

War Crimes Processing Project

The main objective of the War Crimes Processing Project is to support the urgent needs of the justice sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) to expedite the fair and effective processing of war crimes cases. Implemented by the OSCE Mission to BiH, with financial support from the governments of the UK, Norway, Switzerland, US, Italy and Germany, the project will last for approximately 15 months until the European Union's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) funds are released to further support war crimes processing in BiH.

In BiH, there has been some success in the processing of war crimes cases. Between 2004 - March 2013, 214 war crimes cases were completed in BiH. A total of 235 persons were convicted and sentenced to a combined total of 2,262 years imprisonment. Despite these achievements, a backlog of approximately 1,315 war crimes cases still remains to be processed.

The BiH National War Crimes Strategy set deadlines for completing the most complex and top priority cases by 2015, and all remaining cases by 2023. In an effort to meet these deadlines, the pace of case processing needs to be greatly accelerated whilst ensuring that the highest judicial and human-rights standards are met throughout the proceedings.

The War Crimes Processing Project aims to bolster the capacities of the BiH judiciary to process war crimes cases and address the most urgent staffing and training needs of courts and prosecutors' offices at various levels of BiH jurisdiction. Specifically designed by the OSCE Mission to BiH and partners to bridge the 15-month funding gap until the release of EUR 15 million of EU-financed IPA funds, the War Crimes Processing Project will immediately tackle the most pressing needs of the BiH judiciary.

As foreseen in the BiH National War Crimes Strategy, hundreds of war crimes cases were transferred from the State-level to lower level jurisdictions in recent years. This transfer significantly adjusted the structure of the war crimes backlog in BiH. Approximately half of

the backlog of 1,315 cases now falls under State-level jurisdiction, while the remaining half will be processed by the entity and Brčko District jurisdictions. To meet the deadlines set by the Strategy, the human and material resources of these judicial authorities – especially at the entity and Brčko District levels – must be strengthened.

Given the current needs and status of war crimes processing, the primary focus of the War Crimes Processing Project over the next 15 months will be on assigning additional legal professionals to prosecutors' offices, especially those at the cantonal and district level. Once selected and trained via an intensive two-week seminar provided by the OSCE Mission to BiH, in co-operation with the Judicial and Prosecutorial Training Centres, the impact of these additional staff will be closely monitored and periodically assessed to ensure their effective utilization.

Within the War Crimes Processing Project, the OSCE Mission to BiH will also offer intensive training and specialized education to judges and prosecutors working on war crimes cases, as well as defence lawyers, police and other professionals. These specialized trainings will be tailored to the particular needs of each group and will be designed in co-operation with BiH authorities to ensure that the key needs are addressed. This will result in more efficient and effective war crimes processing. In addition to education and training, the OSCE Mission to BiH will also provide operational support, including financial support for exhumations, investigations and witness travel.



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Sarajevo



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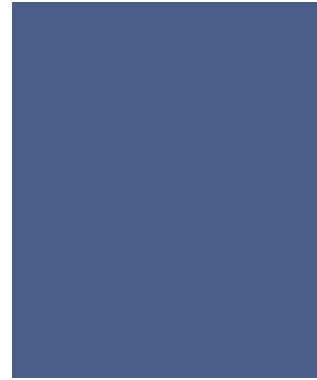
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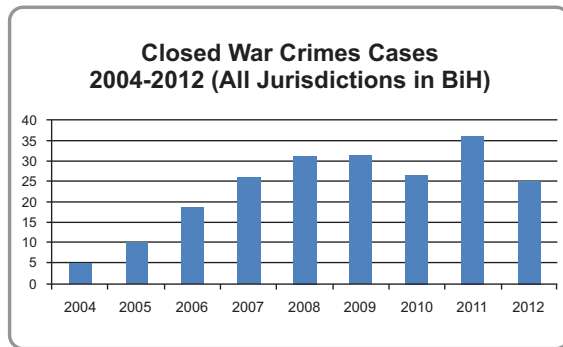


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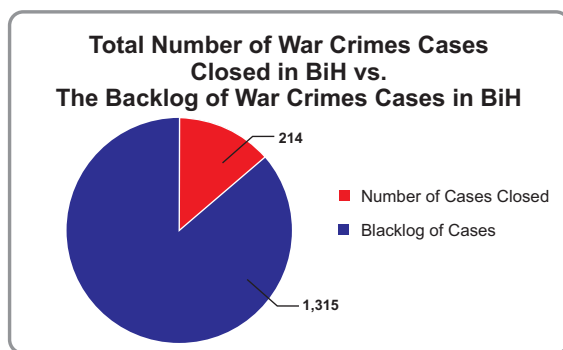
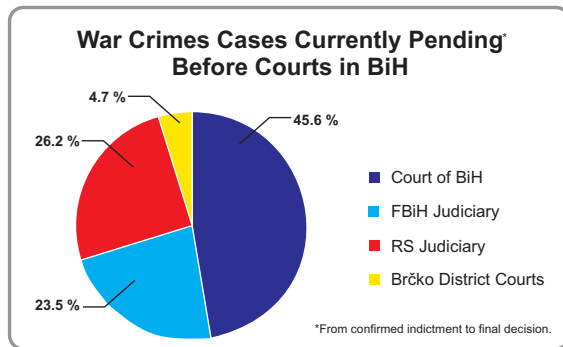
War Crimes Processing in BiH

- **214** war crimes cases were completed in BiH between 2004 and March 2013.
- **235** persons were convicted of war crimes in BiH courts between 2004 and March 2013.
- Those convicted of war crimes between 2004 and March 2013 were sentenced to a combined **2,262** years imprisonment.
- The current (2013) backlog of war crimes cases is **1,315**.
- **3** years remain to process the most serious and complex war crimes cases.
- **10** years remain to process all outstanding war crimes cases.



The War Crimes Processing Project (2013-2014)

- Project implementation is expected to last **15** months.
- **24** legal support staff will be hired to immediately bolster cantonal, district and State-level jurisdictions.
- **65** war crimes investigators will be trained.
- Over **200** judges, prosecutors and defence lawyers dealing with war crimes cases will be trained.
- **100** exhumation visits will be supported for investigators and prosecutors' offices.
- Transportation costs for **150** war crimes witnesses will be supported.
- The project will bridge the funding gap ahead of the 2014-2017 release of **EUR 15 million** of EU-financed IPA funds to assist in war crimes processing.



* These statistics are based on information gathered by the OSCE Mission to BiH through 31 March 2013.

