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From: Hungarian Regional Chair of the Dublin Group
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To: Horizontal Working Party on Drugs

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Subject: Regional report on Western Balkans

Albania

Report by the Tirana Mini-Dublin Group for the year 2013

1. General situation in the country

In 2013, drug crimes remained a serious problem for Albania. The country continued to be both a country of origin (for cannabis and its derivatives) and a transit route (for hard drugs). Cannabis in the vicinity of Lazarat has been cultivated at a large scale, turning the village into one of the biggest cannabis production areas in Europe.

The fight against drugs remains one of the main priorities of the Albanian Law Enforcement Agencies. The new government of Edi Rama, taking up their duties in September 2013, have confirmed their commitment of engaging in intensive efforts to strike the organized crime and the trafficking in narcotics.

The National Strategy Against Drugs 2012–2016, which fully complies with common EU-standards, was approved by the Council of Ministers in June, 2012. In 2013, the new administration adopted a new Strategy and Action Plan against Organized Crime and is planning to establish a National Investigation Bureau, a specialized unit to fight, *inter alia*, against the trafficking in narcotics.

Albania, however, continued to achieve remarkable results against illegal drugs in 2013. Both the volume of drug seizures and of arrests exceeded those of 2012, which had been the highest ever. Measures were taken to ensure a more effective control of borders. The modernization of police equipment continued. Training and equipment of the Albanian Border Police has further improved during 2013 and had a positive impact on the number of seizures.

Albania continued to receive assistance from several countries to enhance its counter-narcotics capacities. The US, Italy and Greece were among the main contributing countries. A number of joint international operations were conducted, mostly in cooperation with Italy.

Regarding prevention activities, the project “Youth Education and Awareness and Reducing Drug Demand and other Harmful Substances”, supported by ICITAP and the US Embassy in Tirana has attracted a special interest and had a great impact on pupils, teachers, parents, media and police officers. Projects for drug awareness and demand reduction continued in 2013 with the coordination of the Albanian Ministry of Education and the State Police.

1.1. Legislation and coordination

The Council of Ministers approved the National Strategy Against Drugs 2012-2016 with the Council of Ministers- Decision No 403, dated 20.06.2012 (*Official Gazette No 85 dated 24.07.2012, page 4299*). The Strategy ensures a balanced approach to drug supply and demand reduction aspects. The Strategy, which is fully in line with the EU Strategy for Drugs 2005-2012 and the Action Plan for Drugs 2009-2012 between the EU and Western Balkan Countries, is based on four main pillars: strategic coordination, supply reduction, demand reduction, harm reduction.

The new government of Edi Rama, in office since September 2013, adopted a new Strategy and Action Plan against Organized Crime. The government announced it shall employ all the adequate human, technical and financial resources to guarantee a full and effective collaboration with the regional and international partners in the fight against terrorism and international crime. To this end, the government is planning to establish a National Investigation Bureau, a specialized unit to fight, *inter alia*, against trafficking in narcotics.

Under the new government, a new Program of Activities of the Ministry of Interior was adopted for the years 2013-2017. The document foresees that criminal activity in the field of drugs will continue inside and outside the country due to market demand and high profits for criminal organizations. It emphasizes the need of better absorbed and analyzed information, collaboration with responsibility and professionalism within the police structures counterparts, as well as increasing the efficiency of the investigation of criminal groups.

In March 2013, the so-called speed boat moratorium, a law which prevented Albanian citizens from possessing speed boats of a certain size, came to an end. So far no significant increase of interest in registering speed boats previously prevented by the moratorium has been detected. The Adriatic and Ionian Sea, however, remained an important route for narcotics smuggling from Albania to Italy, using illegal speedboats.

Activities on international cooperation

22-24 January, 2013, “Conference on Western Balkans Organised Crime” at Europol in The Hague, Netherlands
26 February, 2013, Expert Dialogue Meeting on drugs between the European Union (Horizontal Drugs Group of the Council of the European Union) and Western Balkan Countries in Brussels, Belgium. The meeting focused on updating the Action Plan on Drugs between the EU and Western Balkans.

A total of seven Coordination Meetings on particular cases and common operations were coordinated by EUROPOL, SELEC Centre and Italian Inter-Force Police Mission in Albania, in The Hague, Montenegro, FYR of Macedonia, Albania and Bari, Italy.

The Cooperation Agreement between Police Training Centre of Albanian State Police and CEPOL was signed in May, 2013.

The Agreement on operational and strategic cooperation with Europol was signed in the Hague in December, 2013.

1.2. Strengthening of capacities

Inter-institutional cooperation and coordination

A common platform for the execution of proactive investigations has been developed in the framework of implementation of the cooperation agreement between the Prosecutor General, Ministry of Interior and the State Intelligence Service (SHISH). However, the SHISH and its head, appointed during the term of the previous government, have been widely criticised by the recent government for their lack of cooperation with the police.

Fight against narcotic plants cultivation

During 2013, 28 trainings for the anti-drugs units and from the other law enforcement units have been carried out, where a total of 217 employees have been trained of whom there were 215 State Police Officers (157 anti-drugs officers + 46 public order police officer + 9 Judicial Police Operation at the Prosecutors Office +2 from border police + 1 from the special operations) and 2 officers from the Customs.

In 2013, a joint training action plan with the General Prosecutors Office was implemented.

1.3. Police activities against trafficking of drugs

According to the Albanian Police, during 2013 the trafficking of marijuana has been the main problem and there has been an increase in the number of these cases. The main country of destination were Greece and Italy and a few other countries of the region as Kosovo, FYROM, Montenegro which in most of the cases are used as transit for other destinations in the Western European countries.

Statistical tables on offenses and suspects prosecuted, as well as seized quantities of drugs for the year 2013: (source: Albanian government)

2013

Type	No. of cases	Detected	Quantity	Perpetrators	Arrested/detained	On bail	Wanted
Heroin	95	95	47 kg 325 gr	113	102	9	2
Methadone	2	2	137.7 gr	2	1	1	0
Phentermine	1	1	1.2 gr	1	0	1	0
Cocaine	42	41	16 kg 104.6 gr	59	49	10	0
Marijuana	949	888	20672 kg 916.9 gr	1137	634	455	48
Hashish	6	6	32 kg 440.2 gr	9	8	0	1
Hashish Oil	1	1	359 ml	1	1	0	0
Cannabis seeds	6	6	700 gr	6	5	1	0
Papaver somniferum seeds	1	1	5 kg 288.9 gr	1	1	0	0
Mixers	2	2	1 kg 742.8 gr	2	2	0	0
Total	1105	1043		1331	803	477	51

Statistical tables on offenses and suspects prosecuted, as well as seized quantities of drugs for the year 2012: (source: Albanian government)

2012

Type	No. Cases	Detect	Quantity	Perpetrators	Arrested/detained	On bail	wanted
Heroin	90	90	87 kg 719.9 gr	120	107	13	0
Methadone	1	1	543.1 gr	2	2	0	0
Cocaine	40	39	4 kg 61 gr	57	48	6	3
Marijuana	822	777	21138 kg 231.4 gr	1053	663	342	48
Hashish	1	1	5 kg 112.2 gr	3	1	2	0
Hashish Oil	0	0	500 gr	0	0	0	0
Cannabis seeds	3	3	343.2 gr	3	1	2	0
Mixers	5	5	174 kg 967.1 gr	7	7	0	0
Total	962	916		1245	829	365	51

Having approximately the same number of cases, the quantity of heroin seizures decreased by 46 %, while the quantity of seized cocaine was almost four times more than in 2012. The quantity of seized marijuana was similar to the previous year (21 metric tons) to which seizures of considerable amounts (up to 2 tons) have contributed. The quantity of seized hashish dropped significantly (from 32 kg to 5 kg).

The number of cases has increased by 14.8% for the seizure of narcotics plants and the number of perpetrators proceeded for criminal offences in the area of drugs have increased by 6.9% in comparison with 2012.

During the year 2013:

- 43 criminal groups of trafficking and distribution of narcotics substances have been dismantled with 196 persons prosecuted. (In 2012, 50 criminal groups with 233 prosecuted persons have been dismantled)
- 50 operations by implementing the special investigation technique have been conducted. (Same amount as in 2012).

- 54 operations using various forms of international cooperation have been successfully conducted (43 with Italy, 5 with Germany, 2 with Greece, 1 with Kosovo, 1 with France, 1 with Belgium, 1 with Czech Republic), and resulted in 77 persons arrested in Albania. During 2012, 54 international operations were conducted with 76 persons prosecuted in Albania.

Criminal Code Article	No. Criminal Offences		No. Perpetrators	
	2012	2013	2012	2013
Article 283 (manufacturing, selling narcotics products)	850	948	1071	1134
Article 283/a (Traffic of narcotics products)	106	153	166	193
Article 285 (Possession of chemical substances and equipment)	6	2	8	2
Article 285/a (facilitating the drug's use)	0	2	0	2
Total	962	1105	1245	1331

From the total number of persons prosecuted for selling and trafficking narcotic products (1331), 1292 are Albanian and 39 foreign citizens (11 from Italy, 8 from Kosovo, 6 from Macedonia, 5 from Greece, 3 from Montenegro, 2 from Poland, 1 from Germany, 1 from Austria , 1 from Turkey and 1 from Croatia. *(In 2012, there were 38 foreign citizens prosecuted).*

The following tables reflect the trend of comparative results considering the period of 16 September, 2013 – 27 February, 2014 / 16 September, 2012 – 27 February, 2013:

16 September, 2013 – 27 February, 2014

Type	No. Cases	Detect	Quantity	Perpetrators	Arrested/detained	On bail	wanted
Heroin	46	46	22 kg 553.5 gr	55	48	6	1
Methadone	2	2	137.3 gr	2	1	1	0
Cocaine	30	30	14 kg 276.9 gr	32	28	4	0
Marijuana	561	522	15483 kg 606.5 gr	667	383	259	25
Hashish	3	3	8 kg 837.4 gr	5	5	0	0
Cannabis seeds	3	3	486.3 gr	4	4	0	0
Mixers	2	2	84.1 gr	2	2	0	0
Total	647	608		767	471	270	26

16 September, 2012 – 27 February, 2013

Type	No. of cases	Detect	Quantity	Perpetrators	Arrested/detained	On bail	Wanted
Heroin	40	40	36 kg 457.5 gr	53	50	3	0
Fentermine	1	1	1.2 gr	1	0	1	0
cocaine	14	13	1 kg 707.3 gr	13	12	1	0
Marijuana	429	402	12637 kg 839.8 gr	537	350	158	29
Hashish	1	1	431.6 gr	2	2	0	0
Canabis seeds	0	0	3.8 gr	0	0	0	0
Papaver seeds	1	1	288.9 gr	1	1	0	0
Mixers	2	2	168 kg 480.1	2	2	0	0
Total	488	460		609	417	163	29

During this particular period, the number of cases increased by 32.5 % for seizure of narcotics plants and the number of perpetrators proceeded for criminal offences in the area of drugs increased by 25,9 % in comparison with the same period one year earlier.

Between 16 September, 2013 – 27 February, 2014:

- 27 operations have been carried out using the special investigation techniques, compared to 21 operations carried out in 2012-2013.
- 30 criminal groups targeted in the traffic of narcotics distribution with 117 persons prosecuted, compared to 23 groups with 102 persons targeted in the same period of 2012-2013.

- 34 operations conducted, in which various forms of international cooperation have been used. 42 people were arrested in Albania for international drug trafficking, 31 in Italy, 2 in Germany, 1 in Belgium. It must be mentioned that joint operations with Italy were concluded, «Ellenika AL», «Ellenika 2», with 6 people arrested and «Trust-AL» with 3 people arrested for narcotics and international traffic, resulting in significant amounts of narcotics seized in Albania and Italy, compared to 21 international operations with 26 persons arrested, carried out in the same period of 2012 to 2013.

1.4 Prevention of narcotics plants cultivation

In cooperation with the Italian police, the General Director of State Police has implemented the Operational Plan No. 1150 adopted on 27.06.2013 on “The Air surveillance of the cultivated narcotics plants fields”. In this framework 13 monitoring air surveillances were conducted with the Special Station Helicopters. The Operational Plan of the General Director no. 1360 of 12.08.2013 on “The Monitoring by Helicopters of the narcotics plant cultivated surfaces” was adopted, where 10 flights with State Police helicopters have been carried out in some country region.

The Joint Operational Plan with Army Air Forces no. 1450, of 24.09.2013 “On the air surveillance of the cultivated narcotics plants surfaces in the regions of Vlore and Shkoder” has been adopted.

At the national level, during 2013, 2124 police forces, 271 police vehicles, 1 airplane and 4 helicopters were engaged in police operations for the destruction of narcotic plants.

Comparative statistical data on the cultivation of Cannabis Sativa

No	Years	No. of cases	Detected	Quantity	Perpetrators	Arrested/ Detained	On bail	Wanted
1.	2011	89	55	21267	79	47	19	13
2.	2012	154	107	33000	142	95	21	26
3.	2013	229	77	98491	89	52	16	21

Current “trading” prices:

Retail: 1 g Heroin = 22 €, 1 g Cocaine = 60 €, 1 g Marijuana = 1.2 €

Wholesale: 1 kg Heroin = 18,000 to 24,000 € (typical price: 20,000 €); 1 kg Cocaine = 38,000 to 45,000 € (typical price: 40,000 €), 1 kg Marijuana = 250 to 350 € (typical price: 300 €)

The situation in Lazarat

In 2013, cannabis cultivation in the vicinity of the Southern Albanian village of Lazarat has been continuing at a large scale. Although no official data on the quantity of the cultivated cannabis exists, international experts estimate the yearly production up to 800 metric tons (note: 21 tons of marijuana was seized in 2013 in Albania). Local sources reported 4-5000 persons working on a daily basis on the plantations. The former Albanian governments have so far failed to leave off these activities.

In his annual analysis, the General Director of the State Police admitted “We are aware that there is a considerable criminal activity in terms of cultivation and trafficking of Cannabis Sativa to European countries, involving members of the police structures and other law enforcement agencies. This for us is an unacceptable situation which constitutes one of the major challenges which Albanian police will face and will win.” He added that “the complex investigation and prosecution of drug trafficking networks have not begun yet, but remain the main objective”.

The new Albanian government confirmed its commitment to take effective measures to deal with the situation. Significant quantities of marijuana originating from Lazarat were seized during police operations after the harvest period. According to officials, operations shall continue in 2014.

1.5. Police prevention activities

During 2011 and 2012, the Tirana Regional Police in collaboration with the Education Directorate and with the support of ICITAP and New Jersey National Guard, US Embassy in Tirana implemented the project “Youth Education and Awareness and Reducing Drug Demand and Other Harmful Substances”. The project was focused on the elementary and high schools of Tirana. The programme implemented was a result of a previous evaluation of the drug situation in Tirana. For the implementation of the programme the best police officers were selected and trained. During 2011–2012, 40 joint working groups were established which were composed by teachers and police officers (in total 40 teachers and 27 police officers).

This project attracted special interest and had a great impact on pupils, teachers, parents, media and police officers alike. It produced good results in terms of awareness raising and prevention and is considered as a direct implementation of the community policing philosophy. These activities are contributing to the increase of the public trust towards the police.

The Drug Awareness / Demand Reduction program has been offered in over 160 schools and reached more than 12,000 elementary school children. The ASP, SIDA and ICITAP sponsored a drug awareness camp last June that was attended by 135 Tirana school children who were winners in their individual schools poster contest with an anti-drug theme. In 2014, it is intended to expand this drug awareness camp to other regions in the country.

Projects for drug awareness and demand reduction continued in 2013 with the coordination of the Albanian Ministry of Education and the State Police.

2. Tirana Mini-Dublin Group's recommendations for 2014

- *Continued efforts should be undertaken in prevention, for example by increasing the impact of existing antidrug campaigns.*
- *Albania's efforts along with the assistance of the International Community have led to remarkable progress in the fight against illegal drugs and related crime. However, continued efforts to increase detections and seized quantities are recommended.*
- *The cannabis cultivations of Lazarat remain an issue of huge concern. Effective measures are needed to eliminate local drug production and to promote alternative development to the inhabitants.*
- *Measures to strengthen border control and surveillance, including the improvement of security along the "green border" to the neighbouring countries, should be kept up.*
- *Training and capacity building of the police as well as updating their technical equipment should continue.*
- *Corruption remains a major concern in Albania. Special attention should be given to this problem in order to take effective measures against criminal networks dealing with drug production and trafficking.*
- *Intelligence management should be improved, as should the analytical processes undertaken by the personnel of the Intelligence Analysis unit. Likewise the sharing of information between departments and other institutions requires improvement.*
- *Parliamentary oversight of the security sector in general is essential; however the work of the police and intelligence services requires closer scrutiny during 2014.*

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Country Report by the Mini-Dublin Group Sarajevo 2014

Following written consultations, the Mini-Dublin Group Sarajevo finalized the attached Country Report with the aim to evaluate the progress achieved by Bosnia and Herzegovina in the fight against drugs and drug trafficking since the the group's last report in June 2013. The consultations were coordinated by the Embassy of Hungary. The drafting of the report and the compilation of relevant information was kindly supported by the EU Delegation/EUSR Office and member states.

The evaluation and the report were determined by the fact that the official Annual Report on the Situations of Drugs in Bosnia and Herzegovina for year 2013 is not yet finalized. There is no official aggregate data on the last year. At the Ministry of Security, the competent authority was not in a position to provide them. However their readiness for cooperation and consultation, as soon as the report is published, was fully confirmed and underlined.

1. General situation in the country (general situation in the host country including production, trafficking and demand related issues)

In general, the situation remains unchanged to the previous reporting period.

Drug trafficking has the biggest share in drug related offences in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This can be mainly attributed to two facts: firstly, profit margins are highest in drug trade; secondly it is the fastest way to make money. BiH citizens are mostly involved in the shipment and storage of drugs. The current deteriorating economic and social situation of BiH might lead to increasing trafficking.

The domestic market for and production of drugs is small. However, there are indications that domestic drug demand slightly increased in 2013, especially for synthetic drugs. This change from a predominantly drug trafficking country to a drug consuming country is of concern not only in BiH, but in the whole region. The only drug produced in BiH is cannabis with increasing indoor cultivation of genetically modified potent strains of the cannabis plant.

In general drugs are shipped through Bosnia in two directions. Heroin and cannabis are coming from the East and are shipped to the West whereas synthetic drugs and cocaine are shipped from West to East. BiH is considered to be one of the regional hubs for narcotics shipment. As its neighbours, Bosnia and Herzegovina is affected by trafficking on the Balkan route, linking production sites in Afghanistan via Turkey with the main European markets. One of the sub routes goes through Bulgaria, Romania and FYROM to Kosovo, then through the Serbian and Montenegrin “Sandžak” to BiH, and further on to Croatia and Slovenia. Marijuana is usually transported from Western FYROM, Albania and Kosovo over to Montenegro to southern BiH. It was observed that cocaine traffickers from South-America use ports in Greece, Montenegro and Croatia, and there are already well-established land routes, partly through BiH and further to Western Europe. Law enforcement authorities confirm that persons from all ethnic groups are involved in the narcotics trade, often collaborating across ethnic lines.

It is too early to evaluate the impact of the accession of Croatia to the EU (July 1, 2013) regarding current drug routes. First results are expected within a year. However there are some indications that the better monitored external frontier with increased border control may have some positive impact.

There are no official data available for year 2013 in drug related issues. As far as statistics are concerned, in general it has to be pointed out that every ministry at the several levels of government has different standards. This stems from the fragmented nature of BiH’s law enforcement and security sectors.

The number of the drug users is estimated close to the number in the previous year; there are around 7500 drug users in BiH, the overwhelming majority of them are male. Street prices are considered not see significant changes. According to 2010 data, street prices for heroin are between 15 and 25 EUR per gram. One gram of Cannabis costs between 0.5 and 1 EUR whereas skunk (a variety of marijuana) costs between 1.5 and 3 EUR. In the Balkan region, one gram of cocaine costs currently around 50 EUR and methamphetamine or ecstasy around 3 EUR or 4 EUR.

Legal framework - administrative capacity

Individual law enforcement agencies are showing improved capability to identify and disrupt organized drug trafficking operations. The political will generally exists to disrupt these drug trafficking operations. Further efforts are still needed regarding an effective judicial follow-up as well as to improve joint investigation, coordination and cooperation between the many layers of law enforcement, security and judicial sector actors. Formal coordination and better exchange of intelligence are needed to respond to growing challenges.

The establishment of the Directorate for Coordination of Police Bodies was a landmark in this regard in 2010. However further political support is needed for its coordinating role to be fully recognised. So far, the Directorate has not had a competence to exercise a coordination role towards other police bodies. Lack of political support to make the Directorate fully operational is a significant problem to be addressed in the future. To ensure increased financial support for the Directorate is vital.

Further support to enhance the Local Risk Analysis Centres (LRACs) within contributing agencies for the improvement of work and effectiveness of the Joint Risk Analysis Centre (JRAC) under the Integrated Border Management Strategy will also potentially improve targeted joint enforcement activity.

A rulebook on safekeeping and destruction of seized narcotic drugs, adopted in 2012, proved helpful and produced positive results. In 2012, the Commission for Drug Destruction destroyed for the first time 1015 kg of marijuana, skunk, heroin, ecstasy and amphetamine. During 2013, the Commission for Drugs Destruction was reappointed, and in December 2013, the Ministry of Security, together with law enforcement agencies and Commission for Drug Destruction, destroyed 31 tons (31 000 litre) of anhydride acetic acid in the value of 100 million EUR. (This amount could have been used for producing ecstasy in the value of 250 million EUR.) The whole operation was fully monitored by the members of the Commission. An organised destruction of seized drugs presents a step forward, since the problem had been pending for years, and after the war a large quantity of drugs was stored in different LEAs waiting for destruction. Still a large quantity seized by different courts awaits its destruction. Ministry of Security has been engaged in collection of data on seized drugs and their estimated value.

EMCDDA (European Monitoring Centre for Drug Addiction), appointed a new provisional national focal point works in the Ministry of Security. His work is considered to be useful and essential by the BiH side. It will remain provisional until approved by the Commission. The Commission has not met for more than two years. The last explanation upon the situation refers to certain changes in the government of the RS and thus the composition of the Commission needs to be re-approved. The new national focal point is currently working on the annual report on the situation of drugs in BiH.

High expectations have been expressed towards the growing cooperation between BiH and the Pompidou Group, the Council of Europe's special body combating drug abuse and drug trafficking. A formal application for full membership in the Group is planned to be submitted in the near future. The issue is dealt with by the Ministry of Security. However the proposal of basis for negotiations of BiH with Pompidou Group, proposed by the Ministry of Security, was for two times removed from the agenda of the Council of Ministers, due to opposition coming from RS.

As part of the cooperation a multi beneficiary TAIEX workshop on enhancing the quality of drugs addiction treatment is to be held in Sarajevo on 26-27 March, with regional participation from South Eastern Europe. The workshop is organised in cooperation with EMCDDA and Ministry of Security.

In the reporting period, the new Law on Prevention and Suppression of Narcotic Drugs has still not been passed. The Working Group held a meeting in November 2013, however due to differing stances between Ministry of Security and RS Ministry of Interior the work was suspended. The agreement on the creation of the Office for Drugs as a focal point for cooperation with EMCDDA has not yet been reached. The mandate of the Working Group expired in December 2013 and needs to be extended by the Council of Ministers. The majority of the text of the law was drafted and it is aligned with the EU *Aquis*. Even if the WG finalises its work in the coming months, the election year is likely to cause further delays in the debate and adoption of the Law.

The lack of a legal basis for state institutions in certain fields, like for the Ministry of Civil Affairs regarding health, makes the work of state institutions difficult as they are dependent on the good will of the entities or of the cantons (within the Federation entity). The request of international institutions for contact partners and data on the state level has proven to be very successful in strengthening state institutions.

The decentralization of the police and judiciary, poses particular challenges to the ability of central institutions of BiH to implement a coherent security policy. In face of these challenges, however, there has been steady progress in reforming and stabilizing the crime fighting system by consolidating state institutions such as the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Security, Border Police (BP), State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA), Intelligence Security Agency (OSA), The Service for Foreigner's Affairs, the Office of the BiH Prosecutor, and the State Court. The Ministry of Security has made a concerted effort to try encouraging and facilitating better cooperation and coordination among these and entity level law enforcement and security institutions. The repeated questioning of the competence and legal basis of the BiH Prosecutor's Office and BiH State Court by RS authorities would, however, undermine previous achievements in making more effective the state level judiciary.

a) Legislation

Currently the following legislation is in place:

Law on Production and Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs FBiH and RS

Law on Health Protection FBiH and RS

Law on Prevention and Suppression of Narcotic Drugs (BiH Official Gazette no. 8-6), which came into effect on February 15, 2006,

National Strategy on Supervision over Narcotic Drugs, Prevention and Suppression of the Abuse of Narcotic Drugs in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2009-2013

State Action Plan for the Fight against the Abuse of Narcotic Drugs in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2009-2013

BiH has signed and ratified the relevant drug-related UN treaties, such as the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961), the UN Convention on Psychotropic Substances, (1971) and the UN Convention against illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988).

Furthermore, BiH is party to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2003), its Protocol against Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and its Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition. BiH is also a party to the UN Convention against Corruption and UN Convention on Rights of Child.

As already outlined the new Law on Prevention and Suppression of Drugs has still not been adopted.

b) Institutions - organisation and cooperation

Many BiH institutions are engaged in the fight against drugs, namely the police authorities (entities and cantonal Ministries of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Security of BiH and the Brcko District Police), the Judiciary (Ministries of Justice, prosecutor's offices and courts at all levels-state, entity and cantonal and in Brcko District), the indirect Taxation Authority of BiH (BiH Council of Ministers), the Ministry of Health (on entity and local level) and the entity Ministries of Culture and Education. Non-governmental organizations are engaged as well, both directly and indirectly.

Since the adoption of the Law on the Prevention and Suppression of the Abuse of Narcotic Drugs in November 2005, the main bodies in charge of the development and implementation of drugs policy in BiH as well as on international cooperation in this regard, are the Commission for the Suppression of the Abuse of Narcotic Drugs formed by the BiH Council of Ministers and the Department for the Prevention of the Abuse of Narcotic Drugs in the Ministry of Security.

The Directorate for Coordination of Police Bodies is responsible for communication, cooperation and coordination of law enforcement agencies at the State level with other bodies, including the fight against the abuse of narcotic drugs and it is the national contact for Interpol and Europol. It can still be considered in build up phase.

The server system for data exchange between ministries and respective police bodies has been implemented at the Directorate for the coordination of police bodies (DPC). System is fully operational and it is functioning, however certain questions, in particular on the access to different databases, have been revised in law enforcement community and remain to be resolved.

However the Ministry of Security lacks a legal base to keep the registers on drug crimes, and the new Law on Drugs might resolve this.

The Commission presents the political body composed of ministers and deputy ministers which is in charge of coordinating activities of administrative bodies in the implementation of the Strategy and to design political and strategic actions in the field of prevention and suppression of the abuse of drugs.

The Department for Prevention of Abuse of Narcotics at the Ministry of Security is in charge of the systematic gathering of data and monitoring of the phenomena, of collecting and processing data required for preventing and combating illicit drug trafficking and the criminal offences related to the abuse of narcotics.

The Department for Prevention of Abuse of Narcotics at the Ministry of Security also works on international cooperation with other countries in the region and with representatives of the European Union in the domain of security, and monitors the implementation of the Law on the Prevention and Combat of the Abuse of Narcotics. The department performs tasks assigned by the Commission for the Suppression of the Abuse of Narcotic Drugs which is the main inter-ministerial coordination body in the field of drugs. It also maintains a data base on the import and export of narcotic substances, narcotics and plants from which narcotic drugs and precursor may be obtained, and cooperates with operational police forces in this area.

In general, police cooperation is still carried out rather on an ad-hoc basis than in a systematic way. Agencies depend on personal relations in a remarkable extent. The deficient systematic and formal exchange of information, in particular of intelligence, is a significant gap for disrupting organized criminal networks, including drug trafficking.

A further goal is to participate in an early warning system regarding trends on the drug market. EMCDDA has been contacted for that. Another aim is to work with TAIEX to increase the credibility of Ministry of Civil Affairs' recommendations.

2. Short update on the country's anti-drugs strategy

The national strategy on supervision over narcotic drugs, prevention and suppression of the abuse of narcotic drugs in BiH for the period 2009-2013 is still in place.

Its key objectives are:

1. Rising awareness through community education, in order to implement a healthy life style and mental health,
2. Combating and prevention of further spread of drug abuse,
3. Prevention of drug addiction, death and health damage due to drug abuse,
4. Reduction of damage caused to community by drug abuse,
5. Reducing of drug demand especially among young people,

6. Strengthening of institutional capacity and responsible involvement of the society,
7. Improving legislation and its implementation,
8. Reducing the supply of narcotic drugs,
9. Formation of an independent multi sector office for drugs – Office for the Prevention of Drug Abuse at the state level.

The implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan in RS is coordinated by the RS Commission for Suppression of Narcotics (assisted by the Team for Fight Against Drugs Abuse within the Office of the Director of Police), while Brčko District formed a working body for implementation of Action Plan. There has been no change in the reporting period concerning the establishment of the designated agency at the FBiH level for the coordination of the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan; there is still no designated body.

A new Strategy and Plan of Action is for the period 2014-2018. The list of key objectives to be included in the new Strategy is going to be finalized after the adoption of the evaluation report on the implementation of the Strategy for the period 2009-2013. Enhanced cooperation with international and regional institutions and drug demand reduction, polydrug supply reduction, drug supply reduction and strengthening cooperation with civil society are indicated as major goals for the next period. However there are political obstacles in drafting the strategy, as not yet all the institutions nominated their representatives in the WG.

Drug prevention is part of the curriculum in schools. In RS it takes place in the 7th grade whereas in FBiH it takes place in the 9th grade. However, it is not standardised and it depends entirely on the teachers approach to this subject matter.

In BiH there are currently 59 mental health centres that provide outpatient treatment and counselling for drug users. In addition there are eleven specialised addiction treatment centres and two medical drug treatment centres in Banja Luka and Sarajevo. Liquid methadone as well as methadone tablets is in use for therapy. There are also several NGOs active that operate drop in centres, outreach programmes and some implement needle and syringe programmes. Insufficient financing sets a limit to the possibilities of the medical treatment and rehabilitation. Improvement is needed mostly in the aftercare and rehabilitation; due to the lack of financial sources in several cases the process cannot be finalised in a reassuring way with long lasting results.

3. List of major bilateral and multilateral CN programs

Organized crime networks continue to operate throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina and have a negative impact on political structures and the economy. A number of large-scaled operations were nevertheless successfully conducted, thanks to the cooperation amongst different law enforcement agencies. Implementation of the strategy for the fight against organized crime continued. However, lack of adequate resources limits its effectiveness. Legal and institutional obstacles to more systematic use started to be addressed. The Council of Ministers adopted a decision allowing the establishment of a network of police liaison officers in neighbouring countries, with Europol and in some EU countries. The aim of this network is to improve international cooperation and exchanges of information on fighting transnational organized crime. Results are weak for the time being.

The fight against drugs is a main component of the overall fight against organized crime and was addressed by the European Commission at the negotiating rounds with BiH authorities for the Stabilization and Association Agreement.

BiH authorities cooperate with other countries and institutions on several levels. Cooperation on state level is carried out by DPC and SIPA both seated at the Ministry for Security. DPC is the national contact for Interpol and Europol. Therefore DPC is the channel for BiH authorities on all levels to Interpol and Europol. SIPA has a liaison officer at SELEC in Bucharest. In contrast to Interpol and Europol this liaison can be contacted by all Bosnian authorities directly. Furthermore there are several regional police cooperation centres for cooperation with Croatia

International cooperation

An improved cooperation in combating drug related crime can be expected not only with the implementation of bilateral agreements, e.g. with Croatia which is not a member of the Police Cooperation Convention for South Eastern Europe (PCCSEE), but also by a full implementation of the PCCSEE itself. PCCSEE is still a new convention and time is needed for its members to use its advantages to a full extent. Some countries from within the Schengen zone have recognized the benefit of this convention and started procedures to join this convention (some already by the end of 2011). This should additionally boost regional cooperation in fighting drug related crime in the near future.

Under the instrument for pre-accession (IPA) the EU has prepared a large project in support of the area of law enforcement, including expert and institutional support to the Office for narcotics, which started in May 2012. Twinning assistance aims to strengthen the capacities and the functions of the Directorate for Coordination of police bodies. The project will be finalized in June 2014. Continuation of the project, in a different format and approach, enjoys general support. Drug related issues should remain essential part of the new project. The European Union also supports the establishment of the system for electronic data exchange between police agencies and prosecutor offices.

A working arrangement between the BiH Ministry of Security and FRONTEX has been signed in 2009 related to the implementation of activities in the field of border security. The agreement also envisages information exchange between the BiH Border Police and FRONTEX for the Risk Analysis Unit, cooperation related to further trainings, technical cooperation as well as participation in joint operations on the borderline of BiH and EU Member States.

In April 2013 a seminar was organised for all police chiefs in BiH on regional drug roads in BiH. It took place at the SIPA premises and was organised by UNODC.

Since 2007 the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Security are cooperating in fighting illegal drug trafficking, including advanced investigation techniques. In December 2012, a twinning project led by Austria with the aim to support integrated border management in BiH was completed.

France is also closely following, at strategic and operational level, BiH activities in the fight against drugs. In 2012, France conducted operational and technical cooperation projects on different topics. At first, a dog training for searching drugs, secondly an action on money laundering from drug traffic, then a visit in the French police directions of the anti drug offices and finally, a prevent action towards youth for a presentation of different types of drugs will be organized. Last April France organised a seminar with Slovenia on TAIEX funds on undercover police operations. The second aim of this meeting was to enable the integration of SIPA UC in the European Common Group of UC. This should be a new start for anti drug operations. Furthermore Pole of Belgrade (a strategic and inter ministerial French diplomatic group) will study and publish in the next months a report on the different cannabis routes in the Balkans. Cannabis from the Balkans (ie. Albania) is very well appreciated in Western Europe and in concurrency with Moroccan cannabis,

Italy continued to offer during 2013, several trainings in the field of special investigation techniques and fight of drug trafficking on the web with the support of Central Directorate for Antidrug Services. Moreover, Italian and Europol antidrug experts, in the framework of the EU project EMPACT Western Balkans, organized a specific workshop with SIPA aimed at exchanging best practices in relation to antidrug investigations.

The Netherlands Police Agency (KLPD) supports BiH Directorate for Coordination of Police Bodies by launching a two-year twinning project (beginning in March 2012) between the Netherlands Police Agency (KLPD) and the Directorate, funded by the European Union (EU). The project focuses on the role of the Directorate in operational international police cooperation, its capacities to collect, share, manage and analyze security information.

Slovenia has signed a bilateral agreement on police cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2006, but there were no activities connected with drug related issues carried out on the basis of the agreement during the reporting period. As outlined above in cooperation with France a seminar on TAIEX funds on undercover police operations was carried out.

The UK government is working closely with the Ministry of Security and other stakeholders on implementation of the BiH Strategy and Action Plan for drug control, suppression and prevention.

The U.S. Government's bilateral law enforcement assistance programs, through the U.S. Department of Justice ICITAP (the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program) and OPDAT (Overseas Prosecutorial Development Assistance and Training) programs, continue to emphasize task force training, improved cooperation between law enforcement agencies and prosecutors, and other measures against organized crime, including narcotics trafficking. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) office in Rome maintains liaison with its counterparts in Bosnian state – and entity – level law enforcement organizations. The DEA has also sponsored specific narcotic interdiction training courses in Bosnia. The U.S. embassy also provides other forms of justice and law enforcement training in BiH.

4. Prioritized identification of needs for external assistance

A constant and thorough monitoring of the possible impact of the accession of Croatia to the EU is needed, especially because the future external frontier of the EU represents over 1000 kilometres of poorly monitored border.

There are indications that domestic drug demand in BiH is growing. This implies that crimes associated with obtaining drugs becomes relative to drug trafficking a bigger issue for domestic police. Increasing social and economic problems represent growing additional risk.

Police operations confirm the complementarity of drug and arms trafficking. In most drug seizures weapons were seized as well. They highlight situations where continued and improved cross border intelligence sharing and cooperation are required to maximise the effect, as well as close monitoring to assess the market impacts are needed. It will be a challenge for BiH police to identify these new phenomena. There is a clear need for targeted assistance in this issue.

The solidification and strengthening of the multi-level law enforcement system, with an emphasis on the state-level law enforcement and judicial institutions remains the key objective. The ongoing development of joint institutional and operational capacity and capability is being supported by targeted assistance through the EU instrument for pre-accession assistance (IPA). The Directorate for Coordination of Police Bodies plays an important role in this regards.

Law enforcement system and institutions lack sufficient staff, equipment and training.

The strong will by BiH to enhance regional cooperation and cooperation with relevant European bodies and institutions deserves full support. Training in the field, sharing of best practices and establishment of direct personal contacts are the major objectives of the BiH side.

Bi-lateral assistance shall remain focused on increasing the functionality of existing agencies and on deepening operational partnership including by cooperation agreements. There is still a critical need for improvement of inter – and intra-agency cooperation within law enforcement and for effective judicial follow-up, both within BiH and in the wider region.

5. Mini-Dublin Group assessment of needs

The globalization of crime and its multidimensional forms create a complex and challenging security environment that demands a professional response by the relevant authorities in order to address the growing drug-related threats more efficiently. International cooperation is an essential factor in tackling, these challenges.

The urgent need for BiH at this point continues to be the adoption of the new Law on the Prevention and Suppression of the Abuse of Narcotic Drugs. For improving and strengthening of the fight against drugs traffic and organized crime it will be very convenient to further harmonize the criminal codes between entity and state level. This should be the best way for having common offences and law between entities and state level.

Another decisive factor is the further strengthening of the state level institutions, such as the Ministry of Security, the Directorate for coordination of Police Bodies, SIPA, and the Border Police. In order to increase their functionality and efficiency these institutions need to be properly staffed and equipped to contribute to joint capacity and capability of law enforcement and judiciary as a whole. With regard to the Border Police, further efforts are needed to implement an integrated border management.

Though some progress has been made on operational cooperation between the many law enforcement agencies within BiH in the fight against organized crime, including sharing of intelligence and joint action, formal coordination and exchange of information, particularly of intelligence remain weak. The need for full implementation of the National Intelligence Model, to oblige bodies to share information and intelligence would go a long way to solving the communication and cooperation issues.

The trend of withholding support to state level institutions, especially by the Republika Srpska (one of the two constituting entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina) has continued. Whereas this does not affect the urgency of identified priorities and needs assessed as such, it may influence the pace and feasibility of activities aimed at strengthening state level institutions and could call for creative approaches.

The parliamentary elections to be held this October in BiH will most probably affect significantly the legislation and implementation procedures in a negative way. All efforts should be exerted in order not to waste too much time.

For conducting more elaborated analyses and concluding with more specific assessment of needs, the Annual Report on the Situation of Drugs in Bosnia and Herzegovina for year 2013 Annual Report Group is of outstanding importance. The Group will continue its evaluation at a later stage possessing the Annual Report and summarising its assessment in the follow-up report of 2014. The Group might also consider consultations with representatives of the relevant bodies.

MINI-DUBLIN GROUP MEETING

PRISTINA, KOSOVO

March 2014

The Mini-Dublin Group meeting was held in the premises of the European Union Office in Kosovo, Pristina on 07 March 2014 from 10:00 to 11:15 hours.

Participants: HU (Chair), BG, BE, DE, FI, FR, GR, HR, RO, SE, SWI, Kosovo Police (further on referred to as: KP), EULEX, EU Office in Kosovo.

1. General situation in Kosovo

1.1. Domestic production of drugs

KP informed the delegations that cannabis had been planted in the past because of its use in textile manufactory. After this practice was abandoned, a certain amount of cannabis plants remained on the fields and continued to grow naturally. In 2011, KP (together with KFOR) carried out a helicopter mission in order to explore these natural fields but nothing was found.

In general, Kosovo is not suitable for cannabis planting due to inappropriate climate, small country territory and increasing population.

There is no information on whether synthetic drugs are produced in Kosovo.

1.2. Drug-related statistics

a) Confiscation data

Year	Heroin (g)	Marihuana (g)	Hashash (g)	Kokaine (g)	Cannabis Plants	Ecstasy	Other drugs (g)
2001	815.4	30715.7	0	34.6	0	0	1485.3
2002	6109.2	48046.8	0	1406	0	0	10043
2003	46782	30818.5	0	8482	0	0	2177
2004	23282.8	23287.7	945.7	10.5	0	0	2179
2005	36474.6	55304.1	206	3785	31158	40	22189
2006	14647.1	66635.6	381.6	1721	36686	0	23799.9
2007	47765.6	32123.4	0	1920.7	21712	61	1618.9
2008	44644.3	177490.3	0	2150	9249	40	12.4
2009	36121.2	43644.37	0	1446	33497	2169	2454.8
2010	55610.75	199277.7	2.8	221.26	9724	6	1318.5
2011	60331	216649	0	2738	3604	699	5389
2012	94125.43	1237994	548	7396	10584	153	886
2013	22434.03	85060.1	0	3868.8	1512	107	56.95
Total	489kg 143.4g	2247kg 047g	2kg 084.1g	35kg 179.86g	157726	3275	73kg 609.75g

b) *Suspects and cases 2004-2013*

	Cases	Suspects	Albanians	Serbs	Other	Male	Female	Trafficking	Possession	Cultivation
2004	213	260	209	40	11	250	10	52	142	19
2005	232	354	340	6	8	342	12	71	145	16
2006	284	511	479	18	14	495	16	93	173	18
2007	306	538	513	20	5	516	22	84	187	35
2008	203	336	321	9	6	323	13	76	104	23
2009	272	414	393	5	16	391	23	90	147	35
2010	313	463	419	22	22	448	15	125	146	42
2011	407	547	507	13	27	529	18	143	234	53
2012	527	818	744	19	55	793	25	153	348	59
2013	513	756	694	6	56	731	25	119	428	31
Tot.	3270	4997	4619	158	220	4818	179	1006	2054	331

In 2012, 58 criminal groups (209 persons), in 2013, 21 groups were detected (89 persons).

c) *Age and gender of suspects*

Age	Number	%
14-18	116	15
19-21	201	27
22-35	249	46
35-	90	12

There is a significant increase in the age group 14-18 years (in 2012 their percentage was only 4%). This can be explained with the increase of consumption of this age group but also with the intensified control of KP in the areas of the schools.

2013	Number	%
Male	731	96,7%
Female	25	3,3%

There is no change in gender-related statistics (in 2012, the percentage of males was 97%).

d) Statistics for 2014

2014	Cases	Suspects	Arrested	Detained	Albanians	Serbs	Other	Male	Operations Female	Criminal	Trafficking	Possession	CULTIVATION	
Jan	57	84	60	10	82	1	1	84	0	24	0	12	56	0
Feb	59	72	67	14	66	0	6	70	2	10	0	9	59	0
Tot.	116	156	127	24	148	1	7	154	2	34	0	21	115	0

2014	Heroin	Marihuana ^a	Cocaine	Cannabis seeds	Cannabis plants	Ecstasy	Other	Weapons	Money	Vehicles
January	61.2g	21kg 551g	11.1g	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
February	40.1g	61kg 653g	0	0	0	0	21	0	0	2
Total	101.3g	83kg 204g	11.1g	0	0	0	21	0	0	6

There is no national database for drug users in Kosovo. According to KP's estimation, 3000-5000 people are using heroin and around 10000 people are using marihuana. In 2012, there were 348 cases, in 2013, 428 cases regarding drug possession.

There are six institutions where treatment of drug users can be solved:

- Detention centre, Lipjan
- Detention centre, Dubrova,
- Mental health centre, Gjilan
- Mental health centre, Pristina
- Mental health centre, Gjakova
- Treatment centre run by an NGO called "Labyrinth"

e) Current market prices in Kosovo

According to KP's information there has been no change in the price of the drugs in recent years.

Heroin: 1Kg between 17.000 and 22.000 EUR (0.6 g between 20-25 EUR)

Cocaine: 1Kg between 60.000 and 80.000 EUR (0.6 g between 70-90 EUR)

Marihuana: 1 Kg between 600 and 900 EUR (5 g between 20-25 EUR)

1.3. Trafficking routes

KP identified main source of drugs from the Afghanistan – Pakistan – Iran triangle. Drugs are transported to the Balkans either through countries in the region of the Black sea, or on sea transport around the Arabian Peninsula. Then from the Balkans, the drug is transported to Western European countries (method of dual step).

Kosovo is further on regarded as a transit-country, however, significant steps have been made in order to tackle organized crime. For these organized crime groups it has become much more difficult to transport drugs through Kosovo (due to reasons mentioned below) that's why they started to smuggle only small amounts through the country. Main routes coming from the Middle East and Turkey now changed into the direction of Bulgaria and Romania, continuing to Hungary, according to KP.

a) Heroin route

Offer for heroin was significantly reduced due to the newly introduced visa regime, integration process of the region, intensified border control and operations of law enforcement agencies. According to UN reports, the Balkan route is not mentioned among main routes of heroin any more.

Routes of heroin to Kosovo according to KP:

- Towards Turkey – Bulgaria – Serbia – Kosovo
- Towards Turkey – Greece – Macedonia – Kosovo
- Towards Turkey – Greece – Albania – Kosovo

Afterwards, the heroin is transported to Montenegro, Serbia and Albania.

b) Cocaine route

N/A

c) *Marihuana route*

Transport to Kosovo is flowing mainly through the border between Albania and Kosovo into the South and West of Kosovo and then leaving the country in North and East directions towards Montenegro and Serbia.

d) *Methods of drug smuggling*

According to the cases that KP presented in pictures, the following methods can be mentioned:

- Small amount carried through the green land border on feet;
- Bigger amounts hidden into tyres of bigger vehicles;
- Smaller amounts hidden into batteries of cars;
- Drugs hidden under seats and other plastic parts of a car;
- Drugs hidden into sport bags.

2. Update on Kosovo's anti-drug strategy

National legislative background

- Kosovo Penal Code
- Kosovo Penal Procedure Code
- Law on narcotic medication and psychotropic substances
- Law for the peace and public order
- Law on Police
- National Strategy fighting Drugs 2012-2017
- Action plane (annual strategy) 2012-2017
- SOP

Institutional change

One more regional directorate has been established in North-Mitrovica, so there are altogether seven regional directorates now under the Narcotics Investigation Directorate of KP.

Objectives

1. Demand Reduction
 - Prevention and Education
 - Treatment
 - Monitoring and research
2. Reduction on Supply and Offer
 - Initiation of cases,
 - Investigation,
 - Operational actions
 - Disclosure cases
3. Cooperation and Coordination
 - Inter-institutional cooperation
 - International cooperation

Prevention activities

Among prevention activities, KP dedicated more attention to schools in 2013 and 2014. Several debates were organized around the country and also brochures were produced in order to call the attention of the population, especially the youth to the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Also the RAE (Roma, Egyptian, Ashkali) community was involved in the form of presentations.

Besides this, the following can be mentioned:

- Trainings to local police officers;
- Patrolling the border line;
- Control at border points;
- Operational plans.

Inter-institutional cooperation

- Joint operations with Customs, Border Police and K9
- Joint operations with the KMAP (Kosovo Agency for Medical Products)
- Regular meetings with relevant agencies
- Meetings with NGOs.

3. International cooperation

According to KP, international cooperation increased in 2013 and 2014. In general:

- Cooperation with EULEX
- Cooperation with KFOR
- Information exchange with police authorities of other states
- Trainings, seminars
- Conferences
- Joint investigations (see further information below)
- Study visits were carried out (i. e. to Bratislava, Riga, Brussels)

In 2013, two main joint international projects were finished.

The “ELENIKA” project was carried out in cooperation with ALB, BiH, HR, SI and AT. 117 searches were carried out also in IT. As a result, 71 people were arrested, 600 kg of heroin and 500 kg of marihuana were seized. In Kosovo, also three automatic weapons and one machine gun was found.

In another case, due to cooperation with ALB, IT and SWI authorities, six persons were arrested and 127 kg of marihuana, 8000 EUR money and a car were seized.

Currently 5 projects are ongoing:

- “Tony” – joint investigation with EUROPOL
- “Bridge” - joint investigation with MK
- “Balkans Road” – in cooperation with AT
- “Mechanic” – in cooperation with AT, SWI, DE
- “Prendimi” - joint investigation with ALB

Talks are ongoing with EULEX in order to initiate a new case.

4. Prioritized identification of needs for external assistance

Challenges:

- Political situation (especially in the Northern part of the country)
- Impossibility of the membership of Kosovo in regional and international organizations (SECI Center, EUROPOL, INTERPOL)
- The impossibility of Kosovo to contribute in reports of the field of Organized Crime
- Controlling of the borders
- Illegal telecom operators

5. Mini-Dublin Group assessment of needs for external assistance

Several trainings were carried out in the recent period, also with help of OSCE. More than 20 officers were trained in Vushtrri, and 8 police officers had the opportunity to take part in field trainings in Turkey.

KP reported that also the cooperation with EULEX has significantly improved since 2013.

Experts called the attention of KP to the fact, that artificial drugs arriving from China cause huge problems in other parts of Europe. However KP reported that up to now, there is no information whether such drugs have arrived to the country.

MINI-DUBLIN GROUP MEETING

Skopje,

FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

MARCH 2014

The mid-term review Mini-Dublin Group meeting was held in the premises of the Embassy of Hungary in Skopje, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on 24th of March, 2014 from 11:00 to 12:30 hours.

Participants: HU (Chair), AT, IT, FR, CH, RO, USA, OSCE and the EU Delegation in Skopje.

Altogether 7 Mini Dublin member countries, OSCE and the Delegation of the European Union accepted our invitation, so in total 15 participants attended the meeting.

Guest speakers from the side of local interlocutors included representatives of local MoH, MoI and Customs Administration. Ms. Tatjana Petrusevska, Head of Sector for controlled substances, Vice President of the Inter-Ministerial Commission for control of narcotics offered an expert presentation based on a comprehensive account on the current developments, statistics and trends on the field of drug-related offences in the host country.

1. General situation in the host country

Highlights in the period since the last MDG meeting (November, 2013):

- For the first time, one of the “new psychoactive substances”¹ was detected (Methylenedioxypropylamphetamine - MDPV - **psychoactive drug with stimulant properties**) in the host country. Those substances also have appeared in recent years in EU countries and still pose a great challenge.

- List of the controlled substances in the country was complemented with the inclusion of 15 new psychoactive substances under national control (Annex 1), on the initiative of the National Focal Point (NFP) for cooperation with the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), Sector for controlled substances in the Ministry of Health, due to the appearance of new psychoactive substances.

- The Institute for Public Health has informed that in the last three months there were 11 new cases of HIV virus infections. Whereas in the last year 24 cases were registered altogether, in the lapse of only 2.5 months 11 new cases were reported. This data is the result from the survey of some 200 people falling into risk groups. The survey, conducted with the main objective of intensified testing on HIV within the group that is of particular risk for HIV/AIDS, was carried out in accordance with the National Strategy for HIV/AIDS 2012 – 2016 and has not yet been officially published. In 2013, the total number of infected persons in the host country was 24. In the host country the number of people that are testing for HIV is still very low (under 1% annually).

-In accordance with the analysis of information derived from the data on seizures of heroin for the first months by the host country Law Enforcement and the cooperation with Turkish police services seizure of heroin in the so-called Balkan Route increased. Already, quantities for the first 2.5 months of the year are nearing the seizure quantity of last year.

- The New National Drug Strategy for the period 2014-2020 and the Action Plan 2014-2020, prepared by the Sector for controlled substances in the Ministry of Health (MoH), was adopted by the State Inter-ministerial Commission for control of narcotics (in accordance with article 9 of the Law for control of narcotics (Official Gazette No 103/98), and it is waiting for adoption by the Government.

- A National Report on drugs is being issued for the host country, completely in line with EU standards, offering a comprehensive situation overview (on 90 pages) concerning 5 epidemiological indicators as well as supply reduction indicators, prepared by NFP and submitted to EMCDDA for final revision and approval for final publishing.

¹ New psychoactive substance²: A new narcotic or psychotropic drug, in pure form or in preparation, that is not controlled by the 1961 United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs or the 1971 United Nations Convention on Psychotropic Substances, but which may pose a public health threat comparable to that posed by substances listed in these conventions. Council Decision 2005/387/JHA of 10 May 2005 on the information exchange, risk assessment and control of new psychoactive substances [*Official Journal* L 127, 20.5.2005].

1.1. Domestic production of drugs

Self-cultivated marijuana – mainly for consumption within the country – remains the major illegal source of production of drugs.

Licit poppy straw and poppy straw concentrates for medical purposes are continuously produced in the central and Eastern parts of the country in an area of approximately 1000 hectares, which itself is not enough for the needs of domestic pharmaceutical manufacturer, with GMP (Good Manufacturing Production) from primary type – extraction of alkaloids. Needed additional quantities are imported predominantly from Spain or Australia.

All activities are strictly controlled by the MoH and reported to INCB in Vienna on a quarterly and annually basis.

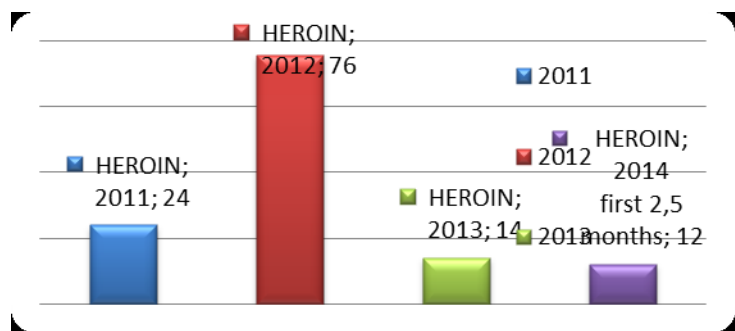
24 companies/institutions deal with import, export or transit of drugs and/or precursors that have been registered in the country.

1.2. Drug-related statistics

a) *Confiscation data - All Law Enforcement (Police and customs administration)*

Data for seizures for 2014 will be presented on a 6 month basis.

Table 1. Trend in seizures of heroin between 2011-2014 (first 2.5 months)



Source: NFP evaluated data received from MoI and Custom Administration

b) *Data on prices*

Table 32 Price of narcotics

HEROIN		MARIJUANA					COCAINE	ECSTASY	Buprenorphine	Amphetamine
1 gram	0,25 grams	100 grams	3 grams	Joint 1	Joint 2	Couple matches	1 grams	1 tbl		1g
11-15 EUR	300-500 den	4000 den	500 den	150 den	250 den	100-200 den	50 EUR	300-500 den	1tbl x 2mg 200-300den 1tbl x 8mg = 500 den	800-1000 den

Source: NFP evaluated data received from MoI

1.3. Trafficking routes

The Ministry of Interior identified the seized drugs as coming from the Afghanistan – Pakistan – Iran region. Heroin routes leading to Belgium and the Netherlands intersect the country and thus affect the local drug situation.

a) *Heroin route*

Seizures in the covered period have been reported in connection with land route, import from Greece on the border crossing point Bogorodica.

b) *Cocaine route*

Seizures in the covered period have been reported in connection with the air and land route.

c) *Marijuana route*

Transport to the host country is moving mainly through Albania towards the Western border region and then leaving the country northward, to Serbia, at the border crossing point of Tabanovce.

2. Co-ordination

Diverse models of multi-sectoral cooperation exist in the host country with the aim of working on improving activities in the domain of justice, freedom and security (also involving health and reducing inequalities; security, money laundering etc).

The main coordination body covering all aspects connected with narcotic issues is the **Governmental Commission - National Commission for Fight Against Illegal Production, Trafficking and Use of Drugs**, coordinated by the MoH. This body includes representatives of 10 line ministries (i.e. justice, internal affairs, health, local self-government, environment, foreign affairs, education and science, labor and social policy, agriculture, forestry and water economy, finance, the customs administration and agency for youth and sport).

Roles and responsibilities of the IMCND are in particular:

- coordination, planning and monitoring of the implementation of programs in the area of prevention, treatment and suppression of drug abuse at the local level;
- elaboration of the implementation of the National Drug Strategy and Action Plan;
- international cooperation.

In general, working documents for the Commission are prepared by the sector for controlled substances in the Ministry of Health, where one of the departments is the national drug observatory – *National Focal Point (NFP)* – centre for monitoring drugs and drug addiction, which is the collaborative body of EMCDDA. NFP unites data from all existing databases and registers, from Institute for Public Health, Centres for Public Health (10) Clinic for Infectious Diseases, Clinic for Toxicology, Clinic for Nephrology, Psychiatric Hospital "Skopje", Institutes for Forensic medicines (4), Treatment services for IDU's (20), NGOs active in the field of vulnerable population (IDU's) (14) for 5 epidemiological indicators: prevalence of drug use among general population; problematic drug users; treatment; drug related death; drug related infectious diseases, and Ministries of Education, Labor and Social Policy. The main target group is the vulnerable "risk group" population, notably IDU's, people with HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis. NFP is also receiving and elaborating data for supply indicators.

3. Anti-drug strategy

3.1. Evaluation of drug strategy

In the period following the implementation of the first strategy (2006-2012 years) 3 scientific research projects were accomplished (out of 2 qualitative and 1 quantitative analytical studies) intended for direct assessment of the drug situation and evaluating the impact of the first drugs strategy. The main objective was to identify areas where there is need to act with the new National Strategy for the period 2014-2020. Analysis was also performed on the related research conducted in the host country, in order to obtain a comprehensive picture of the drug situation and possible solutions to act to overcome certain perceived weaknesses and challenges.

The first qualitative research was conducted at the end of 2012, in the territory of the host country, in eight regions, including 20 cities. It was performed with a research survey method based on standard questionnaires used in the European Union on a sample size of 246 people. The research took place in different locations of open and closed, parks, cafes, clubs. The research was realized in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Interior. The second qualitative research was conducted using a semi-structured questionnaire in three focus groups, including 45 people in the big cities of Skopje, Tetovo and Bitola. A third, quantitative research survey with a standard questionnaire was administered to 80 people involved in the implementation of the National Drug Strategy. Respondents in the study were selected according to their willingness to participate and provide information of interest for the research.

Results showed that National Drug Strategy is implemented in a significant percentage and its goals are achieved by contributing in building capacities for appropriate response to the drug problem in quantitative terms. Results for general evaluation of the Strategy: approximately 64.9% of the respondents believe that the availability of treatment programs increased, 58.4% believe that there is an increased accessibility of 44.2% improved quality of services, 41.6% suggest a variety of possibilities for treatment. 75.3% think that there is better cooperation and exchange of information; reducing the supply of drugs, according to the respondents 75.3%, due to police activity. All results are given in the situation analysis in the NDS 2014-2020.

The National Drug Strategy for 2014-2020 and its respective Action Plan outlines a number of measures and actions to deal with the new challenges that are identified in the period of evaluation, including the need for:

- improvement of the quality, diversification (in terms of sensitivity to cultural differences, gender, age, ethnicity) and the availability of replacement centers for maintenance therapy with methadone;
- reorganization, decentralization and increasing the availability to primary from tertiary level, the treatment of drug addiction with psychotropic substances – buprenorphine;
- measures and activities for mandatory psychiatric treatment in centers for treatment of drug addiction and specialized clinics that conduct treatment of drug addiction: not exclusively pharmacological treatment (issuing OST);
- integrated access to health care and treatment of psychiatric co – morbidity;
- conduct of research and analysis of the reasons for the increasing number of deaths with overdose of methadone;
- conduct of forensic analysis to estimate the high incidence of deaths from traffic accidents and possible use of psychoactive agents as a risk factor;
- measures to respond to the growing trend of using multiple psychoactive substances at the same time (polydrug use), including medicines containing psychoactive substances;
- preventing the diversion of chemicals that can be misused as precursors for the production of illegal narcotics;
- legal interventions in the area of timely response of the emergence of new psychoactive substances;
- legal interventions in the area to establish an early warning system for new drugs (EWS) market, according to existing EU regulations;
- activities aimed at strengthening the capacity of forensic analysis in order to determine the purity and the content of active ingredients in drugs seized;
- establishing a medical body for overseeing the implementation of treatment (pharmacological and psychiatric) for people with drug addiction developed and educating medical staff, under the coordination of the IMCND;
- establishment of a specialized body for overseeing the implementation of preventive activities in the area of drugs, under the coordination of the IMCND;
- activities to develop regional coordination bodies (units) in the area of drugs, locally, under the coordination of the IMCND) for people with drug addiction developed and educating medical staff , under the coordination of the State IMCND;

- establishment of a specialized body for overseeing the implementation of preventive activities in the area of drugs, under the coordination of the State Inter-Departmental Committee on Drugs;
- activities undertaken to develop regional coordination bodies (units) in the area of drugs, locally, under the coordination of the IMCND.

4. **International cooperation**

General introduction

- the host country’s National Police has established a good level of cooperation with other national police directorates in the neighbouring countries (Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece);
- the host country has signed MoUs with various countries on fighting organised crime and drug trafficking (i.e. Hungary etc.);
- on a case by case basis, police has been successfully cooperating with national police liaison officers from various EU member states, especially Austria, Germany and Italy;
- cooperation also persists through the Interpol and Europol networks;
- border control efforts are being strengthened through the development of partnership and effective working relationship with organizations such as INTERPOL, SELEC, SEPCA, EUROPOL, EUROJUST, DCAF, UNODC;
- cooperation with these above networks is crucial for an effective and coordinated action with the aim of tackling organized crime, and also for an operational approach, due to a highly developed database that allows the identification and targeting of repeat offenders;
- this type of data has by now proven to be able to identify “hot spots” and linked “series of crimes” supplying information that helps identify preventive measures; evidence linking offenders to crimes;
- good cooperation on common projects continued between the National Focal Point (Sector for controlled substances, Ministry of Health) and the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA).

Ongoing operations, bilateral and multilateral projects, agreements and events:

- various bilateral contributions in the framework of the police reform program, like capacity building and police trainings;
- successful bi- and multilateral anti-trafficking police-operations with Turkey, Germany and Austria were proven useful in the last period;
- the United States provides essential operational and technical support that has proven to be useful in the interception cross-border shipments of drug;
- France is being active both in the field of prevention and operational support,
- the UK has supported the Ministry of Interior bilaterally in the spheres of rule of law and institutional capacity building. This was done mainly through funding the feasibility study for establishing the National Criminal Intelligence Database (NID), development and adoption of a strategy for National Analytical Centre, and introduction of the UK intelligence-led policing model for combating organised crime". The UK is continuing its work in the same area through an EU sponsored project;
- Starting in September 2012 – for the first time ever - Ministries of Justice and Interior of the host country participated together with Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, EUROPOL and EUROJUST in a “Joint Investigation Team” (JIT) focused on disruption of organized crime networks trafficking heroin to Western Europe.

5. Prioritized identification of needs for external assistance

Challenges:

Integration into the European Union is crucial for all aspects concerning justice and home affairs.

All in all, the below areas prevail as target areas for external assistance:

- technical support for establishment of Software for the collection and evaluation of data for monitoring drug indicators;
- technical support to convey Survey of the general population for use of illicit drugs to have EMCDDA indicator;
- continuation of the cooperation with EUROPOL and EMCDDA and other partner organizations;
- capacity building (especially in the area of control of “new drugs”);
- trainings

6. Mini-Dublin Group assessment of needs for external assistance

Assistance in increasing projects aimed at prevention (primary, environmental, indicative and selective) and juvenile consumption, as well as operational support.

In essence, the problems identified call for surveys on poly drug use, its extents, reasons, as well as for research in the field of psychoactive drug use and driving.

ANNEX 1

Pursuant to Article 21 paragraph 2 of the control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (source: "Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No.103/08 , 124/10 and 164/13) the Minister of Health has adopted

L I S T S

amending the lists for classification of substances and plants in the list of international conventions on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in the category of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances

Article 1

The lists for the classification of substances and plants in the list of international conventions on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances in the category of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (" Official Gazette " br.112/09) , in Article 2 , paragraph 1) in add a new table item 1 - a) and a new table that follows :

" 1 - a) in the first category of drugs include substances and their mixtures :

International name of psychoactive substance	Chemical name (IUPAC)	Other unprotected name	Effects
25I-NBOMe	2-(4-iodo-2,5-dimethoxyphenyl)-N-[(2-ethoxyphenyl)methyl]ethanamine C₁₈H₂₂INO₃	2C-I-NBOMe, Cimbi-5, Wizard, Medication	psychedelic drugs
AH-7921	3,4-dichloro-N-[[1-dimethylamino)cyclohexyl]methyl]benzamide C ₁₆ H ₂₂ Cl ₂ N ₂ O	'AH-7921' 'doxylan'.	Narcotic analgesic with a high potential for dependence, about 80% of the power of morphine
MDPV	3,4-methylenedioxypropylvalerone C₁₆H₂₁NO₃	Explosion, Blow, Recharge 'plant food', 'bath salts', 'research chemicals'	Stimulant of the central nervous system (CNS) similar to cocaine, amphetamines, MDMA, Class of katinons
Methoxetamine	2-(3-methoxyphenyl)-2-(ethylamino)cyclohexanone C ₁₅ H ₂₁ NO ₂	'MXE', 'Mexxy', 'M-ket', 'MEX', 'Kmax', 'Special M', 'MA', 'legal ketamine', 'Minx', 'Jippet', 'Roflcopter'.	An alternative to ketamine analgesia, anesthesia, hallucinations,
5-IT	5-(2-aminopropyl) indole 1-(1H-indol-5-yl)propan-2-amine C ₁₁ H ₁₂ N	'Benzo Fury'	Stimulant of the central nervous system (CNS)
4-MA	1-(4-methylphenyl)propan-2-amine 1-(4-methylphenyl)-2-aminopropane 4-methylamphetamine	pTAP PAL-313, 4-MeA PmeA 4-MA; Aptrol ;	Type of stimulant ephedra (Description by users: the physical and psychological effects) paranoia, anxiety, hallucinations, depression, Anorectic drug (appetite suppressant)
Mephedrone	4-methylmethcathinone C₁₁H₁₅NO	4-MMC MCAT Meow Meow	Stimulant of the central nervous system (CNS) Class of katinons and amphetamines,

BZP	1-benzylpiperazine C ₁₁ -H ₁₆ -N ₂	"herbal high," "бибер экстракт"	CNS stimulants, mimic the molecular mechanisms of action and some of the effects of MDMA (ecstasy)
mCPP	1-(3-chlorophenyl) piperazine C ₁₀ H ₁₃ ClN ₂	'X4" "duhovka" 'rainbow' 'Rolls Royce' 'smarties'.	CNS stimulants

Article 2

In Article 3 point 1) by adding a new table item 1-A) and a new table that follows:

"1-a) in the first category of psychotropic substances substances and their mixtures are included:

International name of psychoactive substance	Chemical name (IUPAC)	Other unprotected name	Effects
2C-I	2,5-dimethoxy-4- iodophenethylamine		Hallucinogenic, psychedelic and stimulant
2C-T-2	2,5-dimethoxy-4- ethylthiophenethylamine		Hallucinogenic and stimulant. Amphetamine derivative
2C-T-7	2,5-dimethoxy-4-(n)- propylthiophenethylamine		Hallucinogenic and stimulant. Amphetamine derivative
TMA-2	2,4,5- trimethoxyamphetamine		Hallucinogenic and stimulant. Amphetamine derivative
4-MTA	P-Methylthioamphetamine 4-Methylthioamphetamine		Stimulant. Amphetamine derivative
PMMA	Paramethoxymethylamphetami ne N-methyl-1-(4- methoxyphenyl)-2- aminopropane		Stimulant. Analog of amphetamine, similar in structure but different in terms of elemental composition.

Article 3

Mini-Dublin Group Report on Montenegro

March 2014

The first MDG meeting this year was held on 25 March at the premises of the Hungarian Embassy in Podgorica.

Representatives of the following countries and organizations took part in the meeting: EU Delegation to Montenegro, Austria, Germany, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Hungary.

Mr. Miodrag LAKOVIC, Head of Counter Drug Division of the Montenegro Police Directorate and his deputy, Mr. Dejan KNEZEVIC gave an overview regarding the drug offences in Montenegro, newest developments and best practices in this field as well as final statistical data on seizures of drugs.

Marijuana (Skunk)

Smuggling and consumption of modified marijuana (Skunk) till dominate the drug related offences in Montenegro. Country of origin of this substance is Albania (with a production capacity of 900 tons/year) from where organize crime groups (OCGs) distribute the modified marijuana to the neighboring countries – also via Montenegro. Different Montenegrin OCGs were involved in the smuggling of “Skunk” in the past as well as currently. Since 2 years this smuggle is organized by Albanian OCGs, who recruit couriers from Greece, Belgium and Italy for the transport of “Skunk” to Western European countries along the so called “Southern path”. The aforementioned path leads from Albania via Montenegro to Croatia, and from there to the countries of the European Union. In the past the so called “Northern path” (the Green Border from Albania to Montenegro and from there also via Green Border to Bosnia and Serbia) was used more frequently, but since the couriers from GR, BE and IT are not familiar with the topographic situation in Montenegro, they prefer using the official border crossing points, namely Subokin, Vracenovici and Debeli Brijeg.

In 2013 the trend of smuggling Skunk has even strengthened. Many OCGs prefer the smuggling of this drug because it has a high profit rate and relatively easy to smuggle. New trend in 2013 is that OCGs from the EU are more intensively involved in this activity that requires intensified international cooperation from the Montenegrin police. The Albanian – Montenegrin green and blue borders provide a relatively easy path to the local OCGs to transport higher amounts of marijuana through them.

In order to tackle the problem, Montenegrin authorities together with Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian counterparts carried out operation “GROM” in the course of 2013 during which 52 persons were arrested and 376 kilograms of marijuana and ½ kilogram of heroin was seized. According to the police authorities, marihuana from Albania remains a crucial problem in Montenegro.

Heroin

Heroin is not smuggled in large quantities in Montenegro. In 2013 7.1 kg were seized, but these are usually split up into relative small packages. The smuggling route leads from Kosovo via Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina to Serbia and Croatia. Consumption in Montenegro is still a major concern, there are 3500 -5000 addicts in the country. In this field, Montenegrin criminal groups are connected to Kosovar, Serbian and Bosnian groups. Typical phenomena is that heroin arrive from Turkey to Kosovo, where is stored in large quantities and distributed further in small quantities. In 2013 - besides other cases - 4 and 1 kilograms of heroin the Bosnian-Montenegrin and Serbian-Montenegrin borders were seized among which the first catch is the biggest since 2 years.

Cocaine

Montenegrin authorities are regularly encouraged to show up results on the fight against cocaine smuggling, especially by EU partners. Police authorities claim that cocaine is not significantly distributed in or through the country. Montenegrin crews of international vessels are involved in the business, but their destinations are mainly bigger European ports (e.g.: Rotterdam). They usually hide the cocaine on the vessel and throw it in the sea near the seacoast. Montenegrin authorities have cooperated with EU countries on this case, and Dutch police was mentioned in particular. On the other hand huge cocaine smuggling related money arrives in the country that is carefully monitored by the police. Concerning this phenomenon, the Montenegrin authorities would like to exploit more the legal possibility to charge somebody for crimes committed abroad

Synthetic drugs

Smuggling of synthetic drugs is not characteristic in Montenegro, very insignificant amounts are found. In summer, during the tourist season foreign tourists bring some of these drugs with themselves.

TYPE AND QUANTITY OF SEIZED DRUGS (2012 – 2013)

TYPE	2012	2013	CHANGE
-MARIJUANA	1 022 347,60gr	1 338380,84 gr	+30,9%
-HEROIN- COCAINE	8 045,63 gr	7175,77gr	-10,8%
-SYNTHETIC DRUGS	408,53gr	80,98 gr	-80,1%
-SUBOXON			
KOMADA		387 pcs	
- HASHIS	6,80 gr	1,00 gr	
TOTAL	1 030 839,06 gr	1 345782,03 gr (928 277 gr at borders)	+30,55%

Major anti-drugs operations in 2013

In 2013 work has intensified with international partners in terms of exchanging information, common investigative activities and joint actions. 40 different operative meetings have taken place with partners from NL, UK, HR, BiH, ALB, SI, BE, DE, AUS, RSA, EUROPOL, DEA and SELEC Centre in Bucharest.

Besides the abovementioned operation “GROM” the following operative actions have taken place:

- Operation “ARKA” together with regional police bodies and EUROPOL during which 2 persons were arrested in Serbia and 2 in BiH and charged with trafficking of cocaine.

- Operation “LINIJA”, joint action with the Serbian authorities during which 2 persons were arrested in 2013 (5 persons were arrested earlier during in the course of the same operation) and a total of 8 persons were charged with trafficking of marijuana.
- At national level operation “MARTA” was realized. In the territory of Montenegro a total of 23 persons were arrested and charged with the trafficking of various drugs.

In 2013 a total of 172 cases were made related to smuggling of drugs, which involved 177 persons. A total of 21 persons in Montenegro were indicted to organized crime.

MINI-DUBLIN GROUP MEETING

Republic of Serbia

19th March, 2014

The first meeting of the Mini Dublin Group in 2014 took place on the 19th March, just one day after the arrest of the most important suspected drug lord of the Balkans, Darko Šarić. The meeting was chaired by Austria and co-chaired by Hungary at the Embassy of Austria in Belgrade. Altogether 9 Mini Dublin member countries, UNODC and the Delegation of EU Commission accepted the invitation, so in total 18 participants attended the meeting. Mr. Ivan Brandic, Head of Department for Drug Smuggling Suppression, Service for Combating Organised Crime of the Serbian Ministry of the Interior, gave an overview on the current developments, statistics and trends on the field of drug related offences in Serbia.

1. General situation in the country

Given that the arrest of drug boss Darko Šarić had happened just the day before the meeting and that the operation was top secret, Mr Brandic was not able or entitled to give further details about this case. However, Brandic could report on many other activities to suppress organized smuggling of cocaine, heroin and marijuana, and of illegal production of synthetic drugs and abuses with precursors. According to Mr. Brandic, 2013 was a specific year, since a return of the Balkan route for drug smuggling had to be observed, even though not in the same quantities as in earlier times. Smuggling leads towards Schengen borders (from Turkey, via Bulgaria and Romania, towards Western European countries) on one side, and towards Macedonia and southern province Kosovo and Metohija on the other.

1.1 *Production data*

Heroin

There was no intelligence obtained so far on the production of heroin in the territory of Serbia. However, available information indicates that high-quality heroin still arrives to the territory of the country. It is smuggled into Serbia in high degree of purity as base heroin that is later mixed with other substances such as paracetamol, caffeine and other, so as to enlarge the quantity of narcotics and accordingly their profit.

In the beginning of 2014, a resumption of activity was observed of people who had been active in heroin smuggling before 2008 and who have served their prison sentence. Their activity is reflected in the procurement of heroin in the territory of Kosovo and Metohija and Turkey. Those are quantities of maximum 5 kilos of heroin base that could be dissolved up to 5 times. Furthermore, the engagement increased in procurement and purchase of substances used as diluents, which are coming from the north of the country. Intelligence indicates that heroin prepared in this way is sold in the territory of Serbia. By monitoring this phenomenon it was observed that it could have increasing trend considering the number of persons and the quantities of heroin and substances for enlarging its weight, that have been seized so far. Mentioned sale starts from the territory of Kosovo and some places in the south of Serbia, where major population are Albanians.

In the beginning of 2014, a number of heroin seizures were recorded in the territories of the neighbouring countries, upon crossing the state border. This is an indicator for the activation of the central direction of the „Balkan route“ of heroin, which ends in the hands of end-users in Western European countries. Out of those reasons, it is necessary to intensify cooperation and exchange of intelligence related to the activities of OCGs from these areas involved in smuggling and sale of heroin, with police services of EU member states.

Cocaine

still appears in Serbia in transit towards Europe and in smaller quantities for sale in the local market. There were no significant seizures. A group of persons was arrested in Serbia, dealing with the sale of cocaine in Western Europe, and their property was seized in Serbia. International exchange of data proved to be very important when it comes to the cocaine smuggling. Europol and Interpol reports indicate that African channel of cocaine smuggling is very active, but Mr Brandic explained that there is no indication that Serbia is used as transit country.

Marijuana

In 2013, the Serbian Police discovered several laboratories used for production of skunk – modified marijuana cultivated in artificial conditions. Increased trend of producing marijuana was noticed in Serbia. Such trend is also expected to be continued in 2014. During 2013, there were number of seizures of „big“ marijuana shipments (quantities of 500 to 600 kilos per shipment) in Hungary, when the territory of Serbia was used as transit from FYR Macedonia towards Western European countries. At the beginning of 2014, this trend continued and about 200 kg of this drug was seized so far. Operational work shows that illegal production laboratories will be popular also this year. In cooperation with Prosecutor's Office several actions are ongoing which point out to significant number of locations where this production is performed. Strengthened controls are conducted at border crossing points because of the positive practise which indicate increased trend of skunk smuggling from the territory of Albania, Macedonia and southern Serbian province Kosovo and Metohija. Through a number of operational cases it was confirmed that skunk produced in Serbia in artificial conditions is being sold in many Western European countries, where the prices per kilogram are several times higher than in Serbia.

Synthetic drugs

When it comes to synthetic drugs, results are relatively good. Several important criminal groups that were involved in the production of synthetic drugs were dismantled, which resulted in the shortage on the market. Trends are related to smuggling and illegal procurement of synthetics from countries of Western Europe. During 2013, there were seizures of ecstasy coming from the Netherlands, and also some seizures of amphetamine in different forms. In one of the laboratories in Serbia the production of metaqualon was discovered, but its quality was not confirmed nor the intended place of sale. The work continued on the implementation of the project of establishment of the working group for developing a guide book for officers entering illegal synthetic drugs production laboratories, and also the work on preparation of educational laboratories in educational training centre of the Ministry of Interior in Goč Mountain, in cooperation with French liaison officer and MILDT of France. Continuation of activities and start of education for police officers is expected during 2014.

1.2 Confiscation data, current market prices, drug related crime statistics

In Serbia in 2013, 5642 criminal offences were committed in the field of drugs, 4928 of criminal charges were submitted, and 428 persons were deprived of freedom.

6169 narcotics seizures were conducted, and 3 tons, 426 kilos and 26644 pills were seized. Out of that quantity there were:

- Marijuana: 3 tons and 43 kilograms
- Heroin: 56 kilograms and 560 grams
- Cocaine: 71 kilogram and 381 grams
- Ecstasy: 20 kilograms and 278 grams, and also 9502 pills
- Hashish: 837 grams
- Amphetamine: 22 kilograms and 501 pills and
- 211 kilograms of other drugs from the list.

1.3 trafficking routes (recent changes and the newest tendencies, if any)

Trend of changing directions of drug smuggling on the Balkan route continued.

2. Short update on the country's anti-drug strategy, institutional changes, new legislative measures, developments

Mr Brandic was able to inform us about several positive developments. Most importantly, the procedures for destruction of seized drugs was finally adopted and already implemented (see below). Secondly, the introduction of a national coordination body for the fight against drugs is progressing just like the establishment of a National Monitoring Centre, which is in compliance with the recommendations of EU and the European Monitoring Centre EMCDDA. Since both institutions are part of the current screening process in the framework of the EU accession negotiations, it can be expected that both important bodies will be created by the end of 2014.

Furthermore, the procedure to adopt a National Strategy for the period 2014 - 2021 is in the process, as well as the Action Plan for its implementation for the period 2014 - 2017. Leadership of the working group in charge consists of representatives of the Ministry of Health.

Prosecutor-led investigation and Supreme Court decision which were conducted from the beginning of 2013 brought considerable changes to police work. Certain data that the police previously obtained by operational work based on the Law on Police, can be obtained now only upon the order of judge for preliminary procedure at the prosecutor's proposal, and according to the new Criminal Procedure Code. This leads to the prolongation of certain deadlines for performing checks of operational data, which also leads to the prolongation of time needed to answer to the requests of foreign countries' liaison officers in the Republic of Serbia. All the checks can be performed only if there is an open investigation or if the case is registered in the base of criminal-operational analytics of Criminal Investigations Directorate. In any other case it is not possible to get or ask for these data. Furthermore, more data will be directed to the mutual legal assistance requests, when it comes to international cooperation.

Drug destruction

On December 6th, 2013, the Government of the Republic of Serbia formed a new Commission for Control of the process of destruction of seized psychoactive controlled substances. It is represented by: Ministry of Health (2 people - one of them is the president of the committee as well); Ministry of Interior (2 people); Customs (1 person) and Environmental Protection Department of the Ministry of Energy, Development and Environment (1 person). On December 7th, 2013, in TA "Nikola Tesla" the first destruction of psychoactive controlled substances seized in time period 2002-2013 happened in proceedings finished with final decisions, before Higher and Basic court in Kragujevac, in total amount of 1,740,036.43 grams, as follows:

Heroin: 40.618,91 grams

Marijuana: 1.699.366, 42 grams

Hashish: 51, 1 grams

On February 13th, 2014, the process of destruction was continued and 400 kilograms of narcotics were destroyed, out of which 275 kilos of marijuana and 125 kilos of heroin from the case lead in Užice and Novi Pazar by SBPOK, Department for Narcotics Smuggling Suppression.

During 2014, the Serbian police expects the continuation of systematic destruction of all seized psychoactive controlled substances based on final court decisions. Since this is a process that started after many years, the Republic of Serbia asks for assistance of EU member states in relation to legal regulations and positive practice which are applied in Europe in this area.

3. International cooperation & operations (ongoing bilateral and multilateral projects, agreements and events)

Mr. Brandic highlighted that fight against organized crime, especially fight against drug smuggling, surely presupposes international cooperation as one of the main factors for the success of this fight.

In international operations, based on data provided by SBPOK, Narcotics Smuggling Suppression Department, in cooperation with other police services world-wide, following amounts were seized:

- 770.59 kg of cocaine,
- 1.2 kg of heroin,
- 65.68 kg of cannabis,
- 2 kg of crystal meth,
- 134,000 £ and 4,745,730 €

Conclusions and recommendations

- *The members of the Mini Dublin group congratulate the Serbian authorities to their continued fight against drug smuggling via the so-called “Balkan route”, as well as the spectacular arrest of the alleged drug lord Saric.*
- *The Mini Dublin group commends the Serbian authorities for the long expected establishment of bodies and procedures for the destruction of seized drugs. It is particularly positive that the procedures have already been implemented.*
- *The Mini Dublin group takes note of reinforced efforts of the Serbian authorities to establish national coordination bodies, which can be interpreted as enhanced attempts to fulfil the necessary steps in the enlargement negotiation process.*
- *The Mini Dublin group recommends the Serbian authorities to continue their efforts to introduce national coordination bodies for the fight against drug abuse and smuggling.*
- *Given the increase of cooperation between ethnic Serbian and ethnic Albanian criminal groups between the territories of Serbia and Kosovo, the members of the Mini Dublin group strongly recommends to intensify cooperation with Eulex and Kosovo police. It is harmful and unacceptable that criminal groups cooperate more effectively than legal enforcement institutions.*