

Bijeljina is an urban settlement and a local self-government unit with the status of the city. It is located in the north-eastern part of the Republic of Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Land area of the city is 734 km<sup>2</sup> and it encompasses Semberia plain which extends on the south over the hills of Majevisa. The City of Bijeljina is located at the confluence of rivers Sava and Drina and these two rivers represent the northern and eastern borders of the city towards Macva and Srem.

The earliest confirmed traces of human settlement in the area of today's Bijeljina date back from the New Stone Age– the Neolithic (5000-3000 B.C.). In addition, material remains from the Bronze Age and Iron Age were also found. In the ancient period (1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> century) Semberia, as well as the entire Posavina, were a part of Roman province Pannonia. The rivers Drina and Sava also represent the state border with Serbia and Croatia. Neighbouring municipalities are Lopare, Ugljevik, Zvornik and the Brcko District.

The city of Bijeljina has 115,000 citizens, which makes it the second largest city by population in the Republic of Srpska.

Thanks to the fertile soil of Semberia, Bijeljina is one of the centers of food production and trade and the most frequent crops are cereals and vegetables. In addition, the most important pillars of development of the City are companies operating in the field of wood processing and metal sector, while the industries on the rise are tourism, services, construction, transport, telecommunications, trade, education, etc.

Semberia lies on a vast underground lake of thermal water used for spa treatment in the famous Spa Dvorovi, six kilometers from the center of Bijeljina. The plan is to use the thermal water in the near future to heat large greenhouses for growing of vegetables and flowers.

Thanks to the investment in education, especially higher education, the population of Semberia is getting younger, and the educational structure of the population is improving, given that a large number of young university

graduates remain to live in Bijeljina after graduation.

In Bijeljina, several multi-day cultural and entertainment events take place, drawing attention of the local audience and visitors of Bijeljina – such as “Pantelinski dani”, dedicated to St. Panteleimon, Visnji 's Days, Days of Comedy, May Music Festival and BH Beer Fest. Certainly, the most famous place for relaxation and entertainment is the complex ethno-village "Staniši i", three kilometres from Bijeljina - an interesting combination of authentic copies of Romanija mountain villages, medieval monastery complexed and fortifications with entertainment, sports and recreational and modern catering facilities.

The City of Bijeljina has been for a number of years among the local communities in the Republic of Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina with the highest budgetary allocations to support sport.

The city administration recognized engaging in sport as an effective barrier against negative impact today's society is exposed to. Over time, this approach has begun to yield results also in elite sport, so that every year several clubs compete in the highest ranks of the

league competition in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The rapid social development, in addition to economic development, have turned the Semberia region into an attractive place to live and that people like to visit and stay in, which is best illustrated by the fact that the population of the City increases by at least a thousand people each year.

