



## IN BRIEF...

# Sweden and Bosnia and Herzegovina

The links between Sweden and Bosnia and Herzegovina are close and Sweden is actively supporting the process of creating sustainable peace, development and EU integration.

Sweden today is Bosnia and Herzegovina's (BiH) biggest bilateral donor for development cooperation. The war in BiH became a matter of deep concern in Sweden. There was a strong will to help the people affected by the war in different ways.

Many non-governmental organisations started to channel humanitarian assistance to victims of the war. Some of them are still engaged in BiH, in areas like reconstruction, support for human rights and democracy.

Sweden took an active part in the peace process. Sweden's former Prime Minister, Carl Bildt, was appointed by United Nations High Representative in the country during some crucial years in the middle of the 1990's. Sweden also, until recently, had a battalion of peacekeeping soldiers stationed in BiH.

Sweden's annual development cooperation with BiH amounts to approximately 30 million Euro. A large part (almost half) has been used for supporting minority return through so called Integrated Area Programs (IAP). These programs include reconstruction of houses but also support to the whole community including helping people with income generation.

Currently the focus of the development cooperation is shifting to helping BiH to adapt to European Union-standards. The priority of the Swedish support will be to concentrate on the institutions that need to be strengthened if BiH is to function as one unified country, and to facilitate activities of EU-integration within the Stabilisation and Association Process. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is actively helping BiH to fulfil its goals to build strong institutions, democracy and a society based on the rule of law. A number of Swedish and international organisations are today engaged by Sida in the development cooperation with BiH.



Embassy of Sweden in Sarajevo.

Ten years after the signing of the Dayton Agreement, Sweden is active in promoting peace and reconciliation in BiH. For instance Sweden strongly supports the proposal for the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission in BiH. According to Sweden, such a commission would help the country and its people to start finding a common identity and build the country together.

60 000 Bosnian refugees came to Sweden during the war and received permanent residence. These people

are a strong link between the countries and potentially many of them can be active in establishing business and trade links between the two countries.

Today, however, Sweden is turning back new asylum seekers, stating that there no longer exists any ground for asylum.

Trade and investments between the two countries still remain low but there is good potential for growing commercial contacts, given the fact that the 60 000 people with Bosnian origin living in Sweden today have

useful experience from both countries which could be utilised in creating business contacts. Areas where there is clear potential for future business cooperation are forestry, green agriculture and tourism.

The Embassy in Sarajevo consists of a general department handling political, commercial and consular relations between Sweden and BiH, a Sida- department responsible for development cooperation, a migration department dealing with visa-issues and a Defence Attaché.

*Halving poverty by 2015 is one of the greatest challenges of our time, requiring cooperation and sustainability. The partner countries are responsible for their own development. Sida provides resources and develops knowledge and expertise, making the world a richer place.*

#### Swedish Disbursements to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Year	Million SEK	Year	Million SEK
1992	13,6	1998	202,0
1993	85,3	1999	217,8
1994	160,2	2000	222,5
1995	57,4	2001	296,2
1996	169,0	2002	262,2
1997	198,8	2003	264,5



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