

**CIN** ✖

Center for  
Investigative Reporting

**Annual  
Report**

**2024**

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**8**  
verdicts



**7**  
indictments



**5**  
investigations



**4**  
arrests



**10**  
confiscated or blocked  
properties



## What did we do in 2024?

In 2024, CIN celebrated its 20th anniversary!

This year, it investigated topics such as economic and organized crime, misuse of public funds, money laundering, corruption in the judiciary, fraud against citizens, environmental issues, abuse of public office, and the assets of politicians, judges, and prosecutors.

Year after year, the police and judicial institutions have been verifying 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.

# WHERE IS SARA



*"I've seen parents bury their children, but they had something to bury. Who do I light a candle for? For the air? I don't need to light one. No, my Sara is alive."*

**Miloš Kuprešanić**  
Sara's father

## "Where is Sara?"

CIN has released a documentary about the missing Banja Luka baby, Sara.

Sara's parents, Aleksandra Blagojević and Miloš Kuprešanić **have spent years unsuccessfully searching for their child's grave.** Over the past year, CIN journalists joined them in their search.

The cameras followed Aleksandra and Miloš as they faced numerous obstacles within the system. However, even with journalistic support, **they were unable to gain access to all the companies, institutions, and organizations** connected to their tragedy.



**two missing babies**



The Banja Luka District Public Prosecutor's Office has opened a case



**886,000**

views on CIN's YouTube channel





Special recognition for  
contribution to journalism  
from the Banja Luka  
Journalists' Club

Third prize for investigative  
journalism in BiH from the EU

Recognition for contributions  
to the fight against  
bureaucracy from the Cystic  
Fibrosis Association of BiH

## Prizes and awards

In 2024, CIN received three awards and recognitions for investigative journalism.

The documentary **Where is Sara**, about the missing Banja Luka baby, Sara, was awarded.

Awarded was also the story **\*Call the Bey for Car Park\*** about the abuse of public resources in the Sarajevo municipality of Stari Grad, money laundering, and the personal gains of former mayor Ibrahim Hadžibajrić and his family.

A recognition was awarded for the story **Fighting Bureaucrats for a Children's Lives**, which highlights young cystic fibrosis patients who have been waiting for months for the Health Insurance Institute of Una-Sana Canton to approve life-saving medication.



*"My goal was to bring together established performers from BiH and enable them to efficiently exercise their rights."*

**Almir Ajanović**

*known on the music scene as Don Almir, the president of AIS's Board of Directors*

## "Musicians' Earnings Disappear in the Lists of Sarajevo's Don"

CIN journalists discovered that while broadcasters were paying royalties to the Association of Performers and Musicians (AIS), **the payments to performers were steadily decreasing**. Between 2015 and 2022, AIS collected nearly seven million BAM but only disbursed BAM 2.7 million to the performers. Additionally, Almir Ajanović, who was also the president of the AIS Board of Directors, **allegedly misappropriated at least BAM 373,000** intended for performance royalty payments.

AIS is an organisation entrusted by musicians to collect royalties on their behalf from broadcasters in BiH.

Journalists uncovered that Ajanović misused the collected funds for personal travel expenses and unlawfully received both a salary and additional allowances at the same time. For years, he also concealed the fact that he was the owner of the commercial property for which AIS was paying monthly rent.



**seven million BAM**  
in collected royalties



**BAM 2,7 million**  
paid to performers



**BAM 373,000**  
royalties intended for  
payment were embezzled  
by the president of the AIS  
Board of Directors

**17**

wins against institutions  
for non-compliance  
with FOIA

**18 months**

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

In 2024, **CIN won its 17th case against institutions** non-complying with the Freedom of Access to Information Act.

So far, CIN has sued governments, courts, state institutions, ministries, and hospitals, and the rulings have always been in favour 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.





*“ There is currently no order in that regard (...) I can assert – without reliable information though – that some lawyers are privileged. ”*

**Izet Baždarević**  
Sarajevo Attorney

## “Millionaires Among Court-Appointed Attorneys”

Over six years, courts in BiH have **paid out BAM 58.8 million** for compensations to court-appointed attorneys. **Nearly BAM 10 million were paid to ten attorneys**, although more than 1,440 were engaged on each ex-officio defence.

Three lawyers earned millions defending clients as court-appointed attorneys: **Omar Mehmedbašić from Sarajevo** represented clients in over 600 cases across three courts in the past six years, **earning at least 2.9 million marks**. **Stjepan Ćaćić from Tuzla earned BAM 1,54 million**, while **Zlatko Ibršimović from Sarajevo earned BAM 1.1 million**. **Ćaćić was involved in more than 300 cases, and Ibršimović in at least 260 cases.**

Since 2011, CIN journalists have been collecting data on court-appointed attorney payments and publishing them in the **Earnings of Court-Appointed Defence Attorneys database**.



**BAM 167,1 million**

spent by courts in BiH on court-appointed defence since 2005



**BAM 58,8 million**

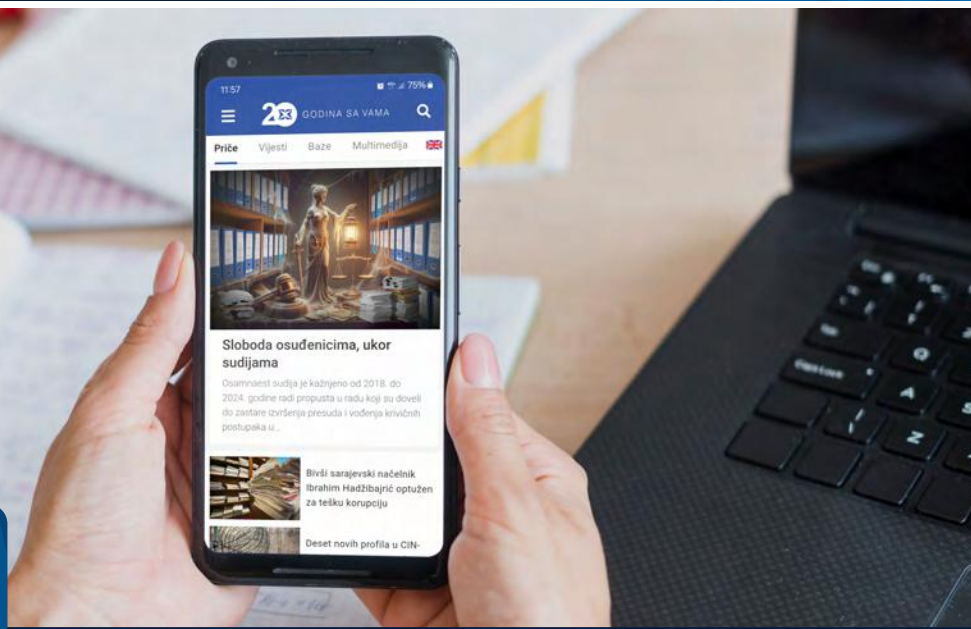
allocated for court-appointed defence from 2017 to the end of 2022



**BAM 10 million**

paid to ten lawyers, even though more than 1,440 were engaged in court-appointed defences





## 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.



**17,000**  
**subscribers**

CIN YouTube channel



**95,000**

CIN Facebook



**7,200**

CIN X



**4,500**

CIN Instagram

## CIN and its readership

Every year, more and more citizens read our content on social media.

In 2024, we provided our followers with many more video and graphic materials alongside our stories.

The number of followers on certain social networks grows organically each year.



" These were just tourist trips. "

**Enver Hadžiahmetović**  
the current director of the Agency



**300,000 kilometres**

travelled by Nanić and Ćavar in  
official cars

*Some of these trips were justified with  
travel orders containing inaccurate data.*



**over BAM 111,000**

spent on costs of fuel and  
maintenance



**about BAM 40,000**

paid to Nanić and Ćavar  
for living-away-from-home  
allowance and living expenses

## "Official Vehicles for Private Adventures"

CIN journalists reveal that **officials from the state Agency for Police Support used official cars for private trips to their hometowns** in Bužim and Tomislavgrad, even though they were not entitled to do so. Some of these trips were justified with travel orders containing inaccurate data. They also exploited their roles as director and deputy director to indulge in official trips across Europe, Asia, North America, and South America.

These officials are Husein Nanić, the former director of the Agency for Police Support in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and his deputy Mišo Ćavar. Over eight years, they covered nearly 300,000 kilometres in official cars. The costs for fuel, tolls, and maintenance have cost the citizens of BiH over BAM 111,000.



After the publication of the story **Grants in Brčko for Friends and Voters**, the Brčko District Prosecutor's Office filed six charges related to the abuse of grants, two of which resulted in convictions.

After the publication of the story **Workers Trapped in a Vicious Circle of Blue Envelopes**, the Tuzla Cantonal Prosecutor's Office filed charges against Abdulah Avdagić, his wife Zlata Avdagić, the companies RIVA and Robni Terminal, as well as employees of these companies, on suspicion of tax evasion.

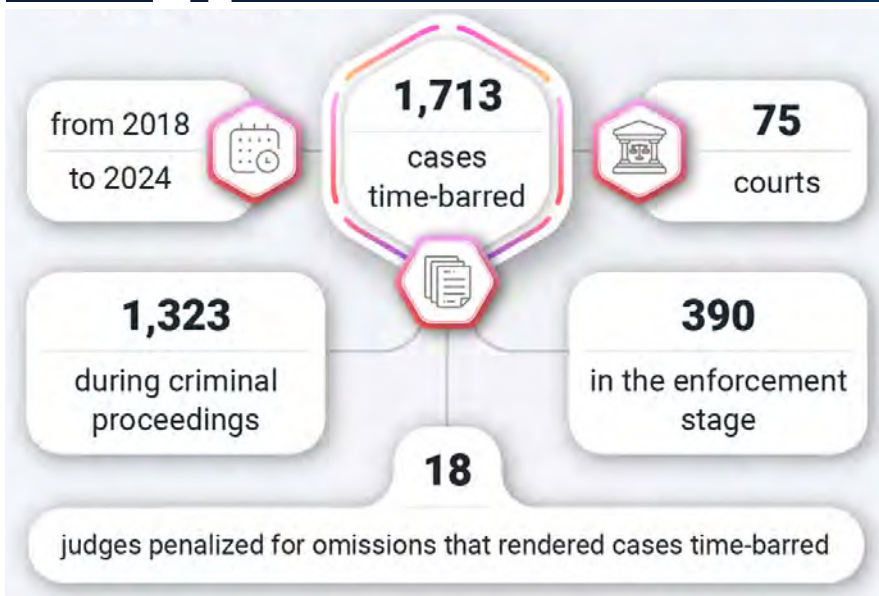
After the publication of the story **Land Clearing at the Gates to the Bjelašnica Olympic Centre**, Ibro Berilo, the mayor of Trnovo Municipality, was arrested. He is suspected of illegal construction in the Bjelašnica area, favouring private construction companies, and accepting bribes.

After the release of the documentary **Where is Sara**, the Banja Luka District Public Prosecutor's Office opened an investigation. The case involves the disappearance of the babies of mothers Aleksandra Blagojević and Nataša Stijak, who gave birth at the University Clinical Centre of RS (UKCRS) in 2018.

Following the release of the story **The Double Life of Officer Čegar**, the Sarajevo Canton Prosecutor's Office indicted officer Zoran Čegar for document forgery.

Following the release of the story **Vučko Made Off with Millions from State Land**, the Basic Court in Sokolac made a non-final ruling that the Vučko Aparthotel Club must refund the Russian investor over two million marks, the amount he had loaned to the company for the construction of the Vučko hotel-apartment complex on Jahorina.





*"The statute of limitations is a legal concept that terminates the state's ability to punish."*

**Miloš Babić**, retired judge

## "Statute Of Limitations Archives Justice in BiH"

From 2018 to the end of 2023, a total of 1,713 cases in Bosnian courts were time-barred during criminal proceedings or the enforcement of the judgment. In only 27 cases, judges were found to be responsible for the time bar.

CIN reporters reviewed about 200 criminal cases that had reached the statute of limitations. It mainly occurred, due to the escape, illness, or death of the accused or convicted individuals, as well as inefficient and lengthy proceedings, and replacing of judges.

These include crimes such as theft, light bodily injuries, fraud, drug trafficking, attempted murder, and other offenses with lighter penalties and shorter statutes of limitations.



between 230 and 340 criminal cases are dismissed in the courts of BiH each year due to the statute of limitations.



1,713

cases dismissed due to the statute of limitations from 2018 to 2024



1,323

cases time-barred during criminal proceedings



18

judges sanctioned for omissions that led to the statute of limitations

*” In impoverished societies like ours, it's quite simple: you appeal to emotions, you prioritize social stability. Investors do everything for their own profit. If we were to close Arcelor, I'm not sure how the economy or society as a whole would function. ”*

### **Nasiha Pozder**

*FBiH Minister of  
Environment and Tourism*



**141 provisions of the  
environmental permit**  
violated by ArcelorMittal Zenica



#### **Limit values exceeded by 255 times**

Carcinogenic dust particles,  
benzene, and benzo(a)pyrene  
in the air within the vicinity of  
the steel plant, harmful to  
human health.

## “Zenica's Steel Wound”

CIN journalists have uncovered that the steel producer **“Arcelor-Mittal Zenica”** has breached nearly all the environmental permit conditions set by FBiH authorities at the end of 2022.

Content with the thousands of jobs and lucrative business deals the company brings to local enterprises, authorities have turned a blind eye, neglecting the serious health risks to Zenica's residents.

Soil analyses from March 2024 **revealed alarming levels of heavy metal contamination from industrial chimney emissions in the Tetovo and Pehare neighbourhoods.** The findings revealed elevated concentrations of **arsenic, lead, zinc, cadmium, nickel, and copper, posing significant health risks.**

Search



+ Create



## Centar za istraživačko novinarstvo (CIN)

@centarzaistrzivackonovina1424 · 17.3K subscribers · 295 videos

Centar za istraživačko novinarstvo (CIN) iz Sarajeva je jedinstvena organizacija u Bosni i ...more

[cin.ba](http://cin.ba)

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## VIDEO STORIES

CIN has produced dozens of video stories that accompany the stories 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.

In this way, the CIN team tries to publish as many investigative stories as possible in the form of video-stories, which have become an indispensable part of our repertoire.

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

*The most viewed video stories on CIN's YouTube channel in 2024:*

1. *Where is Sara?*
2. *Musicians' Earnings Disappear in the Lists of Sarajevo's Don*
3. *Official Vehicles for Private Adventures*
4. *Zenica's Steel Wound*
5. *Brčko Prosecutor Judged by a „Jury“ of Convicts*



POLITICIANS' ASSETS

PROPERTY HOLDINGS OF  
JUDGES AND PROSECUTORSFINANCING OF VETERANS'  
ASSOCIATIONS

INCENTIVES

POST-TERM SEVERANCE

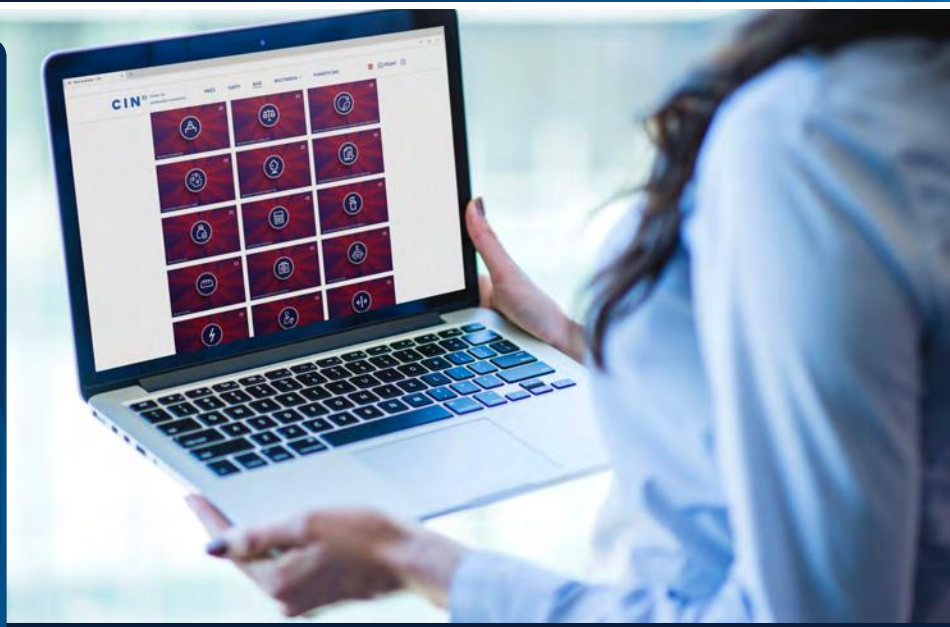
DISCIPLINARY  
SANCTIONS AGAINST  
JUDGES AND PROSECUTORSPROTECTED  
AREAS IN BIHEARNINGS OF COURT  
APPOINTED ADVOCATES

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 analysed 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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