

Current map of prison facilities in BiH and distribution of prison population



* Pre-trial state Detention Unit of BiH also included
 ** Figures are approximate and courtesy of relevant Ministries of Justice

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Council of Europe Prison Reform Projects

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Harmonisation of BiH sanctions policies and practices with European standards

Funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe



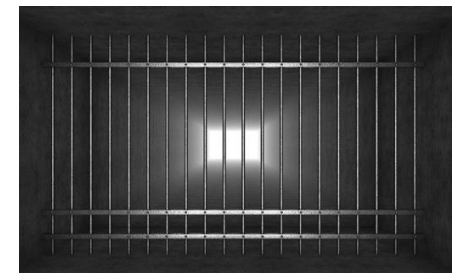
Implemented by the Council of Europe

Background



During the past several years, Bosnia and Herzegovina has taken many steps to achieve the standards necessary for future European integration. Like other member states of the Council of Europe, BiH signed and ratified important Conventions that provide guidelines for dealing with one of the rarely mentioned parts of our society – prisoners. The conditions in which people deprived of freedom are kept form an integral part of country's judicial system and are considered to be a fundamental benchmark in the development of a modern democratic society residing on principles of the rule of law and protection of human rights.

Changing the environment in which the persons deprived of freedom live and function could help them assimilate in the society better and contribute to their community, instead of harming it. At the same time, improving the capacity of prisons and its staff at various levels would add to the safety of the society in general.



The overall goal of CoE's previous programmes has been to promote the rule of law and strengthen the protection of human rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Continuing in the positive direction of changing the prison environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina and with the support of European Union, CoE launched a new Joint Programme in the field of prison reform aimed at addressing these and other burning issues in BiH prison system.

Harmonisation of BiH sanctions policies and practices with European standards

The project, entitled "Harmonisation of BiH sanctions policies and practices with European standards" aims at improving the capacity of prison staff and management, promote the use of non-custodial sanctions, and strengthen the ability to provide suitable support for prisoners with special needs. The project particularly focuses on areas within the prisons sector where further improvements are urgently needed, notably improving implementation of alternative sanctions, assessing options for the establishment of probation service(s), further development of training capacities and treatment of vulnerable categories of prisoners.

The expected results of the Project will enable local policy makers, primarily Ministries of Justice on all levels to develop the prison system(s) further and thereby meet Bosnia and Herzegovina's international treaty obligations. The aim is to build on the strengths of its humane traditions and foster a network of prisons capable of meeting the increasing needs as regards execution of sentences and imprisonment.

In order to achieve the best results for estimated 1800 beneficiaries of this project from Ministries of Justice, prison establishments and prison populations, a variety of activities is simultaneously being implemented to achieve the following specific objectives:

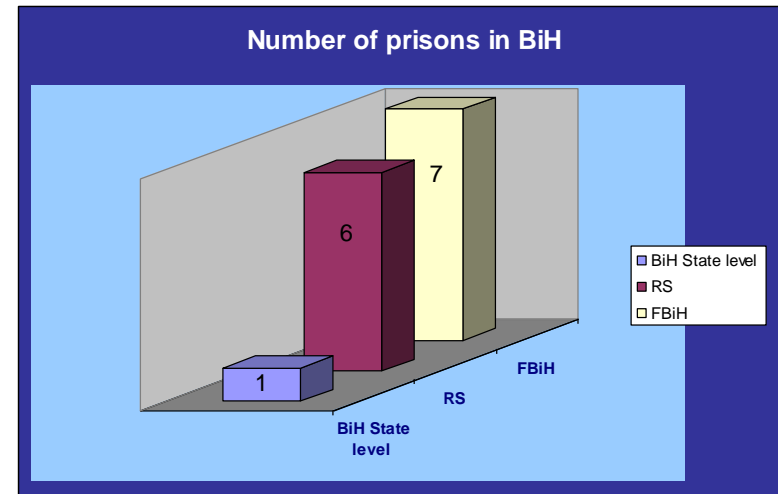
- ✓ Improving implementation of community sanctions (conditional release, community service and conditional sentence)
- ✓ Establishment of probation service(s)
- ✓ Developing prison staff training capacities further and harmonising them between the jurisdictions;
- ✓ Development and harmonisation of treatment programmes for some of the vulnerable categories of prisoners (minors/juvenile offenders serving sentence, persons under security i.e. mandatory treatment, elderly and persons with disability)



... A quick view of the prison system in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In comparison to other European countries and the rest of the world, BiH has a relatively low prison population of 66,5 prisoners per 100 000 people. Total prison population is approximately 2700.

There are 14 prisons in BiH, 6 in RS, 7 in Federation BiH, and one on the state level (State Pre-trial Detention Unit).



Continuous challenges in BiH prison system

Four jurisdictions

Various prisoner-related issues such as no coherent approach to the health care in prisons, abuse of system by more sophisticated inmates, lack of support for prisoners with special needs...

Deficiency of community based sanctions as an alternative sanctions to combat overcrowding
Big industrial units in prisons (economic units) bringing losses due to outdated equipment and industrial work

Old and inadequate prison buildings

A need to develop proper staff training and approach to employment