

Corridor Vc in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The public cost of weak governance



Author

Alma Midžić

Human rights and Community support coordinator

CEE Bankwatch Network

alma.midzic@bankwatch.org

Acknowledgements

Pippa Gallop, CEE Bankwatch Network

Executive summary

Formally launched in 2000, the Corridor Vc motorway project in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) was initially expected to be completed by 2012. However, its implementation has been marked by persistent delays, rising costs and ongoing concerns about procurement and integrity. After more than two decades, only around 45% of the 330-kilometre motorway has been completed at a cost of nearly EUR 5.2 billion. The 10-kilometre twin-tube Prenj Tunnel is expected to take about six years to complete and cost at least another EUR 1 billion. Consequently, the Corridor Vc motorway is unlikely to be completed by the end of this decade.

The project has faced numerous problems, including changes to the route without public consultation, a large number of complaints submitted to the EBRD's Independent Project Accountability Mechanism (IPAM), failed tenders, allegations of fraud and corruption, and unresolved questions concerning state and military property.

These challenges are compounded by the broader governance context in BiH. The European Commission has consistently reported issues such as corruption, state capture, weak accountability, and the selective and non-transparent management of judicial proceedings in cases related to corruption in public procurement. According to Transparency International Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)'s 2025 Corruption Perceptions Index, BiH scored 34 out of 100, ranking it among the four lowest-scoring countries in Europe, alongside Serbia, Belarus and Russia.¹

This briefing examines nine cases that highlight weaknesses in the planning, procurement, management, and implementation of Corridor Vc. Together, they point to a recurring pattern of cost increases, prolonged delays, disputed procurement procedures, weak institutional oversight, unresolved property disputes, and inadequate engagement with affected communities.

Among other developments, in October 2025, the European Public Prosecutor's Office formally identified six suspects in connection with alleged cross-border corruption relating to the Medakovo–Poprikuše section. In December 2025, a leaked internal document from JP Autoceste (JPAC) – the public company responsible for building the motorway – indicated that the European Investment Bank (EIB) had suspended all disbursements for Corridor Vc.

The Vranduk–Ponirak section encapsulates the scale of the project's failures: its planned 24-month construction period has stretched from an initial completion date of August 2021 to at least mid-2027, while estimated costs have doubled from EUR 76.59 million to EUR 153 million. In February 2025, 15 people were arrested in the 'Koridor' police operation over the alleged misuse of EUR 19.5 million through tenders and fictitious contracts linked to the section.

¹ Transparency International Bosnia and Herzegovina, [BiH među četiri najlošije pozicionirane zemlje u Evropi po stanju korupcije](#), 10 February 2026.

On the Zenica bypass, auditors recorded EUR 40.5 million in additional works, a EUR 2.8 million increase in supervision costs, and a two-year delay on the Klopče–Donja Gračanica subsection.

Further south, the Mostar South–Kvanj Tunnel route was incorporated into the project-level spatial plan without public consultation, triggering conflict with local communities. IPAM subsequently found that the route selection process had failed to comply with the EBRD’s standards and has since registered 21 additional complaints, whose resolution is likely to delay project implementation further.

Transparency International BiH has warned that leadership appointments in public enterprises are frequently shaped by political influence and patronage, and JPAC appears to be no exception.² Recurring procurement controversies, adverse audit findings, and investigations spanning several management mandates point to persistent weaknesses in institutional oversight and accountability. The Koridor investigation, reportedly involving five former JPAC directors, illustrates how responsibility for decisions and contracts has become dispersed across successive administrations and increasingly difficult to trace.

Among other recommendations, the international financial institutions involved in the project, as well as the EU, should:

- publicly disclose the current status of Corridor Vc financing and any conditions attached to its continuation;
- require unresolved planning, property, procurement and consultation issues to be addressed before approving further financing or contracts, and waive commitment fees where delays result from these unresolved preconditions; and
- make any further financing for Mostar South–Kvanj Tunnel conditional on a transparent reassessment of route alternatives and renewed, meaningful engagement with affected communities.

JPAC and the government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) should, among other measures, update traffic projections, assess less harmful and less costly alternatives, and demonstrate that the relevant sections are adequately prepared before seeking financing or committing to routes and designs that could prevent future changes. The FBiH government must also choose JPAC directors based on merit and demonstrated personal integrity, rather than party political affiliation.

² Transparency International Bosnia and Herzegovina, [Analiza politika u oblasti zapošljavanja u javnim preduzećima u BiH](#), 28 February 2024.

Introduction

The Corridor Vc motorway project³ in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) spans 330 kilometres and has been a longstanding source of political discord. Initial estimates indicated that this major infrastructure project was expected to be completed as early as 2012,⁴ but it has been marked by persistent delays, escalating costs and recurring procurement and integrity concerns. By late August 2026, approximately 155 kilometres of the motorway had been opened to traffic, including the newly opened 7-kilometre Doboju Jug–Medakovo subsection. However, this subsection is not yet connected to the operational motorway network towards Sarajevo and Zenica,^{5, 6} and projections suggesting completion by 2030 now appear unrealistically optimistic.⁷

The project formally began in 2000, with the laying of the foundation stone by Edhem Bičakčić, then Prime Minister of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH). Less than a year later, he was removed from his subsequent position as director of the public electricity utility JP Elektroprivreda and banned from holding public office by the Office of the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina due to concerns over corruption.⁸ While Corridor Vc continued to move forward, its inauspicious beginning already pointed to a difficult governance environment, with later stages of the project continuing to raise questions about transparency, planning and public oversight.

The completion timeline for the motorway remains uncertain, and the longer it takes, the higher the stakes – and costs. The project’s final bill is still unclear, but as of July 2026, the total cost had reached almost EUR 5.2 billion⁹ – a massive sum for a country of fewer than 3.5 million people¹⁰ – and is set to rise by at least another EUR 1 billion if the 10-kilometre Prenj Tunnel is built.¹¹

JP Autoceste (JPAC), the Federation-owned public company responsible for building Corridor Vc, has so far received almost EUR 4.4 billion in loans and grants from the EU’s Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF), the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

³ For an overview of the project, see: CEE Bankwatch Network, [Corridor Vc motorway, Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), accessed 27 July 2026.

⁴ FENA, [Koridor 5C je trebao biti gotov 2012. godine, a od 337 km do sada je izgrađeno 108](#), Klix, 14 June 2019.

⁵ JP Autoceste FBiH, [Izvještaj o realizaciji projekta: Izgradnja autoceste na Koridoru Vc u Federaciji BiH zaključno sa 30.06.2026. godine](#), 3, July 2026.

⁶ Bljesak.info, [Sedam kilometara otvoreno, Koridor Vc i dalje nepovezan: Gdje zapinje gradnja autocesta u BiH?](#), 25 August 2026.

⁷ Ivana Raonić, [Koridor 5C do 2030. godine: Mostar i Prenj najveći izazovi](#), Bloomberg Adria, 1 November 2024. The article stated that works on the Prenj Tunnel and the Mostar North–Mostar South section were expected to start by the end of 2024; this did not materialise.

⁸ Wolfgang Petritsch, [Decision removing Edhem Bicakcic from his position as Director of Elektroprivreda for actions during his term as Prime Minister of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), Office of the High Representative, 23 February 2001.

⁹ Western Balkans Investment Framework, [Corridor Vc Motorway in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), accessed 27 July 2026.

¹⁰ Eurostat, [Population change – Demographic balance and crude rates at national level](#), last updated 21 July 2026. No more recent Eurostat data is available and no census has been carried out since 2013. However, outward migration has continued and some estimates put the population in 2022 as low as 2.7 million. See Hamza Karcic, [Bosnia is Becoming Depopulated – What to do About it?](#), Balkan Insight, 15 November 2022.

¹¹ European Investment Bank, [Corridor Vc Tunnel Prenj](#), 16 March 2021.

(EBRD).¹² As of July 2026, the EIB¹³ and EBRD¹⁴ are both considering loans for the Prenj Tunnel. Additionally, companies from the United States have expressed interest in financing and constructing parts of Corridor Vc, particularly the Prenj Tunnel, potentially under a concession or similar model.¹⁵

EU standards and principles, public involvement, and accountability are essential for any project involving EU public funds, but especially for one of this size and cost. BiH's record in managing projects and adhering to the basic rights and standards required by the EBRD and EIB is not exactly stellar.

Issues around the Corridor Vc arose early in the 2000s, when plans to route the motorway through the agricultural Neretva Valley south of Mostar faced strong opposition, leading to a shift towards a route on the nearby Podveležje plateau. A 2011 analysis found this ridge route more economically viable, but its approval was not completed due to political resistance. Although the FBiH government approved the new route in December 2011, the House of Peoples of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina stalled its progress.

In 2016, a new valley route via Ortiješ Airport was proposed, but it was controversial because the route had been changed for the Prenj and south-of-Mostar sections without holding public consultations. The House of Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted the project-level spatial plan, including this route, in January 2017, followed by the House of Peoples in February 2017. The text of the plan makes clear that public consultation on the route had only been held in 2011.¹⁶ The EBRD's Independent Project Accountability Mechanism (IPAM) also confirmed in early 2024 that the route had not been selected in line with EBRD standards.¹⁷

¹² Western Balkans Investment Framework, [Corridor Vc Motorway in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#).

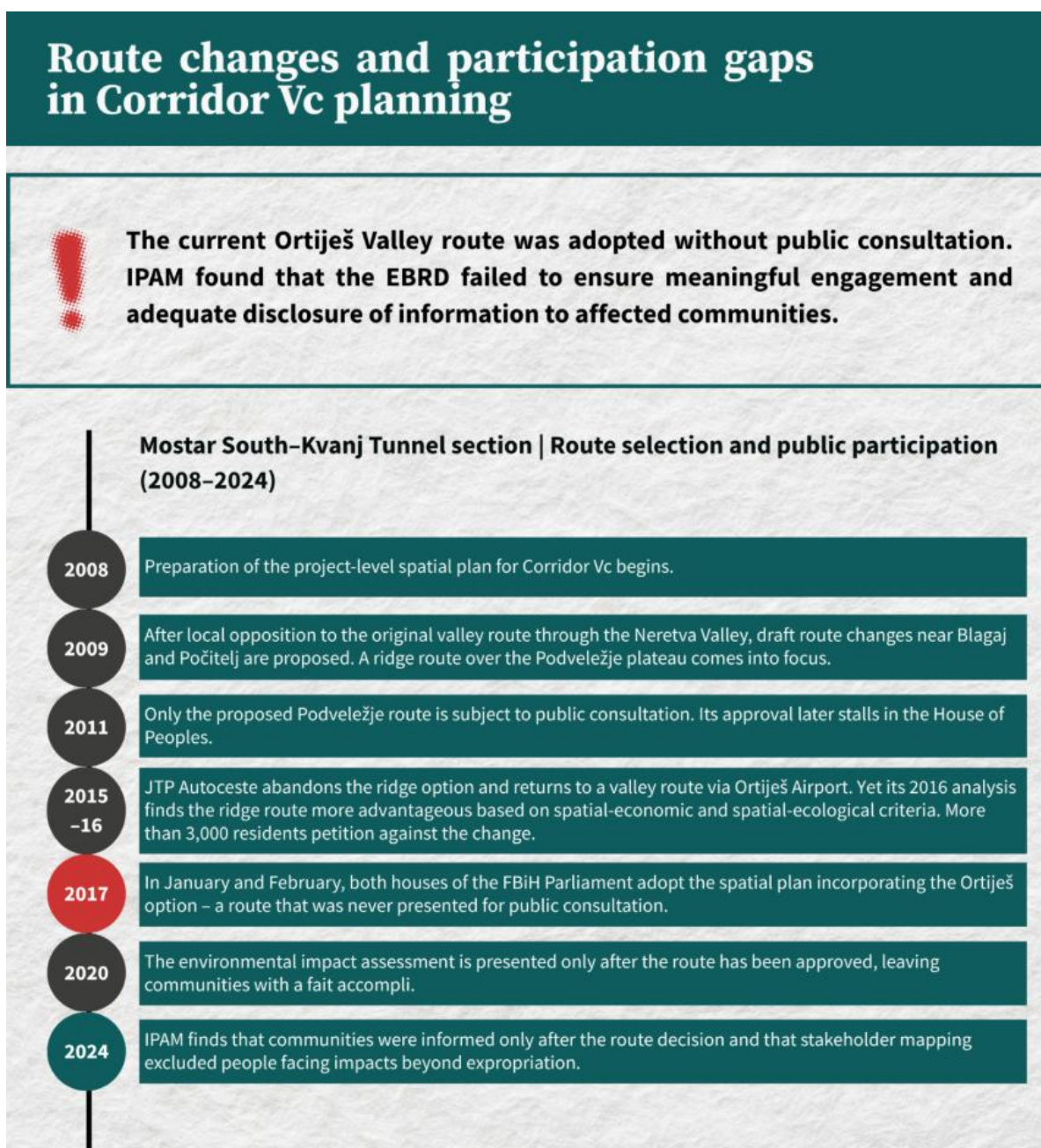
¹³ European Investment Bank, [Corridor Vc Tunnel Prenj](#).

¹⁴ European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, [The Tunnel Prenj](#), 27 February 2024.

¹⁵ Lejla Memčić Herić, [Nikšić traži američko svjetlo na kraju tunela: Ide li Prenj pod koncesiju](#), Odgovor, 5 June 2026.

¹⁶ Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, [Prostorni plan područja posebnih obilježja od značaja za Federaciju Bosne i Hercegovine "Autocesta na Koridoru Vc" za period od 20 godina](#), 25 December 2017.

¹⁷ European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, [Corridor Vc in FBH – Part 3 | Complaints](#), accessed 27 July 2026.

Figure 1. Route changes and participation gaps in Corridor Vc planning.¹⁸

Public consultations must be repeated if significant changes take place, with relevant information about the decision to be taken and the rationale for it made available to the public. Such consultations must be meaningful and take place when all options are still open. The fact that the FBiH government has declared Corridor Vc to be of ‘public interest’ does not diminish the need to ensure that route selection and public consultations are carried out properly – quite the opposite.

¹⁸ CEE Bankwatch Network, [Corridor Vc motorway, Bosnia and Herzegovina | Routing decision made without public consultations](#); Independent Project Accountability Mechanism, [Compliance Review Report | Corridor Vc in FBH – Part 3 | EBRD Project Number 49058 | Case 2020/06 | October 2023](#), 11 January 2024; Alma Midžić, [Corridor Vc in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Environmental and social impacts can no longer be ignored](#), CEE Bankwatch Network, 17 October 2025.

When institutions avoid genuinely informing the public and discussing alternatives, unresolved conflicts emerge during implementation. Failure to meaningfully involve affected communities is not merely a participation issue. It can deepen mistrust, trigger local resistance, prolong implementation and increase costs – all of which have already been witnessed during the construction of this project.

The European Commission’s 2025 assessment of BiH’s accession progress provides important context for understanding the governance risks surrounding Corridor Vc, particularly the Commission’s concerns about corruption, state capture and weak accountability. For this briefing, one finding is especially pertinent: the Commission warned that the selective and non-transparent handling of judicial proceedings in corruption cases related to public procurement remains a major cause for concern.

This broader institutional context is directly relevant to Corridor Vc, as the project has been plagued by allegations of corruption for years. In October 2025, the European Public Prosecutor’s Office formally named six individuals as suspects, including three Bosnian public officials, in connection with alleged cross-border corruption regarding consultancy work for the Medakovo–Poprikuše section.¹⁹ In December 2025, an internal JPAC document was leaked to the media, showing that the EIB had stopped disbursement of all funds for the motorway more than six months earlier.²⁰ Media reports also indicate that representatives of several international banks, including the EIB and EBRD, told the FBiH government at a closed meeting in May 2026 that no further loan tranche disbursements would be made until corrective measures were taken, following findings of alleged corruption during construction of the motorway.²¹

Corruption in BiH remains a major challenge

The European Commission’s Bosnia and Herzegovina 2025 report reiterates concerns raised in its previous reports and identifies persistent, systemic weaknesses in the prevention and prosecution of corruption, public-sector integrity, and public procurement. It concludes that no progress was made in the fight against corruption.²²

This assessment is supported by the following findings:

- **Political authorities failed to address widespread corruption** and actively obstructed reforms, contributing to prolonged stagnation and growing signs of state capture. The state-

¹⁹ European Public Prosecutor’s Office, [EPPO in Italy charges Bosnian public officials for corruption in motorway construction project](#), 13 October 2025.

²⁰ Avdo Avdić, [Zbog istrage evropskog tužioca protiv Lasića i Dževlana: Evropska investicijska banka obustavila finansiranje Autoceste Federacije BiH!](#), Istraga, 22 December 2025.

²¹ Amil Dučić, [EIB i EBRD o korupciji u JP Autoceste FBiH, kažu da imaju dokument od 1.600 stranica!](#), Fokus, 26 May 2026.

²² European Commission, [Commission Staff Working Document | Bosnia and Herzegovina 2025 Report | Accompanying the document | Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions | 2025 Communication on EU enlargement policy](#), 6, 4 November 2025.

level conflict-of-interest law remained poorly implemented, while political interference, pressure and intimidation continued to undermine the handling of high-profile corruption cases. Consequently, the enforcement record remained extremely weak, with convictions exceptionally rare – particularly in high-level corruption cases.²³

- **There was no progress in restructuring publicly owned enterprises.** Their substantial debt risks remain inadequately monitored and managed, while many continue to rely on budgetary support. Despite formal transparency requirements, appointments to company boards remain highly politicised, and effective oversight and governance mechanisms are still lacking.²⁴
- **Persistent weaknesses also remain in public-service integrity.** There is still no system for collecting and consolidating data on the integrity of civil servants, while no progress was made towards establishing a professional and depoliticised civil service. Entity-level recruitment rules continue to allow political influence, particularly in senior appointments, and there was no legislative progress on whistle-blower protection in the Federation.²⁵
- **Public procurement capacity remains weak** and specialised procurement functions are still needed across contracting authorities. Inadequate integrity and conflict-of-interest safeguards continue to leave procurement processes exposed to irregularities and corruption, while cooperation with the courts and civil society remains insufficient.²⁶

BiH's legal framework for protecting the EU's financial interests has yet to align with EU *acquis*. The Commission also called for the establishment of an anti-fraud coordination service to strengthen cooperation and information exchange with the Commission and its European Anti-Fraud Service (OLAF).²⁷

More than 30 years after the war, Bosnia and Herzegovina is still undergoing a difficult process of political and institutional transition. This ongoing instability is significantly worsened by a high level of corruption and weak institutional oversight. Data from Transparency International BiH indicates that the country has

²³ Ibid., 6.

²⁴ Ibid., 57, 58.

²⁵ Ibid., 26.

²⁶ Ibid., 61.

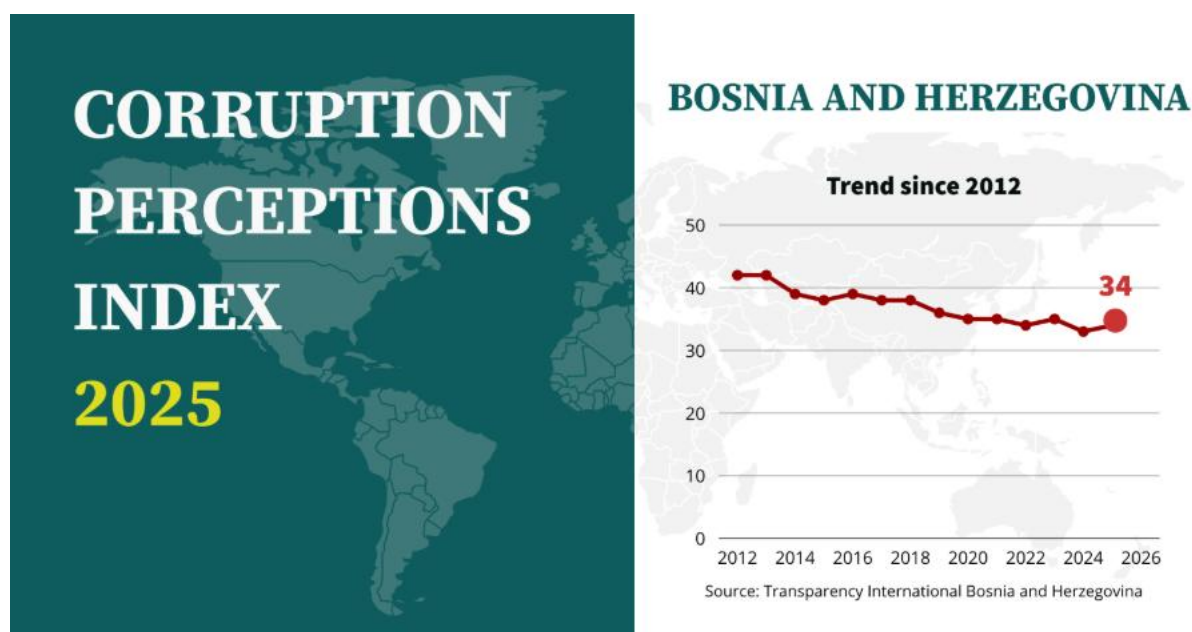
²⁷ Ibid., 64.

experienced a notable decline in its corruption perception rankings since 2012, followed by stagnation since 2020.²⁸

In Transparency International BiH's 2025 Corruption Perception Index, Bosnia and Herzegovina scored just 34 out of 100, making it one of the four most corrupt countries in Europe alongside Serbia (33/100), Belarus (31/100) and Russia (22/100).

Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress has slowed due to failed attempts to tackle political influence over judicial appointments, as well as delays in establishing mechanisms to ensure the independence and accountability of judges and prosecutors. Political elites also continue to refuse to take action to prevent conflicts of interest among public office holders. According to Transparency International BiH, this clearly reflects a lack of political will and a failure to prevent political interference in the distribution of public resources.²⁹ These recurring problems also raise legitimate questions about the quality of planning, procurement risk assessment and overall project governance.

Figure 2. Bosnia and Herzegovina's corruption perceptions index score (2012–2025).³⁰



Against this backdrop, this briefing examines selected sections of Corridor Vc and governance concerns across different phases of the project, from early construction and procurement problems to recent investigations, financing concerns and management issues. It first follows selected sections and subsections of the motorway from north to south, highlighting recurring problems such as delays, cost increases and property issues, before turning to JPAC's leadership and institutional accountability.

²⁸ Transparency International Bosnia and Herzegovina, [Indeks percepcije korupcije 2025](#), accessed 27 July 2026.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

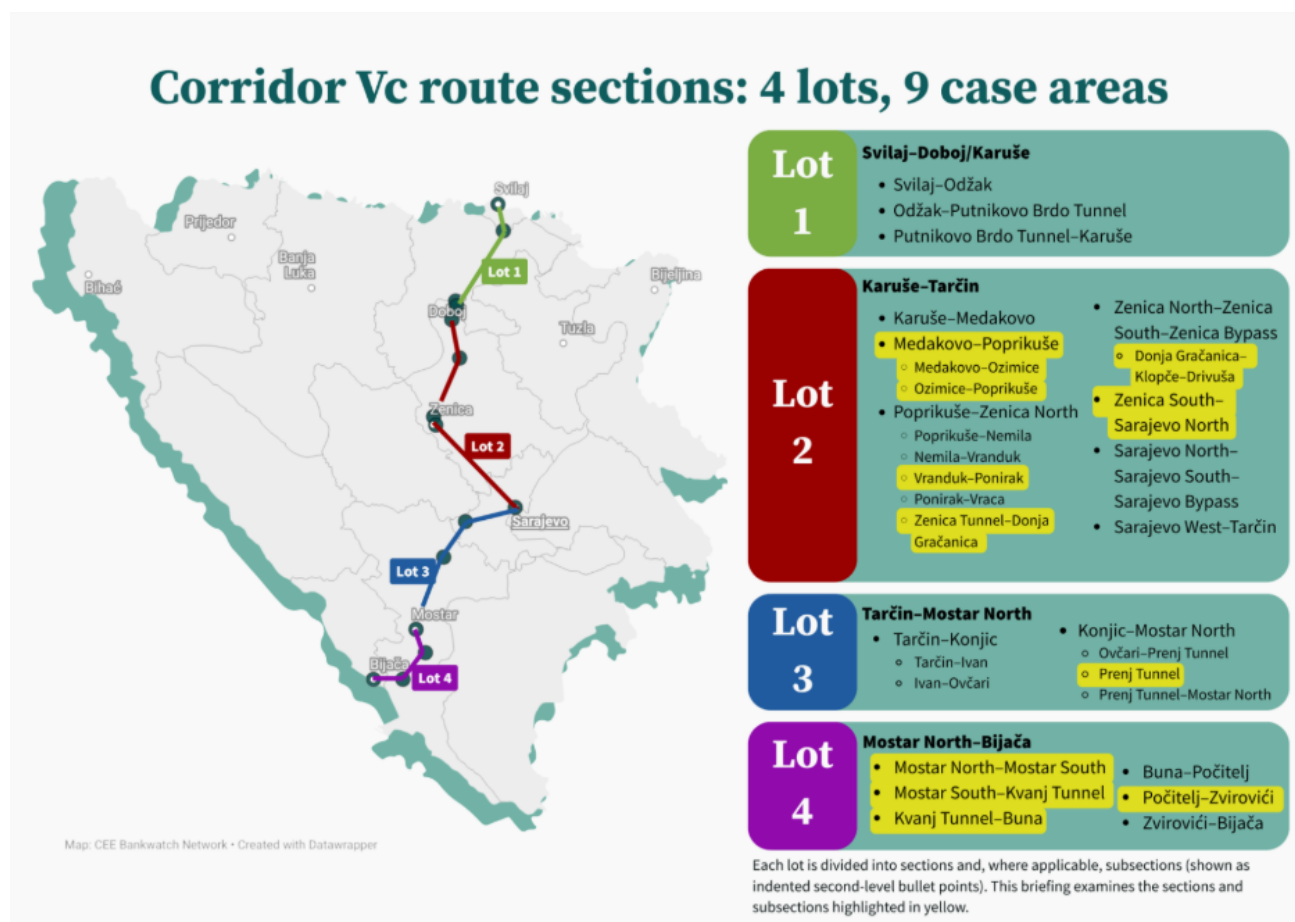
The briefing argues that individual allegations of corruption or fraud are only part of the picture: Corridor Vc also reflects broader failures of project governance, with the resulting public costs ultimately borne by the public and making it harder for the international financiers involved to ensure that their standards are effectively applied.

From north to south: Mismanagement along Corridor Vc

The cases are presented geographically, from north to south, following the official division of Corridor Vc into four main sections, referred to in JPAC documents as ‘lots’. Lot 1 covers Svilaj–Karuše and includes three sections; lot 2, the longest part of the corridor, covers Karuše–Tarčin and includes the already constructed Zenica–Tarčin motorway section as well as seven further main subsections;³¹ lot 3 covers Tarčin–Mostar North and is divided into six major subsections, including the Prenj Tunnel; and lot 4 covers Mostar North–Bijača and consists of six main sections, including the disputed Mostar South–Kvanj Tunnel section.³²

³¹ JP Autoceste FBiH, [Project Implementation Report: Construction of the Motorway on Corridor Vc in the Federation of BiH as of September 30th 2025](#), 22–23 and 28–59, October 2025.

³² The general descriptions of sections and subsections are based primarily on information published by JPAC on its official website, particularly under the categories of completed motorway sections, active construction sites and planned construction: [Aktivna gradilišta](#), [Autocesta A1](#) and [Plan gradnje](#)

Figure 3. Official division of Corridor Vc into four lots.³³

Cost increases and delays are not uncommon in large-scale infrastructure projects, but Corridor Vc has been marked from its early stages by repeated and serious problems in project planning and implementation. This section of the briefing provides an overview of reported corruption allegations, integrity concerns, governance challenges and implementation problems across different sections of Corridor Vc. While some of these issues might appear to be the result of bad luck, their seriousness and frequency point, at best, to a lack of judgement, due diligence and learning from past mistakes.

The financial impact of delays, cost increases and weak project oversight is ultimately borne by the public. The role of international financial institutions is therefore particularly important. As public development banks operating under mandates that require high standards of transparency, accountability, environmental and social protection, and the responsible use of public funds, how they apply these

³³ Visualisation based on JP Autoceste FBiH, [Izveštaj o realizaciji projekta: Izgradnja Autoceste na Koridoru Vc u Federaciji BiH zaključno sa 30.06.2026. godine](#) and JP Autoputevi Republike Srpske, [Corridor Vc in Republic of Srpska](#), accessed 8 August 2026. Additionally, we used information published by JPAC on its official website, particularly [Aktivna gradilišta](#), [Autocesta A1](#) and [Plan gradnje](#) to include all sections and subsections.

standards is a decisive factor in whether they help to set a good example in Bosnia and Herzegovina or end up condoning poor management practices and the waste of public funds.

The cases below are numerous but not exhaustive. They cover some of the main allegations relating to Corridor Vc, focusing on the clearest cases and those that have been, or are being, followed up by the relevant institutions.

Lot 2: Medakovo–Poprikuše (planned)

The EIB and WBIF have approved financing for this 35-kilometre section. As of April 2026, expropriation was still ongoing,³⁴ but had already caused major scandals and led to arrests.

In September 2024, the prosecutor’s office of Zenica-Doboj Canton carried out a police operation codenamed ‘Landfill’, in which former JPAC Director Elmedin Voloder, Boris Zelić (Orašje), Marin Nikolić (Žepče), and Sarajevo businessman Mustafa Musabegović were arrested. It was alleged that they, along with the former Minister of Spatial Planning of FBiH Josip Martić and his assistant Ljuba Tadić, were part of a criminal group that had prior knowledge of the planned route for the Corridor Vc motorway. They allegedly purchased land around Žepče from property owners – who were unaware of the future project – at prices 10 times lower than the amounts for which they would later sell it to JPAC.³⁵ In May 2026, the federal anti-corruption agency POSKOK confirmed that it was still working on the case.³⁶

In October 2025, the European Public Prosecutor’s Office formally named six individuals as suspects, including three Bosnian public officials, in connection with alleged cross-border corruption regarding consultancy work for the Medakovo–Poprikuše section. The investigation was launched after the EIB reported suspicions that an Italian company based in Verona was being favoured in a tender process.

The investigation found that three public officials from the Bosnian contracting authority allegedly took coordinated actions to secure the contract for the Italian company by replacing the evaluation committee, redrafting the technical evaluation report, and directing the company to adjust its financial proposal to obtain the highest ranking. These actions were allegedly carried out in return for financial and other benefits.³⁷

According to documents obtained by Istraga, the allegations relate to a tender launched in April 2023 for supervision of works on the Ozimice–Poprikuše section, worth around EUR 4.6 million, in which Italian company Technital SpA submitted an offer via Sarajevo-based company Trasa. The bid was initially ranked

³⁴ JP Autoceste FBiH, [Izveštaj o realizaciji projekta: Izgradnja Autoceste na Koridoru Vc u Federaciji BiH zaključno sa 31.03.2026. godine](#), 35-36, April 2026.

³⁵ Sedin Spahic, [Širi se istraga protiv bivšeg direktora “Autoceste FBiH”: Voloder pogodio i kod drugih dionica autoputa?](#), Avaz, 26 November 2024.

³⁶ Amil Dučić, [POSKOK pod lupom drži JP Autoceste FBiH: Objavljujemo detalje o predmetima](#), Fokus, 10 May 2026.

³⁷ European Public Prosecutor’s Office, [EPPO in Italy charges Bosnian public officials for corruption in motorway construction project](#).

second, but following a change in JPAC's leadership in May 2023, it was revised and the amount reduced by around EUR 582 000, reportedly because a mathematical error had been identified. This placed Technital first in the ranking.³⁸

It is alleged that JPAC representatives, together with representatives of Technital, attempted to influence the outcome of the tender, and that this had been arranged at a meeting in East Sarajevo, with bribes of between EUR 125 000 and 150 000 allegedly paid. Trasa representatives later claimed that they had alerted the relevant authorities and the EIB, which informed the European Public Prosecutor's Office.³⁹ The case remains under investigation.

Lot 2: Vranduk–Ponirak (delayed/still under construction)

The Vranduk–Ponirak subsection is part of the wider Poprikuše–Zenica North (Donja Gračanica) section of Corridor Vc and, as of July 2026, is still under construction. The construction contract was signed on 15 May 2019 with a consortium involving Azvirt L.L.C. of Azerbaijan and Hering d.d. Široki Brijeg of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The construction was overseen by Divel (BiH) and DRI upravljanje investicij d.o.o. (Slovenia), with the contract for their services valued at BAM 4.06 million, excluding VAT.⁴⁰ Elmedin Voloder was leading Divel at the time, before being appointed director of JPAC, while Adnan Terzić was in charge of JPAC.

The contract value was EUR 76.59 million (including VAT), with financing provided by the OPEC Fund for International Development. The original construction period was 24 months, with completion expected in August 2021. However, a new deadline was set for March 2026,⁴¹ and in June 2026 it was reported that the works would only be completed in mid-2027⁴² – a delay of six years.

The costs have also skyrocketed. In April 2026, JPAC estimated construction cost at EUR 153 million⁴³ – double the original price.

Following a report by Focus news outlet, the Prosecutor's Office of the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton initiated an investigation in October 2022 into alleged irregularities in this subsection.⁴⁴ It questioned Denis Lasić, the current director of JPAC, as well as its former director Elmedin Voloder along with several other

³⁸ Istraga, [Zbog sumnje u zloupotrebe: Istražitelji OLAF-a ušli u Autoceste FBiH](#), 14 July 2026.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ N1 BiH, [Autoceste FBiH: Odblokirana gradnja dionice Vranduk – Ponirak, rok za završetak radova 31. mart 2026. godine](#), 1 February 2024.

⁴² Radio Sarajevo, [Snimak iz zraka: Pogledajte kako teku radovi na jednoj od najzahtjevnijih dionica na koridoru Vc](#), 21 July 2026.

⁴³ JP Autoceste FBiH, [Izveštaj o realizaciji projekta: Izgradnja Autoceste na Koridoru Vc u Federaciji BiH zaključno sa 31.03.2026. godine](#), 48-49.

⁴⁴ Amil Dučić, [Pokrenuta istraga o malverzacijama prilikom gradnje dionice Vranduk–Ponirak](#), Fokus, 12 October 2022.

individuals from JPAC and companies involved in implementing the section. The damage to the FBiH budget was reportedly more than EUR 50 million.⁴⁵

Azvirt, which was responsible for the open part of the route while Hering focused on the viaducts, quickly began disputing the quality of the main design, despite compliance with the provided design being a condition of its contract. Azvirt subsequently hired its own designers from Greece, apparently with support from JPAC. A new design was proposed at a much higher cost, sparking disagreements over whether the increase was justified by new geological evidence or whether it was artificially inflating construction costs.⁴⁶

In February 2025, the investigation culminated in the large-scale Koridor police investigation, which took place across four cantons. Approximately 100 police officers participated in the operation, leading to the arrest of 15 individuals. According to Dnevni avaz, the investigation centred on the alleged misuse of EUR 19.5 million in funds for construction of the subsection through a series of tenders and fictitious contracts.^{47,48}

Five former JPAC directors were arrested: Elmedin Voloder, Adnan Terzić, Ešef Džafić, Jasmin Bučo, and Zlatan Talić.⁴⁹ Former and current executive directors Adem Zolj, Mirko Rogić, Kristijan Milas, Ajman Šoš, and Ivan Brkić were also detained.

The Federal Police Administration issued warrants for Ahmet Murat Turkoglu, general director of Azvirt – Sarajevo Branch, and Saša Mičić, the project manager for the subsection.⁵⁰

Lot 2: Zenica bypass, Zenica North–Zenica South (complete)

The Zenica bypass, also referred to as the Zenica North–Zenica South section, consists of the Drivuša–Klopče, Klopče–Donja Gračanica and part of the Donja Gračanica–Zenica Tunnel subsections, with a total length of 11 kilometres. Construction started in 2014 and the section was opened to traffic on 15 July 2021. It now forms part of the operational Zenica North–Tarčin motorway.

The total cost was EUR 225 million, financed through international financial institutions including the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, the EBRD and the OPEC Fund for International Development,

⁴⁵ Amil Dučić, [Voloder je predmet nekoliko ozbiljnih istraga, vode ih dva tužilaštva](#), Fokus, 10 September 2024.

⁴⁶ Amil Dučić, [Is there any crime in the construction of the highway near Zenica: Exploding costs for the section Vranduk – Ponirak](#), Fokus, 16 August 2022.

⁴⁷ Sedin Spahic, [Kriminal u “Autocestama FBiH”: Pronevjeren novac od kreditora, pravljene fiktivni ugovori, poslove dobijale firme u kojima je Voloder suvlasnik](#), Dnevni avaz, 19 February 2025.

⁴⁸ The media initially reported that the EBRD financed this section, but the Bank subsequently stated this claim was incorrect. See DEPO Portal, [EBRD nije finansirao dionicu puta Vranduk–Ponirak Koridora Vc](#), 21 February 2025.

⁴⁹ Hercegovina.info, [Akcija Koridor: Pet osoba predano Tužiteljstvu HNŽ, za dvije osobe izdane tjeralice, ostali pušteni da se brane sa slobode](#), 19 February 2025.

⁵⁰ BiznisInfo, [FUP raspisao potragu za direktorom kompanije koja gradi Koridor 5C](#), 18 February 2025.

as well as EU grant funding through the WBIF. The works were carried out by Hering, the Euro-Asfalt/Strabag consortium and Cengiz İnşaat Sanayi ve Ticaret A.Ş.

The section suffered from weaknesses at every stage, from design to contract implementation. Auditors highlighted a EUR 40.5 million increase in contracted works on one subsection and a EUR 2.8 million increase in project supervision costs for two subsections. Additionally, the deadline for the Klopče–Donja Gračanica subsection was extended by 731 days – around two years.⁵¹

Lot 2: Drivuša–Bilješevo, Vijenac Tunnel/1 March Tunnel (complete)

In 2010, Slovenian company SCT was awarded the contract for the Vijenac Tunnel, now known as the 1 March Tunnel, but the contract was terminated in 2011 following the company's bankruptcy. The EBRD then approved the second-ranked bidder, Slovenian company Primorje, as the new contractor, although its offer was EUR 8 million higher, bringing the total contract value to EUR 62 million.⁵²

The problems did not end there, however: JPAC's project completion report shows that the contract with Primorje was also terminated.⁵³ The works were subsequently continued by a consortium of subcontractors under a new two-phase agreement, signed in August 2012 and May 2013. However, the project continued to experience delays and cost increases through a series of addenda. Phase I increased from EUR 18 million to EUR 22.5 million, reportedly due to unfavourable geological conditions and price corrections, while phase II increased from EUR 24.4 million to EUR 32.6 million after several extensions. These addenda also entailed deadline extensions, which are not clearly set out in the project completion report but amounted to at least nine months for phase I and two months for phase II.⁵⁴

The same pattern was also visible in consultancy services. The supervision contract with IGH Zagreb, initially worth EUR 2.3 million for 39 months, was repeatedly extended following the failure of the initial contractors. By the time construction was completed, the value of consultancy services had increased to EUR 3.38 million, while the contract duration had almost doubled to 73 months.⁵⁵

Lot 3: Ovčari–Prenj Tunnel–Mostar North (planned)

The Prenj Tunnel section, between Tarčin and Mostar North, is the longest and most complex structure on the entire motorway route. The tunnel itself is planned to be 10,900 metres long, while the full Ovčari–Mostar North section is around 33.56 kilometres long. The total estimated cost of the section is EUR 1.1

⁵¹ Branka Mrkić-Radević, [Revizija poslovanja Autoceste Federacije: Čak 155 miliona KM nepravilno uknjiženo kao prihod kompanije](#), Žurnal, 2 August 2021.

⁵² Borivoje Simić, [Izgradnja tunela Vijenac: Zeleno svjetlo za Primorje](#), Nezavisne novine, 17 March 2011.

⁵³ JP Autoceste FBiH, [Motorway on Corridor Vc in Federation of BH: Project Completion Report](#), 27, January 2016; [Kako se gradi tunel 1. mart](#), accessed 28 July 2026.

⁵⁴ JP Autoceste FBiH, [Motorway on Corridor Vc in Federation of BH: Project Completion Report](#), 27-28.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 28.

billion.⁵⁶ The works are planned to be financed through international financial institutions and JPAC's own funds, including credit arrangements of EUR 450 million with the EBRD and EUR 500 million with the EIB.⁵⁷ In June 2025, the EBRD published a shortlist of companies and consortia competing for the contract to supervise construction of the Prenj Tunnel.⁵⁸ Separately, a EUR 8.99 million technical assistance contract, scheduled to run until April 2031, had already been awarded to a consortium consisting of iC consulenti ZT GesmbH, ILF Consulting Engineers Austria GmbH, and Elea iC d.o.o.

JPAC's latest procurement plan envisages signing the tunnel construction contract in October 2026, with works continuing until October 2032.⁵⁹ The supervision contract is expected to be signed in the same month and run until October 2034. However, the report also states that supervision bids will only be opened in September or October 2026. This leaves insufficient time for their evaluation and contract award, making the planned October 2026 contract signing date unrealistic.⁶⁰

As preparations move forward for construction of the Prenj Tunnel – the most technically demanding section of Corridor Vc – issues encountered during construction of the Hranjen Tunnel on the Sarajevo–Goražde dual carriageway should serve as a warning.

This 5.5-kilometre tunnel project, launched by JPAC in 2019, was expected to be completed within three years. The initial contract for excavation and primary support was valued at BAM 70 million (excluding VAT), with BAM 65 million initially secured through government funds.⁶¹ By 31 October 2025, cumulative expenditure on construction works and supervision had reached BAM 154 million (excluding VAT).⁶² As of April 2026, approximately 65% of the main and service tunnel tubes had been excavated, while only around 40% of the secondary lining, waterproofing and lateral drainage had been completed. Crucially, the current contract fails to account for the full equipping and completion of the tunnel.⁶³ Although difficult geological conditions⁶⁴ have contributed to the delays and rising costs, the project is now entering its eighth year without a firm completion date and remains dependent on additional funding.

This case clearly shows how important it is to ensure, at the earliest stages of a project, that geological investigations, technical assessments, project documentation and financial planning are sufficiently robust before construction begins. Prenj Tunnel should therefore be viewed not only as the most technically

⁵⁶ JP Autoceste FBiH, [Izveštaj o realizaciji projekta: Izgradnja Autoceste na Koridoru Vc u Federaciji BiH zaključno sa 31.03.2026. godine](#), 14, 68–69 and 72.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 14.

⁵⁸ Borivoje Simić, [Konzorciji u trci za nadzor gradnje tunela Prenj](#), Indikator, 24 June 2025.

⁵⁹ JP Autoceste FBiH, [Izveštaj o realizaciji projekta: Izgradnja autoceste na Koridoru Vc u Federaciji BiH zaključno sa 30.06.2026. godine](#), 21.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 72.

⁶¹ JP Autoceste FBiH, [BC Prača–Goražde \(Tunel Hranjen\)](#), accessed 28 July 2026.

⁶² JP Autoceste FBiH, [Odgovor na delegatsko pitanje](#), 20 November 2025.

⁶³ FENA, [Iskopano 65 posto tunela Hranjen, za završetak projekta potrebno još sredstava](#), Oslobođenje, 16 June 2026.

⁶⁴ Klix, [Gdje je zapelo u izgradnji tunela Hranjen između Sarajeva i Goražda: Autoceste FBiH kažu da treba još novca](#), 15 May 2026.

demanding section of Corridor Vc, but also as a major governance and financial risk that requires lessons to be learned from previous experience.

In late summer 2024, a local media report claimed that insider information was circulating about companies favoured for several key Corridor Vc contracts.⁶⁵ For the Prenj Tunnel, the report stated that three predominantly Turkish consortia had passed the prequalification phase of the tender procedure, headed by Cengiz, Makyol İnşaat, and DL Limak Joint Venture, the latter reportedly in partnership with a Korean company. The same report suggested that Cengiz was considered the frontrunner for the project.

In late May 2026, FBiH Prime Minister Nermin Nikšić confirmed that US companies had expressed interest in financing and building part of Corridor Vc, including the Ivan–Mostar South section, and that this would involve a strategic partner taking over the financing, design, construction and operation of the tunnel.⁶⁶

However, key questions remain unanswered. Even if no direct budget guarantees are required, a project of this size would still require some form of security and risk allocation. Apart from a brief mention of Bechtel, the public remains uninformed about which companies are interested, whether they have the necessary experience for such a complex project, or which environmental, social, procurement and transparency standards will apply.

There are also environmental concerns. Prenj has been recognised as part of a planned national park since 1981; however, it has yet to receive effective legal protection.⁶⁷ The current proposal put forward by the Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism in 2026 is an important step, but it covers a smaller area than earlier concepts.⁶⁸ It also excludes the Neretva River, despite Prenj being one of Bosnia and Herzegovina's most valuable mountain ecosystems, with a high concentration of endemic, subendemic and relict species, as well as abundant water resources.⁶⁹

Lot 4: Mostar North–Mostar South (planned/tender procedure ongoing)

This section is approximately 14 kilometres long. It starts at the Mostar North interchange in Kutilivač, east of Vrapčići, and ends at the Mostar South interchange, which connects to the M6.1 Gnojnice–Blagaj road. The section passes entirely through the city of Mostar and includes 2 interchanges, 11 bridges and viaducts, and 6 twin-tube tunnels and related structures. Financing is planned through an EBRD loan of EUR 110

⁶⁵ Amil Dučić, [Jagma za nove dionice autoputa u Hercegovini: Ove firme se spominju kao favoriti](#), Fokus, 8 August 2024.

⁶⁶ Dnevni avaz, [Nikšić: Američke kompanije žele preuzeti finansiranje i izgradnju dijela Koridora 5C, uključujući tunel Prenj](#), 28 May 2026.

⁶⁷ Zeleni Neretva Konjic, [Zašto Prenj čeka na zaštitu skoro pola stoljeća?](#), statement republished by AbrašMEDIA, 15 May 2026.

⁶⁸ Ministry of Environment and Tourism of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, [Obavijest o konzultacijama na tekst prednacrtu Zakona o NP Prenj](#), 21 April 2026.

⁶⁹ Zeleni Neretva Konjic, [Zašto Prenj čeka na zaštitu skoro pola stoljeća?](#), Facebook, 15 May 2026.

million, a EUR 150 million loan from a consortium of domestic banks, and a WBIF grant of EUR 155.9 million.⁷⁰

As of July 2026, the tender procedure for works is ongoing: the previous procedure was cancelled, a new procedure was launched in November 2022, and the second part of the call was published in August 2025. JPAC expected to open bids in May or June 2026,⁷¹ but the tender procedure remains ongoing. Media reports from late summer 2024 claimed that Turkish company Cengiz was already viewed as the leading candidate for the section.⁷²

The tender is not the only part of the project being repeated. The Federal Ministry of Environment and Tourism approved an environmental impact assessment study for the section on 11 May 2022, but its three-year legal validity expired, requiring an updated study in 2026. At a public hearing held on 8 June 2026, the project designer stated that the only change from the 2022 study concerns the Livač Tunnel, which was introduced to avoid state-owned military land at the Miralem Jugo barracks and the associated shooting range. The discussion also clarified that the current study assesses only a temporary road connection at the end of Tunnel 5, rather than the final motorway connection planned for this area. JPAC explained that the final design cannot be implemented at this stage because issues related to state-owned military land around the Ortiješ military airfield, adjacent to Mostar Airport, remains unresolved. The company confirmed that this has disrupted the project and that a temporary solution would be needed if the Mostar North–Mostar South section is constructed before the state property issue affecting the Mostar South–Kvanj Tunnel section is resolved.⁷³

Lot 4: Mostar South–Kvanj Tunnel (planned/tender evaluation complete/pending signed contract)

The section is approximately 9.2 kilometres long. The route starts at the Mostar South interchange, runs directly alongside Mostar Airport, crosses the Buna River near Kosor, and continues past Malo Polje towards Kvanj Tunnel.

This has proven to be one of the most controversial sections of Corridor Vc. The route was included in the spatial plan without public consultation, prompting resistance from residents facing expropriation and creating difficulties for those living or owning property next to the motorway. In some cases, the route would make properties unusable, but their owners would not receive compensation because the expropriation scheme only covers land directly beneath the motorway. In 2024, IPAM found that the route

⁷⁰ JP Autoceste FBiH, [Izveštaj o realizaciji projekta: Izgradnja Autoceste na Koridoru Vc u Federaciji BiH zaključno sa 31.03.2026. godine](#), 9–10, 18 and 74.

⁷¹ Ibid, 75.

⁷² Amil Dučić, [Jagma za nove dionice autoputa u Hercegovini: Ove firme se spominju kao favoriti](#).

⁷³ Author's notes from the public hearing on the environmental impact assessment study for the Mostar North–Mostar South motorway section held in Mostar on 8 June 2026.

had not been selected in compliance with EBRD standards, registering 21 further complaints from families and individuals regarding this section.⁷⁴

Controversy surrounding the route selection dates back to 2016, when concerns about its selection first emerged. The failure to resolve these issues has continuously plagued the project, with progress further stalled by the unresolved issues concerning military and state-owned property. The proposed route also requires the use of land around Mostar Airport. As of July 2026, state-level consent has yet to be granted.

The works are planned to be financed through a EUR 60 million EBRD loan and a EUR 30.33 million EU grant through the WBIF, approved in 2021 and 2022, respectively.^{75,76} The tender procedure for works is ongoing: clarification meetings with all bidders have been completed and the EBRD approved the latest evaluation report in November 2024, but contract signing is expected only once the issue of military and state-owned property is resolved.⁷⁷

The procurement process has also raised integrity concerns. In November 2024, Fokus reported that Strabag had been selected as the best-ranked bidder, with an offer of EUR 153 million.⁷⁸ Three months earlier, Fokus had reported, based on insider information, that Strabag was expected to win the contract.⁷⁹ While the earlier report does not in itself prove wrongdoing, its apparent accuracy raises questions about possible advance knowledge of the procurement outcome and the transparency of the tender process.

⁷⁴ European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, [Corridor Vc in FBH – Part 3 | Complaints](#).

⁷⁵ European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, [Corridor Vc in FBH | Project Summary Document – Part 3](#).

⁷⁶ Western Balkans Investment Framework, [Mediterranean Corridor: Mostar South – Kvanj Tunnel Vc Motorway Subsection in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), accessed 29 July 2026.

⁷⁷ JP Autoceste FBiH, [Izveštaj o realizaciji projekta: Izgradnja Autoceste na Koridoru Vc u Federaciji BiH zaključno sa 31.03.2026. godine](#), 78.

⁷⁸ Amil Dučić, [Saznali smo ko će graditi dionicu koja Mostar povezuje s autoputem](#), Fokus, 26 November 2024.

⁷⁹ Amil Dučić, [Jagma za nove dionice autoputa u Hercegovini: Ove firme se spominju kao favoriti](#), Fokus.ba, 8 August 2024.

Lot 4: Kvanj Tunnel–Buna (under construction)

The Kvanj Tunnel–Buna subsection is 5.25 kilometres long and forms part of the wider Mostar South–Buna section. The construction contract was signed on 4 October 2024 with a consortium comprising China Road and Bridge Corporation, Azvirt, and Hering. The contract value is EUR 125.23 million (excluding VAT) and is financed through an EIB loan and EU grants provided through the WBIF. The planned construction period is 30 months.

The subsection has also raised concerns about possible advance knowledge of the procurement outcome. In summer 2024, Fokus reported that Azvirt, together with Hering, was considered the likely main contractor for this subsection.⁸⁰ Two months later, the contract was signed with a consortium including Azvirt and Hering, alongside China Road and Bridge Corporation. While this does not in itself prove wrongdoing, it raises questions about transparency and possible insider information in the procurement process.

The construction has also generated a separate dispute concerning the Bunica River, one of the country's most important karst springs and a unique natural oasis. Following uncontrolled surface run-off and flooding in the nearby settlement of Parila during construction in late 2025, a large drainage pipe was installed near the spring in June 2026. While JPAC maintains that it collects only natural surface run-off, residents are seeking the technical, hydrological and environmental documentation explaining why this solution was selected and how it was authorised, particularly as it seems it was developed after the original environmental permit was issued.⁸¹

Lot 4: Počitelj–Zvirovići (complete)

The Počitelj–Zvirovići subsection is part of the wider Počitelj–Bijača section and is 11.07 kilometres long. The works for the whole section to Bijača were financed through a EUR 105 million EIB loan,⁸² together with EU grant funding through the WBIF.

In the first tender, launched in 2015, the subsection was divided into two lots. According to an investigation by Žurnal,⁸³ a consortium involving Vijadukt (Zagreb) and Hering submitted the lowest bid for both lots. However, the bid evaluation commissions reached opposite conclusions: for lot 2, Hering was disqualified and EuroAsfalt and Strabag were named the most favourable bidder, while for lot 1, Hering was selected –

⁸⁰ Amil Dučić, [Jagma za nove dionice autoputa u Hercegovini: Ove firme se spominju kao favoriti](#).

⁸¹ Sead Šašivarević, Alma Midžić, [Signs of trouble: Drainage pipe near the pristine Bunica river spring causes outcry as Corridor Vc construction affects Mostar communities](#), CEE Bankwatch Network, 30 July 2026.

⁸² European Investment Bank, [Corridor Vc Pocitelj – Bijaca](#), 7 March 2014.

⁸³ Davor Obrdalj, [Dionica Počitelj–Zvirovići: Uprava Autocesta ne poštuje odluke Nadzornog odbora](#), Žurnal, 8 August 2017.

despite an overlap in membership between the two commissions. This inconsistency raised concerns at the EIB, and the tender was cancelled after two years.⁸⁴

During this period, JPAC had no fewer than four different directors and acting directors: Ensad Karić (Social Democratic Party (SDP)), who served until the end of October 2015 – around the same time the bids were opened; Jasmin Bučo (Party of Democratic Action (SDA)), until July 2016; Đenan Salčin (Union for a Better Future (SBB)), until November 2016;⁸⁵ and Adnan Terzić (SBB). On the one hand, this frequent turnover would hardly have helped continuity, consistency and accountability; on the other, it may have helped surface the issues associated with other parties' nominees.

A new tender was launched in 2017, this time covering the whole section as a single lot. The most favourable bidder was reported to be a consortium of Azvirt and Power Construction Corporation of China Ltd, with Hering as a subcontractor.⁸⁶

In December 2017, however, the EIB intervened once again. According to a statement issued by JPAC, the EIB sent a letter to JPAC requesting that the tender procedure for the Počitelj–Zvirovići subsection be repeated, on the grounds that the procurement process had been compromised by the publication of confidential information in certain media outlets, constituting a breach of the confidentiality provisions in the financing agreement between the FBiH and EIB. In the same letter, the EIB offered to provide an expert, at its own expense, to assist JPAC with the repeated procedure.⁸⁷

Finally, in 2019 – after four years and three tender procedures – contracts were signed: with a consortium involving Azvirt, Sinohydro Corporation (China), and the Power China Road Bridge Group Co. Ltd for construction of the Počitelj bridge, and with China State Construction Engineering Corporation for the remaining section of the route to Zvirovići.^{88,89}

However, the project's troubles were far from over. The Počitelj bridge was due to be completed by March 2022, but the deadline had to be extended by over a year, to August 2023.⁹⁰ As a result, the contractors, as well as subcontractor Hering, were placed on a JPAC blacklist for two years.⁹¹ Then, in August 2023, just as construction was completed, cracks in the bridge were reported.⁹² Although Hering's role in the project was

⁸⁴ BiznisInfo, [Evropska banka stopirala ugovor na koridoru 5C zbog sumnji u korupciju](#), updated 16 January 2017.

⁸⁵ Salčin was appointed in March but only took office in July.

⁸⁶ Davor Obrdalj, [Dionica Počitelj–Zvirovići: Uprava Autoceste ne poštuje odluke Nadzornog odbora](#).

⁸⁷ JP Autoceste FBiH, [EIB traži ponavljanje tendera za dionicu Počitelj – Zvirovići](#), 27 December 2017.

⁸⁸ Dejan Tovilović, [Četiri godine za jedan tender na koridoru Vc kroz Hercegovinu, a Kinezi autoputem lagano do najvećeg vjetroparka u BiH](#), Capital, 2 June 2022.

⁸⁹ JP Autoceste FBiH, [Izveštaj o realizaciji projekta: Izgradnja Autoceste na Koridoru Vc u Federaciji BiH zaključno sa 31.03.2026. godine](#), 85-86.

⁹⁰ Ibid, 86.

⁹¹ Melisa Teletović, [Tek završeni most kod Počitelja napukao, razlog 'loš materijal i greška izvođača'](#), Radio Slobodna Evropa, 8 August 2023.

⁹² Istraga, [Ugrožen jedan od najkompleksnijih objekata na Koridoru Vc: Napukao most Počitelj](#), 5 August 2023.

supposed to be limited to under 15% of the works and exclude the bridge superstructure, it soon became clear that the company had in fact played a major role in the construction.⁹³ Remediation works were carried out during 2024, with the bridge finally opening in September of that year.

Managing Corridor Vc: JPAC directors and institutional accountability

Public enterprises in Bosnia and Herzegovina operate in an environment where management appointments are often shaped by political influence, patronage, and clientelist networks rather than transparent, merit-based governance. Transparency International BiH has warned that such practices weaken accountability, allow political actors to exert influence over public enterprises, and create risks that public resources are used for party or private interests rather than the public good.⁹⁴ This context is particularly relevant for JPAC, given its role in managing Corridor Vc – a multibillion-euro infrastructure project financed largely through public debt, EU grants, international financial institutions and, increasingly, commercial bank loans.⁹⁵

Issues became apparent early on, starting with alleged nepotism. In 2011, shortly after JPAC was established, two senior acting appointments attracted public scrutiny: Mirsad Nikšić, brother of Nermin Nikšić – then, as now, Prime Minister of the Federation of BiH – was appointed Acting Executive Director for Management and Maintenance, while Ivan Šakota, brother-in-law of the then Federal Minister of Agriculture Jerko Ivanković Lijanović, was appointed Acting Executive Director for Economic and Financial Affairs.⁹⁶

As noted above, the Koridor (Vranduk–Ponirak) investigation is particularly relevant for understanding JPAC leadership, since it involves several former and current management figures – including five former JPAC directors – as well as individuals linked to the section’s implementation. The four-year Počitelj–Zvirovići tender saga likewise spanned the mandates of four different JPAC general directors and acting directors, making it difficult to establish what happened when and under whose responsibility.

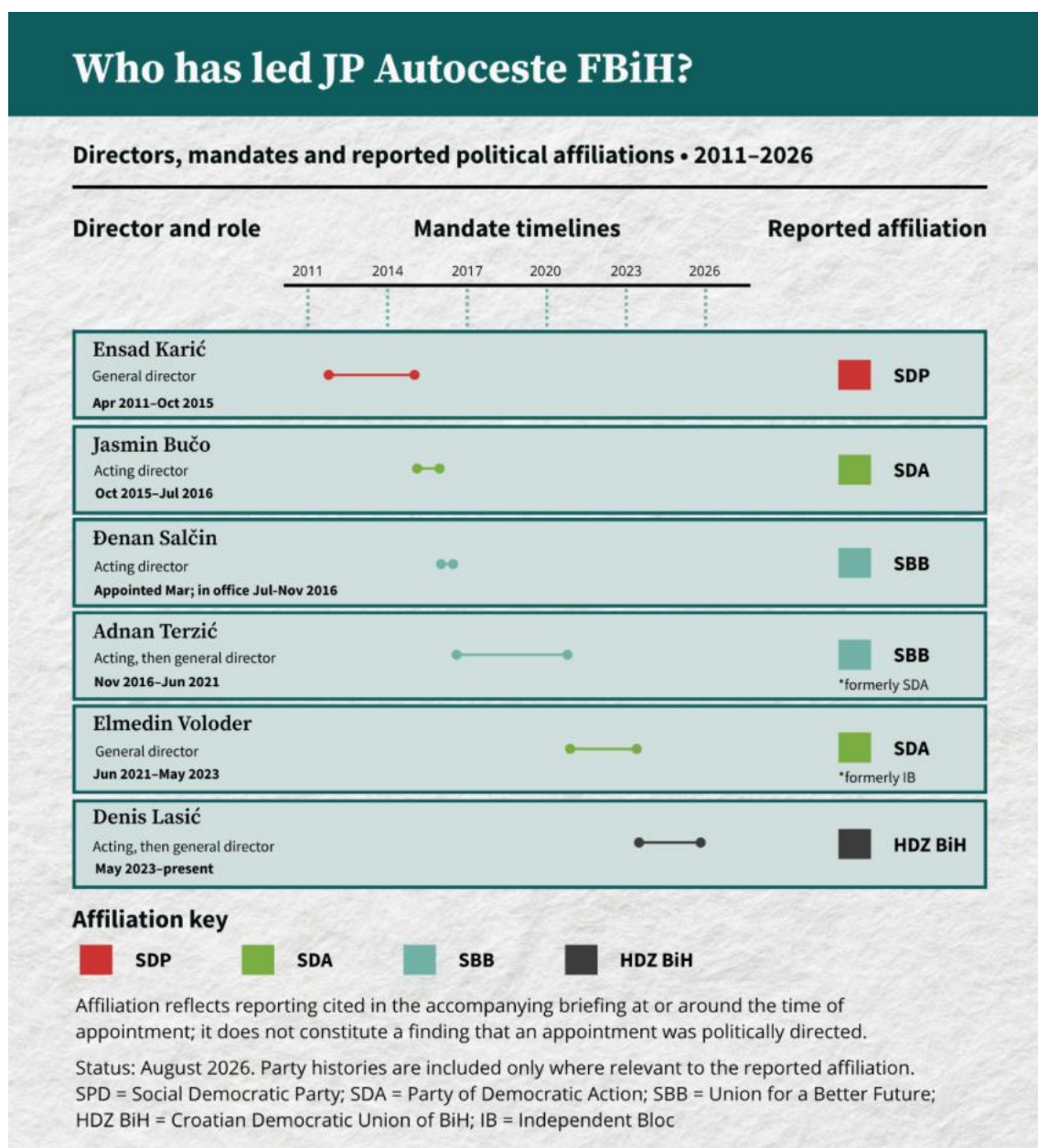
These cases illustrate why the mandates of JPAC directors matter: the same project problems often extend across several management periods, while responsibility for decisions, contracts and corrective action remains difficult to trace.

⁹³ Melisa Teletović, [Tek završeni most kod Počitelja napukao, razlog 'loš materijal i greška izvođača'](#), Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 8 August 2023.

⁹⁴ Transparency International Bosnia and Herzegovina, [Analiza politika u oblasti zapošljavanja u javnim preduzećima u BiH](#).

⁹⁵ For the Mostar North–Mostar South section, JPAC also secured a syndicated commercial loan of BAM 293.37 million (around EUR 147 million). The loan was signed with seven banks: UniCredit Bank d.d. Mostar, Intesa Sanpaolo Banka d.d., Union Banka d.d., Bosna Bank International d.d., Sparkasse Bank d.d., NLB Banka d.d., and Privredna Banka d.d. The loan carries an effective annual interest rate of 6.35%, with a 15-year repayment period, and is guaranteed by FBiH. See Audit Office of Institutions in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, [Izveštaj o finansijskoj reviziji Javnog preduzeća „Autoceste FBiH” d.o.o. Mostar za 2024. godinu](#), 38, September 2025.

⁹⁶ Prime Communications, [Analiza medijskog izveštavanja: Korupcija u Bosni i Hercegovini \(15–28. avgust 2011. godine\)](#), Transparency International Bosnia and Herzegovina, October 2011.

Figure 4. Directors of JP Autoceste FBiH, their mandates and reported political affiliations (2011–2026).

2011–2015: General director Ensad Karić

Ensad Karić was appointed acting director of JP Autoceste FBiH in April 2011, shortly after the company was established. The appointment was made by the company's supervisory board, with the consent of the FBiH government.⁹⁷

⁹⁷ Government of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, [Odluka o davanju saglasnosti Nadzornom odboru JP Autoceste FBiH d.o.o. Mostar na Odluku o privremenom imenovanju vršioca dužnosti direktora Uprave JP Autoceste FBiH d.o.o. Mostar](#), 7 April 2011.

In 2021, prior to his JPAC appointment, Karić was sentenced at first instance to five years in prison for abuse of office and money laundering in the ‘Lok’ case, connected to a microcredit foundation. The conviction was later annulled and the case returned for retrial.⁹⁸

2015–2016: Acting directors Jasmin Bučo, Đenan Salčin and Adnan Terzić

After Karić’s mandate ended in October 2015, Jasmin Bučo was appointed acting director but was replaced in March 2016 by Đenan Salčin, an SBB nominee. The most controversial phase of the first Počitelj–Zvirovići procurement process took place during Bučo’s short tenure in 2015, and – as noted above – the tender was subsequently repeated due to inconsistencies in the evaluation commissions’ treatment of Hering.

Salčin was dismissed in November 2016, when Adnan Terzić was appointed acting director of JPAC.⁹⁹ However, Žurnal reported that the timing of Salčin’s dismissal coincided with the final stages of the Počitelj–Zvirovići tender, and alleged that Salčin had written to the EIB to warn it of irregularities in the procurement process. Žurnal further reported that, following Salčin’s dismissal, a team from the Bank was expected to meet with JPAC’s new management to discuss the tender.¹⁰⁰ While the findings of the investigation do not appear to have been made public, JPAC later confirmed that the EIB’s Fraud Investigations Division had been examining matters related to the tender.¹⁰¹

2017–2021: General director Adnan Terzić

In May 2017, the FBiH government granted JPAC management, then led by general director Adnan Terzić, a full four-year mandate.¹⁰² At the time, Terzić was associated with the SBB, having previously served as vice-president of the SDA.¹⁰³ Officially, he was appointed to ‘intensify the preparation and implementation of projects’.¹⁰⁴

Terzić is a well-known public figure who has held various political positions, including roles in local and cantonal authorities and Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, he has also been implicated in several major corruption scandals unconnected to JPAC, including the Potkivanje¹⁰⁵ and Pandora¹⁰⁶ cases.

⁹⁸ Klix, [Ukinuta osuđujuća presuda Ensadu Kariću i ostalima u predmetu “Lok”](#), 19 August 2022.

⁹⁹ Radio Sarajevo, [Smijenjen Đenan Salčin, Adnan Terzić novi v.d. direktor Autoceste FBiH](#), 18 November 2016.

¹⁰⁰ Žurnal, [Zašto je smijenjen Đenan Salčin: Terzić postavljen za direktora zbog posla vrijednog 200 miliona maraka!](#), 18 November 2016.

¹⁰¹ JP Autoceste FBiH, [Uprava JPAC poništila tender za poddionicu Počitelj – Zvirovići](#), 13 March 2017.

¹⁰² Radio Sarajevo, [Adnan Terzić imenovan na puni mandat od četiri godine](#), 11 May 2017.

¹⁰³ Center for Investigative Reporting, [Biografija - Adnan Terzić](#), updated 18 May 2023.

¹⁰⁴ Klix, [Đenan Salčin smijenjen, Adnan Terzić novi v. d. direktora JPAC](#), 18 November 2016.

¹⁰⁵ Amarildo Gutić, [Uloga Adnana Terzića u Potkivanju: Ko je lažirao dokaze o vlasništvu?](#), Žurnal, 2 July 2020.

¹⁰⁶ Zinaida Đelilović, [Osmić objašnjava kako je propala Pandora: Država je podijeljena više nego što se misli...](#), Žurnal, 17 June 2021.

During his tenure, JPAC received a negative evaluation of its 2020 financial report.¹⁰⁷ Concerns raised included hiring practices that bypassed public competitions, organisational inefficiency, and millions of euros paid out due to unutilised loan funds. Improper accounting was also found, with as much as BAM 155 million in fuel excise taxes recorded as company revenue.¹⁰⁸

As mentioned above, Terzić was arrested in 2025 as part of the Koridor case, and in July 2026 the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) visited JPAC's offices in Mostar as part of an investigation into tender procedures held between 2018 and 2022 – a period that partly overlapped with his tenure as director.¹⁰⁹ As of late July 2026, the outcome of the investigation remains unknown.

2021–2023: General director Elmedin Voloder

The FBiH government appointed Elmedin Voloder acting director of JPAC in June 2021. He was proposed by the SDA after leaving Senad Šepić's Independent Bloc.¹¹⁰ At the time of his appointment, Voloder served as director of Divel – a company he founded – which had already secured multimillion-euro contracts with JPAC, primarily for oversight services. He was also, at the time, serving as an SDA representative in the House of Representatives.¹¹¹

According to Transparency International BiH data, Divel secured several contracts from JPAC worth over BAM 8.8 million, including three contracts totalling BAM 3.6 million signed in 2019, while Voloder was a sitting member of the House of Representatives. Since 2015, Divel has obtained 68 contracts from public enterprises in BiH, totalling BAM 13.8 million, all related to traffic project design, construction supervision, and project documentation review.¹¹²

As mentioned above, Voloder was arrested in 2024 in the 'Landfill' case, concerning allegations that a group with prior knowledge of the planned Corridor Vc route purchased land near Žepče cheaply before selling it to JPAC at significantly higher prices. He was also among those arrested in the 2025 Koridor investigation concerning the Vranduk–Ponirak section, for which a supervision contract involving Divel had been signed in 2019.

¹⁰⁷ Hercegovina.info, [Autoceste FBiH: Nepravilno uknjiženo 155 milijuna maraka, neproductivnost, zapošljavanje bez natječaja i penali](#), 5 August 2021.

¹⁰⁸ Audit Office of Institutions in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, [Izveštaj o finansijskoj reviziji javnog preduzeća „Autoceste FBiH“ d.o.o. Mostar](#), July 2021.

¹⁰⁹ JP Autoceste FBiH, [Saopćenje za javnost – Povodom aktivnosti Evropskog ureda za borbu protiv prevara \(OLAF\)](#), 17 July 2026.

¹¹⁰ Klix, [Ko je uhapšeni Elmedin Voloder? Ranije su ga optuživali da je "prodao" mandat za poziciju direktora](#), 10 September 2024.

¹¹¹ Radio Sarajevo, [Elmedin Voloder je novi direktor Autocesta FBiH](#), 10 June 2021.

¹¹² Transparency International Bosnia and Herzegovina, [Sukob interesa Elmedina Volodera nema ko da utvrdi](#), Transparentno, 18 June 2021.

In July 2026, OLAF visited JPAC's offices in Mostar as part of the same investigation into tender procedures held between 2018 and 2022 – a period that partly overlapped with Voloder's tenure as director.¹¹³ As of late July 2026, the outcome remains unknown.

2023–present: General director Denis Lasić

Voloder served as director until May 2023, when the FBiH government gave prior consent for his dismissal and the appointment of Denis Lasić as JPAC's new acting director.¹¹⁴ Lasić, a long-time member of the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), had his appointment confirmed in August 2024. He previously worked as a mathematics professor and served as Prime Minister of Herzegovina-Neretva Canton and Federal Minister of Transport and Communications.¹¹⁵

Lasić has framed his administration as having saved EUR 25 million in public money in relation to the Poprikuše–Nemila section and, separately, as having acted to prevent wrongdoing in the consultancy tender for the Ozimice–Poprikuše subsection currently under investigation by the European Public Prosecutor's Office, having annulled the relevant tender and filed a criminal report in 2024.¹¹⁶ However, Istraga has published what appears to be a European Public Prosecutor's Office document naming Lasić as one of the suspects in the same case.¹¹⁷ The investigation is still ongoing.

Another scandal arose after media reports revealed that Lasić had annulled the so-called blacklist established by the previous management (2021–2023) as a preventive measure against corruption and procurement irregularities, in accordance with the Law on Highways of Corridor Vc. The list included companies that had attempted to circumvent procurement procedures or had exhibited irregularities in their work, such as deviations from the contract terms. The annulment was justified on the grounds that the original decisions had been made by unauthorised individuals and had not undergone the necessary signing and approval process.¹¹⁸ Whatever the justification, it does little to project a strong image for a company already plagued by corruption and mismanagement allegations.

¹¹³ JP Autoceste FBiH, [Saopćenje za javnost – Povodom aktivnosti Evropskog ureda za borbu protiv prevara \(OLAF\)](#).

¹¹⁴ BiznisInfo, [Denis Lasić je novi direktor "Autoceste FBiH"](#), 17 May 2023.

¹¹⁵ Dnevni avaz, [Ko je Denis Lasić, novi v.d. direktor Autoceste FBiH](#), 17 May 2023.

¹¹⁶ Patria, [Iako je neke suspendovao i EBRD: Lasić ukinuo 'crnu listu' firmi koje su pokušale varati na tenderima i izvođenju radova, 21 June 2024](#).

¹¹⁷ Istraga, [Zbog sumnje u zloupotrebe: Istražitelji OLAF-a ušli u Autoceste FBiH](#), 14 July 2026.

¹¹⁸ Patria, [Iako je neke suspendovao i EBRD: Lasić ukinuo 'crnu listu' firmi koje su pokušale varati na tenderima i izvođenju radova, 21 June 2024](#).

Conclusions

The cases presented in this briefing show that Corridor Vc is not merely a transport corridor but a massive infrastructure project with major financial, social and environmental implications – one whose importance cannot be measured in kilometres built alone. Its success also depends on whether spatial planning and route-selection processes are transparent and open to meaningful participation, whether project implementation is properly planned, whether procurement processes are credible, and whether institutions can respond adequately and promptly when risks and irregularities arise.

Across the sections examined, the project has been marked by repeated delays, rising costs, procurement and integrity concerns, weak follow-up on corruption risks, and unresolved social disputes. While some of these issues might appear to be simple bad luck, their frequency and seriousness point instead to a persistent lack of judgement, due diligence and institutional learning.

This has fuelled local conflicts and eroded public trust, particularly as the same problems recur – sometimes involving the same companies. Before construction advances on disputed sections, key points of conflict – including unresolved state property issues and pending IPAM complaints – should be resolved.

Wider governance and management weaknesses must also be addressed. These have repeatedly been identified by the European Commission and Transparency International BiH, and include state capture, weak accountability, limited public procurement capacity, insufficient oversight of public enterprises, and ineffective follow-up on corruption cases.

Corridor Vc illustrates how such weaknesses play out in practice: recurring problems are not addressed transparently or early enough, while responsibility for addressing them is diffused across multiple layers of project governance. Where oversight is weak and decision-making vulnerable to undue influence, public resources are more exposed to misuse and less likely to be managed consistently in the public interest.

For this reason, any continued financing of Corridor Vc must be tied to stronger oversight, clearer conditions, and more transparent follow-up by the EU and international financial institutions.

Recommendations

Recommendations for international financial institutions and the EU

1. Make clear public statements on the current status of financing for Corridor Vc and any conditions attached to its continuation.
2. Require JPAC and the FBiH government to resolve state property and other land ownership issues before finance or construction contracts are signed, or works begin, on affected sections – rather than treating unresolved property questions as mere implementation details.
3. Suspend or waive commitment fees where project delays result from unresolved planning, property, procurement or consultation issues, to avoid creating financial pressure to advance construction before key risks are resolved.
4. Strengthen procurement and integrity oversight by publishing key findings and corrective measures from investigation and complaint processes – including those related to past tender irregularities – and by requiring clear evidence that recommendations have been implemented before further funds are disbursed.
5. For a project of this scale and risk profile, remote monitoring is not enough. The EIB, EBRD and other financiers should ensure closer on-the-ground scrutiny – including international, not only local, staff – require credible corrective action where risks are identified, and make key findings and required measures public, including where procurement, environmental, social or integrity standards may have been breached.
6. Make any further financing, disbursement or contract signing for the Mostar South–Kvanj Tunnel section conditional on a transparent reassessment of route alternatives, including the possibility of rerouting, and on meaningful renewed engagement with affected communities – addressing the concerns raised before IPAM regarding route selection, stakeholder engagement, and the need to minimise harm to people and the environment.
7. Do not finance the construction of the extremely high-risk Prenj Tunnel until significant improvements are made to JPAC's and FBiH's governance, management and integrity.
8. Prioritise financing for more environmentally sustainable and lower-cost transport projects, such as urban mobility and rail transport (passenger and freight).

Recommendations for the FBiH government

1. Appoint JPAC directors on merit rather than party political affiliation, through an open and transparent selection process assessing relevant professional competence and demonstrated personal integrity.

Recommendations for JPAC and the FBiH government

1. Revise traffic projections for the remaining disputed and technically demanding sections, and assess whether they justify a full-profile motorway or whether less costly, less harmful alternatives should be implemented instead.
2. Ensure projects are at an adequate stage of readiness before seeking loan financing to avoid delays, cost increases and escalating commitment fees.
3. Improve due diligence on contractors' track record and integrity, and reintroduce the exclusion list to debar problematic companies from tenders.
4. Ensure that the route and design of the Mostar North–Mostar South section do not foreclose possible future route changes on connected sections – including Konjic/Ovčari–Prenj Tunnel–Mostar North and Mostar South–Kvanj Tunnel, state property at Mostar Airport, expropriation, and IPAM's finding that the route selection for Mostar South–Kvanj Tunnel did not comply with EBRD standards.