



Public policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina Toward Addictions

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Interdisciplinary Doctoral Study

Introduction



- Addiction represents one of the most significant challenges of modern societies, with far-reaching social, health and economic consequences.
- Bosnia and Herzegovina with its own complicated structure the issue with addiction is further complicated by the complex political-administrative system, institutional fragmentation and limited resources.
- This dissertation seeks to understand how public policies toward addiction are formulated, implemented and perceived through the perspectives of decision makers, professionals and people who successfully completed treatment programs

Research Motivation



- The main motivation lies in the need to identify the gap between existing strategies and the real needs of people struggling with addiction
- While countries like Croatia, Slovenia, Austria etc. Have established national frameworks and robust prevention networks, Bosnia and Herzegovina lack a unified policy structure

Theoretical Framework



- The study relies on theories of public policy cycles (Howlett, 2009) and participatory governance (Sabatier, 2007) where it shows addiction as both a social and a health issue, emphasizing human rights, social inclusion and the need for cross-sectoral collaboration (UNODC, 2023).



Legislative and Institutional Context

- Key legal instruments:
 1. Law on Prevention and Suppression of Drug abuse
 2. National Drug Strategy
 - Despite formal frameworks, implementation remains inconsistent across cantonal and entity levels.
 - The lack of monitoring systems and financial support leads to policy fragmentations (EMCDDA. 2023).



Research Focus and Objectives

- This study applies an interdisciplinary approach combining political science, sociology, social work, law, psychiatry and psychology.
- Analyze how policymakers shape addiction policies
- Assess professionals perspectives on implementation
- Explore lived experiences of people with addiction
- Identify barriers and future opportunities

Research Questions



1. What are the key policy directions regarding addiction in Bosnia and Herzegovina ?
2. To what extent are policies aligned with real needs ?
3. How do professionals perceive institutional coordination ?
4. How do people with addiction experience treatment and reintegration ?
5. What are the prospects for multi-sector cooperation ?

Hypotheses

H1: There is a significant gap between strategic goals and real implementation

H2: Professionals are not sufficiently involved in policy development

H3: Treated addicts experience severe stigma and limited reintegration

H4: Institutional coordination remains weak and fragmented

H5: Participatory models enhance policy effectiveness

Methodology



- The study will follow a qualitative research design based on semi-structured interviews.
- Participants include policymakers, social and health professionals and individuals with lived experience of addiction.
- Data will be analyzed using thematic analysis to uncover recurring themes and contrasts across groups

Research Overview

- The study follows a qualitative design structured in five main phases:
 1. Research preparation and ethical approval
 2. Participant selection
 3. Data collection through semi-structured interviews
 4. Thematic coding and analysis
 5. Synthesis and interpretation of findings



Data Collection Process

- Data will be collected between March and August 2026.
- Each interview will last 45-90 minutes and will be audio recorded with consent
- September until december analyzing the data



Expected Scientific Contribution

- I hope that the dissertation will provide both theoretical and practical contributions to the field of public policy and social science
- Hopefully to expands the understanding of public policy processes in complex, post conflict states like Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Integrating policy theory with human-centring and participatory governance models



Expected Results and Key themes

- Fragmentation and weak coordination between institutions
- Stigma as a major barrier to social reintegration
- Professionals exclusion from policymaking processes
- Positive impact of participatory and community based approaches

Thank you!

