



5 Million Friends of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Connecting communities, culture, and dialogue across borders



5MFBH NEWSLETTER

Autumn–Winter 2025

www.5mfbh.com

A Word from the Editor:

This is our very first newsletter — and in many ways, it feels like a beginning rather than a summary.

Over the past year, 5 Million Friends of Bosnia and Herzegovina has grown through conversations, encounters, and shared moments across cities and borders. What connects all of them is a simple belief: that culture, dialogue, and community still matter.

This newsletter was created to capture a reflection on a year spent building bridges — between people, ideas, and places. Some of those moments were public and visible, others quieter and more personal, but all of them shaped who we are becoming as an association.

As you turn the pages, you'll find stories from 2025 that speak of connection, care, curiosity, and commitment. We hope they offer a sense of what 5MFBH stands for — and perhaps invite you to be part of what comes next.

This is only the beginning.

— Ivona Mock, Editor-in-chief

Our Mission & Vision

As we publish the first issue of the 5 Million Friends of Bosnia and Herzegovina (5MFBH) newsletter, I do so with pride and gratitude for the opportunity to serve Bosnia and Herzegovina and its people.

5MFBH was created with a clear purpose: to connect the Bosnian diaspora and friends of Bosnia and Herzegovina worldwide, and to work together toward positive, lasting change. Through soft diplomacy - culture, sports, tourism, and economic cooperation - we work to elevate and transform the image of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the global stage.

This mission goes beyond defending national interests. It is rooted in the promotion of universal values such as dialogue, cooperation, and solidarity, and in the belief that Bosnia and Herzegovina belongs fully within a strong and united Europe.

I invite all Bosnians in the diaspora, as well as friends of Bosnia and Herzegovina around the world, to take part in this journey. Even a small contribution of time, knowledge, or support can help transform shared values into meaningful action.

Together, we can build a future based on connection, responsibility, and mutual respect.



— Edo Šabanagić
Founder and President,
5MFBH

Bosnie, Mon Amour

On 31 October 2025, the second edition of *Bosnie, Mon Amour* filled the City Hall of Paris's 7th arrondissement with friends of Bosnia and Herzegovina, members of the diaspora, and partners from the cultural and diplomatic sphere.

The evening brought together poetry, theatre, and humour — from a moving homage to Mak Dizdar's *Zapis o zemlji* to the comedy *My Village Is More Beautiful Than Paris*, which explored identity and cultural difference with warmth and wit.

Honoured by the presence of Ambassador Višnja Lončar and Deputy Mayor Olivier Le Quéré, the event reaffirmed culture as a powerful bridge between Bosnia and Herzegovina and France, and a space where dialogue, memory, and connection can flourish.



Mrs Višnja Lončar,
ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina in
France

Community & Care — Healing Trauma Through Meditation

In 2025, 5MFBH began developing initiatives focused on healing, resilience, and emotional well-being, recognizing that many individuals within diaspora communities carry visible and invisible forms of trauma.

Led by Marisa Hannewyk, Ambassador for Women's Rights and Trauma Healing, these meditation-based initiatives aim to create safe, supportive spaces where participants can slow down, reconnect, and begin processes of self-regulation and healing.

This work reflects 5MFBH's belief that building strong communities also means caring for inner lives — not only cultural, professional, or national identities.



Youth & Excellence — Supporting Young Talent

In 2025, Bosnia and Herzegovina's young tennis talent Tea Kovačević made history by winning the Tennis Europe Junior Masters in Monte Carlo for the second consecutive year.

5MFBH supported Tea by highlighting her achievement, amplifying her story, and advocating publicly for greater recognition and support of young talent. Through our platforms and community networks, we aimed to ensure that her success was seen not only as a sporting result, but as a reminder of the extraordinary potential of Bosnia and Herzegovina's youth.

For us, supporting young talent means creating visibility, encouraging dialogue, and helping exceptional achievements resonate beyond borders.

ZajednoSwiss

In November 2025, representatives of 5MFBH participated in the ZajednoSwiss business evening held at ETH Zürich, bringing together professionals and entrepreneurs from across the Western Balkans.

Represented by President Edo Šabanagić and Vice-President Marisa Hannewyk, the association presented its mission to a highly engaged diaspora audience, emphasizing cooperation, knowledge exchange, and long-term connections beyond national borders.

The evening highlighted the strength of the diaspora as a network of integrated professionals and leaders, and reaffirmed 5MFBH's role as a platform for dialogue and collaboration across Europe.



Looking Ahead to 2026

As we move into 2026, 5MFBH is entering a new phase of growth. Several cultural, educational, and community-based initiatives are currently being developed across France and Europe.

While some projects are still taking shape, our direction remains clear: to continue building bridges, strengthening diaspora connections, and creating spaces for dialogue, care, and cooperation.

More details will be shared in the coming months.

Join Us

5MFBH is a people-driven association, and there are many ways to be part of it.

You don't need a title or large amounts of time — even 30 minutes a month can make a difference. Whether through volunteering, sharing skills, supporting events, or simply staying connected, every contribution matters.

If you are curious, interested, or would like to get involved, we would love to hear from you.

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European Dialogue at the Maison de l'Europe — Bordeaux

On 26 November 2025, 5MFBH took part in a public discussion hosted by the Maison de l'Europe Bordeaux-Aquitaine, focusing on Europe, identity, and regional cooperation.

During the conference, Edo Šabanagić explored Slovenia as an example of balance between cultural identity and European integration, opening a broader conversation on the place of the Western Balkans within the European project.

A central principle of 5MFBH is supporting a stronger and more globally respected European Union, one that Bosnia and Herzegovina can fully belong to and contribute to.

The exchange highlighted the importance of dialogue, institutional trust, and long-term vision — values that resonate deeply with 5MFBH's mission to strengthen understanding between Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Balkans, and Europe.