

Inspection



Seized drugs: Situation is alarming

Police regularly seize drugs in the course of their operations, but what happens next? How do they classify and store them? The EU Police Mission's Inspection Department travelled throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina to find out.

"Overall, the situation is alarming," says Salvatore De Blasio, Inspection Team Officer. "Seized drugs are most often stored in inadequate premises, with a poor, if any, security system. In some instances, seized drugs are not even registered. The police sometimes do not even use a logbook, let alone an electronic database!"

The EU Police Mission's inspectors visited the Ministry of Interior of the Sarajevo Canton, SIPA's Regional Office in Sarajevo and the police stations in Bijeljina and Kiseljak.

"We selected a location with particularly high drugs confiscation quotas, a location that is close to the border, a small remote police station and a state-level agency," De Blasio explains.

Inadequate premises

EUPM's inspectors discovered that there is a great contrast with regard to the conditions under which seized drugs are stored throughout the country.

"From the cramped premises of the Sarajevo Canton police, with packages even lying underneath the tables, to the almost perfect premises of SIPA's Anti-Drugs Department, we discovered that there is a huge contrast in the way seized drugs are dealt with throughout the country," says De Blasio.

"From the cramped premises of the Sarajevo Canton police, with packages even underneath the tables, to the almost perfect premises of SIPA's Anti-Drugs Department, which are empty, we discovered that there is a huge contrast in the way seized drugs are dealt with throughout the country."

According to EU best practices, seized drugs should be stored in specially designed premises which comply with security and conservation norms.

"When it comes to drugs storage facilities, every entrance and departure has to be registered with a precise date and hour," explains De Blasio. "Ideally, these premises should have armoured doors and be under closed circuit television (CCTV)

Editorial

For more than a decade, the European Union has been playing a key role in the stabilisation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Numerous assistance programmes and the deployment of two European Defence and Security Policy missions, EUPM and EUFOR, demonstrate the ongoing commitment by the EU, as BiH moves from stabilisation to closer EU integration.

These efforts try to complement BiH's endeavours on its way to full European integration that were strongly supported by the initialling of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) last December. The agreement of main political leaders on police reform achieved in the Mortar Declaration should also provide a basis for hopefully soon signing the SAA.

EUPM has been monitoring, advising and inspecting the BiH police forces, focussing on the police reform process, the strengthening of police accountability and the support to the fight against organised crime. The leadership and staff of EUPM deserve great credit for the results achieved so far.

Austria is trying to contribute to these activities and therefore supports EUPM by sending police experts to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Austria also tried to complement these efforts on a bilateral basis by the appointment of a liaison officer of the Austrian Ministry of Interior in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Austria is also interested in promoting regional cooperation in fighting all types of crime. Since 2006 Austria has been implementing a three-year programme entitled Police cooperation in the field of combating human trafficking and smuggling, and illegal migration that involves some ten countries of South-East Europe, including Bosnia and Herzegovina.

All these endeavours strive towards one common goal for all European countries: the increase of security for their citizens, since a secure environment is the foundation for the prosperity of democracy and economic progress of every society.

The secure environment in BiH is directly attributable to the joint efforts of all EU agencies and the actors of the wider international community in their common efforts with all competent local authorities.

However, all these initiatives would not be successful without the sincere commitment of those involved. I therefore wish to extend to all members of EUPM my best wishes for the further success of their work to achieve our common goals in the fields of security. ■

By Werner Almhofer,
Ambassador of the Republic of Austria
to Bosnia and Herzegovina



Continued on page 2 >>

supervision around the clock."

In Bijeljina, for instance, EUPM's inspectors found out that there is only one police officer who is in charge of the premises. He is responsible for one of the two keys and usually keeps it with him during his leave. The other one is kept in a sealed envelope in the chief's safe in case of emergency.

What's more, the storage is in the basement and does not comply with any security or preservation norms. When exposed to humidity or excessive light, for instance, the chemical composition of certain types of drugs can be altered. In certain cases, this may mean that they could no longer be used as evidence to back up a case before a court.



■ The Bijeljina Public Security Centre does not have a special premise to store seized drugs.

No systematic registration and destruction procedures

Regarding the registration of seized drugs, the inspection team found out that information is not provided in a systematic way, and that it is often not sufficient. Most of it is handwritten. Pages are not numbered and signatures are not authenticated with a stamp.

"This makes it easy to alter the register," says De Blasio. "The handwritten register should respond to certain norms and be backed by an electronic database that would ideally be connected to an entity- or state-level database."

Registration procedures should be harmonised throughout the country. Official log books should be used.

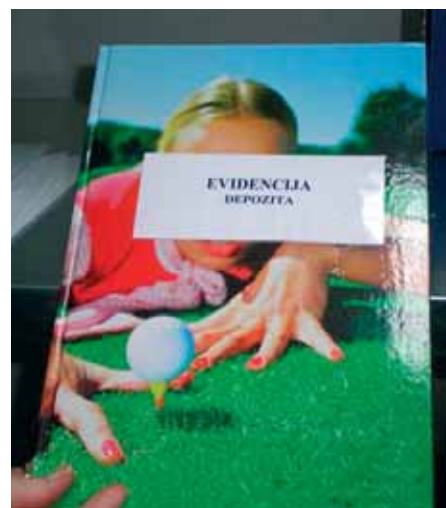
A law on seized goods has been in application since 2003. Since there is no specific law that stipulates how to deal with seized drugs, it is treated as any other piece of evidence.

Only judges are entitled to order the destruction of seized drugs and it seems that procedures are particularly inefficient and slow. A special commission to deal with the destruction of seized drugs was created in 2005, but it has never gathered since then.

"It was created on paper, but they have never held a meeting," deplores De Blasio.

The case of the Sarajevo Canton police

At the Sarajevo Canton police, the inspection team found some drugs that date back to 1996.



■ Log books should respond to certain standards and be the same throughout the country.

illustrates the consequences of such shortcoming perfectly. The inspection team found out that some drugs had been stored there since 1996.

"This is unacceptable," says De Blasio. "This kind of situation calls for a better cooperation between judges, prosecutors and police."

EUPM's Criminal Justice Unit will look into ways to improve the cooperation in this regard.

The Inspection Department also suggests that SIPA's Manual of Principals and Procedures for Material Evidence be used as a model in order to harmonise rules and regulations on drugs handling and destruction throughout the country. ■

Police reform

EUPM hosts donor conference

EUPM and its partners hosted the third Donor Conference in the field of policing on 2 April.

A lot of embassies participated in the conference and expressed interest in supporting training efforts, the fight against police corruption, the management of forensic centres and the creation of a DNA database.

"We have already supported training in the past and we will look into continuing our support in the future," said Gizem Sucuoglu, Third Secretary of the Embassy of Turkey.

EUPM's Head of Mission, Brigadier General Vincenzo Coppola, opened the conference with a brief overview of EUPM's revised strategy with regard to donations. He pointed out that donation activities will focus on supporting police reform and establishing a sustainable and professional police service in BiH. Osman Topcagic, the Director of Directorate for European Integration joined Coppola in thanking all embassies for taking part in this conference.

EUPM and its partners, EC CARDS and ICITAP, aim at adopting a harmonised approach to donor contributions and to focus on tasks that are common to all police forces in their fight against crime, i.e. forensics and telecommunications.

The embassies of the Netherlands, Norway, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, Canada, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy and Japan participated in the conference. Representatives of the Delegation of the European Commission and the High Judicial and Prosecutors Council were also present. ■



"We want to make sure that EUPM gets the attention it deserves"

Police Expert Antonio Molinaro and Political Adviser Alexis Hupin are the EU Police Mission's main points of contact at the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) in Brussels.

They ensure that all issues for which EUPM requires the Council's support or guidance are properly addressed.

"We are working side by side to elaborate strategic documents and monitor the mission's operational capabilities on a daily basis," says Molinaro.

"We just want to ensure that BiH continues to receive the attention it deserves," concludes his colleague Hupin, who joined the CPCC in December last year.

Hupin worked and lived in Bosnia and Herzegovina for more than six years, and he says the biggest challenge in his new

position was to understand the modus operandi of the Council and its Secretariat in Brussels, which is "not a piece of cake."

He currently enjoys his new position, as it provides him with the opportunity to combine his interest in Western Balkans issues with Justice and Home Affairs.

"Besides, joining a recently established capacity such as the CPCC is always an interesting challenge," he adds.

For him, civilian crisis management is an area in which the European Union clearly has an added value. EU Member States have recognised this and therefore wish to enhance their contribution to civilian crisis management missions.

"The possibility to join the EU is as precious as getting a Doctorate degree," says Molinaro, who thoroughly enjoys dealing with ESDP issues. "I was really eager to join the EU and I am so proud to be a part of the European team."

"As a detached national expert, it is great to learn about best EU practices and standards," he goes on. "This is something that will be of great use at the end of my mandate, when I go back to Italy."

After graduating from the law faculty at the Free University of Brussels and the London School of Economics, Hupin joined the Ministry of Interior in Belgium.



■ Alexis Hupin, Political Adviser at the CPCC

He was seconded to the Office of the High Representative to Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1999 as a Legal Advisor and later managed certain Justice and Home Affairs projects for the European Commission Delegation. He left Bosnia and Herzegovina for Sweden in March 2005, where he continued working on projects related to BiH and Kosovo.

Molinaro has been working with the State Police for 23 years now and also joined the CPCC last December. Before that he was working with the EU Division of the International Office of the Department of Public Security in the Ministry of Interior in Rome, covering all the aspects of EU police missions for the various police forces in Italy. ■



■ Antonio Molinaro, Police Expert at the CPCC

Police in BiH

Border police cadets take oath

The 92 members of the fourth generation of Border Police cadets took their oath yesterday at a solemn ceremony at the Police Academy in Sarajevo.

Wishing them a warm welcome, BiH Border Police Director Vinko Dumancic said "I have no doubts in your commitment to embrace all the professional challenges that are ahead of you. I am certain that you have chosen the right path."

This is the fourth generation of cadets that was educated in accordance with the Law on Police Officials and the new curriculum that was adjusted to EU standards and harmonised for all law enforcement agencies in BiH.

The newly graduated police officers have undergone 12 months of training, amounting to 4,200 hours of theory, field instructions, and real-life exercises.

"The BiH Border Police have always paid attention on continuous education and training of its staff" said Dumancic. "We are aware that only well-trained and professionally skilled staff members can deal with the ever-rising challenges related to the control



of our borders and the fight against all forms of cross-border crime." ■

122 response is not satisfactory

With its yellow posters and billboards, 122 has become a recognisable and corporate police number. Police Spokespersons report an increase of citizens' calls. However, one year after the launch of the Your Security - Our Obligation campaign by the EU Police Mission and BiH law enforcement agencies, the way in which data are being collected and processed is still far away from the envisaged standards.

Police stations in BiH do not have adequate recording devices, nor trained staff. In most police stations, calls are still being registered manually and recorded on paper. There is no systematic analysis, nor a computer system to support data collection and processing.

"I think that recording devices would

help us improve the way we process 122 calls," explains Jusuf Zornic, Spokesperson of the Canton Sarajevo police, emphasising that the police stations of the Sarajevo Canton are seeing a progressive increase in the number of calls, many of which help them advance their investigations.

One recording device costs £5,000. Technically, pending police reform and the introduction of a centralised response system to 122 and emergency calls, 15 such devices would be necessary to cover the entire country.

In the Republika Srpska, the Public Security Centres of Banja Luka, Doboj and Trebinje also noticed an upward trend as far as 122 calls are concerned. Bojana Gasevic, Spokesperson of the Banja Luka Public Security Centre, assessed that the

15 police stations in her area of responsibility receive an average of 130 calls every day.

The popularity of the 122 police number has also increased in the Brcko District.

"Just recently, on 22 March, a citizen's call allowed us to catch red-handed two people who were trying to rob a newsstand," says Halid Emkic of Brcko District Police.

Unfortunately, police agencies in BiH currently do not consider recording systems a priority within their limited budgets, not realising the importance of such investment where even one useful tip can help the police immensely, as illustrated by the Brcko District case. ■



■ A control room in the United Kingdom



■ A control room in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Vox populi

Would you call 122?

According to Police Spokespersons the popularity of the 122 police number is on the increase.

We asked citizens whether they would call 122 to share information about a crime case to the police. To those who told us they had already dialled 122 we asked whether they were satisfied with the response they got.

Samir (26), tradesman, Sarajevo

It's 112, but I don't have any problems and I have never called them in my life. I would of course call them if I had information about someone doing something illegal, but it also depends on of what kind of crime we are here talking about. I do really trust our police, but I think they should have far more competences. Everything would be so much easier if the police had more power to deal with problems. Their hands are tied by the international police forces in this country. That I why I think they should give them their batons back, and all our problems would be solved.

Elmir (35), unemployed waiter, Mostar

I know that number is 122, and I called it before, but I wasn't pleased. I don't think that I would call them if I had some information about crime cases. I think I would probably call the Krimolovci hotline because it's anonymous.

Milena (28), saleswoman, Banja Luka

I am familiar with the police number because I called 122 and 337-100 a few times. I am mostly satisfied, although there was one time when I called the police to report noise coming from the neighbouring apartment, but the duty police officer told me to call the nearby police station. I would surely call them if I had some information about crime cases, because I strongly believe the information the police receives from the citizens can help them to resolve the crime cases. I trust them, and I expect them to protect the citizens.

Sejla (22), student, Sarajevo

I think it is 124. No, sorry, I think it's 122. But I was luckily never in a situation where I needed their assistance. Currently, I would say that I

General Coppola awards Service Medals to EU Police Mission Members

Brigadier General Vincenzo Coppola, Head of the European Union Police Mission, awarded European Security and Defence Policy Service Medals to over 70 mission members on 4 April.

"With these medals, I wish to thank you for your service and commitment to EUPM's goals towards the professionalisation and modernisation of police work in BiH," said General Coppola.

He confirmed that the EU Police Mission will continue to implement its mandate with a strong focus on the support to the local police fight against organised crime. He emphasised that the fight against crime needs strong coordination among the police agencies of BiH and close cooperation between police and prosecutors.

"EUPM's crime advisors, in cooperation with our criminal justice experts, nurture better relations between police and prosecution. The mission has also gained expertise to monitor what hap-



pens with high-risk individuals in pre-trial detention and in prisons," added Coppola. "I am confident that the problem of organised crime in Bosnia and Herzegovina can be controlled, if politicians allow police to put the right tools in place. There are professional and responsible police officers who want to work and achieve results."

He recognised that in the last few years, entity and cantonal police have strengthened their performance in upholding public peace and order in a satisfactory way.

"However, their fragmentation into 13

different police administrations intrinsically undermines further progress in fighting organized and major crime, which police reform should resolve, not only because of EU integrations, but more importantly, for the better security of BiH citizens" concluded General Coppola.

Today's ceremony was attended by Stefan Feller, Head of Operations for all Civilian Missions within the European Security and Defence Policy, and other international and national police officials. ■



trust our police, but I think it in general depends on the situation. That is why I am not sure if I would call them if I had information on somebody committing crimes. I also don't have any kind of expectations related to our police.

Aleksa (54), technician, Banja Luka

I know about the 122 number, and I think most citizens do. I have used the number several times and I was always satisfied with the reaction. They came to the crime scene quickly and behaved very professionally. I fully trust our police and I would call them immediately if I had some information about crime offences. I believe that most police officers perform their duties very professionally and responsibly. Surely, I expect from them to protect the citizens in the best possible manner.

Ivo (73), pensioner, Sarajevo

I have no idea which number I should dial, because I never needed it. I would surely report to the police if I had any information on someone who committed a crime, because I fully trust them. I don't see any reason why I should not trust them.

Marina (48), secretary, Mostar

The number is 122, but I never called them. I would if I had some information about crime because I am sick of all the thieves around me. I trust the police and I think they should get higher salaries, which would motivate them to perform their duties better.

Almira (41) saleswoman, Sarajevo

I don't know the number, although I face situations daily where I should call them. I simply don't have the courage to do it. Since I never call them, I also don't know how they would react and I can hardly say what expectations I would have related to our police. I can only say, if I had information about somebody who committed a crime, I would never report it to our domestic police. I think I would rather call the international police forces.

From Gasi to the Pale murders

Kaarlo Askola, the Head of the Sarajevo Regional Office, says his area of responsibility is very exiting and challenging for an international police officer. Against the background of the recent arrest of Muhamed Ali Gasi, the unsolved series of murders in Pale and the ethnical tensions in the Zepce area, it would be difficult to disagree with him.

As a matter of fact, EUPM's Regional Office in Sarajevo covers a 'happening' area comprising of three Field Offices, respectively Pale, Travnik and Sarajevo, and the Federation Ministry of Interior. The 29 members of the Regional Office - 16 international and 13 national staff members - cover a huge region which transcends inter-entity border lines.

The area of responsibility of EUPM's Field Office in Pale covers the East Sarajevo Public Security Centre and Canton Gorazde, whereas the Field Office in Travnik covers two cantons - Travnik and Zenica.

Obsolete investigation methods

While monitoring the series of unsolved murders in Pale and in Sarajevo, EUPM's Regional Office noticed that their counterparts' investigation methods need to be improved. Clear procedures need to be established and carefully implemented.

"Amongst other issues, they have to learn how to use formal channels to collect information from abroad," says Askola.

Crime scenes are not sealed properly and it sometimes takes days to analyse fingerprints or DNA samples. Interviewing techniques are often obsolete. Investigators still use so-called polygraphs or lie detectors.

"The results of a polygraph test cannot be used as evidence in front of a court," explains Askola.

Moreover, cooperation between the uniform police and criminal investigators does not run smoothly. According to EUPM's Chief Adviser, the uniform police in the



■ From left to right: Kaarlo Askola, Chief Adviser; Lejla Gadzo, Assistant to the Chief Adviser; Elena Benkova, Team Leader of the Field Office Sarajevo(Canton 9); Sehija Soja, Assistant; Markos Novak, Adviser; Andrea Radmilovic, Assistant and Ernesa Hasanac, Assistant.

Federation are too passive.

"They do not voluntarily collect information about suspect movements or activities to their colleagues from the Criminal Investigations Department," says Askola.

Great cooperation with Himzo Selimovic

Askola and his colleague Elena Benkova, Team Leader of EUPM's Field Office in Sarajevo, both emphasise their extremely good cooperation with the Commissioner of the Sarajevo Canton police, Himzo Selimovic, and the Director of the Federation Police Administration, Zlatko Miletic. If he could make a wish, Askola would like his BiH counterparts to regard EUPM officers as team members, rather than international supervisors.

"Our policing systems and mentalities are very similar," says Benkova, from the Slovak Republic. *"This is a great asset in providing my counterparts with valuable experience and advice."*

Internally, the Regional Office looks like a big multi-cultural family. They meet around a coffee every morning to plan their day of

work and often meet up after work for dinners or other activities.

"I have been working with the EUPM for six years and I am attached to the organisation and its people," says Lejla Gadzo, the Assistant to the Chief Adviser.

Her colleague, Ernesa Hasanac jokes: *"I have a kind of infatuation with police work, since I have been working with police officers for 14 years, first with IPTF and now with EUPM."*

"I am happy to help our international police officers communicate with their BiH counterparts," she goes on. *"It is also a great way to learn about the various languages and cultures of the European Union."*

The discovery of another culture was Markus Nowak's main incentive to embark on missions in the Balkans: *"This is my second mission in the Balkans. Previously I was in Kosovo."* Nowak is now an adviser to the Federation Ministry of Interior.

"I like to see and compare how police officers from various countries solve problems on the field," he concludes. *"This is my main motivation."* ■

Police in BiH

SIPA cadets take oath

The 18 members of the second generation of SIPA cadets took their oath at a solemn ceremony at the Police Academy in Sarajevo on 31 March 2008.

Addressing the new members of the State Investigation and Protection Agency Director Mirko Lujic said that working for SIPA is challenging but above all honorable job.

"SIPA's agenda requires professional and committed personnel, prepared to fight the most severe forms of crime to the benefit of citizens. I am happy that SIPA has been reinforced with this group of young and educated people who will contribute to the accomplishment of this agenda," said Lujic.

Brian Donley, SIPA Chief Advisor also congratulated the new generation of cadets on joining the young organization of SIPA



and said they could consider themselves the leaders of the future if they seize the opportunities offered in their initial training and beyond. ■

Trebinje: crime rate decreases

Trebinje has been in the centre of media attention since 23 January, when the Municipal Assembly rejected the report by the Public Security Centre about of the security situation in the town. "The entire town is in fear of about 20 criminals whose names are known to everyone," the Assembly's members claimed. They threatened to request the dismissal of police officials in the area unless adequate measures were taken to stabilise the situation.

What measures have been taken by the Public Security Centre since then? And have these brought about any improvements to the security situation in the area?

In the immediate aftermath of the Municipal Assembly's expression of discontent, the Ministry of Interior of Republika Srpska and the Trebinje Public Security Centre strengthened security measures in the area.

Police set up checkpoints to prevent car theft and crime in general. Patrol cars drive through the area around the clock.

"About 50 police officers from other police stations have temporary been redeployed to Trebinje," says Goran Zubac,

Chief of the Public Security Centre of Trebinje.

EUPM's Field Office in Trebinje has contributed to the reinforcement of security measures since the very beginning, offering advice to their counterparts and monitoring the implementation of the security measures.

"The Trebinje police and EUPM are still actively working on this issue, which we consider top priority," says Erik Van de Castele, Team Leader of the Field Office in Trebinje. "We expect more results in the near future. The details of upcoming operations cannot be disclosed at this stage, but EUPM is closely monitoring the situation."

So far, the Public Security Centre's reinforced measures turned out to be effective, insofar as the number of stolen cars has dropped significantly and the security situation seems to have improved.

"Since 1 February, when we started implementing reinforced security measures and activities, only three cars were stolen, and all three were recovered," Zubac highlights.

Compared to the 29 stolen vehicles in January, this signals a positive trend.

"We recorded a significant decrease of



■ Goran Zubac, Chief of the Public Security Centre of Trebinje, and Erik Van de Castele, Team Leader of EUPM's Field Office in Trebinje.

the general crime rate as well," adds Zubac.

At the last session of the Municipal Assembly of Trebinje, which took place on 13 March, the councillors acknowledged the latest decrease in crime rates. However, they added that they would not assess the security situation as satisfactory until certain organised car theft networks have been busted.

Meanwhile, on 25 March, Trebinje police carried out a successful operation, arresting four suspected drug traffickers and seizing 309 grams of cocaine.

"Four notorious criminals have been put behind bars," says Erik Van de Castele. "They were involved in all kinds of crime, which created the feeling of insecurity in the town." ■

Media

EUPM organises PR training for SIPA cadets

The EU Police Mission organised an advanced PR skills training session for SIPA seniors from 31 March to 5 April 2008.

For a week, the Media Centre of Sarajevo, and the Centre for Strategy and Communication of London trained and coached eight previously selected senior staff members to develop and improve their television performance - public speaking - and communication strategy skills.

"I welcome this initiative of EUPM and SIPA to increase the transparency of our work and thus improve the public's awareness of the important work we do for the security of our country," said Dragisa Stanic, one of the participants.

For the majority of participants, the mock press conferences and one-on-one studio interviews conducted by professional journalists were the most exciting, but also the most challenging moments.

Selma Delalic, the Acting Spokesperson of SIPA, who also attended the training, expects a lot from this experience: "We need to be more proactive as far as our external communication



is concerned, especially since we play a key role in fighting major and organised crime, which is crucial for the long-term prosperity and sustainability of BiH."

All eight participants received certificates jointly issued by the Media Centar Sarajevo and its partner, the Centre for Strategy and Communication (CSC) of London. ■

Nature's way to celebrate Spring

There are many sights to see in this country in spring, but if you don't want to be dependant on Bosnia's shifting weather, head for Herzegovina and its Hutovo blato, an ornithological reserve marshland located 30 kilometres south of Mostar.

This beautifully preserved example of nature's finest work has been placed on the list of important bird habitats by the International Council for Bird Protection, and for a good reason: it is the largest of its kind in this part of Europe, in terms of both size and diversity. Hutovo blato is home to over 240 types of migratory birds and dozens that make their permanent home in these sub-Mediterranean wetlands surrounding Deransko Lake. In the migration season, tens of thousands of birds fill this lake and its surroundings.

But migratory birds are hardly the only attraction of this unique area. The reserve provides an exceptional oasis amongst the harsh arid karst of western Herzegovina. Teeming with freshwater fish, wild duck, geese, coots, hawks, herons, pheasants, wild boar and wild horses, it accommodates birdwatchers, nature lovers and families with children alike.

The best way to see Hutovo blato is to rent a boat, which can be done from the reserve's only hotel, "Karaotok". Per hour,



these boats cost 40KM (for up to six persons), 60KM (for up to ten persons) or 100KM (for ten to 15 persons). They come with a professional biologist guide, who speaks English and takes an additional 30KM.

Hutovo blato is located only five kilometres from the city of Capljina and is marked with clear signs on the M-17. There is no entrance fee to the park and it is open all year round, providing access to the picnic area, restaurant/café, and the newly renovated hotel. For more information, visit www.hutovo-blato.ba. The website is available in English as well. ■



Recipe

Bosanski Lonac

Bosanski lonac (literal translation "Bosnian Pot") is an authentic Bosnian culinary speciality, appreciated for its rich taste and flexibility. It is impossible to define *the* recipe for this dish, as there are many variations, but the main ingredients are mostly the same: meat and various vegetables.

The main concept of preparing the *bosanski lonac* is to put meat and vegetables in levels (one level meat, then one level of vegetables, then meat, vegetables and so on) into a pot with 1 - 2 dl water or white wine. Remember to cut ingredients in rather large pieces.

You should use a deep pot. Originally, *bosanski lonac* was made in ceramic pots that were then put in the fireplace or a pit in the ground. That would be perfect, but today, not everyone has a fireplace available for cooking, so you can always use a normal deep pot.

Since the pieces of meat and vegetables are rather large, it takes about four hours till the meal is cooked.

Here is one typical recipe for *bosanski lonac*:

Ingredients:

- 1 kg beef or lamb
- 2-3 carrots
- 3-4 large tomatoes
- 3-4 large potatoes
- 2 bell peppers
- 2 onions
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1/2 tablespoon cooking oil
- 1/2 tablespoon vinegar
- 2-3 bay leaves
- Salt and pepper
- Parsley
- Water
- White wine (optional)
- Vegeta (optional)



Preparation:

Cut up vegetables in large pieces. Cut meat in large, bite sized pieces. Layer meat, vegetables, herbs, and spices in a previously oiled deep pot (one layer of vegetables, one layer of meat, and so on). Add 1-2 dl of white wine and water (white wine is optional, you can just add water). Cook on low to medium heat until meat and vegetables are cooked (usually takes at least about three hours). **NOTE:** Do not stir the stew; just let the vegetables and meat simmer together.



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