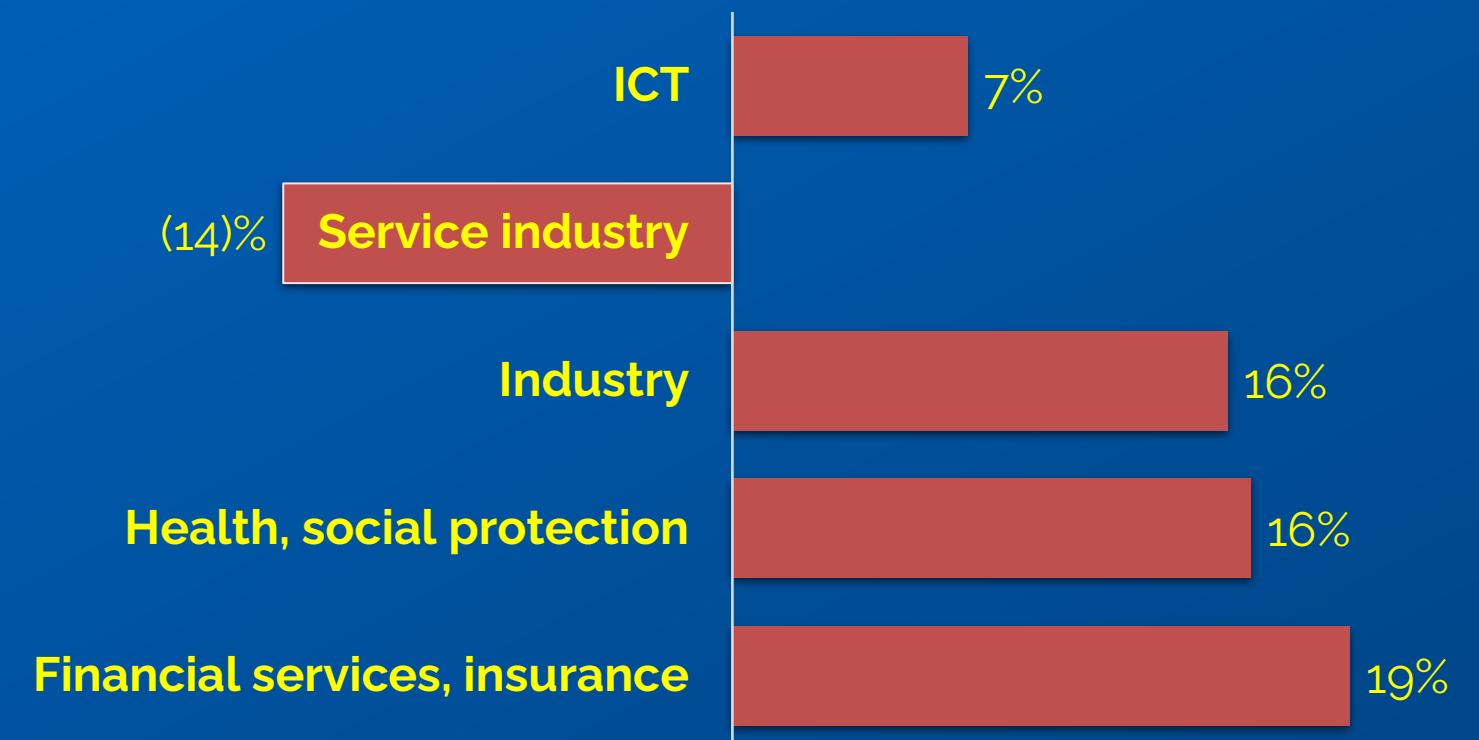
=> Women in Bosnia and Herzegovina spend more than six hours a day on unpaid care work (men three hours)

=> Women make 67 per cent of total unpaid household assistants that account to 1.4 of total employment

=> Share of women in informal sector is estimated to 24.58 per cent, compared to 16.29 per cent of men

	Men (%)	Women (%)	Gender gap (%)
Activity rate	59.6	36.1	23.5
Employment rate	52.1	28.9	23.2
Unemployment rate	12.6	19.8	7.2
Activity rate, by age			
15 to 24	34.9	21.2	13.7
25 to 49	88.7	63.8	24.9
50 to 64	63.7	32.0	31.7

Gender pay gap, by industry



# 30%

water-related jobs in BiH

# 23%

Despite women making up nearly half of the population, their **representation in water management** roles remains significantly low



# Water as an Asset

## Understanding Economic Inequalities in Resources

Renewable surface and ground freshwater 9,500 m<sup>3</sup> per person annually

Water supply and sewerage system suffer from highly defragmented management spread over two regional water utilities, **142 local water utility companies** owned by municipalities and cities

**30% population** relying on self-provisioning; discrepancy of infrastructure and water quality

between urban areas and rural communities is dramatically high

Leakages equalling to 55 % NRW

**3% population** connected to wastewater treatment plant

=> **strong impact on the affordability of water services**



## Evaluating Women's Representation in Governance

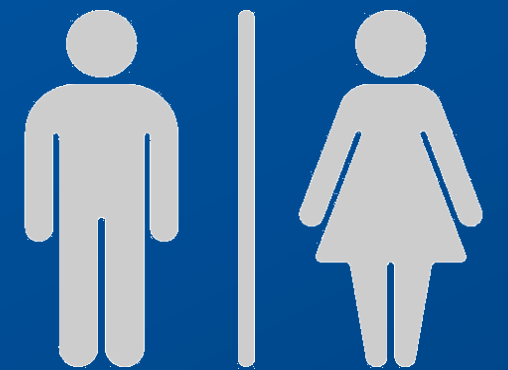
Despite a robust legal framework, women's underrepresentation in decision-making roles within water governance highlights significant **gaps in implementation**, limiting their influence on policy and resource management.

Ownership of registered water service providers is in the **domain of local governments**, and that **unregistered water utilities are managed within communities**

Advocating for **women's needs is crucial at the local level.**

Share of women in municipal/city councils **22.02 per cent** in 2024

Women holding municipal mayor's function in **8 of 142** local administrations (CEC, 2025).



# Thank you

