

Gender Equality in the Military




Gender Equality in
Policing

Gender in Small Arms
Control

Photos

Publications ▼

 Secure
area

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2021 - Year in Review

As 2021 comes to a close and the holiday season begins, we pause to take stock of and reflect on the year behind us.

In 2021 UNDP SEESAC has continued its close cooperation with the representatives of the Governments in South East and East Europe who remained firmly committed to the full implementation of planned project activities. The donors, the EU, Germany, France, the U.S., Norway and Slovakia, as well as the UK, the Netherlands and Sweden ensured continuation of activities with their steadfast support. SEESAC also continued with close cooperation and coordination with international and regional organizations in support to the region.

SALW CONTROL

With the EU support, a comprehensive support is being provided by UNDP SEESAC to the authorities in the following areas:

Regional cooperation

In 2021, SEESAC continued supporting the two key regional platforms that represent the backbone of strategic and operational cooperation on SALW control in South-East and East Europe. The 13th and 14th regional SALW Commission meetings provided a platform for knowledge exchange and planning at the strategic level while the 14th and 15th meetings of the South East Europe Firearms Experts Network (SEEFEN) strengthened operational cooperation on combatting illicit arms trafficking through facilitation of region-wide exchange of information, challenges and new trends.

Advancing legislative and policy framework

Comprehensive technical and advisory support was provided to SALW Commissions particularly in North Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, and Kosovo* in the development of their new SALW Strategies and Action Plans.

Harmonization of legal framework with the EU Acquis was improved through tailor made support for developing or amending Laws on Weapons and related bylaws in all the Western Balkan jurisdictions and through facilitation of the Regional Harmonization Workshop.

Gender and SALW

Advancing gender mainstreaming in SALW control, we conducted a ground breaking and truly comprehensive gender analysis of legislation and policy frameworks in five jurisdictions of the Western Balkans, directly informing policy making. The reports on gender analysis for Albania, Brcko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and North Macedonia have been published and the report for Kosovo will follow soon.

Combatting arms trafficking

Capacity development for combatting arms trafficking was facilitated through region-wide exchanges such as Regional Meeting of Border Police Services, the Regional Meeting of Criminal Police Services, and the Regional Meeting of Firearms Focal Points. The capacity development of FFPs was enhanced through substantial advisory support and equipment as well.

Comprehensive needs assessments of border police services in the Western Balkans to combat arms trafficking have been completed, and support initiated in development of Standard Operating procedures (SoPs) throughout the region. The SoPs have been completed in Albania and their development was initiated in Montenegro and North Macedonia. Comprehensive support in view of procurement of equipment and training is planned in 2022-2023.

Missions to conduct needs assessments of criminal police services in 6 Western Balkans jurisdictions to combat illicit possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW and ammunition have also been completed, based on which support in development of procedures, training and equipment will be provided in the forthcoming period.



Physical Security and Stockpile Management

In Bosnia and Herzegovina 1,972 pieces of SALW were destroyed while 2,119 arms, 50,000 cartridges and 142 parts and components were disposed of in Moldova.

With support of the US State Department, security upgrades of the Albanian State Police main SALW and ammunition storage location were completed, and with support from the EU, security upgrades on six SALW safekeeping evidence rooms were completed in Montenegro and in Kosovo.

Building the knowledge base

In 2021 we launched a new series of analytical reports. The In-Focus Armed Violence Monitor provides an in-depth analysis of trends identified among firearms-related incidents across Southeast Europe captured by SEESAC's Armed Violence Monitoring Platform.

Seven thematic reports were published thus far taking a closer look at incidents in the criminal context, celebratory shootings, weapons seizures, perpetrators of firearm incidents, firearm-related suicides, explosives-related incidents, and firearm incidents in the context of domestic violence.

We continued publishing the AVMP quarterly reports and, in partnership with the governments in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, published the Regional Report on Arms Exports in 2019.

Awareness raising

An online campaign has just been launched to draw the attention of the public to dangers of celebratory shooting and the illicit use of pyrotechnics so frequently practiced during the holidays.

Monitoring and coordination of the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap

Monitoring and coordination of the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap implementation continued in close cooperation with the EU, Germany, France and the RCC.

Two Regional Roadmap Coordination meetings were held in July and December, each preceded by around of local coordination meetings organized with SEESAC's support in 6 capitals. Enabling regional review of progress, challenges and plans among national counterparts, donors and IOs, the meetings were informed by two biannual regional reports based on Key Performance Indicators and Roadmap Goals.

Progress in the implementation of the Roadmap was reviewed at the 3rd High-level Meeting on the Implementation of the Specific Actions for SEE of the EU Action Plan on Firearms Trafficking 2020-2025.

In parallel, SEESAC continued to serve as the Secretariat of the Western Balkans SALW Control Multi-Partner Trust Fund, responsible for its programmatic coordination and monitoring. The Fund's portfolio has this year reached \$21.8 million and 6 new projects were initiated with the support of Germany, UK, France, the Netherlands, Sweden and Norway.

We also continued to ensure a coordinated approach in the implementation of the UNDP's Funding Windows regional project established to support the Roadmap implementation and implemented by UNDP Country Offices. This year, the UNDP COs supported the authorities to progress in countering arms trafficking, enhancing ballistic capacities, ensuring security upgrade of SALW storages, and mainstreaming gender in arms control. The project is funded by Germany.

New project launch

We are also proud to announce that in September of 2021 we launched a new 3-years long regional project funded by the EU Commission DG NEAR - Support for Enhancing the Fight Against the Illegal Possession, Misuse and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Western Balkans.

GENDER EQUALITY IN SECURITY SECTOR

With funding from Norway and Slovakia we have been supporting the Ministries of Defence and Armed Forces from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia in advancing gender equality through a regional approach.

Our efforts this year were largely concluded with a Ministerial Conference titled A Way Forward on Gender Equality in the Defence Sector in the Western Balkans. The ministers took stock of the progress made in advancing gender equality in the defense sector and signed a Ministerial Declaration on Support for Gender Equality in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans.

The Conference also served as platform to launch the Study on the Position of Women in the Armed Forces in the Western Balkans which identifies progress since 2013, highlights the gaps and marks the ways forward in achieving gender equality in the military. At the same time the regional Handbook on Preventing and Responding to Gender-Based Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, and Abuse was launched which was developed by the MODs to help prevent and respond to cases of gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse.

Additionally, in 2021, the MoDs and the Armed Forces met through the regional platform of gender equality mechanisms, decisionmakers and commanders to facilitate the information exchange, knowledge sharing and planning of joint activities. We also provided support to the Regional Network of Gender Trainers and a regional working group has been supported in planning the integration of gender perspective in military education and training.

Furthermore, Gender Coach Programme has been implemented with leaders and commanders in Montenegro's MoD. The MoDs were supported to complete the first gender-sensitive survey on employees' job satisfaction in Montenegro, and to initiate it in North Macedonia, replicating the good practice from the region. Seminars were organized to facilitate networking and capacity development of women officers. Capacities of internal complaints mechanisms were strengthened in Serbia and North Macedonia.

For almost two decades, SEESAC has been facilitating regional cooperation and supporting the authorities in South East and East Europe to strengthen their SALW control measures, advance gender equality, and thus contribute to citizen security, and we look forward to continuing this work in the new year.

* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

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