

UNODC in South Eastern Europe

NEWSLETTER | Vol. 31

This newsletter provides information about key news and events related to UNODC's action and partnerships in the region. The UNODC Regional Programme for South Eastern Europe (2016-2019) is structured along three main pillars: (I) Illicit Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime, (II) Enhancement of Integrity and Justice, (III) Prevention, Treatment and Care. The Programme focuses on priority actions identified in cooperation with the Governments in the region and through a dialogue with national, regional and international partners. For feedback, queries or comments regarding this newsletter, please contact Ms. Ekaterina Kolykhalova (e-mail: ekaterina.kolykhalova@un.org) and Ms. Lejla Karahasanovic (lejla.karahasanovic@un.org).



NEWS AND EVENTS

UNODC expands its presence in North Macedonia

16-18 September 2019, Skopje, North Macedonia:

In the framework of its Regional Programme for South Eastern Europe (RP SEE), UNODC expanded its presence in North Macedonia by strengthening the Office in Skopje with a larger team appointed to be responsible for a variety of aspects within the UNODC portfolio, with special emphasis on countering organized crime in the region, in particular cross-border crime and illicit trafficking. Consistent with this important development, UNODC met with relevant stakeholders in North Macedonia, including the senior representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior and Justice, the Customs Administration and others, as well as international counterparts. UNODC formally introduced members of the new Programme Office, including the new Head of Office, and discussed future cooperation and partnerships in the framework of the UNODC RP for the period 2020-2023. The UNODC expanded presence in North Macedonia has been warmly welcomed by counterparts. This paves the way for fruitful collaboration corresponding to the UNODC mandates and treaties, the wider UN 2030 Agenda and the EU accession process in the country, particu-

larly in the context of Chapters 23 and 24 of the EU *acquis communautaire*. (For info: *Bill Wood*)

13th Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Europe, and data for South Eastern Europe

2-5 July 2019, Lisbon, Portugal: At the 13th meeting of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA) of Europe, a representative of the RP SEE presented the Report of the Secretariat on regional and subregional cooperation in South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, highlighting the importance of regional and interregional cooperation and the similarities of the challenges faced by the Balkans and other regions.

According to the other meeting's document – the Report of the Secretariat on the World situation with regard to drug trafficking, the following are the most prominent recent updates to different types of drugs in South Eastern Europe:

- The most commonly used route for transporting Afghan heroin into Europe continues to be the Balkan route, with large amounts of heroin seized in Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Turkey. Iranian authorities reported that 85 per cent of the heroin seized in 2017 had entered the country

through Pakistan, while 70 per cent was being trafficked onwards to Turkey and the Caucasus;

- The amount of heroin seized in South Eastern Europe reached record levels in 2017, with 18.2 tons, almost triple the 6.4 tons reported in the region in 2016;
- In South Eastern Europe, the total amount of cannabis herb seized increased by over 20 per cent in 2017, with Albania and Turkey reporting 78 tons and 94 tons, respectively;
- In recent years, there has been an increased amount of amphetamine trafficking in South Eastern Europe, with Turkey reporting the seizure of a record 6.7 tons in 2017, the largest amount reported by a country in Europe in that year. (For info: *Ekaterina Kolykhalova*)



UNODC continues to support South Eastern Europe in the field of financial investigations

The UNODC project on Financial Investigations in SEE, funded by the European Commission, is delivering activities to build regional anti-money laundering and counter-financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) capacity. This joint two-year UNODC/CEPOL project is designed to strengthen the capacities of the law enforcement sector and the judiciary in the six Western Balkan jurisdictions to effectively detect, investigate, prosecute and recover the proceeds of crime.

(For info on all of the below: Yulia Minaeva)

On **17-20 September 2019** in **Skopje, North Macedonia**, UNODC successfully concluded the fourth series of trainings, fully delivered by the UNODC certified national trainers. The training supported various law enforcement and judiciary institutions responsible for addressing organized crime, money laundering and the financing of terrorism issues, including the Police and Judicial Academies, Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs), Ministry of Interior, Customs and Tax authorities, judges, Police and the Prosecutor's Office. The participants gained extensive knowledge on information sources, international and national cooperation in financial investigations; tools and techniques of financial data and its transformation into evidence; analysis and visualization of links, connections and relationships; complex money laundering schemes; tax evasion and money laundering as well as the legal and illegal use of legal structures.



With the training in Skopje, the current phase of the UNODC Training-of-Trainers (ToT) course is completed. It has resulted in the training of 122 experts from the region. In total, UNODC has trained 373 law enforcement and judiciary officials. The 61 national trainers from Albania, Bosnia and

Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo under UNSCR 1244 are now certified and fully capable to deliver the trainings on financial investigations to their peers in an autonomous manner. After this training phase, the national trainers will go on to deliver trainings in the law enforcement and the judiciary institutions in their respective jurisdictions based on the training curricula initially developed by the UNODC experts and later adopted to the national contexts. As part of the next phase of the ToT, UNODC experts will attend the trainings provided by the national trainers in each jurisdiction to ensure that the quality of the training remains intact and that the sustainability of the project is secured.

On **10 September 2019** in **Budapest, Hungary**, UNODC and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) co-organized the fifth meeting of the national project focal points to discuss the implementation of the joint project activities and coordinate future interventions. The meeting reviewed completed activities and focused on the main achievements of the project to date, including the completion of the latest phase of the ToT course by UNODC and the submission of the plans for the institutionalization of the curricula by the training institutions. The meeting also examined the planned activities for the next six months, including the implementation of the sixth ToT phase and the upcoming study visits. It also agreed on the way forward with regard to the project implementation and visibility.

On **23-24 July 2019** in **Vienna, Austria**, UNODC, in cooperation with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Finance, organized a study visit for 14 officials representing the law enforcement and justice institutions of



Kosovo under UNSCR 1244, including the tax, customs and anti-money laundering authorities, the Prosecutor's office, the courts and the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council.

The study visit focused on the prevention of ML/FT and allowed the participants to get acquainted with the relevant Austrian and European frameworks and international standards, the overview of national practices, the role of the Austrian Financial Market Authority in ML/TF prevention and its inspection process, the AML/CFT legislation in the Austrian financial sector, as well as the national and international cooperation, which was later consolidated and illustrated with practical examples of predicate offences, investigations and case studies.

UNODC's support to Albania in the field of countering terrorism financing

The comprehensive multi-annual OSCE-UNODC capacity-building programme aims to support the national CFT efforts in Albania and South Eastern Europe, with the financial support of the OSCE Presence in Albania and International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP). The train-the-trainer programme is in line with the international standards and particularly the recently adopted UN Security Council Resolution 2462 (2019), the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF)'s standards and OSCE commitments. Recently, in the framework of the programme several activities have been organized:

On **23-27 September 2019** in **Golem, Albania**, a training course aimed at further strengthening the Albanian CFT capacities was organized jointly by UNODC, OSCE's Transnational Threats Department (TNT), OSCE-Albania and the ICITAP of the US Department of Justice. 23 participants from the General Directorate for the Prevention of Money Laundering (GDPML, the Albanian Financial Intelligence Unit, the State Intelligence Service (SHISH), the Albanian State Police, the Ministry of Justice and the Prosecution Office for Serious Crimes completed the course. The course also supported Albania's compliance with the international standards, in particular the UN Security Council Resolutions, the recently adopted UNSCR 2462 (2019) on CFT, the FATF standards and the OSCE commitments. The seminar emphasized the key role of inter-agency cooperation in investigating and disrupting TF. Based on country- and region-specific scenarios, it included sessions on financial investigation, creating

financial profiles, briefings, decision logs, case management and converting financial intelligence into evidence. The training also benefitted from Europol's knowledge of the subject matter. Over half of the course was dedicated to practical work on specific instruments and techniques that play an important role in CFT.

On **2-3 September 2019** in **Vienna, Austria**, the programme implementers delivered a tailored training course to Albanian officials, which allowed to discuss and thoroughly analyse aspects related to financial investigations and case management with the purpose of strengthening the capacity of Albania to identify, investigate and disrupt the FT and enhance inter-agency cooperation. The participants of this training

course will continue to deliver these training courses to local officials in the future, together with the international experts from OSCE and UNODC. *(For info: Oliver Gadney)*

UNODC supports inter-regional bridges in countering money laundering and terrorism financing

9-13 September 2019, Moscow, Russian Federation: UNODC in cooperation with the International Training and Methodology Center for Financial Monitoring (ITMCFM) and the Government of Russian Federation organized a training for officials representing FIUs, State Police and the Ministry of Finance of the region aimed at enhancing their capacities in analytical methods and investigative techniques in

financial investigations as well as strengthen regional cooperation between the Russian Federation and SEE in the field of AML/CFT. Relevant national policies/strategies and cooperation and valuable information on related topics such as preventives measures, legal systems and operational financial data, countering the financing of terrorism and international cooperation were presented.

(For info: Ekaterina Kolykhalova)



ORGANIZED CRIME

UNODC promotes the rule of law through Education on Firearms

24-25 September 2019, Zagreb, Croatia: In the framework of the UNODC Education for Justice (E4J) initiative, which seeks to prevent crime and promote a culture of lawfulness through education activities designed for primary, secondary and tertiary levels within the Doha Programme, UNODC in cooperation with the Political Science Faculty of Zagreb organized an expert workshop for lecturers from South Eastern Europe dedicated to the E4J University Module Series on Firearms. The workshop aimed to bring together university lecturers in order to: (1) enhance their familiarity with the E4J modules on firearms; (2) consider effective approaches to teaching the modules in universities in the region, at both the undergraduate and graduate levels; (3) strengthen the participants' capacity to teach courses based on the modules; and (4) support the participants in adapting and integrating the modules into existing or new courses. The event gathered 23 participants from six countries representing academic institutions, law enforcement and military training institutions. As a result of this training, the knowledge in South Eastern Europe on teaching on firearms and other E4J modules was enhanced and the awareness of E4J modules and available tools and materials for the incorporation into the training curricula of academic and specialized training institutions was raised. *(For info: Diman Dimov)*

UNODC is nearing the finalization of the report on organized crime in the Western Balkans

17-18 September 2019, Herceg Novi, Montenegro: UNODC organized the second regional training under the initiative "Measuring and assessing organized crime in the Western Balkans (MACRO)." The project, funded by European Commission, aims to establish a mechanism to collect available data and develop a standard framework to produce regular evidence-based analytical reports on organized crime in the Western Balkans. UNODC brought together experts with a wide range of experiences on countering organized crime. The regional training provided an overview on various forms and methods to increase the capacity to collect and share criminal justice data on organized crime. The training focused on sharing progress in the implementation of the MACRO project. Panels focused on the recently published Research Brief on assessing the data available to measure organized crime and implementation of the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS). The final results of the data collection and the preliminary conclusions of the project were also presented. The training also reviewed other forms of data and information that could contribute to measuring organized crime in the beneficiary jurisdictions. Experts from international organizations and national institutions, academia and civil society in the field of organized crime provided their subject-matter expertise to almost 70 representatives of national insti-

tutions. At the end of 2019, the MACRO project will produce the final regional report on Organized Crime in the Western Balkans which will describe the trends and patterns observed through collected data and propose evidence-based policy advice to support developments in the rule of law, implementation of SDG 16.A and further the EU accession process in the beneficiary jurisdictions. Earlier, on **18-19 July 2019**, within the same project, UNODC organized in **Vienna, Austria**, an Expert Group Meeting aimed at gathering experts in the field of crime and statistics to discuss the preliminary findings of the above-mentioned regional report, including the country and regional analysis and estimates of the illegal markets in view of consolidating the analysis of collected da-



ta and further refining the data analysis strategy. UNODC provided a thorough overview of the specifics of framing data collection on organized crime in the Western Balkans, as well as the background and current findings and achievements under the MACRO project. *(For info: Tejal Jesrani Haslinger)*

UNODC participates in the OSCE/ FRONTEX joint conference on preventing document fraud and cooperation in the Western Balkans

11-12 September 2019, Vienna, Austria: A coordination conference for the WB on preventing document fraud was organized by the OSCE's Transnational Threats Department in close cooperation with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency's (FRONTEX) Center of Excellence for Combating Document Fraud. The conference brought together 60 participants representing the EU member states, regional and international organizations as well as document experts from South Eastern Europe. Document and identity fraud remains one of the biggest challenges for the national and international security as it is a key element of various criminal activities, such as trafficking, smuggling and terrorism. FRONTEX and OSCE are actively supporting activities to detect identity and document fraud and prevent and combat cross border crime. For this purpose, the two organizations teamed up to build a comprehensive situational awareness

and to identify gaps or overlaps where enhanced coordination among multiple stakeholders is required. The aim of these efforts is also to agree on an effective coordination mechanism to adequately support and complement the two organizations' operations and make an efficient use of the resources in the Western Balkans. *(For info: Ekaterina Kolykhalova)*

UNODC continues to support for the marking process of imported firearms in Bosnia and Herzegovina

3 July 2019, Bern, Switzerland: UNODC organized a study visit for officials from the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations (MFTER) of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Federal Police of Switzerland and the Bern Cantonal Police. The study visit provided an opportunity for the officials to learn about the various types of firearms data registered by the federal and cantonal authorities and the procedures used for inter-agency data exchange; the organization of the impact marking process including the main actors, duties and timelines; as well as how data on imported firearms is recorded,

collected and handled in line with the regulations and obligations for all involved in the process. The Swiss authorities presented the software, used for managing this information, and demonstrated various options for conducting search queries and obtaining



statistical information, which can be used for conducting firearms tracing. The participants learned about the organization of the record-keeping process at the cantonal level. The knowledge gained during the study visit will be used for developing the terms of reference for a record-keeping system on imported firearms in Bosnia and Herzegovina, operated by the MFTER, and containing data on markings of all imported firearms to the country. *(For info: Diman Dimov)*

ANTI-CORRUPTION

UNODC holds a conference on safeguarding sport from corruption

3-4 September 2019, Vienna, Austria: In line with its efforts towards the effective implementation of resolution 7/8 on corruption in sport adopted by the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), UNODC organized a conference on Safeguarding Sport from Corruption aimed at discussing and sharing progress on the implementation of this resolution, and where applicable other efforts to safeguard sport as they relate to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The resolution 7/8 of the Conference of States Parties to the UNCAC on corruption in sport affirms among others the relevance of UNCAC in promoting integrity, transparency and accountability and preventing cor-

ruption, also in sport and calls upon States to enhance their efforts in preventing corruption in sports and step up cooperation, coordination and exchange of information, including through robust legislative and law enforcement measures, multi-stakeholder



global and national partnerships and the involvement of the private sector, academia, communities and civil society to raise awareness regarding the existence, causes and

gravity of the challenge posed by corruption to sport. The conference was organized following the international conference on Safeguarding Sport from Corruption held in Vienna in June 2018 to keep the momentum and to serve as the primary global platform for Member States, sports organizations and other relevant stakeholders to continue the dialogue on this issue as it is widely accepted that corruption can undermine the potential of sport and its role in contributing to the achievement of the SDGs. Representatives from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia attended the event, which further contributes to countering corruption in sports in these countries and builds on the previous achievements in addressing the risks posed by this threat, globally and in the Western Balkans. *(For info: Ronan O'Laoire)*

GLOBAL CONTAINER CONTROL PROGRAMME (CCP)

UNODC supports the authorities of Montenegro in container control

23-27 September 2019, Podgorica, Montenegro: In the framework of the UNODC-WCO CCP, UNODC delivered the first week of the Strategic Trade and Export Control (STEC) training for 14 officers from the Port

Control Unit (PCU) of Bar, Montenegro and other officials from the Customs, Police and the Ministry of Economy. For many participants, this was an introduction to the relevant UN conventions and resolutions linked to illicit trafficking and strategic trade. The training was well received as noted through the written feedback in the evaluations col-

lected after the training, the latter being an integral part of the CCP. This training will be followed by two additional course weeks further contributing to strengthening the capacities of Montenegro in countering illicit trafficking. The PCU in Montenegro is supported by the Government of Luxembourg. *(For info: Alen Gagula)*

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

UNODC participates in the Mirage Task Force Meeting on Countering Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration

26 September 2019, Ohrid, North Macedonia: In line with the efforts to strengthen regional cooperation for combatting trafficking in human beings (TiP) and illegal migration, UNODC participated in the Mirage Task Force Meeting on Countering Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration, organized by the Southeast European Law Enforcement Center (SELEC) and the OSCE-North Macedonia. The meeting aimed at evaluating the regional situation on TiP and smuggling of migrants (SoM) in 2018, discussing the undertaken initiatives in this area and planning future operational activities. The participants represented regional and international organizations addressing TiP and SoM and provided overviews on new trends, modus operandi, routes, investigative methods, case studies and successful joint investigations related to TiP and SoM and held discussions on lessons learned and exchanged experiences in this area. UNODC contributed to the discussions by sharing the UNODC activities and

experience in countering TiP and SoM, which further contributes to enhancing the regional cooperation in this area.



UNODC delivered a training on identifying and investigating cases of human trafficking for the purpose of Forced Labour

17-19 September 2019, Vlačić, Bosnia and Herzegovina: UNODC in cooperation with the Governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the United States of America organized a multidisciplinary training on Identifying and Investigating Cases of Human trafficking for the Purpose of Forced Labour. The training was attended by officials representing institutions addressing TiP and illegal migration including the Prosecutor's Office,

the State Coordinator for Combating TiP and Illegal Migration and the Federal Department for Inspection Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as academia. The participants gained extensive knowledge on a variety of topics including the legal concept of TiP with a focus on forced labour from international, domestic and comparative perspectives; identification of victims of TiP for the purpose of forced labour, indicators for identification and interagency cooperation; the phenomenon of TiP for the purpose of forced labour including etiology and root causes, risk factors and victims' vulnerability, methods of prevention and the role of private sector, victims' rights and possibilities of compensation as well as the efficient investigation of cases using a victim-centered approach including a presentation of procedures for interviewing, evidence collection and investigative measures, and crime scene management. The reviewed topics were illustrated with real-life cases and the participants practiced the studied material through hands-on exercises in working groups under the guidance of experts. *(For info: Davor Raus)*

DRUG PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND CARE

UNODC expanded the Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence programme to Croatia building on its successful results in four other countries of South Eastern Europe

6 September 2019, Zagreb, Croatia: UNODC and the Lions Clubs International Foundation in collaboration with the Croatian Ministry of Science and Education and with the technical support of the Croatian Agency for Education and Training, launched the social and emotional prevention programme "Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence" (LQSFA) in Croatia. The LQSFA programme was initially launched in South Eastern Europe in 2014 and gradually expanded to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia reaching more than 7,000 students in over 140 elementary schools across the region. Following a strict evidence-based implementation modality, the programme proved to be effective and showed encouraging results in substance use reduction, the intention to use drugs and dissuasive effects on the engaged students on substance use in their local environment. Additionally, the results of the LQSFA pro-

gramme inform and support the UNODC-WHO International Standards on drug use prevention by providing information on programme implementation in low- and middle-income countries. The proved effectiveness of the LQSFA programme builds a case for



the future expansion of the programme both regionally and globally. Owing to the valuable support of the Croatian Agency for Education and Training and the local Lions Clubs office, 50 elementary schools were recommended for the launch of the programme across the country, in various locations surrounding the cities of Osijek, Zagreb, Rijeka, Zadar, Split. The programme will start with

training workshops for educators and trainers involving 100 teachers and two trainer candidates from the above-mentioned cities beginning on 11 September 2019 and will be implemented over the next two academic years with the objective to reach over 2000 students. Upon delivery of the programme in Croatia, the effectiveness of the strategy will be evaluated and its results included in the final report along with comments on the cultural adaptation, the implementation modality and the material for further consideration of the Croatian Ministry of Science and Education and the Agency for Education and Training. *(For info: Milos Stojanovic)*

