

SUBREGIONAL FACTSHEET:

WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

INTRODUCTION

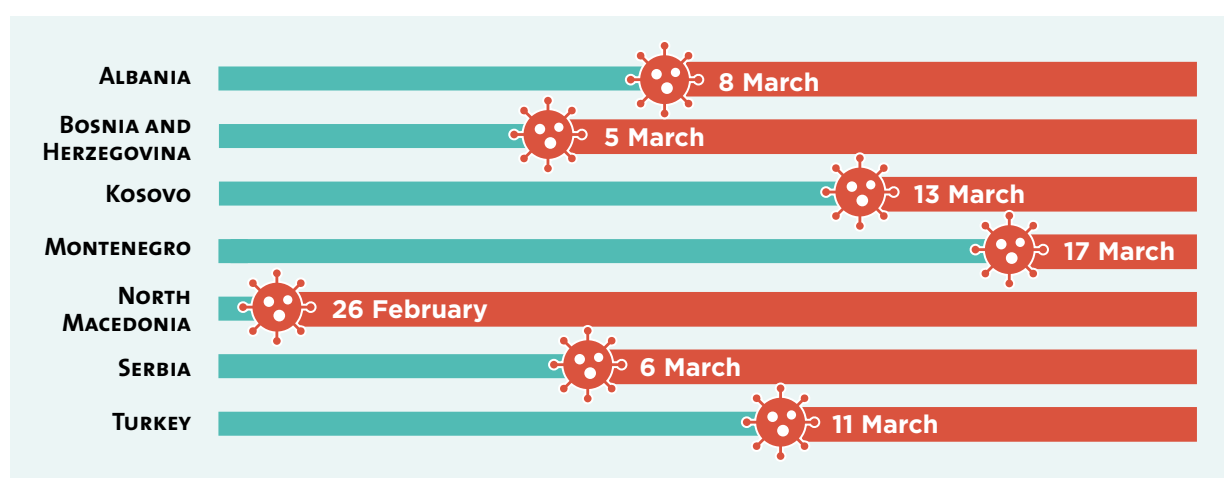
This factsheet draws on findings from the UN Women research study, 'One Year of COVID-19: A Gender Analysis of Emergency COVID-19 Socio-Economic Policy Responses Adopted in Europe and Central Asia' and its multiple data sources.¹ This factsheet provides an overview of the policy measures that the governments of six Western Balkan countries - **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo², Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia** - and **Turkey** adopted in relation to social protection, labour market, and economic, fiscal and business stimulus.

This factsheet highlights measures taken with a gender lens³ and the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) principle.⁴ By applying these perspectives, governments can mitigate the adverse and disproportionate impacts that

the COVID-19 pandemic has had on women and vulnerable groups while bolstering the fundamentals in 'building back better' after the pandemic.

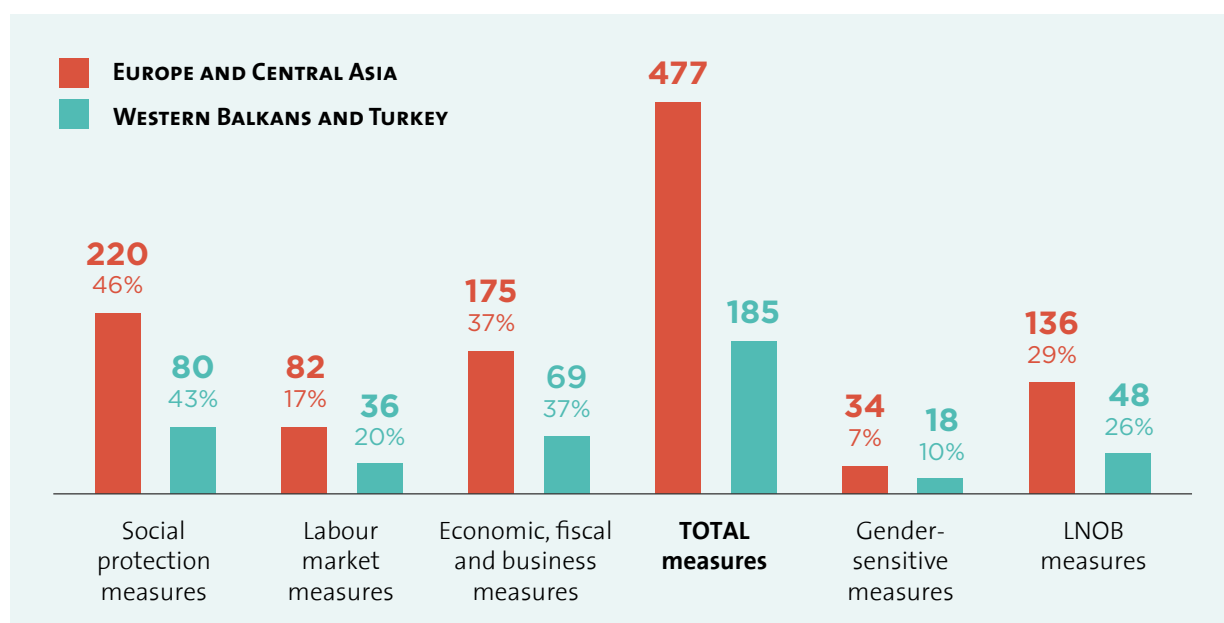
It is important to note that although the study applied a rigorous analysis, the underlying data "should be interpreted with caution... there may be gaps or biases due to a lack of available information, underreporting of measures being announced, overreporting of measures that have been suspended, or the lack of data on the gender components of existing measures."⁵ It should also be noted that because the study took a broad approach that drew on multiple sources, some data points presented may differ from the UNDP-UN Women COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker of September 2020.

TIMELINE OF 1ST CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASES IN WESTER BALKAN COUNTRIES AND TURKEY



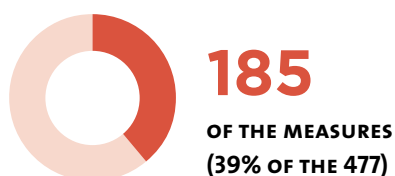
- 1 Secondary data was collected from six data sources: [Council of Europe: Promoting and protecting women's rights at national level](#); [International Monetary Fund Policy Tracker on Policy Responses to COVID-19](#); [ILO Country Policy Responses](#); [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development POLICY TRACKER: Tackling COVID-19 - Contributing to a global effort](#); [World Bank Social Protection and Jobs Responses to COVID-19: A Real-Time Review of Country Measures](#); [UNDP-UN Women COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker](#)
- 2 All references to Kosovo are made in the context of UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).
- 3 A gender lens methodology considers measures to be gender-sensitive if they include explicit reference to "women" and "seek to directly address the risks and challenges that women and girls face during the COVID-19 crisis." (See [COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker Methodological Note](#).)
- 4 The Leave No One Behind (LNOB) principle's methodology considers measures that directly address and make explicit reference to vulnerable and marginalized households and groups. LNOB is the central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals
- 5 [COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker Methodological note](#)

HOW THE SUBREGION RESPONDED

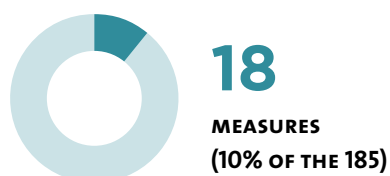


Country/Territory	Social protection measures	Labour market measures	Economic, fiscal and business measures	TOTAL measures	Gender-sensitive measures	LNOB measures
Albania	12 (55%)	4 (18%)	6 (27%)	22	4 (27%)	8 (36%)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	6 (32%)	5 (26%)	8 (42%)	19	1 (5%)	2 (11%)
Kosovo	10 (50%)	2 (10%)	8 (40%)	20	1 (5%)	5 (25%)
Montenegro	10 (43%)	4 (17%)	9 (39%)	23	1 (4%)	7 (30%)
North Macedonia	10 (37%)	7 (26%)	10 (37%)	27	2 (7%)	9 (33%)
Serbia	10 (44%)	4 (17%)	9 (39%)	23	4 (17%)	5 (22%)
Turkey	22 (43%)	10 (20%)	19 (37%)	51	5 (10%)	12 (24%)
TOTAL	80 (43%)	36 (20%)	69 (37%)	185	18 (10%)	48 (26%)

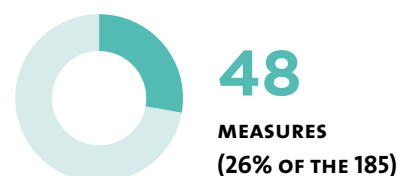
Of the 477 measures that were recorded in Europe and Central Asia to address the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic:



under the three categories were from the six Western Balkan countries and Turkey;



can be classified as being gender-sensitive in that they specifically reference women;



can be classified as being inclusive of the LNOB principle in that they specifically reference vulnerable and marginalized households and groups.

SOCIAL PROTECTION



Of the 185 measures collected for the Western Balkan countries and Turkey, **80 MEASURES (43 PER CENT)** fall under the social protection category in that they provide social assistance, social insurance and welfare benefits to all citizens or members of an age group.

Findings from a gender lens and the LNOB principle show that:



15 OUT OF 80 OF THE SOCIAL PROTECTION MEASURES (19 PER CENT) from four countries can be classified as being gender-sensitive. **Albania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey** made explicit reference to “women” as one of the beneficiaries of some form of social protection support (cash transfers, utility relief, in-kind support, unemployment benefits and paid sick leave). Eight of these measures (67 per cent) mentioned “women heads of families,” “pregnant women,” “new mothers,” and “widowed women” as recipients of cash transfers.



43 MEASURES (54 PER CENT) from all six Western Balkan countries and Turkey can be classified as being inclusive of the LNOB principle in that they include assistance and benefits to varying degrees to vulnerable and marginalized households and groups.



TOTAL SOCIAL PROTECTION MEASURES:

TARGETED CASH TRANSFERS SCHEMES:

19 measures across seven countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey)



HOUSING AND UTILITY RELIEF, AND IN-KIND SUPPORT:

14 measures across seven countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey)



UNEMPLOYMENT AND LEAVE BENEFITS (SICK, PAID AND FAMILY, PARENTAL AND CHILDCARE LEAVE):

27 measures across seven countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey)



UNPAID CARE WORK: 1 measure in one country (Montenegro)



OTHER WELFARE BENEFITS AND ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING PENSION AND DISABILITY BENEFITS:

19 measures across six countries (Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey)

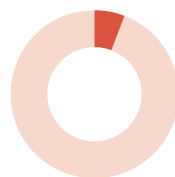
	Social protection measures	Gender-sensitive measures	LNOB measures
ALBANIA	12 (55%)	4 (33%)	8 (67%)
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	6 (32%)	0 (0%)	1 (17%)
KOSOVO	10 (50%)	0 (0%)	4 (40%)
MONTENEGRO	10 (43%)	0 (0%)	6 (60%)
NORTH MACEDONIA	10 (37%)	1 (10%)	7 (70%)
SERBIA	10 (44%)	3 (30%)	5 (50%)
TURKEY	22 (43%)	4 (10%)	12 (26%)
TOTAL	80 (43%)	12 (15%)	43 (54%)

LABOUR MARKET



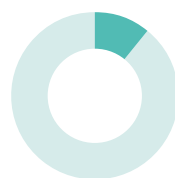
The mapping collected 36 measures in the labour market category from all six Western Balkan countries and Turkey. The measures adopted protect the jobs and incomes of employees and assist employers of businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic to mitigate the risks of contract termination, including with state support for the payment of wages. Policy responses under this dimension also included labour policy and regulation adjustments and/or reinforcements.

Findings from a gender lens and the LNOB principle show that:



ONLY TWO OUT OF 36 (6 PER CENT) of the labour market measures from two countries can be classified as being gender-sensitive. **Montenegro** and **Serbia** made explicit reference

to women in offering direct labour market assistance in the form of salary support through subsidies for women caring for a minor (Montenegro) and salary increases for predominantly women care workers in nursing homes (Serbia).



ONLY FIVE MEASURES (14 PER CENT) from five countries (**Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia** and **Serbia**) can be classified as being inclusive of

the LNOB principle in that they include assistance and benefits to varying degrees to vulnerable and marginalized households and groups..

TOTAL LABOUR MARKET MEASURES:



SALARY/WAGES SUPPORT TO EMPLOYED AND SELF-EMPLOYED: 24 measures across seven countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey)



LABOUR POLICY/REGULATORY ADJUSTMENTS AND/OR REINFORCEMENTS: 12 measures across five countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey)

	Labour market measures	Gender-sensitive measures	LNOB measures
ALBANIA	4 (18%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	5 (26%)	0 (0%)	1 (20%)
KOSOVO	2 (10%)	0 (0%)	1 (50%)
MONTENEGRO	4 (17%)	1 (25%)	1 (25%)
NORTH MACEDONIA	7 (26%)	0 (0%)	2 (29%)
SERBIA	4 (17%)	1 (25%)	0 (0%)
TURKEY	10 (20%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	36 (20%)	2 (6%)	5 (14%)

ECONOMIC, FISCAL AND BUSINESS

All seven governments introduced emergency responses in the form of socio-economic support policies and programmes to address the economy and citizens' economic vulnerabilities. From a gender lens and the LNOB principle, only **Albania** explicitly referenced women and vulnerable households.

All countries revised their national budgets to offer state fiscal assistance packages, including through COVID-19 anti-crisis funds. The measures ranged from 0.15 per cent of GDP in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** to 7 per cent in **Serbia**.

Out of the 69 economic, fiscal and business measures collected for the six Western Balkan countries and Turkey, **one country** offered support to the feminized sectors of the economy (i.e. sectors that absorb a higher proportion of women's employment compared to that of men). In **Kosovo**, interest-free loans were provided

to publicly-owned enterprises facing financial difficulties due to the pandemic (public-sector employment represents 47.8 per cent of women's employment and 33.4 per cent of men's employment).

While **business and entrepreneurship stimulus** measures were recorded in all Western Balkan countries and Turkey, **three countries** offered measures that can be considered as being gender-sensitive in that they made categorical references to women-run businesses and/or women as entrepreneurs. Republika Srpska of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** adopted a programme to facilitate access to financial funds for micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises that includes business activities of women and young entrepreneurs. In **North Macedonia**, companies run or founded by women were offered a 30 per cent grant. In **Turkey**, a grant programme was announced for women cooperatives.

	Economic, fiscal and business measures	Gender-sensitive measures	LNOB measures
ALBANIA	6 (27%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	8 (42%)	1 (13%)	0 (0%)
KOSOVO	8 (40%)	1 (13%)	0 (0%)
MONTENEGRO	9 (39%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
NORTH MACEDONIA	10 (37%)	1 (10%)	0 (0%)
SERBIA	9 (39%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
TURKEY	19 (37%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL	69 (37%)	4 (6%)	0 (0%)