

Newsroom
News
Photo gallery
Video
Blog

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South East Europe Firearms Expert Network met for the 14th time

The Regional Meeting of the South East Europe Firearms Expert Network (SEEFEN), facilitated by SEESAC, brought together investigators, ballistic experts, representatives of border police, customs officials, and prosecutors from 6 Western Balkans jurisdictions, Moldova, Belarus, and Ukraine. The aim of SEEFEN meetings is to facilitate knowledge exchange and sharing of best practices in the prevention and suppression of illicit firearms possession and trafficking in, from, and through South East and East Europe.

SEEFEN is a unique platform that facilitates information exchange not only among experts working on the ground in South East and East Europe but also with representatives of international organizations and police services outside of the region.

Participants shared information on the state of play in all jurisdictions specifically focusing on experiences and results achieved during the year 2020 to counter illicit arms possession and trafficking.

In addition to this, one of EUROPOL's flagship reports, the Serious and Organized Crime Threat Assessment (SOCTA), was discussed and the emergence of new variations in criminal activity brought by globalization and the impact ballistic evidence has on criminal investigations.

Participants also discussed the modalities of operational use of controlled delivery, methodologies of development of joint risk analysis for border police and customs, and particularities and best practices of ballistic information exchange.

Apart from partners in South East and East Europe, the meeting was also attended by representatives of the Regional Cooperation Council, EU Commission – Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs, EUROPOL, EMPACT, FRONTEX, INTERPOL, NABIS, UNODC, OSCE attended the meeting.

The 14th SEEFEN meeting was organized in the context of the implementation of EU Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/2111, in support of SEESAC's disarmament and arms control activities in South East Europe, and it directly contributes to the implementation of the Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse, and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition in the Western Balkans.

[← Back](#)



South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC)

Bulevar Zorana Đinđića 64
11000 Belgrade
Serbia
Telephone:
(+381) 11 415 5300
Fax: (+381) 415 5499
E-mail: seesac@undp.org

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