

SEESAC

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

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SEESAC ACTIVITY REPORT 25

SALW PROBLEMS IN BELGRADE - A SURVEY OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES

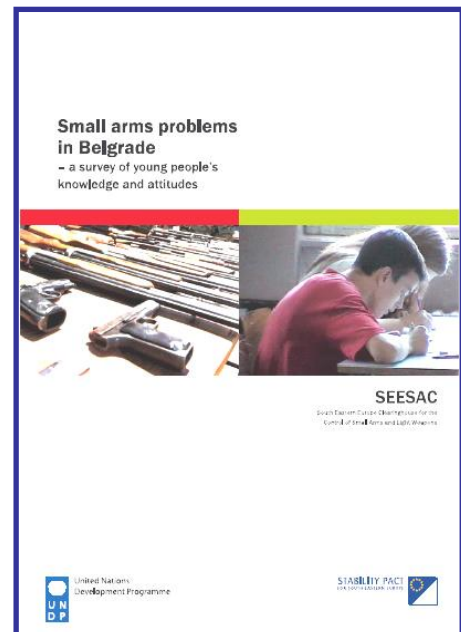
SEESAC FUNCTIONAL AREA	FA 3 - Management Information and Communications FA 4 - SALW Awareness
SEESAC OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY	SG 1 - Capacity Building SG 6 - Technical Support and Assistance to NGOs SG 8 - Research Activities

Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro, 25 February 2004. A recently completed survey of the knowledge and attitudes of Belgrade's young people concerning SALW is now available on request from SEESAC. The Belgrade-based NGO Balkan Youth Union conducted the survey with project support (including financial assistance) from SEESAC, and technical input from outside consultants.

The research was the first of its kind to investigate young people's attitudes towards, and experiences of, small arms in the city. It sought to determine to what degree models of gun-usage and violence still prevail among Belgrade's young people, and to find evidence for any alternative cultural models. A representative sample of young people studying in Belgrade's primary and secondary schools completed questionnaires designed to elicit information on:

- Their experience of the possession and use of small arms;
- Their assessment of the amount small arms around them in everyday life;
- Their views on security;
- Their assessment of the main motives for possession and use of firearms; and
- The degree of activist potential among respondents, in preparation for any follow-up SALW Awareness programme.

An analysis of the results suggests some immediate priorities for would-be SALW Awareness campaigners:



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- ❑ To conduct campaigns designed to change young people's attitude towards the 'tradition' of celebratory gun-fire;
- ❑ To target parents who retain weapons in the home, seeking to modify their behaviour and produce safer storage habits, or (where possible) weapons surrender;
- ❑ To conduct SALW Awareness campaigns designed to combat the belief that weapons possession is a guarantee of personal safety; and
- ❑ To conduct campaigns designed to motivate young people and engender in them a belief that they themselves can campaign effectively against the hegemony of weapons in their society without jeopardising their personal safety.



Male students request help when filling in questions regarding potential involvement in campaigns against weapons.

BYU is currently considering its work plan for 2004, and continues to seek donor support for actions such as these. The knowledge gained during this research project, together with experiences in Macedonia, Kosovo and South Serbia has been instrumental to the development of the Regional Micro-Disarmament Standard (RMDS) on SALW Survey, and the SALW Survey Protocols jointly developed by the Small Arms Survey and SEESAC. The SALW Survey Protocols are now available online at (<http://www.seesac.org/resources/surveyprotocols.htm>) and have informed a subsequent research projects in the Republic of Montenegro and a national SALW survey currently underway in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

To download the full report, or to order a hard copy, please visit the SEESAC website: (http://www.seesac.org/reports/st_reports.htm).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrian Wilkinson'.

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