



CIN 

Center for
Investigative Reporting

**Annual
Report**

2020

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**14**

sanctions and amended
regulations i.e., changed practices

**6**

verdicts and indictments

**4**

arrests

What did we do in 2020?

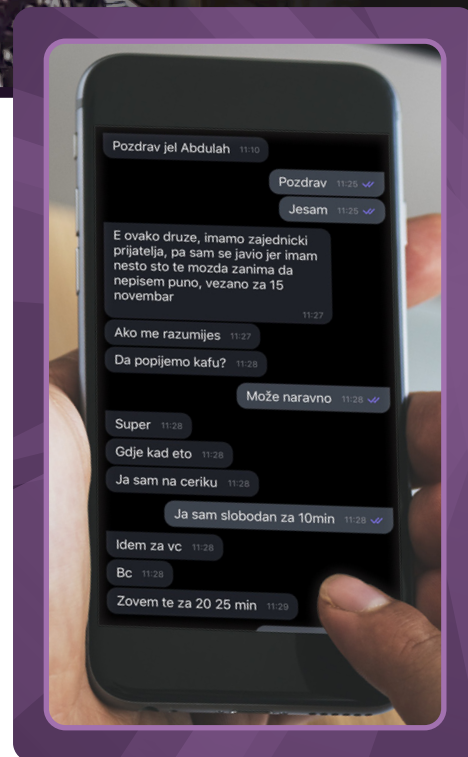
In 2020, CIN investigated the misuse of public money, corruption in employment, illegal exploitation of natural resources, public procurement procedures, abuse of public office, election fraud, corruption in the judiciary, and the assets of politicians, judges, and prosecutors.

Following the publication of CIN investigative stories police and judicial institutions launched investigations to check the allegations from our stories. They arrested corrupt politicians and citizens. Some investigations have resulted in verdicts and prison sentences. Our stories made institutions change their rules and practices and resulted in several initiatives to amend laws and regulations.



” You - BAM 1,300! I make a copy of the list (...) and tell whom to vote for. On the 13th you'll get the list. You give 40 (BAM, author's note). I'll give it to a lad, you understand, I have two lads. ”

Elvir Saletović
vote-seller



“Vote selling network exposed by CIN reporters”

We revealed a network of vote traders in the Brčko District on the eve of the 2020 Local Elections.

Posing as party activists, the journalists have arranged a meeting of **Abdulah Ilijazović**, a candidate for the Brčko District Assembly with the vote traders. In this action, the journalists recorded the offer made by vote-traders and the convicted dealers **Elvir Saletović** and **Sanel Pengić**.

Ilijazović agreed to give **BAM 6,500 for 130 votes**, and Saletović and his partner Pengić committed to finding voters whom they would pay **BAM 50** each. They would keep some of the money for themselves.

Thanks to Ilijazović's decision to report the indecent proposal to CIN, the vote-trading deal that would win this candidate a term in the Brčko District Assembly was prevented.

" The principle of maximum disclosure of the information is one of the fundamental principles of any democratic society, "

one of the verdicts said.



12

wins against institutions for non-compliance with FOIA



18 months

the average duration of the procedure

Institutions have been inconsistently enforcing the laws for years and while some provide all the information, others find various reasons to deny requests.

The struggle for public information

CIN won its 12th case against institutions non-complying with the Freedom of Access to Information Act. The last one was in September 2020, on the International Day of the Right to Access Information.

CIN sued courts, state institutions, ministries, and hospitals, and so far, all the verdicts were in favor of CIN. On average, it takes 18 for the courts to reach a decision.

Thanks to these laws, reporters collect data every year to prove the misuse of public funds. The published investigative stories often serve as a basis for initiating investigations, prosecutions, and legislative amendments.



“ I guarantee that every one of these people – who work best – wants to get a permit and work properly, but the procedure is so difficult and sometimes very discouraging, ”

says **Živan Jakšić Žića**

a politician and gravel worker from Serbia.

“Politicians profiting from the bent Drina”

Due to the undetermined boundaries between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, **3,600 hectares of land along the Drina river** is beyond the control of institutions of either side. This absence of authority suits the local politicians who illegally mine the gravel in this area.

For 25 years, the two countries have not been able to agree on a demarcation line, so the Drina river is considered the border. Due to large deposits of gravel in the riverbed, the river spills on the left or right side, thus making a new riverbed.

To protect Semberija from flooding, gravel must be extracted from the riverbed, not from the river banks, as the gravel-miners currently do illegally. By digging up the banks, they render the river Drina flood the fertile lands of Semberija.

In addition to the illegal exploitation of gravel, the reporters also discovered illegal construction and wild landfills.

NO MAN'S LAND



29 km²

of Serbian
territories
in BiH



7 km²

of BiH
territories
in Serbia

CONSEQUENCES



ILLEGAL
GRAVEL
MINING



ILLEGAL
CONSTRUCTION



WASTE
DISPOSAL



” It is about legal discipline – the yacht was bought with my money from the sale of shares, ”

said Fahrudin Radončić

a delegate in the House of Peoples of the BiH Parliament.

“Politicians conceal yachts, condos, offices, and land”

CIN reporters revealed high-ranked politicians concealing their property and ignoring the law which mandates that they must declare to relevant institutions everything they own.

Nine of them withheld information about owning property worth **at least BAM 4.7 million**. It's about: **Melika Mahmutbegović, Bakir Izetbegović and his wife Sebija Izetbegović** and **Asim Sarajlić** from the SDA, **Fahrudin Radočić** and **Munib Jusufović** from the SBB, **Mirko Šarović** from the SDS, **Obren Petrović** and **Sredoje Nović** from the SNSD.

According to the Election Law in BiH, nominees and elected officials must report with the Central Election Commission (CEC) their income from the previous year and all property belonging to them and their close family members valued at upwards of **BAM 5,000**.

UNDECLARED ASSETS



9

POLITICIANS



19

REAL ESTATES AND A YACHT



BAM 4,7 million

WORTH



CIN and its readership

Every year, ever more citizens read CIN's content on social media. In 2020, we offered our followers much more video and graphic content on stories that had **over four million clicks** across all platforms.

CIN heartily thanks its readers for their trust and support.



2,141,622

Visits to www.cin.ba



5,330
subscribers

CIN YouTube channel



60,000

Readers following
CIN on Facebook



5,320

Readers following
CIN on Twitter



1,520

Readers following
CIN on Instagram



“ Alija told me he was pleased and said ‘you have earned this’ as he handed me BAM 2,000 stashed in a piece of paper, ”

Džemal Karić

admitted to the investigators.

“Your very own prosecutor”

CIN reporters revealed that Sarajevo Canton prosecutor **Džemal Karić** was taking bribes from a Sarajevo businessman for concessions in court cases against his brothers.

In one case, Karić unlawfully gave legal advice to the opposing defendants’ attorney, while in two other criminal cases he helped **the brothers of Alija Delimustafić**, a businessman and wartime minister of the interior of Bosnia and Herzegovina, avoid long-term prison sentences, while their companies kept illegal gain worth millions of BAM.

Delimustafić paid him **BAM 5,000** for his services.



3

court cases



the accused escaped imprisonment and their companies retained the ill-gotten gains worth millions



A BAM 5,000

BRIBE

**855**CIN contents redistributed in
other media**673**

times by portals

**153**

times by TV

**29**times
by print media

Cooperation of CIN with other media

CIN offers its investigative stories free of charge to all print, online and electronic media, with the caveat that the source of information must always be indicated and the content must remain unchanged.

In this way, fact-checked and true information, based on facts and evidence, reaches a large number of citizens.

The stories have been redistributed or mentioned **855 times on various portals**, print media, and almost all private and public television and print media in the country.



“Protected areas without protection”

The research showed that protected natural areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina are being endangered due to uncontrolled exploitation, private interests, and inadequate care of competent institutions.

CIN reporters found that half of the protected areas do not have a management plan, and almost the same number has never been subject to any monitoring, hence it is not known exactly which species should be protected in those areas. Most managers claim not to have enough funds or professional people.

Although the authorities planned to protect certain areas, they also allowed private individuals to exploit the wealth of these areas.

The research is accompanied by a database that contains data on the **41 protected areas**. The database provides their specifics, allowed and prohibited activities, current situation, acts of proclamation, photographs, and an interactive map of BiH with their locations.



#FollowingthepublicationofCINstories



#FollowingthepublicationofCINstories

“Fund For Wastefulness”

February 2017 ▶ reporters exposed **Senaid Begić**, former director of Health insurance Fund of the Zenica-Doboj Canton, who used the money of this institution for election promotion, media advertising, and purchase of awards.

February 2018 ▶ The Zenica-Doboj Canton Prosecution opened a case against Begić.

April 2019 ▶ The Zenica-Doboj Canton Prosecution filed an indictment against Begić.

September 2020 ▶ The Zenica Municipal Court rendered the first-instance decision, sentencing Begić to four years in prison for abuse of office and fraud in the service.

“Hidden Assets Of Sarajevo Leaders”

January 2020 ▶ CIN reporters found **five mayors of Sarajevo municipalities and the mayor of Sarajevo** not to have declared all real estate owned by them and their families to the Anti-corruption and Quality Management Office of Sarajevo Canton.

February 2020 ▶ The Anti-corruption and Quality Management Office of Sarajevo Canton checks whether Sarajevo officials have declared all property.

April 2020 ▶ The Sarajevo mayor and mayors of Stari Grad and Trnovo municipalities declared their hidden real estate.

January 2021 ▶ The Anticorruption and Quality Management Office has filed five criminal charges against officials who did not provide accurate data on property, among them the current and former mayors of the municipalities of Trnovo, Centar, and Novo Sarajevo.



#FollowingthepublicationofCINstories

“Grants In Brčko To Friends And Voters”

November 2019 ▶ Reporters revealed Brčko District MPs using grant money to pay up their friends and party colleagues and secure votes in elections.

January 2020 ▶ The Brčko District Prosecutor's Office investigated abuses in the allocation of grants to associations.

July 2020 ▶ **Ćazim Dačaj**, an MP, arrested on suspicion that he awarded grants, after which he demanded that half of the money be paid back to him.

January 2021 ▶ The Brčko Basic Court confirmed the indictment for abuse of position or authority against Dačaj.



#FollowingthepublicationofCINstories

“Land Clearing At The Gates To The Bjelašnica Olympic Center”

July 2020 ▶ reporters revealed that the Municipality of Trnovo enabled illegal logging of 3.5 hectares of forest on Bjelašnica for construction of sports courts, apartments, and a hotel.

July 2020 ▶ The Sarajevo Canton Prime Minister said that they stopped co-financing of the BAM 3.6 million project.

August 2020 ▶ The Sarajevo Canton Agriculture, Water, and Forestry Inspection established that the Municipality was not granted a license to clear the land nor was the agricultural land ever converted into construction land.

September 2020 ▶ The Inspectorate filed misdemeanor charges against the company “Dolovi” from Sokolac for illegal logging and selling of logs without a license.



NEW DATABASES

"Foreign Ownership In Sarajevo Canton"

50 companies
12 million square meters
of real estate
financial statements

"Protected Areas In BiH"

data on 41 protected areas

"Incentives For Electricity Producers From Renewable Sources"

BAM 207 million
paid in incentives
525 plants
312 companies

CIN databases - a source of information

Every year CIN publishes databases that contain thousands of pieces of fact-checked information and primary source documents were hitherto hidden from the public by government bureaucrats. The databases enable citizens to inform themselves quickly on a variety of topics and to access data to which they otherwise have no access.

This year CIN published three new databases: **about foreign ownership in BiH, protected areas, and paid incentives for electricity generators from renewable sources.**

On CIN's web page you may find databases about the financing of veterans' associations; subsidies; public procurement; officeholders severance packages, court-appointed attorneys' earnings, energy prospects in BiH, etc.