



**CIN** 

Center for  
Investigative Reporting

**Annual  
Report**

**2023**

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### Newsroom

Azhar Kalamujić, Renata Radić-Dragić, Jelena Jevtić, Milena Mitrović,  
Ibro Čavčić, Adna Zilić, Dženita Lutvić, Kenan Hadžić

### Fact-checking

Jasna Fetahović

### Producer

Mubarek Asani

### Photography and camera

Dženat Dreković

### Graphics and animation

Željko Todorović

### Social Networks Editor

Adnan Čomor

### Project assistant

Mirza Avdić

### Translation

Lejla Efendić

### Proofreading

Razija Šahinović

### Administration

Aleksandra Zelić, finance manager  
Damir Salihbašić, office & HR manager

---

### Address

Center for Investigative Reporting  
Gabriele Moreno Locatelli 11  
71000 Sarajevo, BiH

**Tel:** +387 33 560 040; **Fax:** +387 33 560 045

**E-mail:** info@cin.ba; **Web:** cin.ba



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indictments and verdicts



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sanctions and arrests



3

Amended regulations  
and changed practices

## What did we do in 2023?

In 2023, CIN investigated economic and organized crime, misuse of public money, money laundering, corruption in the judiciary, defrauding, environmental issues, abuse of public office, and property of politicians, judges, and prosecutors.

Year after year, the police and judicial institutions have been checking allegations from our stories. Some investigations led to criminal investigations, indictments, or prison sentences. Our stories prompted institutions to change their rules and practices and resulted in several initiatives to amend laws and regulations.



#FollowingthepublicationofCINstories

Drivers in Bosnia and Herzegovina will not be paying more for vehicle registration because the Rulebook on Vehicle Registration unlawfully passed by **Vojin Mitrović, the former state minister of communications and transport**, has been repealed.

**Kemal Čaušević, the former director of the BiH Indirect Taxation Authority**, is sentenced to imprisonment for five and a half years for receiving gifts. The proceeds of BAM 1.72 million shall be confiscated from Čaušević.

The Energy Regulatory Commission in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has denied the application for an operation permit for the mini hydro-power plant "Zlate" on the Doljanka River, which was constructed by **the company 'Eko-Vat', owned by Mirza Teletović**.

**Teacher Velibor Vujić**, who after being convicted of sexually harassing a minor student worked at the Vuk Karadžić High School Center in Lopare, was dismissed.

The Municipal Court in Dubrovnik rendered the first instance judgment sentencing **the police officer Zoran Čegar** to a prison sentence for threatening a CIN reporter.

The Brčko Prosecutor's Office filed an indictment against **MP Alija Denjagić and president of the local citizens' association Enida Osmanović-Stevanović**. They were accused of abusing their positions to obtain material benefits for themselves and others through the Brčko grants.



*” What problem do you or anyone have with that? The state is repaying it and the state will collect it. ”*

**Aleksandar Prović**  
*commented on his debts*



**BAM 6 million**

an RBI loan approved based on  
falsified documentation



**15,218 m<sup>2</sup>**

of state-owned land  
granted to the company B&B Vučko



**about BAM 13 million**

of investor's funds misused by  
the Prović family for personal needs

## “Vučko Made Off With Millions From State Land”

Falsified documents, deceived partners, and millions in debt – these all were the controversies that for decades followed the construction and operations of **the Vučko Hotel complex in Jahorina managed by father and son Prović**. The municipal authorities made it possible for them to misappropriate state land, while the Entity authorities gave them millions in loans, which are now being repaid by Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the same time, the Prović family hid millions in profit.

Aparthotel Vučko in Jahorina has been keeping a **“parallel ledger”** to hide the real income from apartment rentals and restaurant operations, thus avoiding paying tax and tourist tax for guests.



*” Do you want me to give you this in cash,  
or should I add it to your account?*

*Check with the bey.  
However you want it, brother. ”*

*Karišik wrote in one of his  
messages to Seid Hadžibajrić*

## “Call The Bey For Car Park”

CIN’s reporters revealed that the former mayor of the Sarajevo municipality of Stari Grad, **Ibrahim Hadžibajrić**, leased several public car parks in the tourist center of the city to his friends, striking deals with some of them that would render his son Seid a millionaire.

Exchanges via the Sky application reveal how the Hadžibajrić family amassed wealth through municipal parking lots while assisting **Elmedin Karišik**, owner of the Plaza Group, in laundering the illicit funds.

The Prosecutor’s Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) revealed that, from January 2020 to March 2021, Karišik had control **over 4.23 million BAM** entrusted to him by **Sani Al- Murdaa**, the leader of an international cocaine smuggling group.



### 5 car parks

granted to private individuals by Hadžibajrić to the detriment of the local community



### correspondence on the Sky App

reveals that Karišik looked after Hadžibajrić’s real estate, money, and luxury cars



### Hadžibajrić facilitated procedures for building permits for Karišik

in return, he received money for the election campaign, properties, and up to 80% of the profits from parking rentals

**16**

wins against institutions  
for non-compliance  
with FOIA

**18 months**

average duration  
of the procedure

Institutions have  
inconsistently applied laws  
for years. While some provide  
all the information, others  
find various reasons to  
reject requests.



## The struggle for public information

**CIN has won 16 lawsuits against institutions** that fail to comply with the Freedom of Access to Information Act - the latest in March 2023.

So far, CIN has sued courts, state institutions, ministries, and hospitals, and the rulings have always been in favor of CIN. It took an average of **18 months** for courts to make a decision.

Thanks to these laws, journalists gather data each year to prove the misuse of public funds. The published investigative stories often serve as the basis for launching investigations, filing charges, and amending regulations.





## Cooperation of CIN with other media

CIN offers its investigative stories 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 corroborated with evidence reaches a large audience.

CIN's stories have sparked numerous discussions on topics important to society, which are regularly covered by colleagues from other newsrooms. Sometimes, as a result of this collaborative effort, practices, and regulations are changed to reduce the room for misuse of public money and citizens' rights.

**576**

CIN contents redistributed  
in other media

**546**

times  
by portals

**17**

times  
by TV and radio

**13**

times  
by print media





## SUPPORT US

Donate to CIN and help the new generation of journalists continue the tradition of excellent investigative journalism on your behalf – in the name of the public.



**10,800**

**subscribers**

CIN YouTube channel

## | CIN and its readership

Every year, more and more citizens read our content on social media. In 2023, in addition to stories, we offered our followers much more video and graphic content. The number of followers on certain social networks naturally grows each year.

Thank you for your confidence!

CIN Team



**94,300**

CIN Facebook



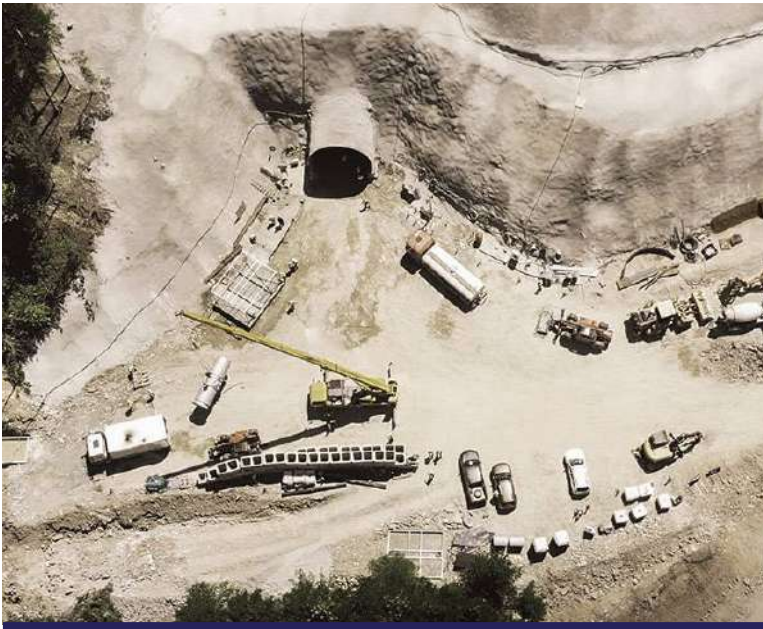
**7,000**

CIN X



**3,600**

CIN Instagram



*“ Everything will be contaminated.  
What for? All for a fistful of gold?!  
It’s not worth a fistful of gold. ”*

**Dalibor Ballian**  
a professor from the  
Sarajevo Faculty of Forestry

## “The Zenica Government Treat For The World’s Ore Traders”

The Zenica-Doboj Canton favored the company **Adriatic Metals**, awarding them concessions in Vareš.

CIN reporters revealed that in 2018, this company – which was called **Eastern Mining** at the time – got the concession six times cheaper than domestic companies, thus depriving citizens of **about five million marks**.

In return, illegal stone mining and road reconstruction left the locals with a devastated picnic area and stream.



**BAM 5 million**

The Government of Zenica-Doboj Canton favored the company Eastern Mining (later Adriatic Metals) in the concession granting process



**40,4 km<sup>2</sup>**

of land in Vareš granted to the company Adriatic Metals for exploration and exploitation



**22 m<sup>3</sup>**

of healthy trees were cut down so that Trgošped could extract stone from the quarry for the construction of the road to the mine

*" A never-ending story... Eight hundred thousand BAM, body armor, this and that ... while we, as small cogs in the big state machinery, wonder who of us is gonna be next. (...) It's Russian roulette. "*

*Sarajevo police officer*



The Sarajevo Cantonal Police Administration paid BAM 2,334 per bulletproof vest



Of 369 vests 304 did not meet the required criteria

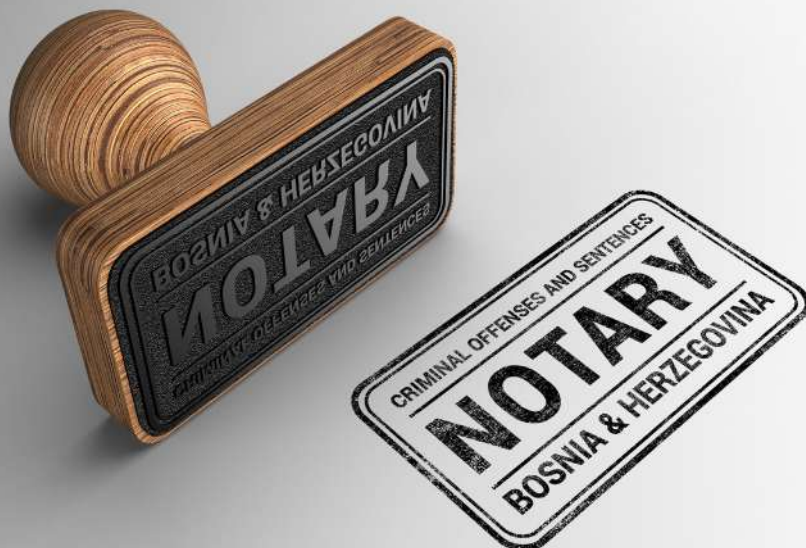
For vests of the same protection level, the police in Brčko paid Danial'S 585 BAM per piece, and the Judicial Police paid 1,489 BAM.

## “Bulletproof Vests Sitting In The Storage While Policemen Risk Their Lives Working Unprotected”

CIN's reporters revealed that Sarajevo policemen work without protection while expensive body armor collects dust in a warehouse. This is the outcome of **a public procurement worth BAM 861 thousand**, in which neither the police administration nor the vendor did a good job.

**“I know a colleague who is nicknamed Pancirko [Armor Guy] because he bought himself body armor for protection.** And it was the guys sitting on committees and tender [commissions] who dubbed him ‘Armor Guy,’ and he became known as that among the folks. They make fun of him,” says a Sarajevo police officer who goes to interventions without protective equipment, exposing himself to bullets and stabbings.





*” You have to understand, if he is a civil servant, he is like a polar bear. (..) It means he is fully protected. ”*

**Mirsad Adilagić**  
an injured party



In 7 years, at least 6 notaries  
convicted for



**making fictitious contracts**



**facilitating illegal  
property transactions**



**other criminal acts**

## “Notarized crime”

Six notaries in BiH were convicted for misconduct in public office, falsification of documents, and endangering security. Based on the verdicts, which are not yet final, two notaries got out of the service.

None of them were suspended during the trials, nor were disciplinary proceedings conducted against them after the verdicts.

The convicted notaries are **Dževad Omanović** from Cazin, **Dževad Pazalja** and **Samir Muslić** from Sarajevo, **Džemanina Memagić** from Zavidovići, **Benjamin Ibrulj** from Gradačac and **Milka Đaković** from Laktaši.

They were sentenced to suspended sentences, fines, and prison terms.





Fraudsters have exploited a key EU climate policy by passing off cheap traditional biofuels as expensive types made from waste



Bosnian company Sistem Ecologica is accused of selling U.S. soy biodiesel mislabelled as next-generation fuel made of used cooking oil



Investigators say Sistem Ecologica supplied 17 companies in nine EU member states over several years

## “How Biofuels Scams Have Undermined A Flagship EU Climate Policy”

**Multiple scams involving fake biofuels** have erupted in northern Europe in recent years. An investigation by CIN, Organized Crime and Corruption Project (OCCRP), Follow the Money, and De Tijd found these cases to be linked to a BiH company that has sold thousands of tons of fake fuel across the European Union.



## VIDEO STORIES

CIN has produced dozens of video stories that accompany the articles, and help readers and viewers to more easily understand the facts and context of important events.

Video is particularly important for Internet users who like to be informed about important topics through various video formats.

The CIN team tries to publish as many investigative stories as possible in this format, which becomes an indispensable part of our repertoire.

**Readers can find them on CIN's YouTube channel.**

*Most-watched video stories  
from 2023 on CIN's YouTube  
channel:*

1. *Vučko Made Off With Millions From State Land*
2. *Old Affairs Of The US Visa Trader*
3. *Secret Wealth of Sarajevo Mayor Hadžibajrić: Call The Bey For Car Park*
4. *Workers Trapped In A Vicious Circle Of Blue Envelopes*
5. *The Zenica Government Treat For The World's Ore Traders*

POLITICIANS' ASSETS

PROPERTY HOLDINGS OF  
JUDGES AND PROSECUTORSFINANCING OF VETERANS'  
ASSOCIATIONS

INCENTIVES

POST-TERM SEVERANCE

DISCIPLINARY  
SANCTIONS AGAINST  
JUDGES AND PROSECUTORSPROTECTED  
AREAS IN BIHEARNINGS OF COURT  
APPOINTED ADVOCATES

PARDONS

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

BUDGET RESERVE

...



## CIN databases - a source of information

Every year CIN publishes databases that contain thousands of pieces of fact-checked information and primary source documents hitherto hidden from the public by government bureaucrats.

They enable citizens to quickly get information about different areas and also access data to which they otherwise have no access.

In 2009, CIN published the first database containing data on compensations paid for work in committees. The journalists collected and analyzed data from 41 institutions at the level of BiH.

Most contain data from the period in which they were collected, and some of them are regularly updated, such as the databases on the assets of politicians, judges, and prosecutors.



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