

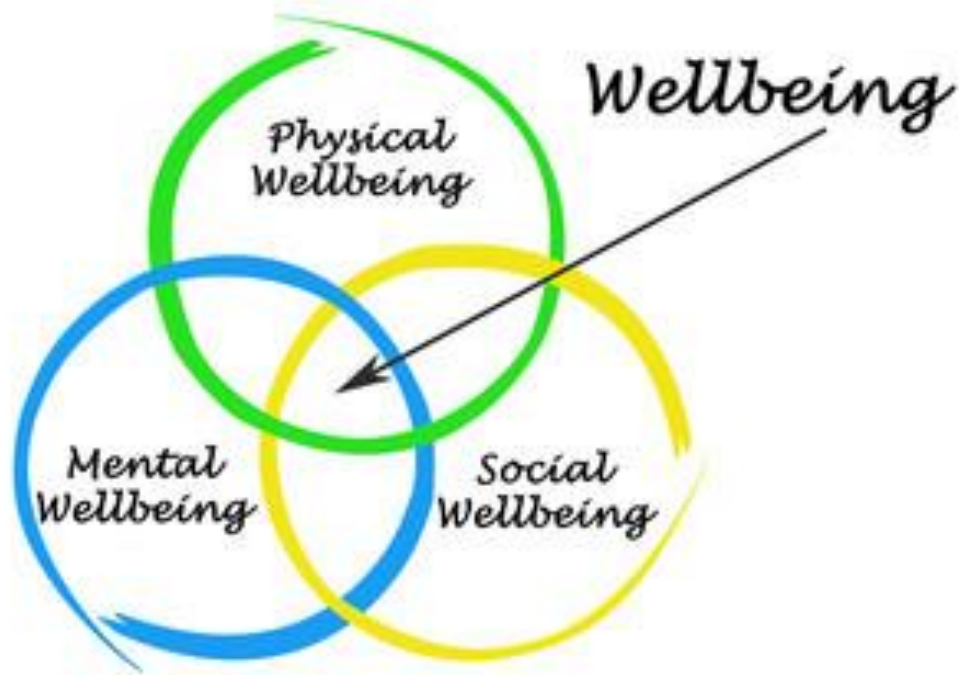


**ReSPA**

Regional School  
of Public Administration

BUILDING TOGETHER  
GOVERNANCE FOR THE FUTURE

# Survey on the Mental Well-Being of Civil Servants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia



Co-funded by  
the European Union

**January 2024**

## **Author:**

Ljiljana Manić

for

### **The Regional School of Public Administration**

Podgorica, Montenegro

The Regional School for Public Administration (ReSPA) is an inter-governmental organisation for enhancing regional cooperation, promoting shared learning and supporting the development of public administration in the Western Balkans. As such, it helps governments in the region develop better public administration, public services and overall governance systems for their citizens and businesses, and helps prepare them for membership and integration into the European Union (EU). The ReSPA members are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia, while Kosovo\* is a beneficiary

#### **DISCLAIMER**

*"This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union or of the Regional School of Public Administration. Neither the Regional School of Public Administration nor any person acting on its behalf are responsible for any use which might be made of the information contained in the present publication. The Regional School of Public Administration is not responsible for the content of the external websites referred to in the present publication."*

#### **COPYRIGHT**

© 2024, Regional School of Public Administration

All rights reserved. Any re-printing and/or reproduction is prohibited without prior written permission of ReSPA.

#### **CONTACT**

Regional School of Public Administration

Podgorica, Montenegro

Internet: [www.respaweb.eu](http://www.respaweb.eu)

E-mail: [respa-info@respaweb.eu](mailto:respa-info@respaweb.eu)

---

\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and ICJ opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of independence.

# Contents

<b>ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. GENERAL SURVEY RESULTS</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1. Emotional Component of Mental Well-being	8
2.2. Social Component of Mental Well-being	10
2.3. Psychological Component of Mental Well-being	11
<b>3. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SURVEYS</b>	<b>13</b>
4.1 Statistical Overview of Data – Emotional Component of Mental Well-being	15
4.2. Statistical Overview of Data – Social Component of Mental Well-being	18
4.3 Statistical Overview of Data – Psychological Component of Mental Well-being	21
<b>5. INITIATIVES SUPPORTING MENTAL WELL-BEING</b>	<b>24</b>
5.1 Initiatives of Mental Well-being in Europe	24
5.2 Initiatives for Boosting Mental Well-being in the Western Balkans	26
Literature	29
Annexe 1: Methodology Overview	30
Annexe 2: Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Survey Sample	31
Annexe 3: Mental Well-being and Sociodemographic Characteristics – A Survey Perspective	35

## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ReSPA</b>	Regional School of Public Administration
<b>p</b>	Statistical significance
<b>**</b>	Statistical significance at the 0.01 level
<b>*</b>	Statistical significance at the 0.05 level
<b>M</b>	Arithmetic mean
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization

# 1. INTRODUCTION

Mental well-being represents a crucial and determining condition for the health of every individual. It affects social relationships, work performance, the ability to take care of oneself and others, and the capacity to make sound business and life decisions. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as "complete physical, mental, and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease". The word "well-being," as a synonym for "prosperity" (from Latin "prosperitas" meaning "successful growth"), in the broadest sense, signifies a state of development, success, and happiness.

The concept of mental well-being encompasses the unity of emotional, social, and psychological well-being. Individuals who achieve the entirety of mental well-being are more resilient to stress, fulfil their potential, are more productive, and contribute more to their community.

Impaired mental health can lead to substance abuse, hasten the onset of other health problems, hinder an individual's ability to fit into a collective, result in social exclusion, and even lead to self-harm and suicide.

The work that active workers perform and the work environment where they spend a significant part of their days and lives significantly affect their mental state, positively or negatively. The consequences of poor mental health of individuals spread to their immediate and broader environment, and the more such individuals there are, the greater the burden on the community and society. Therefore, it is essential to identify work-related factors and the work environment that promote or endanger the mental well-being of employees.

Considering this, a survey on the mental well-being of civil servants was conducted in Serbia in October 2022.<sup>2</sup> With the support of ReSPA, a regional survey on the same topic was conducted in 2023 with other ReSPA members who expressed interest in this initiative, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and North Macedonia. Both surveys focus on the mental well-being of civil servants, including their emotional, social, and psychological well-being.

The surveys were conducted with the following objectives:

- Gain insight into the actual state of mental well-being among civil servants.
- Explore different dimensions of well-being (emotional, social, and psychological).
- Investigate whether there are significant differences based on the demographic characteristics of respondents (gender, age, place of employment, economic and health status, and job position).
- Exploring cross-cultural differences in mental well-being within the RESPA members.

A specific goal of both surveys was to provide findings that would enable administrations to develop various corrective measures for enhancing mental well-being through various personal and professional development activities based on the data obtained.

Both surveys contributed to expanding civil servants' knowledge of mental health. After answering the questions, respondents received detailed descriptions of the components of mental well-being and interpretations of their responses as feedback. This contributed to raising awareness about the importance of mental health.

---

<sup>2</sup> The project 'Mental Well-being of Civil Servants' was part of the project 'Training for Civil Service for the 21st Century in the Republic of Serbia' which was implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), with the participation of the National Academy of Public Administration and the College of Social Work in Belgrade

This report presents the results of the surveys on the mental well-being of civil servants conducted in Serbia in 2022, and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and North Macedonia in 2023. In addition to presenting the survey results for four ReSPA members, the report offers recommendations for improvement and examples of initiatives related to mental well-being in Europe and the Western Balkans.

## 2. GENERAL SURVEY RESULTS

Both surveys on mental well-being involved 5,669 civil servants: 1,303 from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 838 from Montenegro, 1,293 from North Macedonia and 2,235 from Serbia. The survey population is comprised of approximately 121,000 civil servants, with a sample of 5,669 respondents representing 4.66% of this population. This sample size is associated with a marginal error of 1.67% and a confidence level of 99%.<sup>3</sup>

The survey included participants from all three levels of administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the majority from the institutions of the *Republika Srpska* (829), followed by the institutions of the *Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina* (267), and institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina (207).

Out of the total number of civil servants from North Macedonia who responded to the questionnaire on mental well-being, 1,087 completed the survey in Macedonian, while 206 did so in Albanian language.

The overall mental well-being is represented as the sum of scores obtained from all three components: emotional, social, and psychological. Scores on the subscales and the scale of overall mental well-being were obtained as the sum of values on the items that constitute them. The theoretical minimum and maximum range from 1 to 5. Thus, the range on the scale of overall mental well-being, as well as the emotional, social, and psychological scales, goes from 1 to 5. A higher average value indicates better mental well-being of civil servants. The same range was applied to all items.

In a sample of 5,669 respondents whose responses were processed, the overall mental well-being is 3.49, indicating that this component is slightly above the average value, as depicted in **Figure 1**. The average overall mental well-being is obtained based on the average values of the total mental well-being of civil servants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia.

When observed across four RESPA members, although the differences are not substantial, the highest average values are in North Macedonia - 3.58, while the lowest are in Bosnia and Herzegovina - 3.43.

**Figure 2** displays the average ratings for overall mental well-being per each of the four ReSPA members who participated in these surveys.

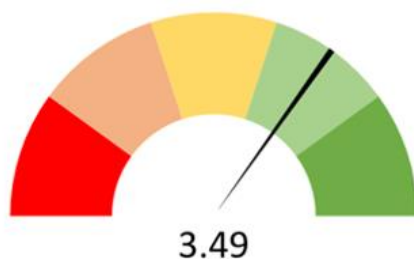


Figure 1: The average rating for overall mental well-being of civil servants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia

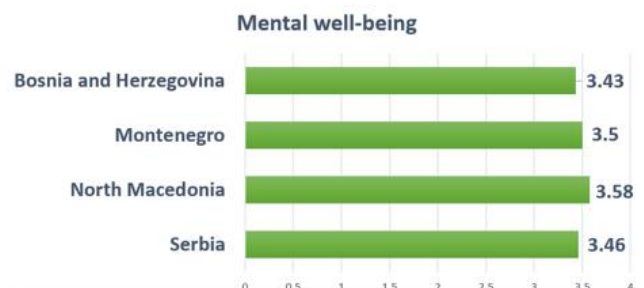


Figure 2: Findings for ReSPA members included in the survey

<sup>3</sup> Values within a 10% marginal error and a 99% confidence interval are considered acceptable.

By comparing the results of all four ReSPA members based on gender, age, location of employment, job position, marital status, financial status, and health status, differences in the overall level of mental well-being among different participant groups were identified:

- There are differences in mental well-being and all its components between men and women, with men showing a slightly higher level of well-being.
- There are differences in mental well-being among individuals of different age groups. The average levels of mental well-being are lower for civil servants aged between 31 and 40 years and those between 41 and 50 years.
- There are variations based on location, as employees in major cities Sarajevo, Banja Luka, Podgorica, Skopje, and Belgrade experience lower well-being levels than those in smaller cities.
- There are differences between civil servants in managerial and non-managerial positions, with higher levels of well-being achieved by civil servants in managerial roles. Among managers, there are no significant differences in the managerial positions they hold.
- No statistically significant differences in mental well-being among respondents with different marital statuses exist. However, it has been shown that a higher level of relationship satisfaction is associated with higher mental well-being for those in a relationship.
- Civil servants with good or very good financial status achieve a higher level of mental well-being. In contrast, the lowest level is observed among civil servants who rated their financial status as very poor.
- Civil servants who rated their health as good or very good have a higher level of mental well-being.

## 2.1. Emotional Component of Mental Well-being

Emotional well-being is measured based on responses regarding the presence or absence of work-induced positive emotions. The results show that respondents generally have positive feelings regarding their work.

The average rating of the emotional well-being of civil servants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia is 3.45, which indicates that this component is slightly above average (**Figure 3**).

Observed by administrations, civil servants in Bosnia and Herzegovina exhibit the highest emotional well-being. Emotional well-being in Bosnia and Herzegovina is 3.55, slightly lower in North Macedonia with 3.48, and the lowest is in Montenegro and Serbia, at 3.38.

**Figure 4** displays the average ratings for the emotional well-being of ReSPA members who participated in both surveys.



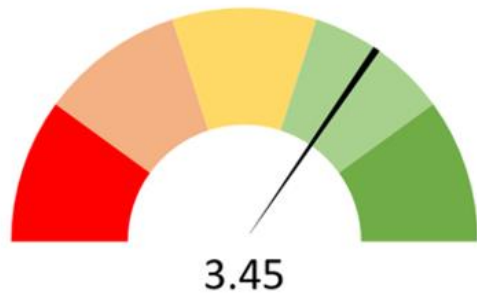


Figure 3: The average rating for emotional well-being of civil servants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia

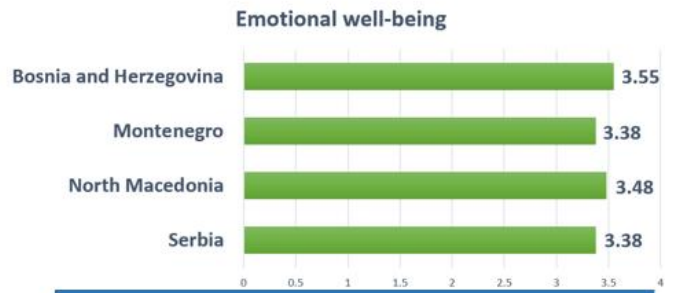


Figure 4: Findings for ReSPA members included in the survey

Individual items on the emotional well-being subscale have ratings ranging from 2.88 to 3.78. The lowest average rating is for the statement, "After work, I feel drained lately," to which 44.6% of respondents agree. It is encouraging that most respondents agree or strongly agree that they often laugh at work (67.4% in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 67.4% in Montenegro, 55.4% in North Macedonia, and 69.2% in Serbia). The percentage of respondents expressing fear at work in Bosnia and Herzegovina is 14.8%, Montenegro 12.3% and North Macedonia 14.5%, and Serbia 13.7%.

**Figure 5** displays responses to the first open question, "How would you describe the mood you bring to work?" In four ReSPA members included in the survey, more than half of the respondents describe the positive feelings they bring to work. This percentage is the highest in Serbia, with 75.97% of responses.

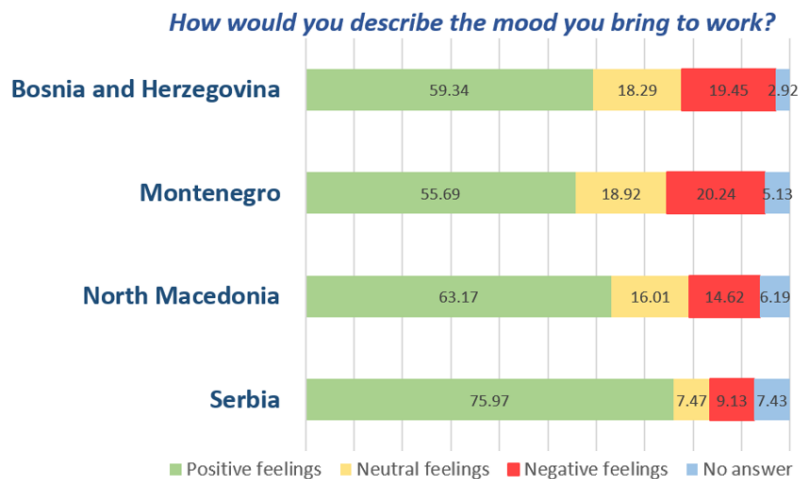


Figure 5: Mood of Civil Servants upon Arrival at Work

## 2.2. Social Component of Mental Well-being

Social well-being encompasses an individual's ability to adapt and integrate into their social and/or work environment, connect with others, feel a sense of belonging to a collective, and enjoy an atmosphere of mutual affection, respect, and trust in interactions with colleagues. Based on the self-assessment of respondents' social well-being, the average rating of social well-being is 3.39, indicating that this component is slightly above the average value (**Figure 6**).

Observed by administrations, civil servants in North Macedonia exhibit the highest social well-being. Social well-being in North Macedonia is 3.48, while it is slightly lower in Serbia at 3.43, Montenegro at 3.36, and the lowest in Bosnia and Herzegovina at 3.31.

**Figure 7** displays the average ratings for social well-being per ReSPA member who participated in the surveys.



Figure 6: The average rating for social well-being well-being of civil servants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia

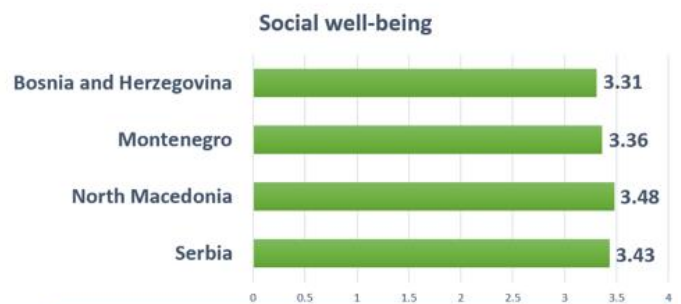
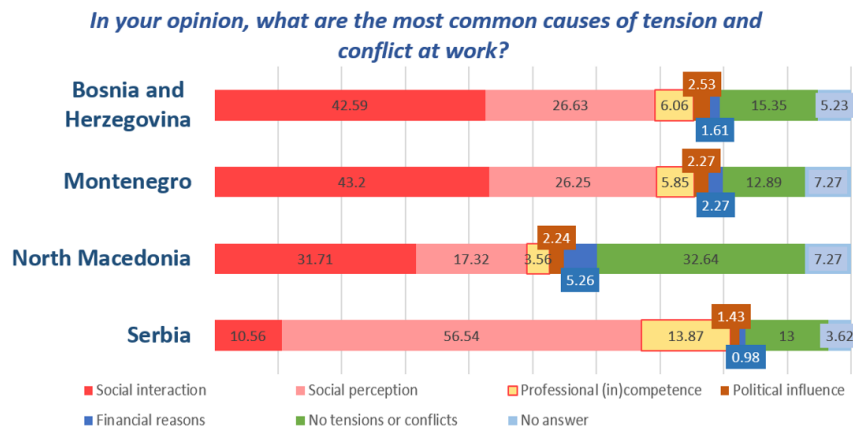


Figure 7: Findings for ReSPA members included in the survey

Individual items on the subscale of social well-being have ratings ranging from 2.85 to 4. Eighty-two per cent of civil servants in all four ReSPA members feel that they contribute to the institution they work for and the broader community. Civil servants are most bothered by the fact that there is more criticism than praise in their environment.

**Figure 8** displays responses to the second open question, "In your opinion, what are the most common causes of tension and conflict at work?" Commonly cited reasons for tensions and conflicts in the workplace include poor organisation and division of work, setting short deadlines for completing tasks, simultaneously seeking efficiency and quality, and the lack of communication or poor communication. Nearly a third of the respondents in North Macedonia expressed no conflicts or tensions in their workplace. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, 15.35% of civil servants stated no conflicts and tensions in their workplace; in Montenegro, 12.89, while in Serbia, this figure is 13%.



**Figure 8: The most common causes of tension and conflict at work**

### 2.3. Psychological Component of Mental Well-being

Psychological well-being involves self-acceptance, meaning self-love and valuing one's being despite being aware of one's limitations and shortcomings.

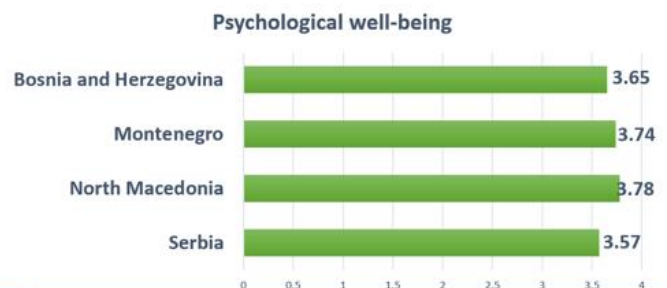
The average rating of the psychological well-being of civil servants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia is 3.68, which is slightly higher than other aspects of mental well-being (**Figure 9**).

Observed by administrations, civil servants in North Macedonia exhibit the highest psychological well-being with 3.78. Psychological well-being is slightly lower in Montenegro, 3.74, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, 3.65, and the lowest in Serbia, 3.57.

**Figure 10** displays the average ratings for psychological well-being per each of the four ReSPA members who participated in the surveys.



**Figure 9: The average rating for psychological mental well-being of civil servants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia**

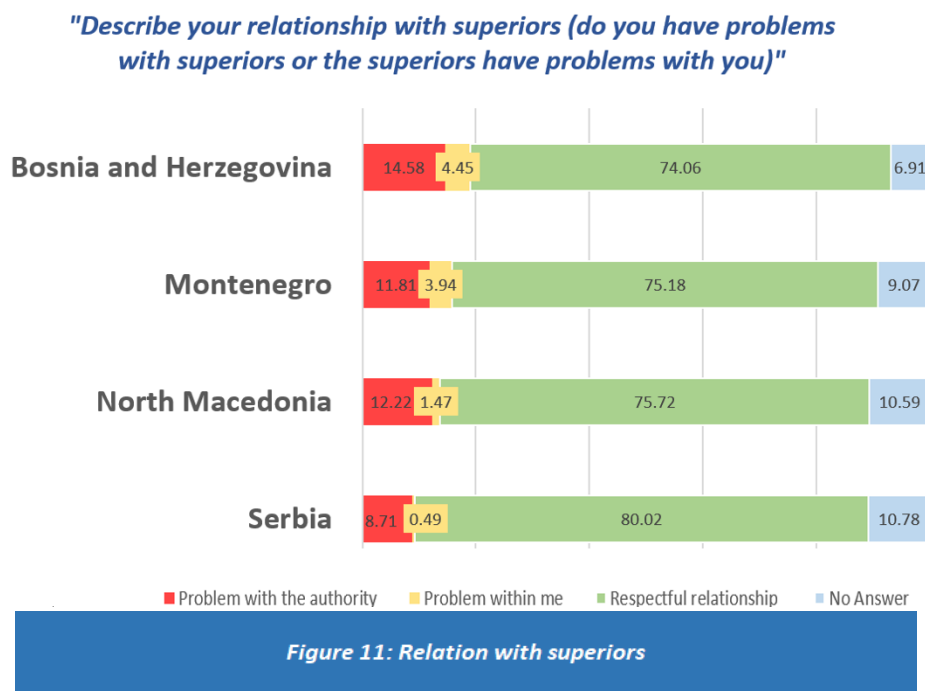


**Figure 10: Findings for ReSPA members included in the survey**

Individual items on the subscale of psychological well-being range from 2.93 to 4.15, which is slightly higher than other aspects of mental well-being. This indicates that respondents have average to good or slightly above-average psychological well-being.

Civil servants most strongly agree that they have worth as individuals and professionals. More than 90% of civil servants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia agree with this statement. Additionally, 87.7% claim they easily adapt to technological innovations at work. The lowest scores were obtained in the field of career advancement satisfaction. 38.3% of respondents in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 35% in Montenegro, 50.6% in North Macedonia, and 41.9% in Serbia agreed they were not satisfied with their career progression.

**Figure 11** illustrates how participants described their relationship with authority. About three-quarters of the participants of the surveys depict their interactions with superiors as relationships filled with mutual understanding and respect.



No significant cultural differences were found in mental well-being among civil servants in four ReSPA members. Minor differences exist between respondents from North Macedonia who answered in the Albanian language and other respondents. Respondents who answered the questionnaire in the Albanian language showed a higher level of overall mental well-being, higher levels of emotional, social, and psychological well-being compared to other participants in the survey, and a greater degree of agreement with all positive statements.

### 3. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SURVEYS

In the surveys on the mental well-being of civil servants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, 5,669 respondents participated. Several key areas for improvement can be identified based on these comprehensive surveys.

- Although the overall results are encouraging, there is a possibility that civil servants may not recognise signs of stress. Although 55.8% of respondents stated that their job does not trouble them much, in later responses, 46.6% of the civil servants who participated in the surveys agreed with the statement that they feel drained after work, and 21.7% of them experience sleeping or eating problems. Therefore, the first recommendation is to organise training sessions to enhance participants' knowledge about the mechanisms for recognising "hidden stress" and its impact on physical health. Additionally, it is worth considering implementing programs that teach employees stress management techniques, such as meditation and mindfulness techniques, or encourage regular physical activity, which can help reduce stress and anxiety levels.
- Considering that surveys involved twice as many women as men and that scientific research<sup>4</sup> shows that men generally pay less attention to their mental health and tend to rate their health better than females<sup>5</sup>, it is important to create training programs that focus on the importance of mental health for men, reducing the stigma around expressing feelings and emotional problems, and encouraging openness towards seeking help when needed.
- The surveys have also shown that at the top of the list of reasons for conflicts and tensions in the workplace are problems in relationships with colleagues. The quality of interpersonal relationships, built through effective communication, is undoubtedly the foundation of mental well-being. A necessary condition for constructive and quality communication is the skill of listening, also known as "active listening". Hence, the third recommendation is to organise training sessions to raise participants' awareness and appreciation for the value and multiple benefits of active listening as an essential component of quality communication.
- Many civil servants notice much more criticism than praise in their environment. That is agreed upon by as much as 43.4% of the respondents. A recommendation for improvement would be the organisation of training on providing feedback that includes recognition and information on areas for improvement rather than just criticism. Additionally, the training should cover constructive ways of giving and receiving criticism.
- Nearly half of the respondents are unsatisfied with their career progression. That is agreed by 41.4% of the respondents. The recommendation is to organise specialised

---

<sup>4</sup> Kwon M, Lawn S, Kaine C. Understanding Men's Engagement and Disengagement When Seeking Support for Mental Health. *American Journal of Men's Health*. 2023;17(2). doi:10.1177/15579883231157971

<sup>5</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Self-perceived\\_health\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Self-perceived_health_statistics)

career development training and improve existing training focusing on developing key skills necessary for advancement, such as leadership and communication skills. Enhancing transparency in promotion and advancement processes would improve the situation. This would reduce the perception among civil servants that career advancement is conditioned by personal connections and political or ethnic affiliation and increase trust and a sense of belonging to the institution.

- Civil servants aged between 41 and 50 years show lower levels of mental well-being. Training programs aimed at this age group should be a priority. This especially applies to training on career development opportunities, stress management workshops, and balancing work and personal life.
- In responses to the open-ended question, "What are the most common causes of tension and conflict at work workload?", tight deadlines and poor task distribution are frequently mentioned. It would be beneficial to organise special training for managers aimed at recognising opportunities to address such issues and to educate leaders and managers on the importance of mental health, including identifying factors that contribute to increased stress and anxiety levels among employees.
- It is recommended to continue with regular surveys on mental well-being in ReSPA members. This will raise awareness about the importance of mental health and also provide valuable data enabling comparative analysis. Additionally, it will foster regional cooperation and facilitate the exchange of best practices in mental health.

## **4. STATISTICAL OVERVIEW OF MENTAL WELL-BEING SURVEYS AMONG PUBLIC SERVANTS**

Two surveys conducted online, one in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and North Macedonia in 2023 and the other one in Serbia in 2022, used a specially designed questionnaire which was completed by 5,669 civil servants employed in these ReSPA members. The questions in the questionnaire pertained to the domains of emotional, social, and psychological well-being, and participants provided self-assessments in their responses. The survey in Serbia was carried out in October 2022, and the survey in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and North Macedonia was in September 2023. The following is a statistical report on the collected data for each mental well-being component.

### **4.1 Statistical Overview of Data – Emotional Component of Mental Well-being**

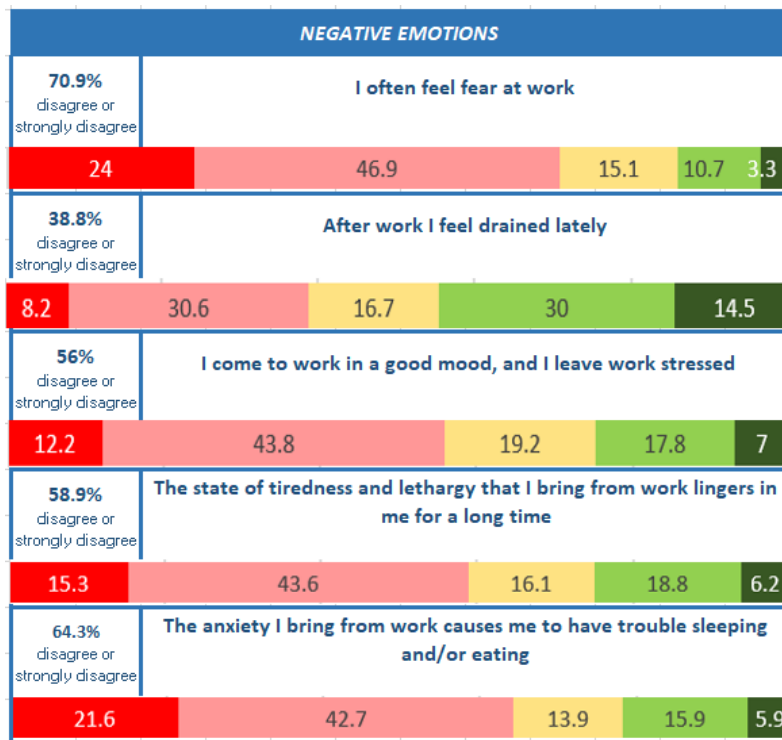
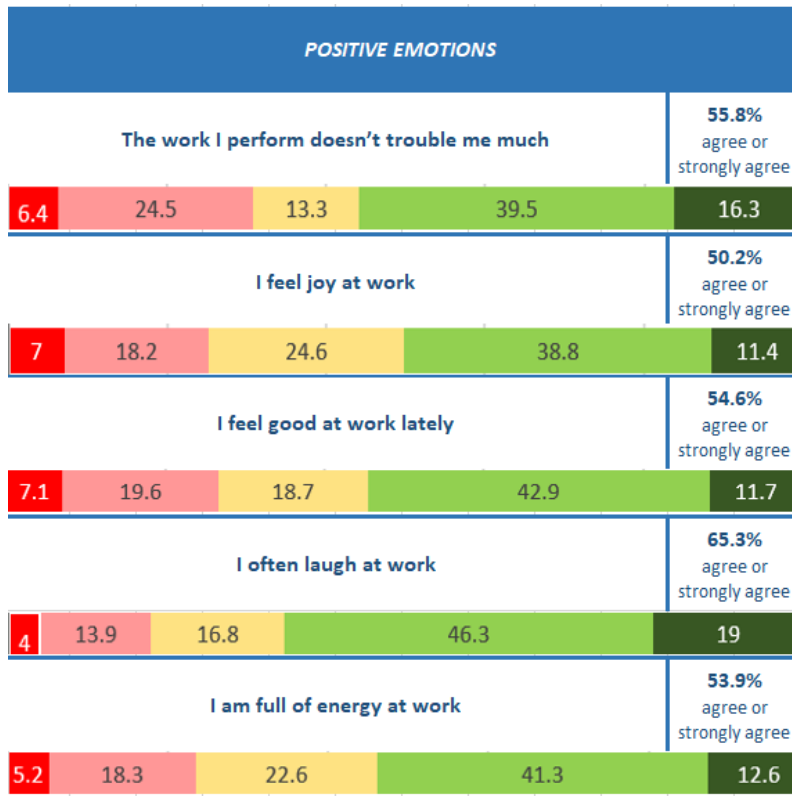
Emotional well-being is measured based on responses regarding the presence or absence of positive emotions triggered by work. In the section related to this well-being component, the questionnaire contains ten statements in which respondents express their degree of agreement or disagreement.

The first five statements convey a positive approach (work does not cause me too much worry, I feel joy and composure, often laugh, and have a lot of energy). A negative approach characterises the second group of statements. They measure whether employees feel fear, unease, or lack of enthusiasm, feel drained after a working day, and whether negative emotions affect their sleep and appetite. The questionnaire also includes an open-ended question asking respondents to describe the feelings they bring to work.

Regarding positive emotions, civil servants most strongly agree with the statement that they often laugh at work and that their work does not cause them too much worry. That they often laugh at work was confirmed by 65.3% of the respondents, while 55.8% indicated that their job does not cause them too much worry.

Regarding negative feelings, the highest agreement is found with the statement "I feel drained lately", with 44.56% of respondents expressing concurrence. The least common sentiment is fear at work, with only 14% of civil servants who agree with this statement.

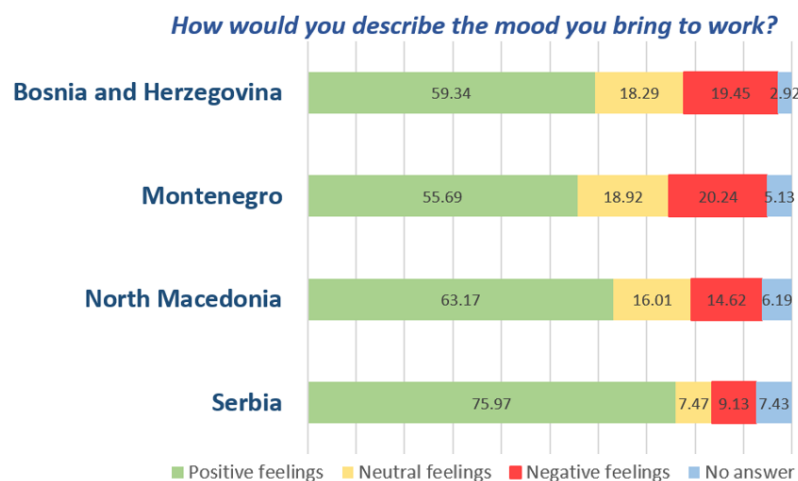
The following charts depict the degree of agreement or disagreement with the statements from the questionnaire expressed in percentages.



■ Strongly disagree  
 ■ Disagree  
 ■ Undecided  
 ■ Agree  
 ■ Strongly agree



Based on the content analysis of the responses to the first open-ended question, "How would you describe the mood you bring to work?" the following dominant themes were identified and categorised as "positive feelings", "neutral and borderline feelings", and "negative feelings". Responses under the first code, "positive feelings," had the highest frequency. A total of 3,750 respondents described the mood they bring to work in a positive way, which accounts for 59.34% of the responses in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 55.69% of the responses in Montenegro, 63.17% in North Macedonia and 75.97% of the responses in Serbia. Civil servants used terms such as carefree, energetic, well, satisfied, confident, enthusiastic, nice, excellent, optimistic, relaxed, eager, positive, joyful, relaxed, solid, cheerful, lively, happy, and I love my job. Responses coded as "negative feelings" have a lower frequency, with 833 respondents, which accounts for 19.45% of the responses in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 20.24% in Montenegro, 14.62% in North Macedonia and 9.13% in Serbia. However, they were very precise in describing their feelings, citing anxiety, apathy, lack of enthusiasm, depressive feelings, boredom, tension, dissatisfaction, and fatigue. They also compare their negative feelings to unpleasant physiological states (stomach cramps or a lump in the throat) or unpleasant situations (going to prison). Interestingly, many attribute their bad mood to sleepiness or lack of sleep. "Neutral feelings" have the lowest frequency, with 752 respondents, accounting for 18.29% of the responses in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 18.92% in Montenegro, 16.01% in North Macedonia, and 7.47% of the responses in Serbia. These are responses from participants who describe the feelings they bring to work as normal, average, variable, without specific emotions, dependent on the day and circumstances. Three hundred and thirty-four respondents did not answer this question.



**Figure 5: Mood of Civil Servants upon Arrival at Work**

## 4.2. Statistical Overview of Data – Social Component of Mental Well-being

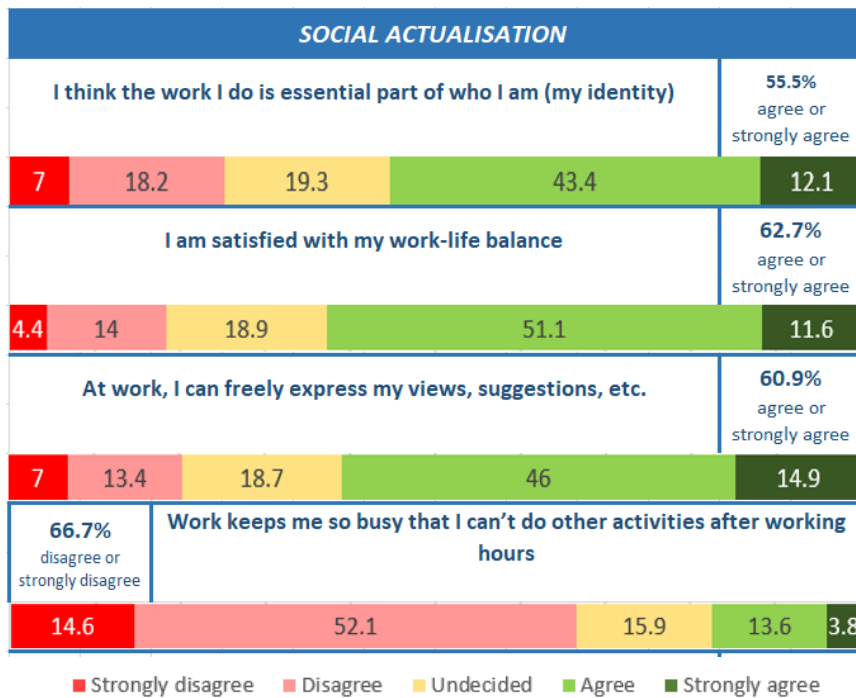
To measure social well-being, the questionnaire included ten statements, and based on the responses, data were obtained regarding social inclusion, social actualisation, and social contribution.

Social inclusion represents a process that enables full participation in economic, social, and cultural life, achieving a standard of living and well-being considered normal in society and increased participation in decision-making. The following chart depicts the degree of agreement with the statements from the questionnaire expressed in percentages.



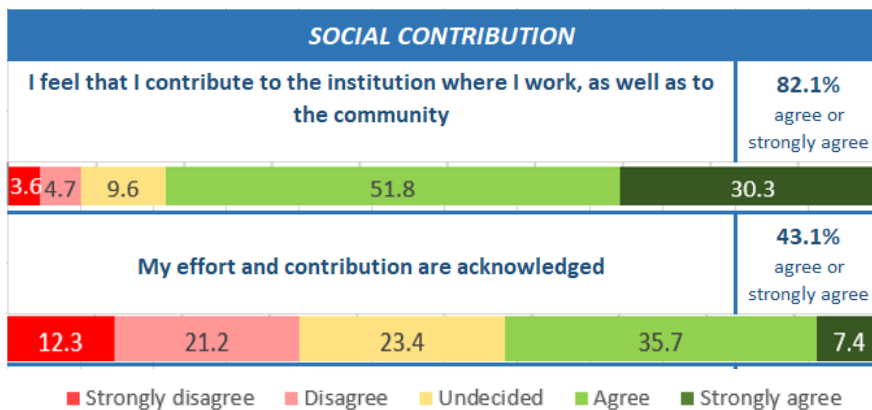
Social actualisation is the ability to influence others, initiate things, encourage change, and engage in productive collaboration with others within the collective.

The following chart depicts the degree of agreement or disagreement with the statements from this part of the questionnaire expressed in percentages.



Social contribution refers to the positive impact an individual has on society, a group, or a community, involving activities or behaviours that contribute to improving the well-being of others or the community as a whole.

The following chart depicts the degree of agreement with the statements from this part of the questionnaire expressed in percentages.



The questionnaire also includes an open-ended question to measure social well-being. Based on the content analysis of the responses to the second open-ended question, "In your opinion, what are the most common causes of tension and conflict at work?" the following dominant themes were identified and coded: "political influence", "social interaction", "professional (in)competence", "financial reasons", and "social perception".

The highest frequency is for "social perception", with 2,080 responses, which was 26.63% of the responses in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 26.25% in Montenegro, 17.32% in North Macedonia and 56.54% in Serbia. Under "social perception," tensions are attributed to some

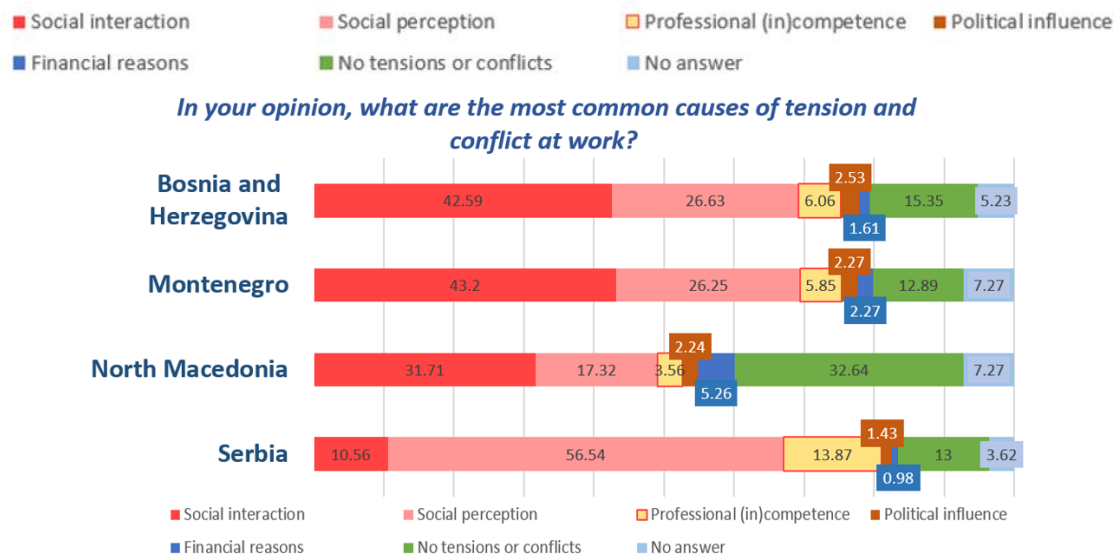
personal traits of colleagues, such as arrogance, intolerance, frustrations of leaders, lack of culture, excessive ambition, and the like.

Responses coded as "social interaction" have a lower frequency with 1.563 responses, which was 42.59% of the responses in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 43.20% in Montenegro, 31.71% in North Macedonia and 10.56% in Serbia. Here, general descriptions prevail: poor organisation and division of work, setting short deadlines for completing tasks, and simultaneously seeking efficiency and quality often lead to challenges, and the lack of communication or poor communication exacerbates these difficulties.

Some respondents attribute the cause to the "professional (in)competence" of colleagues (6.06% of the responses in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 5.85% in Montenegro, 3.56% in North Macedonia and 13.87% in Serbia).

Political influences are the most common cause of conflicts and tensions at work, according to the opinions of 2.53% of respondents in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2.27% in Montenegro, 2.24% in North Macedonia and 1.43% in Serbia.

"Financial reasons" as a trigger for conflicts and tensions are mentioned by 1.61% in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2.27% in Montenegro, 5.26% in North Macedonia and 0.98% in Serbia.



**Figure 8: The most common causes of tension and conflict at work**

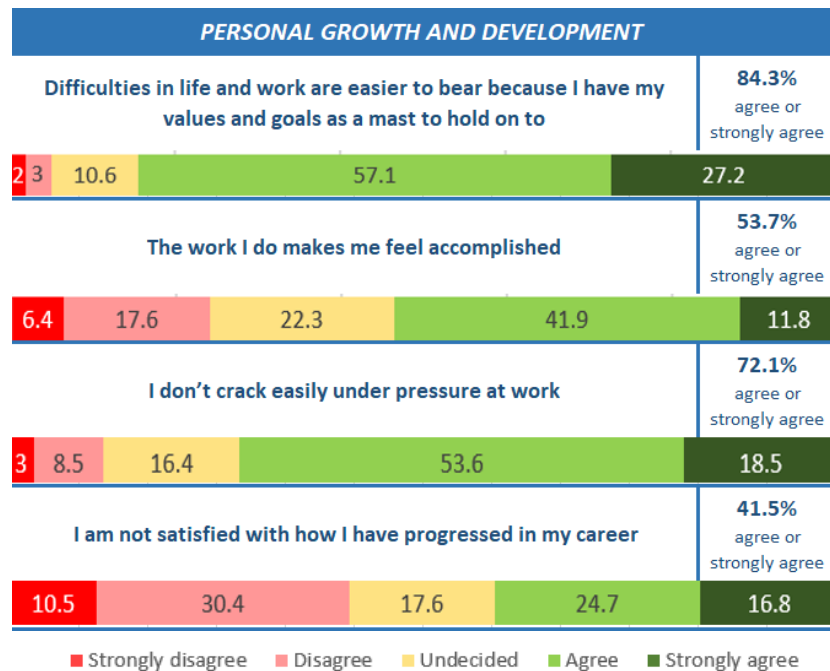
Nearly a third of the respondents in North Macedonia expressed no conflicts or tensions in their workplace. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, 15.35% of civil servants stated that there are no conflicts and tensions in their workplace; in Montenegro, 12.89, while in Serbia, this figure is 13%.

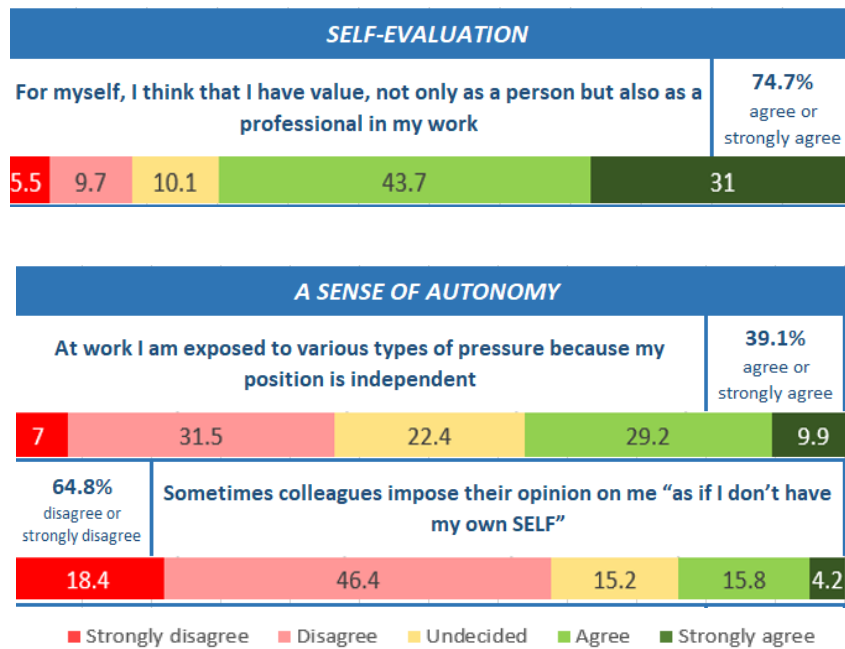
Three hundred twenty-seven respondents did not answer the question.

### 4.3 Statistical Overview of Data – Psychological Component of Mental Well-being

The questionnaire comprises ten statements to measure the psychological component of well-being. Based on the responses, data were obtained regarding self-efficacy (belief in one's abilities to cope with challenging situations), personal growth and development, self-evaluation, and a sense of autonomy.

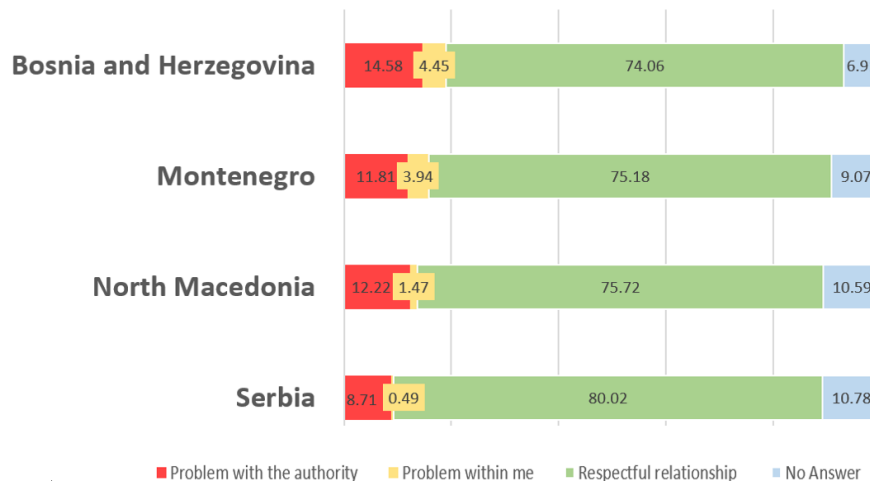
The following charts depict the degree of agreement or disagreement with the statements from this part of the questionnaire expressed in percentages.





The questionnaire also includes an open-ended question to measure the psychological component of well-being. Based on the analysis of the content of the third open-ended question, describe your relationship with superiors (do you have problems with superiors or the superiors have problems with you); the following dominant themes were identified and coded as a problem originating from the employee, "a problem within me", "a problem with authority", and "a respectful relationship".

*"Describe your relationship with superiors (do you have problems with superiors or the superiors have problems with you)"*



**Figure 11: Relation with superiors**

The code "a respectful relationship" has the highest frequency in four ReSPA members participating in surveys, indicating a good relationship between employees and superiors (authorities). Civil servants described the relationship as calm, professional, excellent, correct, positive, solid, excellent, respectful, humane, and without conflict. This type of response was

provided by 74.06% of all responses in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 75.18% in Montenegro, 75.72% in North Macedonia and 80.02 in Serbia.

Negative experiences were reported by 14.58% of participants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 11.81% in Montenegro, 12.22% in North Macedonia and 8.71% in Serbia. They most commonly state that their issue is not with authority in general but rather with specific managers who lack understanding, are frequently changing, come without experience, are incompetent, are unwilling to accept different opinions, or are appointed due to personal connections and political or ethnic affiliations.

Five hundred and forty-three respondents did not respond to this question. However, 4.45% in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 3.94% in Montenegro, 1.47% in North Macedonia, and 0.49% see themselves as the cause of these problems.

## 5. INITIATIVES SUPPORTING MENTAL WELL-BEING

### 5.1 Initiatives of Mental Well-being in Europe

Many EU and OECD countries have recognised that mental well-being policies for civil servants and officials are not just about providing support and care to employees; they are also integral to maintaining a high-performing, efficient, and ethical government workforce. European governments and organisations strive to create a supportive and mentally healthy work environment for civil servants, ultimately improving job satisfaction, productivity, and overall well-being.

Within the EU institutions, employees are provided with various kinds of support that benefit their mental well-being, including flexible working hours, teleworking options, access to a wide variety of personal development courses, a diverse and inclusive workplace culture, expatriate benefits (such as travel and expatriation allowance), and "family-friendly" benefits (such as dependent child allowance, European Schools, and parental leave for both parents).<sup>6</sup>

The EU-Compass for Action on Mental Health and Well-being<sup>7</sup> initiative by the European Commission and EU Member States serves as a web-based mechanism to collect, exchange, and analyse information on policy and stakeholder activities in mental health. The EU-Compass promotes mental health and well-being by sharing information, good practices, and policies, encouraging data collection, combatting stigma, and supporting survey and policy development to improve mental health across Europe. The EU-Compass is a long-term platform that can greatly benefit all EU member states and EU institutions to create better policies within the realm of mental health and mental well-being.

Another initiative that serves to provide information and resources to improve mental well-being is the Well-being Hub by the UK Charity of Civil Servants organisation<sup>8</sup>. This platform is aimed specifically at civil servants. It provides resources, services, and a supportive community to help civil servants cope with stress, mental health challenges, and work-related pressures. The Well-being Hub aims to enhance civil servants' overall wellness and resilience to ensure they can perform their duties effectively while maintaining good mental health.

Positive well-being focuses on mental wellness as opposed to mental illness. The UK civil service departments and agencies have realised that the attention has been primarily on mental and physical ill-health, focusing on ways to reduce the symptoms of a negative work environment with interventions targeting those in crisis. This brought the idea of Well-being Confident Leaders Training<sup>9</sup> as a need to provide an open, honest platform for people to take accountability for their own and others' well-being positively. Based on the assumption that leaders can do more to empower everyone to support their own positive psychological well-being, this training provides a positive foundation for collaborative learning.

The training is based on the PERMA model of positive well-being, which establishes five fundamental pillars of well-being: Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment. The approach and model have been identified to help support departments

---

<sup>6</sup> <https://eu-careers.europa.eu/en/eu-careers/benefits>

<sup>7</sup> [https://health.ec.europa.eu/non-communicable-diseases/mental-health/eu-compass-action-mental-health-and-well-being\\_en](https://health.ec.europa.eu/non-communicable-diseases/mental-health/eu-compass-action-mental-health-and-well-being_en)

<sup>8</sup> [https://wellbeing.foryoubyyou.org.uk/?\\_ga=2.226707229.1029826703.1551199203119149716.1551199203](https://wellbeing.foryoubyyou.org.uk/?_ga=2.226707229.1029826703.1551199203119149716.1551199203)

<sup>9</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/800937/wellbeing\\_confident\\_leaders\\_brochure\\_5.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/800937/wellbeing_confident_leaders_brochure_5.pdf)



and agencies take a more strategic approach to support well-being. The aim of this leadership training is to feel empowered and confident to practice, manage and role-model positive psychological well-being. Although it is clear that the training will not change the culture overnight, it gives leaders the knowledge and tools to create a safe space for people to have potentially sensitive and positively focused conversations about well-being. The role of these leaders within their organisations is to continue these conversations with their peers, teams and departments, building on the momentum of the workshop.

In Ireland, another interesting practice aims to build and maintain a resilient workforce to deliver effective services by raising awareness of and promoting good mental health in the workplace. The Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS)<sup>10</sup> is a work-based professional service for all staff members working in the Civil Service, which is designed to assist employees in managing/resolving work-related and personal difficulties which, if left unattended may adversely affect attendance, work performance and quality of life. This important shared service is an element of the human resource structure in the Civil Service and plays a key part in the ethos of promoting employee wellness and organisational effectiveness. Through phone, in-person, and online appointments, CSEAS provides support to managers and HR, acts as an information point on various policies and processes, such as Sick Leave, Dignity at Work and Probation, provides presentations and webinars to staff teams and departments on topics about staff well-being and responds to critical incidents in the workplace.

CSEAS supports individuals with any issues that are worrying them or are having a negative impact on their work and/or personal life. There are no limitations on what can be discussed with the service, as its goal is to be a non-judgemental, confidential and free service where civil servants are met with empathy and understanding. Some examples of issues where civil servants can seek support include interpersonal/relationship difficulties, mental and physical health issues, financial worries, bereavement, domestic abuse, workplace issues and suicidal ideation.

Combating the stigma surrounding mental health is another very important element of promoting mental well-being because it promotes understanding, encourages help-seeking behaviour, supports inclusivity, and ultimately improves the mental well-being of individuals and communities. In Denmark, Fighting Stigma at Work: One of Us<sup>11</sup> was an initiative whose goal was to raise awareness of the importance of mental well-being and increase reflection on culture and language while also combatting self-stigma, guilt and shame and challenging myths with facts. One of Us focused all activities on methods that have been proven to be relevant for anti-stigma efforts to facilitate identification, empathy and reflection through social contact activities where target groups can meet people with lived experience of mental illness for information. A series of dialogues was organised at schools, workplaces, health and social units, festivals, and conferences. Furthermore, films, pictures, TV, radio, and theatre shows were used to share the experiences of people with lived experience of mental illness. Social media was used to spread information, while PR initiatives were based on data from surveys that promoted more positive stories of mental illness.

These specific examples showcase various approaches OECD countries and the EU took to support civil servants' mental well-being. While the specifics of programs and policies vary, the common goal is creating a work environment that promotes mental health, reduces stigma, and supports those in need.

---

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.cseas.per.gov.ie/>

<sup>11</sup> [https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2017-11/2017\\_mh\\_work\\_schools\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2017-11/2017_mh_work_schools_en_0.pdf)

## 5.2 Initiatives for Boosting Mental Well-being in the Western Balkans

Mental well-being is crucial for youth because it supports healthy development, academic success, and positive social relationships. It enhances resilience, reduces risky behaviours, and contributes to long-term well-being, both personally and societally. Prioritising youth mental health helps build happier, more productive, and resilient individuals and communities. In Albania, the "Programme for Mental Health and Well-being of Children and Adolescents" was implemented in August 2023.<sup>12</sup> During a five-day mental health summer camp, through a safe and open space for discussion, young people learned about the mental health and well-being of young people and adolescents, understanding the challenges they face during these critical stages of life. At the end of the mental health summer camp, local initiatives were crafted for action to promote mental health awareness and break the stigma around mental health issues. The UN Association in Albania implemented the activity, supported by UNICEF Albania, and organised under UNICEF and WHO.

A similar project was implemented in Montenegro. Non-governmental organisations (NGO) Cazas and the Centre for Youth Education organised a three-day training for young people, several one-day workshops, and a panel discussion. The needs of young people were presented in an innovative way, and their active participation in decision-making and implementation of youth policy was enabled. The training and workshops were aimed at providing mechanisms for encouraging activism, developing a culture of participation among young people, and improving their knowledge about preserving and improving mental health. In addition, Viber stickers were created during these projects to further communicate the importance of mental health to the target group - young people- and to emphasise even more strongly the problem that was particularly visible during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>13</sup>

The Professional Development Program of the Civil Service Agency of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina includes a training titled "Workplace Stress Reduction and Mental Health Protection". This training is composed of modules that target specific aspects of stress management and mental health. One aspect delves into the sources of stress and external factors contributing to professional burnout. It includes activities like defining stress, understanding personal stress, breathing techniques for stress reduction, classifying external stress sources, and exploring healing sounds. The training also focuses on internal factors as stress sources and the role of psychological needs in stress. This involves examining how personality traits and personal beliefs can induce stress, recognising a safe space, and differentiating between needs and desires and behaviour drivers. The training also explores the power of empathy and strategies for coping with stress. It introduces the concept of BASIC Ph., elucidates the essence of empathy, and discusses self-empathy through the lens of nonviolent communication. The participants also benefit from presenting ways to cope with stress, including a unique storytelling approach.

The training aims to help participants recognise the stress level leading to burnout and understand complete behaviour driven by psychological needs. Notably, the training also focuses on recognising and applying stress reduction and self-help techniques.

---

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/albania/stories/mental-health-summer-camp-2023>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.nvcoce.me/projekat-mladi-i-mentalno-zdravlje?id=5>

The Civil Service Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina also organised stress recognition training for public servants at that administration level. Through the webinar and the classroom, the participants learned about the causes and physical signs of stress and the most effective techniques for stress relief that can be applied in everyday work. After the Covid-19 pandemic, the Agency included Mental Health training in its regular program. Starting from the concrete experiences of the participants and following the Gestalt psychotherapy direction, this training insists on three crucial questions: what is important for existential survival in a crisis; how does an individual experience the world in a crisis (with which senses, interests, activities), and is there a willingness to approaches to personal change. The content of the training is changed and supplemented as needed in accordance with specific challenges.

The Professional Development Program of the Human Resources Administration of Montenegro includes two important training actions: "Stress Management" and "Psychological Safety in the Workplace".

The "Stress Management" training aims to acquaint participants with effective stress management skills in the workplace. Processing the topic includes understanding stress, the stress in the context of change, development, and relationships with others, as well as understanding one's own and other people's emotions. Also, participants learn how to achieve good stress management, use stress management tools, and understand how stress affects relationships.

The "Psychological safety in the workplace" training aims to improve the participants' awareness of the importance of creating a safe, professional atmosphere, which enables the use of differences, disagreements, mistakes, and conflicts in favour of business efficiency. The training is designed to provide the knowledge and skills needed to manage stress effectively and maintain psychological safety in the workplace, thus contributing to improving the work environment and the organisation's overall efficiency.

The job they perform and the environment in which it is carried out significantly impact the mental stability of employees, either positively or negatively. Data on interest and the number of registrations for stress management training, as reported by the National Academy for Public Administration in Serbia (NAPA) for the past two years, indicate that public administration officials express a need for improvement and personal development. They require knowledge and skills in mental well-being protection and preservation, with the pandemic only intensifying the demand for such training. The "Anti-Stress Workshop" had 680 participants and was the most attended program for continuous professional development in 2021. Based on this success, the workshop has been continuously offered within the NAPA Training Programme, 2024 included.

During the pandemic, the importance of mental well-being became evident across different sectors. Maintaining mental well-being proved essential for coping with stress, uncertainty, and isolation while staying resilient and adaptable. In Serbia, the Unbreakable campaign<sup>14</sup> was inspired by the Hemofarm employees' assistance during the pandemic. The employees in this large pharmaceutical company were under a lot of stress since they worked 24 hours, seven days, in four shifts to produce large quantities of medicine for everyone who needed it. The Hemofarm Foundation thus joined forces with the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Belgrade to develop a national campaign in Serbia named the Unbreakable to prevent another epidemic, this time of mental illnesses.

---

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.stada.com/stories/sustainability/the-unbreakable-a-campaign-for-preserving-mental-health-and-fighting-depression-and-stigma>

The Unbreakable campaign, recognised and supported by the Ministry of Health, was launched to preserve mental health, fight depression and stigma, and provide psycho-social support to people. Billboards with the messages "Watch out, fragile" and "Don't let it break you", visible in 18 cities in Serbia, announced the launch of the campaign and promoted a free and anonymous SOS phone line to fight depression. Help and support were made available via e-mail, website and social media. The Unbreakable campaign website contained texts and advice from experts for improving psycho-social health, confessions of people who are struggling with depression, FAQs and answers about depression, "A Cup of Coffee with a Psychologist" sessions, as well as addresses of mental healthcare facilities in Serbia.

The Unbreakable campaign raised awareness for fighting depression and the associated stigma and, within the first nine months of implementation, exceeded one million contacts. Furthermore, nearly 9,000 inquiries were made through the SOS line, e-mails, and social media channels, and 40 statements about the fight against depression were published on the Unbreakable website, along with 26 blogs on key mental health topics. Visibility was further increased through media appearances at large TV channels to announce the launch of the campaign. Finally, the Unbreakable campaign has been awarded by Emerging Europe in Brussels in the category of 'People - Health and Social Care'.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.fondacijahemofarm.org.rs/eng/vesti/529/%E2%80%98Unbreakable%E2%80%99-campaign-among-Eight-Most-Important-Initiatives-in-SEE>

## Literature

### Bibliographic:

Keyes, C.L.M, Lopez, S.J. Toward a science of mental health, Oxford handbook of positive psychology 2009, Vol.2, p. 89-95.

Kwon M, Lawn S, Kaine C, Understanding Men's Engagement and Disengagement When Seeking Support for Mental Health, American Journal of Men's Health. 2023;17(2).  
doi:10.1177/15579883231157971

Lee M, Kim B, Effect of the Employees' Mental Toughness on Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction, Mediating Psychological Well-Being, Administrative Sciences, 2023, Vol.13(5), p.133.

### Websites:

[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Self-perceived\\_health\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Self-perceived_health_statistics)

<https://eu-careers.europa.eu/en/eu-careers/benefits>

[https://health.ec.europa.eu/non-communicable-diseases/mental-health/eu-compass-action-mental-health-and-well-being\\_en](https://health.ec.europa.eu/non-communicable-diseases/mental-health/eu-compass-action-mental-health-and-well-being_en)

[https://wellbeing.foryoubyyou.org.uk/?\\_ga=2.226707229.1029826703.1551199203119149716.1551199203](https://wellbeing.foryoubyyou.org.uk/?_ga=2.226707229.1029826703.1551199203119149716.1551199203)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/800937/wellbeing\\_confident\\_leaders\\_brochure\\_5.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/800937/wellbeing_confident_leaders_brochure_5.pdf)

<https://www.cseas.per.gov.ie/>

[https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2017-11/2017\\_mh\\_work\\_schools\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2017-11/2017_mh_work_schools_en_0.pdf)

<https://www.unicef.org/albania/stories/mental-health-summer-camp-2023>

<https://www.nvcoce.me/projekat-mladi-i-mentalno-zdravlje?id=5>

<https://www.stada.com/stories/sustainability/the-unbreakable-a-campaign-for-preserving-mental-health-and-fighting-depression-and-stigma>

<https://www.fondacijahemofarm.org.rs/eng/vesti/529/%E2%80%98Unbreakable%E2%80%99-campaign-among-Eight-Most-Important-Initiatives-in-SEE>

## Annexe 1: Methodology Overview

Quantitative survey methods for collecting numerical data that enable measurements and statistical processing were used in both surveys. Also, qualitative data were collected, analysed, and interpreted based on the represented themes and codes.

The surveys were conducted online using a voluntary and anonymous questionnaire. For the purposes of developing the methodology, the questionnaire that was used in Serbia was translated into English and then into the languages spoken in the other ReSPA members included in the survey. After filling out the questionnaire, the participants received processed data based on their self-assessment of various aspects of mental well-being and brief explanations of each element.

To examine the mental well-being of civil servants, an instrument was constructed for survey purposes - the questionnaire consists of a total of 43 questions. The first nine questions refer to the sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents, and 33 questions refer to three components of mental well-being: emotional, social and psychological components. 11 items describe each component.

The degree of agreement with each statement is assessed on a five-point Likert scale (from 1 - strongly disagree to 5 - strongly agree). The total score is determined as the average value of assessments on all items, which indicates a theoretical range of scores from Min=1 to Max=5, where a higher score indicates greater well-being.

The results on three subscales (emotional component, social component and psychological component) are determined as the average value of assessments on the items that make up a specific subscale, and the theoretical range of results ranges from Min=1 to Max=5.

The survey conducted in 2022 in Serbia involved 2,235 civil servants, while the second one conducted in 2023 involved a total of 3,434 civil servants, with 1,303 from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 838 from Montenegro, and 1,293 from North Macedonia. The survey included participants from all three levels of administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the majority of 829 civil servants from the institutions of the *Republika Srpska*, 267 from the institutions of the *Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, and 207 from the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Out of the total number of civil servants from North Macedonia who responded to the questionnaire on mental well-being, 1,087 completed the survey in Macedonian, while 206 did so in Albanian.

In addition to the closed-type questions, the questionnaire also contained three open-type questions. The goal was to obtain qualitative answers within the emotional, social, and psychological components of mental well-being. Within the emotional part, the respondents were asked to answer: *How would you describe the mood with which you come to work?* The question *What are the most common causes of tension and conflict at your job* was open type question in the social aspect of mental well-being. The third question was, *"Describe your relationship with authorities (do you have problems with superiors or the superiors have problems with you)"*.

The purpose of surveying civil servants was to, based on their self-assessment, provide relevant and up-to-date information that will be the basis for comprehensive solutions and for improving the situation in this area.

## Annexe 2: Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Survey Sample

A total of 5,669 respondents participated in the mental well-being surveys. The realised sample exceeds a sufficient number of respondents and is considered valid. The surveys were completed by 1,303 civil servants employed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 838 in Montenegro, 1,293 in North Macedonia and 2,235 in Serbia (Table 1). Out of a total of 1,303 participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 829 were from the institutions of the *Republika Srpska*, 267 from the institutions of the *Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, and 207 from the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Table 1a).

Table 1. Structure of the sample – ReSPA members

	Value	%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,303	23.0%
Montenegro	838	14.8%
North Macedonia	1,293	22.8%
Serbia	2,235	39.4%
Total	5,669	100.0%

Table 1a. Structure of the sample – level of administration

	Value	%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	207	3.70
<i>Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>	267	4.70
<i>Republika Srpska</i>	829	14.60
Montenegro	838	14.80
North Macedonia	1,293	22.80
Serbia	2,235	39.40
All ( $\Sigma$ )	5,669	100.00

The surveys involved 3,415 women, 1,783 men, and 469 respondents who chose not to disclose their gender (Table 2).

Table 2. Structure of the sample – gender

	Value	%
Female	3415	60.3%
Male	1783	31.5%
I prefer not to say	469	8.3%
All ( $\Sigma$ )	5667	100.00%

The participants were divided into five age categories. The highest number of them were between 41 and 50 years old, somewhat fewer were between 31 and 40, and the smallest number of participants were in the group of those older than 61 (Table 3).

*Table 3. Structure of the sample – age*

	<b>Value</b>	<b>%</b>
Up to 30 years	510	9.00%
31 - 40	1749	30.9%
41 - 50	1904	33.6%
51 - 60	1199	21.2%
61 years and older	307	5.4%
<i>All (Σ)</i>	5669	100.00%

The majority of respondents, more than half, reside in large cities such as Sarajevo, Podgorica, Skopje, Belgrade and Banja Luka, while 41% live in all other cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

*Table 4. Structure of the sample - location of employment*

	<b>Value</b>	<b>%</b>
Beograd	1015	17.9%
Sarajevo	290	5.1%
Podgorica	693	12.2%
Mostar	16	0.3%
Banja Luka	471	8.3%
Skoplje	858	15.1%
Other	2326	41.0%
<i>All (Σ)</i>	5669	100.0%

The sample included 1,429 managers, accounting for 25.2% of the total. (Table 5).

*Table 5. Structure of the sample – management of an organisational unit*

	<b>Value</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	1429	25.2%
No	4238	74.8%
<i>All (Σ)</i>	5667	100.00%

The majority of civil servants are employed in ministries. Regarding marital status, participants were divided into five categories: single, married, in a non-marital partnership, divorced, and widowed. The results indicate that among civil servants, the highest percentage is married individuals at 63.5%, while the lowest rate is widows or widowers, accounting for only 2.1% (Table 6).



Table 6. Structure of the sample – marital status

	<b>Value</b>	<b>%</b>
Single	1207	21.3%
Married	3598	63.5%
Non-marital partnership	353	6.2%
Divorced	393	6.9%
Widow/widower	118	2.1%
<i>All (Σ)</i>	5669	100.00%

For assessing mental well-being, it is important to know if someone is in a relationship and the quality of that relationship. Therefore, civil servants in a marital or non-marital partnership are asked to assess the quality of their relationship (Table 7). The data shows that as many as 90.1% of them are satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of their relationship.

Table 7. Quality of Partner Relationship Assessment<sup>16</sup>

	<b>Value</b>	<b>%</b>
I am very dissatisfied	35	0.9%
I am not satisfied	123	3.1%
I can't tell	230	5.9%
I am satisfied	1705	43.4%
I am very satisfied	1832	46.7%
<i>All (Σ)</i>	3925	100.00%

Most respondents rate their financial situation as good or average. 45.7% rated their condition as good, meaning they can generally afford everything they need but occasionally find themselves short of money; 26.3% rate their financial situation as average, while 7.7% of the respondents believe they can afford more than they need. A total of 20.3% assesses their financial situation as poor or very poor (Table 8).

<sup>16</sup> The average assessment of the financial situation is M = 4.31 (Min=Very bad [1] – Max = Very Good [5]). A higher average score indicates higher satisfaction.

*Table 8. Financial Status Assessment<sup>17</sup>*

	<b>Value</b>	<b>%</b>
Very bad – I can't afford the basics	200	3.5%
Bad – I can't have everything I need	955	16.8%
Average	1490	26.3%
Good – I can often afford everything I need, but it happens that I don't have enough money	2588	45.7%
Very good – I can afford more than I actually need	435	7.7%
<i>All (Σ)</i>	5668	100.00%

The majority of civil servants assess their health as average or good. Forty-three per cent of participants in the surveys assessed their health as average, indicating they have minor health issues, and 39.3% believe their health is good, indicating they had no health problems. Excellent health is reported by 11.7% of the participants. More serious health issues are present in 5.5% of the participants, and 0.6% believe they have severe health problems (Table 9).

*Table 9. Health Status Assessment<sup>18</sup>*

	<b>Value</b>	<b>%</b>
Very bad – I have severe health problems	32	0.6%
Bad– I have serious health problems	311	5.5%
Average – I have minor health problems	2435	43.00%
Good – I don't have any health problems	2226	39.3%
Very good – my health status is excellent	665	11.7%
Total	5669	100.00%

<sup>17</sup> The average assessment of the financial situation is M=3.37 (Min= Very bad [1] – Max = Very Good [5]). A higher average score indicates higher satisfaction.

<sup>18</sup> The average assessment of health status is M=3.63 (Min= Very Bad [1] – Max = Very Good [5]). A higher average score indicates higher satisfaction

### Annexe 3: Mental Well-being and Sociodemographic Characteristics – A Survey Perspective

The content of this chapter provides insight into the mental well-being of participants of different socioeconomic statuses. To determine if there are differences in the levels of well-being components among specific groups of participants, comparisons were conducted based on gender, age, location, employment position, marital status, material and health conditions.

#### A.1 Gender and mental well-being

Based on the recorded values, the mental well-being of all participants is at an average level or moderately above average. Differences in mental well-being and all its components were observed between men and women, with men showing a slightly higher level of well-being (Table 10).

Table 10. Gender and mental well-being

	<b>Gender</b>			<b>P</b>
	Female	Male	I prefer not to say	
Emotional component	3.38	3.47	3.31	**
Social component	3.38	3.46	3.33	**
Psychological component	3.67	3.70	3.54	**
Mental well-being	3.48	3.54	3.39	**

#### A.2 Age and mental well-being

Differences in mental well-being have been observed among individuals of various age groups (Table 11). The average level of mental well-being is lower in those between the ages of 31 and 60, compared to public servants younger than 31 or older than 60.

Table 11. Age and mental well-being

	<b>Age</b>					<b>P</b>
	Up to 30 years	31 - 40	41 - 50	51 - 60	61 years and older	
Emotional component	3.56	3.41	3.36	3.37	3.49	**
Social component	3.49	3.40	3.37	3.39	3.52	**
Psychological component	3.68	3.67	3.65	3.66	3.73	**
Mental well-being	3.58	3.49	3.46	3.47	3.58	**

### A.3 Location of employment and mental well-being

The surveys have shown differences in the well-being of civil servants based on their location of employment (Table 12). Across cities, civil servants in larger urban centres, such as Sarajevo, Podgorica, Skopje, Belgrade and Banja Luka, experience lower levels of well-being compared to those living in smaller cities in ReSPA members included in the survey.

Table 12. Location of employment and mental well-being

	Location							P
	Beograd	Sarajevo	Podgorica	Mostar	Banja Luka	Skoplje	Other	
Emotional component	3.42	3.32	3.38	3.51	3.36	3.39	3.42	
Social component	3.43	3.26	3.33	3.29	3.25	3.38	3.47	**
Psychological component	3.59	3.69	3.73	3.76	3.62	3.75	3.65	**
Mental well-being	3.48	3.42	3.48	3.52	3.41	3.51	3.52	**

The surveys have also revealed differences among civil servants in managerial positions and those who are not, with higher levels of well-being achieved by civil servants in managerial roles. There are no statistically significant differences among managers based on whether they are officials, position holders, or managers of a narrower scope (Table 13).

Table 13. Managerial Position in the Organization and Respondents' mental well-being

	Do you do management work?		P
	Yes	No	
Emotional component	3.38	3.41	
Social component	3.50	3.37	**
Psychological component	3.78	3.63	**
Mental well-being	3.55	3.47	**

### A.4 Marital status and mental well-being

It can be concluded that there are no statistically significant differences in mental well-being among respondents with different marital statuses. However, for those in a relationship, it has been shown that a higher level of relationship satisfaction is associated with higher mental well-being (Table 14).

Table 14. Quality of Partner Relationship and mental well-being

	How would you rate the quality of your partner relationship?					P
	I am very dissatisfied	I am not satisfied	I cannot decide	I am satisfied	I am very satisfied	
Emotional component	3.17	3.23	3.15	3.37	3.51	**
Social component	3.32	3.14	3.21	3.39	3.50	**
Psychological component	3.42	3.50	3.47	3.64	3.77	**
Mental well-being	3.30	3.29	3.27	3.46	3.60	**

#### A.5 Financial Status and mental well-being

A relationship between financial status and mental well-being has been demonstrated as expected. Those with good or very good financial status achieve a higher level of mental well-being. In contrast, the lowest level is observed among employees who rated their financial status as very poor (Table 15).

Table 15. Financial Status and mental well-being

	Financial Status Assessment					P
	Very bad – I can't afford the basics	Bad – I can't have everything I need	Average	Good – I can often afford everything I need. but it happens that I don't have enough money	Very good – I can afford more than I actually need	
Emotional component	2.81	3.06	3.35	3.54	3.75	**
Social component	2.91	3.15	3.40	3.50	3.65	**
Psychological component	3.29	3.47	3.67	3.73	3.90	**
Mental well-being	3.00	3.23	3.47	3.59	3.77	**

#### A.6 Health Status and mental well-being

Mental health is an integral part of overall health, so it's not surprising that respondents who rated their health as good or very good have a higher level of mental well-being (Table 16). In our sample, slightly more than half (54.9%) fall into this category.

Table 16. Health Status and mental well-being

	Health Status Assessment					p
	Very bad – I have severe health problems	Bad– I have serious health problems	Average – I have minor health problems	Good – I don't have any health problems	Very good – my health status is excellent	
Emotional component	2.58	2.79	3.21	3.58	3.84	**
Social component	2.76	3.01	3.29	3.50	3.69	**
Psychological component	3.12	3.43	3.57	3.73	3.93	**
Mental well-being	2.82	3.08	3.36	3.60	3.82	**

#### A.7 Level of Administration and mental well-being

Differences exist in the levels of mental well-being among civil servants from ReSPA members included in these surveys. Respondents from North Macedonia exhibit a higher level of overall mental well-being and higher levels across all components compared to others (Table 17). The respondents who answered the questionnaire in Albanian showed a higher level of understanding than those who responded in Macedonian. The lowest level of mental well-being is observed among public servants in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and, when observed by administrative levels, respondents from the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina showed a lower level than those from the institutions in the *Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina* and institutions of the *Republika Srpska* (Table 18).

Table 17. Mental well-being of each of the four ReSPA members

	ReSPA member				p
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Serbia	
Emotional component	3.35	3.38	3.48	3.39	**
Social component	3.31	3.36	3.48	3.43	**
Psychological component	3.65	3.74	3.78	3.57	**
Mental well-being	3.44	3.5	3.58	3.46	**

Table 18. Mental well-being per each of four ReSPA members (detailed overview)

	ReSPA member							p
	Bosnia and Herzegovina			Montenegro	North Macedonia		Serbia	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	<i>Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina</i>	<i>Republika Srpska</i>		Respond in Macedonian language	Respond in Albanian language		
Emotional component	3.3	3.33	3.38	3.38	3.46	3.59	3.39	**
Social component	3.2	3.36	3.32	3.36	3.45	3.67	3.43	**
Psychological component	3.66	3.69	3.64	3.74	3.78	3.83	3.57	**
Mental well-being	3.38	3.46	3.45	3.5	3.56	3.7	3.46	**