

Scrap Metal Thief Makes Off With Iron Bridge

Police have little trouble tracking the suspect who made off with an iron bridge. 3:07pm UK, Saturday 20 October 2012

A Bosnian scrap metal dealer who added to his earnings by stealing and illegally selling metal drain covers got a bit over-ambitious when he made off with an entire iron bridge. Police spokesman Mile Jurosevic in Brcko, in the northeast of the country, said a 29-year-old man was detained at his home a few hours after the crime was reported. A large clue was found at the suspect's house. He said: "We also found in the courtyard in front of his house the metal structure of the bridge, cut in two to make it easier to transport." Mr Jurosevic revealed that the bridge, which is 12 metres long and weighs several tonnes, was stolen on Wednesday night at Dizdarsa, a suburb of Brcko. The metal structure was unscrewed from its base and dragged several metres to the nearest road before being loaded on to a truck, he said. The bridge was in a farming area through which a small river runs and was regularly used by several families to reach their fields, said resident Zejneba Pasalic. She was astonished to find the bridge, which was built in the 1980s by local people using scrap railway tracks, had vanished and alerted the police. Bosnia is one of Europe's poorest countries, with a 40% unemployment rate, and scrap metal provides a valuable additional income as it can be sold locally for €0.20 (16p) a kilo. Hundreds of people, including entire families, collect scrap metal such as drain covers and sell it on the black market, posing a real problem for the authorities.