In 2017, the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina began systematically monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of criminal proceedings in serious corruption cases in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

In the context of the Assessing Needs of Judicial Response to Corruption through Monitoring of Criminal Cases, or the ARC Project, the Mission developed a unique trial monitoring methodology based on the specific features and challenges of the judicial response to corruption.


The Mission’s findings led to the conclusion that the judicial response to corruption in BiH is insufficient, particularly with regard to the processing of medium and high-level cases. This suggests a reality of de facto impunity for such crimes.

To remedy these shortcomings, the Mission provided 24 concrete and actionable recommendations targeting capacity issues at the legal, institutional, and individual levels. The Mission also organized regional peer-to-peer meetings that developed discussions of the reports’ findings and recommendations.
In addition to shaping the priorities of domestic authorities, the Mission’s recommendations influenced concrete actions. For example, the HJPC, following the Mission’s recommendation, adopted criteria to categorize corruption cases according to their seriousness, providing a precise tool to assess the judiciary’s record on corruption.

The fight against corruption in BiH will require sustained efforts, political will, and the implementation of a coherent strategy for many years to come.

Accordingly, the Mission will continue to monitor corruption cases for the foreseeable future, in order to follow-up on the actions taken to improve judicial response to corruption, as well as to measure progress in the processing of such cases by the criminal justice system.

In June 2018, BiH authorities endorsed most of the Mission’s recommendations through several conclusions adopted during a roundtable organized by the European Commission (EC). In September 2018, the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (HJPC) of BiH endorsed the June 2018 roundtable conclusions by embedding them in its action plan on the fight against corruption and organized crime.

The fight against corruption in BiH will require sustained efforts, political will, and the implementation of a coherent strategy for many years to come. Accordingly, the Mission will continue to monitor corruption cases for the foreseeable future, in order to follow-up on the actions taken to improve judicial response to corruption, as well as to measure progress in the processing of such cases by the criminal justice system.