Fostering employment and discouraging illegal immigration

The Youth Employability and Retention or, as it was commonly known, YERP programme, aimed to offer young people new entry points to the job market and at the same time discourage their illegal emigration, to prevent the drain of valuable resources from the country. With 24 national UN Volunteers, UNV played a pivotal role to utilize volunteerism as a linkage between education and the labour market, supporting the government, the public employment system and civil society with an integrated package of youth employability measures.

Youth's unemployment in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is reaching a critical peak. Its rate of 63.1 per cent in 2013, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO) annual outlook "Global Employment Trends 2014", means that two in three young people are jobless. Youth's joblessness is partly due to the education system which is not fully functional to meet market's needs.
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Run from 2010 to 2013, the programme was jointly implemented by the Government of BiH, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), with funding from UNV and the Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund.

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As part of the measures, 17 Youth Employment Centres (CISO Centers) were opened, serving over 5,900 young people and involving over 4,000 community members, and two Youth Task Forces were established. The Task Forces, composed of civil society, private sector and government representatives, worked on developing a Youth Work Experience Policy, introducing youth work experience schemes and giving official recognition to volunteer experiences.

UN Volunteers provided workshops in many areas, including CV writing, interview preparation, job search strategies, computer literacy, and foreign languages. To date, the Centres continue to be operational, providing one-on-one counselling, advice and training to young people.

- Bosnia and Herzegovina • ILO • unemployment

Sustainable Development Goal: