



# SEESAC

## South Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons

AR/017

19 September 2003

### SEESAC ACTIVITY REPORT 17 ASSESSING TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES IN THE SOUTHERN ADRIATIC REGION

SEESAC FUNCTIONAL AREA	FA 1 - Cross Border Controls FA 3 - Management Information
SEESAC OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY	SG 3 - Information Management and Exchange SG 8 - Research Activities

**Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro, 19 September 2003.** SEESAC has a responsibility within its mandate to advise on legislative issues and the collection and registration of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and to provide support to projects relating to the control of SALW within the South Eastern Europe region.

Borders communities are more than just entry and exit points to a country. In the world of porous borders and trans-border crime, these communities take on various aspects of the activities pursued in their environs. Some of these activities are clearly evident, such as the increase in youth appearing to be drug users. Other signs are more difficult to pinpoint, as one person's businessman becomes another's smuggler. These characteristics are exacerbated by the context of a post-conflict situation where tensions and isolation cause greater conspiracy theories rather than greater cooperation and coordination.

This study, researched and written primarily by the EastWest Institute in cooperation with SEESAC, attempts to bring together some of these disparate pieces through a study of the technical, structural, and perception based information that relates to trafficking activities for people making up these border communities. It offers a community-centred series of images built through interviews, observations, and analysis that provide one level of understanding of how this particular border region is situated in relation to trafficking activities, its controls, and how it has been affected by trafficking activities.

Many of the conclusions of the study are not earth shattering. In fact, some are even regional public secrets. In addition, it is likely that these trends are not unique to this specific border region.

EU technical and infrastructure upgrade assistance is now arriving in significant amounts throughout the region. Improvements in border infrastructure and training will clearly have a positive impact on combating trafficking in this strategic triangle and throughout the region. Still, without a more comprehensive approach to the trafficking problem, there is likely to be little resolution of border community tensions and the normalization of relations necessary to make the border areas open and integrated, but not porous. Accordingly, this study describes the situation in this particular set of communities and suggests several ways to begin bridging this gap in border control by bringing the communities into the equation.

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In this spirit, the recommendations are meant to be complementary to already established and planned initiatives. Coordination of an integrated border management that includes both border communities for this and other micro-regions is the best hope for the integration of the communities back into the region and Europe. The report will shortly be available on the SEESAC website ([www.seesac.org](http://www.seesac.org)).



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