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Implementing Children's Rights in the Western Balkans: Institutional Challenges and International Compliance

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Abstract
Children's rights, including access to education and healthcare, protection from abuse, and participation in decisions affecting their lives, are fundamental human rights established by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The Western Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia) have ratified the UNCRC and aligned their national legislation with international and regional standards. However, practical implementation remains uneven due to institutional weaknesses, limited resources, socio-cultural barriers, and fragmented governance. This study uses a mixed-methods comparative approach, combining quantitative data from UNICEF and the KidsRights Index with qualitative analysis of legislation, policies, and institutional mechanisms. Findings show Serbia and Montenegro perform best, North Macedonia demonstrates progress in education but limited child participation, while Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo face significant gaps.

Keywords
Children's Rights; Western Balkans; UNCRC; Comparative Analysis; Education; Institutional Effectiveness, International Compliance

INTRODUCTION

A fundamental aspect of human rights is the rights of children. These rights guarantee protection, access to education and healthcare, and the opportunity to participate in decisions that affect their lives. The adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1989) created a universal framework for the protection and well-being of children worldwide, encompassing civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights. Children's rights have consistently been the focus of numerous scientific studies at both national and international levels (Lundy et al. 2021; Lansdown 2018).

Western Balkan countries, including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia, have ratified the UNCRC and implemented international and regional standards. These countries have adopted relevant international and regional frameworks, such as Council of Europe conventions and EU child protection policies. However, many challenges remain in translating these commitments into practice (Council of Europe 2021; European Commission 2022). Key obstacles include institutional weaknesses, limited financial and human resources, and socio-cultural barriers, including political instability and fragmented governance, which hinder consistent implementation of children's rights (UNDP 2021).

Evidence from the national reports on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and UNICEF assessments highlights significant challenges in children's access to health and

education, as well as inequalities in Albania and Kosovo, where gaps exceed regional averages. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro face institutional and structural limitations that constrain child protection, emphasizing the need for studies that systematically compare countries, identify key barriers, and provide actionable recommendations for policymakers and practitioners (UN Committee on the Rights of the Child 2022; UNICEF 2023).

Across the Western Balkans, legislative frameworks protecting children's rights generally comply with international standards. Nevertheless, implementation remains uneven, with persistent issues not addressed by legal provisions alone, such as insufficient involvement of social services and inadequate protection against violence and exploitation. UNICEF reports and reports of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child document ongoing efforts to prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Socio-cultural norms and traditional practices, which vary across countries, often hinder children's participation in decision-making processes.

This paper aims to identify the difficulties and gaps in the implementation of children's rights in the Western Balkans by examining the legal and institutional frameworks for child protection in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia. Access to education and healthcare, protection mechanisms, and monitoring institutions are key indicators for assessing practical implementation and serve as critical balancing factors. A specific objective of this study is to identify similarities, differences, and challenges that hinder effective implementation, and to use the findings to propose policy recommendations and best practices to strengthen institutional capacity, promote interagency cooperation, and enhance children's participation in decision-making.

The significance of this paper lies in its contribution to regional comparative literature by providing a detailed analysis of the implementation of children's rights in the Western Balkans. The study integrates quantitative data from UNICEF and the KidsRights Index with qualitative assessments of national legislation and policies. It offers a nuanced understanding of the structural, institutional, and socio-cultural factors that affect children's rights (UNICEF 2022; KidsRights Foundation 2022). Practically, this study identifies implementation obstacles and successful strategies for policy design, aiming to improve the effectiveness and coherence of child protection systems across the region. Highlighting gaps in legal and policy frameworks underscores the need for more substantial, more coordinated efforts to protect children's rights, ultimately contributing to improved well-being and equitable access to justice, education, and healthcare (Lundy et al. 2021; UNDP 2021).

CONCEPTS AND CONTEXTS

Children's Rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

One of the fundamental requirements for the proper functioning of a country is the protection of children's rights. With the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) by the UN General Assembly in 1989, all states, including Albania, ratified it, committing to ensure children's survival, development, protection, and participation (UN Committee on the Rights of the Child 2013). Based on principles of non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, and the child's right to participate in decisions that affect them, the

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UNCRC represents the highest level of institutional, political, social, and legal attention to children (UNICEF 2022a).

Theoretically, children's rights include the right to education, protection from violence and abuse, participation in public life, and inclusion in decision-making processes. Children also have the right to be integrated into their communities and to influence decisions affecting them, which requires a shift in institutional mindsets toward a just and equitable society (UNICEF 2019). Efforts are ongoing to harmonize national legal frameworks with international standards and to establish institutions and mechanisms for child protection. However, challenges remain, particularly economic and cultural issues, such as the prevalence of violence and abuse against children and the lack of effective support for unemployed caregivers (Stojanović 2022).

Additionally, there is potential to increase children's inclusion in judicial and administrative processes, which depends on institutional capacity and professional training (Council of Europe 2019; Milošević 2021). Addressing these challenges effectively requires adopting new reforms and updated policies to improve children's rights practices across the Western Balkans (World Bank 2022a).

The Regional and International Legal Context

The guarantee of children's rights also serves as an institutional safeguard for signatory states, requiring them to adopt legal and institutional measures to protect children. The UNCRC is the most important international framework in this regard, alongside additional protocols addressing more complex issues such as armed conflict, child separation and trafficking, and individual complaints (UNICEF 2022a). Clear and detailed strategies for ensuring children's rights have been implemented. For example, the Council of Europe's Action Plan 2022–2027 provides member states with specific guidelines on legal protection, access to services, and the creation of safe conditions for children (Council of Europe 2022).

The EU has consistently emphasized children's rights, making legal reforms aligned with international standards a key requirement for accession. This highlights the importance of guiding Western Balkan countries toward compliance. However, achieving these reforms and harmonizing national laws with international standards is not without challenges. Issues include insufficient independent oversight in some countries, limited reporting mechanisms, and structural gaps that hinder the practical enforcement of children's rights.

To address these challenges effectively, several factors require immediate institutional attention: properly functioning authorities, adequate funding, professional training, and meaningful participation of children in decision-making processes. Strengthening these areas is essential for maximizing alignment between national provisions and international standards.

LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the most important topics in international discussions on children's rights is their protection, access to education and healthcare, and inclusion in decision-making processes. Organizations such as UNICEF, Save the Children, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child have examined these issues in detail. A primary goal of these organizations is to establish a clear understanding of the current state of

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child protection practices in the Western Balkans and to identify the difficulties and challenges in implementing children's rights.

UNICEF (2019) reported that legal frameworks for the protection of children have been adopted across the Western Balkans, particularly in education and healthcare systems. However, the reports highlight that the most significant challenges lie in the inclusion of children with special needs, emphasizing the urgent need for institutional attention and coordination. These reports also use quantitative indicators, such as registration records, literacy rates, and patient coverage, as reference points for analyzing practices in each country.

Save the Children (2020) emphasized the importance of coordinated strategies among countries to effectively uphold children's rights. Their analysis showed that child protection often relies more on NGO-led initiatives than on state institutions, highlighting a significant institutional capacity gap. This underscores the need to focus on institutional frameworks and interorganizational cooperation, not only to assess the theoretical implementation of laws but also to understand the practical challenges of enforcement. State-led mechanisms must complement NGO efforts, particularly in Albania, Kosovo, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA 2018) compared institutional differences across countries, focusing on the presence of an independent ombudsman and specialized child protection bodies. The report concluded that a lack of timely, detailed data reporting significantly undermines accountability and monitoring, highlighting a key barrier to the effective implementation of children's rights.

A highly significant analysis using the KidsRights Index, conducted by the KidsRights Foundation in 2023, provided a comparative assessment of Balkan countries. The study concluded that countries with independent monitoring structures, such as Serbia and Montenegro, tend to perform better in protecting children's rights than Albania, which ranks lower due to gaps in implementation and monitoring. One of the most critical shortcomings in Albania is the limited scope of research on this topic. Existing studies have primarily focused on structural and practical obstacles to the fulfillment of children's rights, addressing urgent issues such as children's participation in education and healthcare, as well as their inclusion in social services.

There is a clear need for further research using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Combining quantitative indicators with qualitative assessments of institutional performance provides a comprehensive understanding of both policies and practice. The existing literature consistently highlights the prevalence of violence and abuse against children and the limited access to justice in such cases (Stojanović 2022). Institutional reports have also emphasized that institutional resistance and insufficient professional training hinder children's effective participation in judicial and administrative processes. Future studies should therefore focus on capacity building, interagency coordination, and evaluation of mechanisms designed to protect children from abuse and neglect (Council of Europe 2019; Milošević 2021).

The regional and international legal context plays a central role in guiding children's rights in the Western Balkans, particularly the UNCRC, which serves as the primary framework for all countries in the region (UNICEF 2022a). Complex issues such as armed conflict, child exploitation and trafficking, and individual complaint mechanisms are addressed through additional protocols. The Council of Europe Strategy on the Rights of the Child (2022–2027) provides further guidance on legal protection, access to justice, participation, and safe living

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conditions. The EU has also played a key role through its enlargement policy, encouraging candidate countries, including Albania, to harmonize national legislation with international standards on children's rights (Council of Europe 2022).

The study by Lirëza and Kume (2023) provides a detailed analysis of the principle of the best interests of the child in both legal and institutional contexts in Albania. The study demonstrates that, although Albania has made ongoing efforts to align its legislation with international standards, there remains a pressing need for continuous improvement in the practical implementation of this principle, which remains inconsistent across institutions. Administrative and judicial procedures have been identified as key areas requiring attention. Enhancing professional training and strengthening institutional capacity are highlighted as critical measures to ensure the full realization of the best interests of the child (Lirëza and Kume 2023).

These findings reinforce broader regional literature, emphasizing that legal harmonization alone is insufficient. Adequate protection of children's rights requires simultaneous investments in monitoring mechanisms, professional development, and institutional structures that guarantee meaningful inclusion of children's voices in all decision-making processes.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

The comparative design of this study employs two complementary methods: qualitative and quantitative. Both approaches are used to assess the implementation of children's rights in six Western Balkan countries, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia, allowing the identification of similarities, differences, and patterns in both legal and practical implementation across the region. By combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, this study examines the legal frameworks, institutional mechanisms, and measurable indicators that provide a comprehensive assessment of how international conventions are implemented in practice. Additionally, it highlights specific institutional actions that can help address challenges faced by children in key systems such as education, healthcare, and participation.

Samples and Data Sources

Reliable official secondary sources form a fundamental basis for this study. These internationally recognized sources include reports and concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2022), UNICEF country profile studies and monitoring reports (UNICEF 2019; UNICEF 2022a), Save the Children regional studies on children's rights (Save the Children 2020), and the KidsRights Index (KidsRights Foundation 2023). Statistical data were drawn from INSTAT, Eurostat, and regional statistical offices, as well as national legislation and institutional documents, including relevant laws, regulations, strategies, and policy papers.

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A study needs to focus on a specific time period to ensure comparability and relevance. For this research, the period 2018–2023 was selected to provide up-to-date, comparable data across all countries included in the analysis.

Methods

Data availability for Kosovo remains limited due to its non-membership in the United Nations and the absence of mandatory reporting obligations to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Consequently, this study relies on secondary assessments, civil society reports, and international organization evaluations to provide indicative rather than definitive findings for Kosovo.

Instruments and Measures

The indicators used in this study to assess the implementation of children's rights include school enrollment rates, literacy levels, inclusion of children with special needs, access to healthcare services, vaccination coverage, infant mortality rates, the number and quality of child protection institutions, the presence of independent monitoring mechanisms, reported cases of abuse, legal protection measures, and children's participation in administrative, judicial, and community decision-making processes.

For proper analysis, cross-country comparisons were conducted using these quantitative indicators. In the qualitative approach, the study examined institutional capacities, legal frameworks, and policy implementation to evaluate how effectively countries fulfill and enforce their legal obligations regarding children's rights.

Procedure

To achieve timely and accurate identification of relevant legal and institutional measures, several sources were systematically reviewed, including national legislation, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child reports, and UNICEF and Save the Children studies. These reports and institutional documents provided the basis for extracting quantitative indicator data and constructing comparative tables.

To identify practical challenges and best practices, a qualitative assessment was conducted using institutional reports, ombudsman documents, and monitoring studies. Drawing on multiple official, national, and international sources enabled a comprehensive analysis of both legal frameworks and their practical implementation. This approach minimized bias and enhanced the reliability of the findings.

Data Analysis and Purpose of the Study

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative analyses. The quantitative component uses comparative tables on education, healthcare, and participation to rank the included countries and examine differences in the implementation of children's rights, highlighting gaps in practical application. The qualitative analysis explores

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institutional patterns, barriers, and challenges, providing case examples that illustrate both obstacles and best practices, particularly in children's participation in judicial and administrative processes. By integrating both approaches, the study identifies key political, economic, and social factors influencing the effective implementation of children's rights in the region. The primary aim is to compare the implementation of children's rights across Albania and five other Western Balkan countries, focusing on measurable indicators, institutional effectiveness, and contextual factors shaping outcomes.

RESULTS

Official reports indicate that Western Balkan countries have made efforts to align their national legislation with international standards. However, numerous challenges remain in practical implementation. In Albania, these challenges include insufficient funding and limited professional training for personnel (UNICEF 2023). In Serbia and North Macedonia, unresolved issues are primarily related to ineffective monitoring of cases of violence against children. Meanwhile, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo face gaps in legislation that are not fully aligned with international standards, as well as inadequate financial and technical support for children (World Bank 2022).

Access to Primary Education

Access to primary education, as guaranteed by Articles 28 and 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, forms the foundation for all other rights, including social development, equality, and protection from abuse. Comparative analysis across the Western Balkans highlights areas where access to education still needs improvement.

Table 1: Access to Primary Education in the Western Balkans (Source: Author's depiction based on data from UNICEF 2022a, Save the Children 2020, and Eurostat 2023)

Country	Access to Primary Education (%)
Serbia	98
Montenegro	97
North Macedonia	96
Albania	95.3
Bosnia-Herzegovina	94
Kosovo (evaluation)	c. 92

Note: The figure for Kosovo is an estimate based on available reports and evaluations, as comprehensive official data are unavailable.

Table 1 shows that children in Serbia and Montenegro have the highest levels of access to primary education, reflecting the relative effectiveness of their national education policies. Notably, one of Serbia's key policies is the provision of transportation for children and young people living in rural areas, who would otherwise face difficulties traveling to school.

Primary education in North Macedonia is also highly inclusive, supported by targeted programs for teacher training and diversity. Albania's performance is slightly lower, though still

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relatively high by regional standards. However, challenges persist, particularly in rural areas where poor transportation and economic constraints limit access to schools. Addressing these issues represents a crucial strategic focus for improving educational access.

Bosnia and Herzegovina shows lower levels of achievement, likely due to its fragmented education system, which is structured along ethnic lines and contributes to discrimination and temporary school dropouts. Data for Kosovo are incomplete, as reporting remains inconsistent, but available information highlights deficits in livelihoods, insufficiently trained staff, and high school dropout rates among Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities. Overall, there are significant variations in educational outcomes across the region.

Access to Health Services

Article 24 of the UN Convention guarantees every child the right to access high-quality healthcare. Comparative analysis reveals significant disparities in healthcare provision across the Western Balkans (Figure 1).

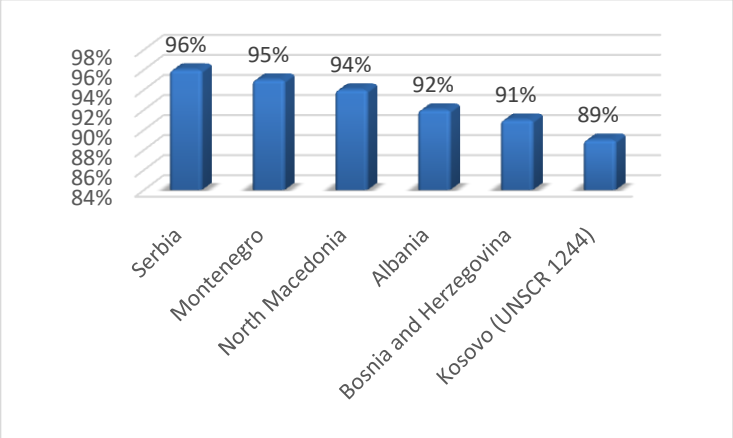


Figure 1: Access to Health Services (%)
(Source: Author's depiction based on UNICEF 2022a, WHO Serbia 2021, and World Bank 2022)

The results from Figure 1 indicate that Serbia and Montenegro lead the region, supported by strong health systems and comprehensive public health policies for children. Key measures in these countries include regulated vaccination schedules, regular check-ups, and outreach programs targeting rural areas. Serbia has also significantly expanded local medical centers providing free pediatric care.

North Macedonia reports broad access to healthcare in urban areas (95%) but faces challenges in rural coverage and a shortage of pediatric specialists (World Health Organization [WHO], Serbia 2021). Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo experience regional inequalities, limited medical personnel, especially in less developed areas, and shortages of primary care services and essential medicines for children. Albania generally provides satisfactory access to healthcare; however, challenges remain, including a shortage of pediatric specialists in rural areas, inadequate transportation for children with disabilities, and insufficient resources in mental health.

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Institutional Mechanisms for Child Protection

Article 4 of the UN Convention requires states to establish effective and independent institutions for the implementation and monitoring of children's rights. While this indicator cannot be measured numerically, it reflects a state's capacity to provide both legal and practical protection for children (Table 2).

Table 2: Institutional Mechanisms for Child Protection (Author's depiction based on data from UN Committee on the Rights of the Child 2022, UNICEF 2022a, and Save the Children 2020)

Country	Institutional Mechanism
Serbia	Yes – Ombudsman for Children's Rights
Montenegro	Yes – Special Office under the Ombudsman
Albania	Yes – Commissioner for Children's Rights
North Macedonia	Yes – Section under the People's Advocate
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No – Internal, not independent
Kosovo	No – There is no independent institution for children's rights

Note: Kosovo currently lacks an independent institution for child protection; this information is based on available reports and evaluations.

Serbia and Montenegro have established independent bodies with clearly defined mandates. In Serbia, the ombudsman handles complaints, investigates cases of abuse and sexual violence, and provides recommendations supported by legislation. Montenegro has a dedicated bureau within the ombudsman's office that follows up on violations of children's rights, participates in policy development, and reports regularly to the Assembly.

Albania has a commissioner responsible for children's rights; however, the position is not specialized and lacks the independence seen in Serbia or Montenegro. North Macedonia has limited capacity in this area, with constraints in funding and decision-making, resulting in only partial independence. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo currently lack independent, dedicated child protection institutions.

Table 3: Reporting to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (Author's depiction based on the Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2022), UNICEF 2022a, and OHCHR reports)

Country	Reporting to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
Serbia	Yes
Montenegro	Yes
Albania	Yes
North Macedonia	Yes
Bosnia and Herzegovina	No
Kosovo	No

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Additionally, Article 44 of the Convention requires states to submit initial and periodic reports on the measures they have taken to implement children's rights. These reports include progress assessments, identification of implementation gaps, and recommendations for improvement.

Western Balkan countries demonstrate varying levels of commitment and compliance with these reporting obligations (Table 3).

Albania has consistently fulfilled its reporting obligations, with the most recent report submitted in 2022. While this report was positively received, it lacks sufficient data on monitoring and children's participation. Serbia maintains an exemplary reporting record, collaborates with independent organizations, and implements recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Montenegro submits reports, although sometimes with delays, and faces challenges in inter-institutional coordination and data collection. North Macedonia's reporting was delayed due to political upheavals and the COVID-19 pandemic, with the last submission in 2020. Reporting is even more limited in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo. Kosovo's last report was submitted in 2012, and subsequent reports are missing due to political disputes. As Kosovo is not a UN member state, it is not formally required to submit reports; however, independent civil institutions have prepared equivalent assessments.

KidsRights Index

The KidsRights Index is a widely recognized tool for assessing the state of children's rights. It evaluates country performance across five areas: the right to survival, health, education, protection, and a supportive environment, including laws, policies, data collection, and children's participation. Scores range from 0 (lowest) to 1, providing a comparative measure of children's rights implementation (Table 4).

Table 4: KidsRights Index Scores (Source: KidsRights Foundation 2023)

Country	Score (Scale: 0–4)
Serbia	0.75
Montenegro	0.74
North Macedonia	0.72
Albania	0.68
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.65
Kosovo	N/A

Note: Kosovo is not included due to a lack of standardized reporting. Scores reflect overall performance in children's rights across health, education, protection, and participation.

The results in Table 4 indicate that Serbia leads the region, demonstrating the highest levels of access to health and education, as well as independent institutions that protect children's rights and promote their participation in local governance. Montenegro follows, ranking just behind Serbia, due to its well-developed functional structures and a relatively advanced legal framework compared to other countries in the region. North Macedonia ranks next, showing considerable progress in education in recent years; however, its performance is

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limited by low levels of child participation in decision-making, particularly for children in vulnerable situations, and by inadequate data collection.

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo rank significantly lower due to legislative gaps, insufficient budgets, and challenges in data collection. Institutional fragmentation and weak policy coordination further exacerbate these issues. Kosovo, in particular, is excluded from the ranking due to its current international status and the lack of standardized reporting.

DISCUSSION

In the field of human rights, the Western Balkan countries have adopted measures that vary across legal systems and have made progress in addressing specific difficulties, gaps, and challenges; however, significant challenges persist in practice. Among the key obstacles countries face in protecting children's rights are weak institutional capacity, fragmented coordination mechanisms, and insufficient or unstable financing. Prolonged distrust in public institutions has further undermined governance systems, including those related to education and child protection. For these reasons, it is essential to introduce new strategic reforms to legislative frameworks that place greater emphasis on practical implementation and measurable outcomes.

This study adopts a high-level mixed-methods comparative approach; however, the availability and completeness of reported data vary across the countries included in the analysis, particularly in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted with caution and understood as indicative of broader structural trends rather than precise longitudinal measurements. The results of this study should therefore be viewed as informative rather than conclusive.

Detailed, clear, and comprehensive country-specific analyses provide a framework that should be continuously strengthened through improved reporting practices. Such improvements would support future comparative studies aimed at assessing and monitoring the existence and effectiveness of independent bodies, particularly those dedicated to children's rights. In addition, incorporating concrete case studies is essential for deepening understanding of how rights are realized in practice. Monitoring and analyzing potential policy reforms across different national models can further inform the development of coherent national and regional strategies.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. This study relies exclusively on secondary data sources, which vary in scope, methodological rigor, and reporting frequency across countries. The absence of primary data collection and the lack of children's direct participation limit the ability to capture lived experiences and localized implementation dynamics. Nevertheless, triangulation across multiple international and national sources enhances the overall reliability of the comparative analysis.

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CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that children's rights are a critical concern in the Western Balkans. While significant progress has been made in aligning national legislation with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, translating legal commitments into everyday practice remains uneven. Implementation is influenced by factors such as institutional capacity, resource availability, and governance stability.

Serbia and Montenegro are the most advanced in the region, with independent child protection mechanisms and relatively strong education and healthcare systems, supported by political continuity, clear administrative mandates, and accountability. North Macedonia has made progress in inclusive education and teacher training, though rural-urban disparities and limited child participation persist. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo face greater structural and financial challenges, including unequal distribution of resources, complex administrative structures, and insufficient institutional support. Kosovo, in particular, is constrained by its partial international recognition and the absence of a fully independent child protection body.

Aligning national laws with international standards is only a first step. Effective implementation requires continuous monitoring, strong oversight institutions, long-term investment in professional training, child-centered social services, and reliable data systems. Integrating children's rights into policy planning and budgeting at all levels, along with regional cooperation and knowledge sharing, can help harmonize practices and address institutional gaps. Ultimately, the goal is to ensure that every child in the region can fully enjoy their rights, without discrimination, regardless of location.

This study relies primarily on secondary data, which vary in quality, scope, and timeliness across countries. Incomplete or inconsistent data, particularly from Kosovo, may affect comparability. Additionally, the study does not include primary fieldwork or direct input from children, limiting insights into lived experiences and local contextual nuances in the implementation of children's rights.

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CONTRIBUTOR

The author contributed solely to the intellectual discourse that forms the foundation of this article, as well as its writing and editing, and assumes full responsibility for its content and interpretation.

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