



## Building an operational police force

### Supporting the fight against crime

Police forces across Bosnia and Herzegovina are gradually rebuilding their competences with the support of the European Union Police Mission (EUPM). Whilst the training of police officers and management is critical to the development of an effective force, the provision of modern equipment is also crucial for their ability to fight crime efficiently.

In many cases, equipment in use before the war was damaged or stolen during the fighting, and much of the records kept before the war have also been lost or destroyed. Modern techniques such as DNA analysis require sophisticated laboratory equipment to implement, but even a reliable fingerprint database with computerised search facilities is a significant investment.

With funding from the EU's CARDS programme, a police support unit has been established to help all of Bosnia and Herzegovina's police forces, along with the government ministries responsible for law and order. The police forces in the country must become professional, effective, fair and impartial, and free of political control. The police support unit aims to help them by providing technical assistance and equipment to fight organised crime. In particular, it assists in developing procurement capabilities within the police forces.

It should be stressed however that EU support is not intended to assist in any matter relating to weapons of any type.

### Fingerprints

Comparing fingerprints found at a crime scene with those recorded in past investigations is a long-established technique for identifying possible suspects. But when the comparison has to be done by hand and eye it takes time and effort.

### CARDS

#### Country

Bosnia and Herzegovina

#### Implementation period

2002-2004

#### Funding

€600,000

#### Results

Supporting the reorganisation of BiH police forces, ensuring they have the structures and equipment required to do an effective job.

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All police agencies in BiH,  
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Automating the procedure will make it a much quicker and simpler process to find possible matches, speeding up police work and increasing the chances of criminals being caught.

The police support unit is working with the Forensic Laboratory, located in Sarajevo University's Faculty of Criminology, to help specify and procure the equipment needed to establish a computerised database and fingerprint-matching system. This will allow them to transfer their archive of card-based records to computer. In future, it is planned to adopt other DNA systems to improve crime-fighting abilities further.

### Surveillance

The fight against organised crime requires sophisticated equipment to counter ruthless gangs working with state-of-the-art communications equipment. The project is also helping to provide specialist surveillance equipment, such as micro-cameras and telephone-bugging devices to track the activities of criminals. As well as provision of the equipment, specialist operators within the police and security services are to be trained to use it.



A related initiative will see the establishment of a nationwide secure information system, through which all local police units will have rapid access to information on vehicles and criminal records.

Training sessions have been held regularly within EU Member States to help specialist units within the local police forces adopt the techniques required to operate these new systems effectively.

### Moving forward

Altogether, the police support unit has worked with the local beneficiaries to plan and develop over 13 major projects to increase the capacities of the police forces. These projects will be implemented with CARDS funding in the coming years.