

**8th EU-BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA SAA SUB-COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES
Bruxelles, 19 November 2024 (VC)**

EU RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission recommended to the national authorities that drafting of strategies and legislation need to be accompanied by a stakeholders' consultation, by the allocation of resources adequate to the objectives of the strategy, to favour quality over speed, to improve data collection statistics and to ensure a monitoring mechanism for the implementation of the strategy.

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (CH. 11)

1. To further ensure compliance with all provisions of the SAA related to trade.
2. To aim at further compliance of **trade statistics** for agricultural, processed agricultural products, and fish and fishery products with the EU statistical regime in order to allow a proper analysis and prevent discrepancies between BiH and EU figures on certain commodities.
3. To advance in the preparation of the **agricultural census** as its absence severely hinders agricultural statistics and the design of an agricultural and rural development policy. Allocate the necessary funds for the Agricultural Census and ensure that legislative prerequisites, including defined budget, legal framework, organisation and methodology are in place by Q2/2025. Adopt Action Plan for the preparation, implementation and the dissemination of the results of the agricultural census and conduct the agriculture census in October 2025, based on the country-wide legal basis.
4. To urgently improve **administrative capacities** and resources aiming at better preparedness and gradual approximation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), in particular as regards the setting up of the central paying agency and the Integrated and Administration Control System (IACS). In that respect, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of BiH and other relevant state authorities have to improve coordination in countrywide policy making and *acquis* alignment.
5. To speed up the necessary economic reforms to increase the **competitiveness** of the sector.
6. To take necessary actions to establish central **agricultural information systems** and ensure a country wide harmonisation of various systems.
7. To prepare and adopt a comprehensive, multi-annual and multi-budgeted **countrywide strategy for agriculture and rural development**.
8. To harmonise **support measures** across the country and to gradually align them with the *acquis*.
9. To ensure that all **by-laws** of the national law on the organisation of the **wine** market are in place by Q2/2025.
10. To prepare and adopt the law on **organic production**, in compliance with the EU *acquis* (Q4/2025).
11. To adopt country-wide quality policy legislation, aligned with the EU *acquis*, including in the area of **wine and spirits**.

FOOD SAFETY, VETERINARY AND PHYTOSANITARY POLICIES (CH. 12)

1. Build up and maintain a reliable and sustainable system of animal registration and vaccination, wherever relevant, as a measure to improve the control of animal diseases.
2. Intensify the monitoring and surveillance system in animal disease control. In particular, maintain the vaccination campaigns against rabies and brucellosis and intensify the disease control measures in the long-run.
3. Urgently ensure alignment with the EU *acquis* in the field of food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary, in particular regarding food, animal health and plant health laws as well as official controls, through adopting the legislation at state level without delay.
4. Central competent authorities in food safety, veterinary and phytosanitary should improve their functions and responsibilities within the chain of command in line with the *acquis*.
5. Urgently strengthen and upgrade its institutional and administrative capacities, including inspections services and laboratories.
6. Urge BiH to speed-up the preparations for national reference laboratories, through further alignment with the *acquis*, notably by increasing the accreditation of laboratory methods used in hygiene, veterinary and phytosanitary, food and feedstuff controls.
7. Emphasise the importance of implementation and compliance with EU rules to ensure and maintain commodity authorisation/access to the EU market. In this context, it is important to address all audit recommendations by providing satisfactory action plans and implementing corrective actions without delay to ensure targeted guidance towards EU compliance and market access.

More specific and persistent shortcomings on two audits, despite proposed, as well as partial, remedial follow-up action(s), include:

- Milk and dairy products, 2023-7742;
 - cooperation, coordination, and reporting towards confidence in, and reliability of, the national defined control system, and;
 - the approval of milk collection centres, and re-evaluation of all registered centres under the said system;
- Meat (bovine, ovine and caprine), 2022-7509;
 - accuracy of the database for records on animal movements and traceability, and thus lack of confidence in the system;
 - organisation of official controls on animal health in small establishments and animal markets, and;
 - effectiveness of surveillance and early detection systems, as well as the development of contingency plans and instruction manuals, where needed.
- 8. Generic and common limitations as already identified with regards to technical capacity and infrastructure to meet the testing obligations as reflected in the OCR should be addressed without any further delay. As many of these technical shortcomings are common to most sectors, and generic in nature, if not already done so, such issues could be addressed horizontally at a national level to help drive momentum in respective sectors.

FISHERIES (CH. 13)

1. Continue with the preparatory work and inform the Commission on the state of play of its countrywide fisheries and aquaculture strategy and on the Action Plan for sector *acquis* approximation (e.g. alignment of the Common Market Organisation Regulation,

Data Collection Framework), which is of crucial importance to ensure alignment with the Common Fishery Policy and further assistance.

2. Consult the Commission on the draft of the countrywide fisheries and aquaculture strategy once available.
3. Strengthen its administrative and financial capacities necessary for implementing fisheries policy and control measures and address other outstanding issues such as establishing and managing a fleet register.
4. Proceed with a countrywide harmonised collection of data and statistics on catches and landings per type of fishery and provide updates on activities including workshops and sharing of relevant documentation on operation plans and agreed methodologies.

As a ***general recommendation to Chapters 11,12 and 13***, the authorities should maximize the use of the TAIEX instrument to address pending priorities of the country's approximation to the EU, such as any follow up actions below.