



Support to prison staff training in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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 their liberty are kept form an integral part of the 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 their liberty live and function could help them, once they have served their sentence, to assimilate in the society better and to contribute to their community, instead of harming it. 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 programmes is 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 the Government of the United States through the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), CoE launched new activities in the field of prison reform aimed at addressing these and other issues in BiH prison system.

The project "Support to prison staff training in Bosnia and Herzegovina" is the re-designed continuation of previous prison reform activities within the framework of the US/CoE VC "Enhancing recruitment procedures and training of staff for the State prison of Bosnia and Herzegovina" implemented by Council of Europe (CoE) in the period December 2011 – November 2013.

Important contacts:

Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of Justice

Sector for execution
of criminal sanctions
Trg Bosne i Hercegovine 1
71 000 Sarajevo
Tel: (033) 281-552
Web: <http://www.mpr.gov.ba>

Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of Justice

Sector for execution
of criminal sanctions
Valtera Perića 15
71 000 Sarajevo
Tel: (033) 209-952
Web: <http://www.fmp.gov.ba>

Republika Srpska Ministry of Justice

Sector for execution
of criminal sanctions
Trg Republike Srpske 1
78 000 Banja Luka
Tel: (051) 339-335
Web: <http://www.vladars.net>

Council of Europe in BiH Prison Reform Programme

Importantne Centar
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Support to prison staff training in Bosnia and Herzegovina



The project, entitled "Support to prison staff training in Bosnia and Herzegovina" aims to strengthen professional capacities of existing entity prisons and to improve prison management in accordance with European and other relevant international standards. More specifically, it focuses on the enhancement of prison operational procedures from human rights and public safety aspects and on the improvement of professional capacities of prison management and staff in direct contact with prisoners.

The project provides comprehensive training service for middle management and prison front line staff using the competence based training curriculum developed under the previous project phase. In order to support the improvement of the overall prison management performance tailor-made training programmes, materials and tools will also be developed and put into practice through training for the prison senior management staff.

For an efficient transfer of acquired skills and competencies into the practice two so-called "core" prisons, Zenica and Foča, have been selected as model prisons. The course of action continues with transferring their model performance to the so-called "follow up" prisons: Banja Luka, Mostar, Bijeljina and Tuzla. By the end of the project, it is expected that trained entity prison staff will form nucleus of the future State prison staff, in that way spreading good prison management practices that are most likely to be transferred to the new establishment.

The continued US authorities' generous support will ensure that the momentum of the developmental work within BiH prison service(s) is kept and their further integration in the modern penological trends continues. The expected results of the Project will enable local policy makers, primarily Ministries of Justice of BiH to develop the prison system(s) further and thereby meet Bosnia and Herzegovina's international treaty obligations.

In order to achieve the best results, a variety of activities will be implemented to achieve the following specific objectives:

- ✓ Providing training to prison officers in two selected "core" prisons and four "follow up" prisons based on the "Training manual on core competencies for prison staff with operational procedures";
- ✓ Development of training programme with relevant training materials, to improve prison management skills and practice in selected prisons, in line with the European standards and best practices;
- ✓ Delivery of training to prison senior management staff based on developed training programme.

Role of the Council of Europe in prison reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina



Like other CoE member states, BiH committed itself upon accession to the Organisation in April 2002 to sign and ratify the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the European Convention on the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

Owing to the CoE monitoring mechanisms built into the CoE post-accession obligations, the regular reporting schemes continue turning the attention to some key shortcomings in the prison related issues requiring immediate remedial actions. Some of these shortcomings were successfully addressed by the previous CoE-implemented projects in this area:

- ✓ Training and Development of Prison Staff in Bosnia Herzegovina (2003-2005, EU/CoE Joint programme);
- ✓ Assistance for the reform of the prison system in BiH (2005-2007, CIDA funded project);
- ✓ Professionalisation and harmonisation of prison system in BiH (2007-2008, CIDA funded project);
- ✓ Development of a reliable and functioning prison system respecting fundamental rights and standards, and enhancing of regional co-operation in the Western Balkans (2007-2008, EU/CoE Joint programme);
- ✓ Efficient Prison Management in BiH (2009-2010, EU/CoE Joint programme).

The objective of the CoE remains to help the BiH authorities accept their obligation to put in place sector-wide reform, across entities and jurisdictions.

Continuous challenges in BiH prison system

- ↪ **Four jurisdictions**
- ↪ **Lack of a coherent approach to the health care in prisons, possibility of abusing the system by inmates, lack of support for prisoners with special needs**
- ↪ **Deficiency of community-based sanctions as an alternative to imprisonment**
- ↪ **Old and inadequate prison buildings**
- ↪ **A need to develop proper staff training and approach to employment**