



Centar za istraživačko novinarstvo

Drug Abuse in BiH Prisons

Sarajevo 2009

The Background

Reporters from the Center for Investigative Reporting in Sarajevo (CIN) talked to dozens of inmates in Foca, Zenica, Tuzla, Sarajevo and Mostar prisons during 2007. Research was part of a project called “Hard drug state” by CIN.

According to our findings , younger prisoners were typically drawn in to drug abuse by older inmates, who gave out heroin free as a way to hook younger prisoners, who become future customers.

Experts opinion

Criminologists and psychologists who are working in prisons, says most prisoners use drugs because they have trouble adapting to prison life.

They say those who are weak, succumb to a frustrating situation, and prison is a frustrating situation. Their capability to prevail in those challenges is not enough to keep them on the surface.

Prison drug smuggling has increased

- Instances of prisoners caught with drugs have increased. Guards caught five prisoners inside Republika Srpska (RS) facilities in 2005. In 2006, 19 were caught in the entity's six prisons. In Tuzla, the number has grown from two to nine between 2002 and 2007.
-

Percentage of addicts in prison

- Experts who have worked in prisons for years said that when they started to work, addicts were exceptions in the prisoner population, and today there are some treatment groups where the percentage of addicts is between 20 and 40, and sometimes as high as 50 percent.
-

Organized drug groups operate in Zenica.

- Between March and December 2007, 26 prisoners were caught with drugs in Zenica prisoner. When 12 people were found with drugs in August of 2007 alone, authorities identified and isolated eight prisoners whom they identified as direct or indirect participants in drug dealing.
-

One of the members of organize group who was dealing in

Tuzla prison:

- "I saw other prisoners who were already working with drugs. I saw you could make good money. I took part of the drugs for myself and the rest I mixed with plywood, for example. If the stuff was good, on 20 grams I added six, seven grams of mix."
-

The price of drugs in prison is much higher than on the street

- For example, a gram of heroin can be divided into 10 to 15 "lines" which are sold for 30 KM each. By comparison, street heroin can be bought for 10 KM for a similar dose. Inmates pay with 30 KM telephone cards. A dealer can earn from 300 KM to 450 KM per gram
 - A typical addict will easily consume 1 gram or more per day if it is available.
-

The way how to get drugs in prison

- Convicts get their drugs from various sources. The easiest way is to smuggle the drugs into the prison by themselves. BH law allows for prisoners who behave well to leave the prison for a few days, called "weekends." Most drug seizures occurred when prisoners returned to prison from this time off and tried to smuggle them in.
-

Drugs lead to death for some in prison

- There were possibly five fatalities from heroin overdoses in the past three years in BH prisons
 - Elvir Sejdinovic, 22, was found dead in Doboj district prison in 2005. A toxicology report showed Sejdinović had consumed heroin, which could have caused his death
 - Zvonimir Cabrajic, 28, also died from heroin overdose in a Zenica prison cell
 - An inmate at Tuzla prison, Fuad Girotić, died from a heroin overdose in late December 2007. A Tuzla Canton MUP investigation found that Ines Stanković, his common law wife, transferred a package of heroin to Girotić when kissing. Girotić died of an overdose late that night.
-

HVALA
