

RRTF Releases latest Property Law Implementation figures

The Agencies involved in the Property Law Implementation Plan (OHR, OSCE, UNHCR, UNMIBH and CRPC) announced today that, as of the end of October, the overall implementation rate of the property laws has risen to 37% in BiH. 46% of cases have been solved in the Federation, 27% in the Republika Srpska and 33% in Brcko. In other words, out of 129.366 households that filed a claim in the Federation, 59.543 have repossessed their property and out of 120.087 claims in the Republika Srpska, 31.896 have been solved. In total, 93.698 out of 256.328 have repossessed their property.

Amendments to the property laws as decided by the High Representative last week are effective from now on. These amendments, as well as strong commitment and sustained action by all concerned authorities will no doubt help to speed up the implementation and resolution of property claims throughout BiH.

The international community is also continuing to assist the housing authorities in implementing administrative processing systems that are fair and transparent. One component of this effort has been the hiring, by OSCE, of short-term data entry clerks to assist in drawing up chronological lists of cases for processing. The work of these data clerks in various municipalities has assisted PLIP in identifying numerous cases in which claims for destroyed property had wrongly been counted in the PLIP statistics.

In the case of this month's statistics, the apparent 3% increase results from a combination of such correction work and ongoing progress by local authorities in resolving claims.

Concerning the comment in the PR regarding the sudden increase of 3 %:

The PLIP cell had asked housing authorities to exclude claims, decisions and repossessions of destroyed property (as well as business premises and land plots) from the statistics, given that the PLIP focuses exclusively on residential property.

It was easy to take decisions and repossessions of destroyed property out of the statistics, and housing authorities were gradually doing this. Nevertheless, in order to take out claims on destroyed property from the total number of claims in each municipality, housing authorities would first have to process the claim (in order to know whether the claim was in regard to destroyed property or not). In practice this was difficult and many housing authorities didn't do it. What happened was that in many municipalities, destroyed property wasn't taken out from the claims, but was taken out from the repossessions, which meant that the implementation ratio was smaller than it should have been (implementation ratio = number of claims divided through number of repossessions). The data entry clerks identified all claims on destroyed property and took this out of the total number of claims, which resulted in the division of a smaller number through the number of repossessions, which increased the implementation ratio.