

Committee: Security Council

Issue: Reducing drug trafficking along the South-Eastern European region

Student Officer: Areti Moustaki

Position: Deputy President

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear delegates of the Security Council,

My name is Areti Moustaki, I am 16 years old and an IB1 student at Costeas-Geitonas School (CGS). It is my utmost honor and pleasure to have been given the chance to serve as one of the Deputy Presidents in the Security Council of this year's Deutsche Schule Thessaloniki Model United Nations session. Overall, I have participated in 19 conferences so far, making DSTMUN my 20th and my 6th time chairing.

This year, as delegates of the Security Council, you will have the chance to discuss topics of great importance, including drafting a blueprint for the withdrawal of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) in accordance with Cypriot-Turkish peace talks, reducing drug trafficking along the South Eastern European region, as well as the situation in the African Great Lakes region. However, the topic of this Study Guide focuses on the second topic, which is "Reducing drug trafficking along the South Eastern European region".

Even though by carefully reading this Study Guide you will be able to gain all the fundamental and necessary knowledge on the topic, it should not be your only source of information. You are encouraged to conduct further research on your own in order for you to be fully prepared and informed about the issue, and to be able to form your country's policy and come up with beneficial and innovative solutions.

I understand that questions may arise while either reading the study guide or while further researching the topic, so please feel free to contact me through my email aretimost@gmail.com at any time.

I'm looking forward to meeting you all and I am confident that we will have a wonderful time at the upcoming conference!

Best regards,

Areti Moustaki

TOPIC INTRODUCTION

Illicit drug use and trafficking are issues that endanger public health and societal stability on a global level. Based on research and statistics, one in every three young Europeans has tried using illegal substances, and at least one of our people dies from a drug overdose every hour. At the same time, ever-changing production and consumption patterns require continual monitoring and dynamic adjustments. Drug trafficking is a global illegal trade that includes the cultivation, production, distribution, and sale of drugs that are illegal under drug regulations. Member States acknowledged the necessity of enhanced international collaboration in combating the global drug issue in the Declaration on the Rule of Law.

As the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) World Drug Report 2019 vividly indicates, much effort needs to be put into addressing the various damages caused by drugs to health, development, peace, and security in all parts of the globe. According to evidence and research, a quarter of a billion people, or about 5% of the worldwide adult population, used drugs at least once throughout the year. Even more concerning is the fact that around 29.5 million of those drug users, or 0.6% of the overall adult population, experience disorders resulting from extended drug use. Internationally, there have been approximately 190,000 — in most instances preventable — drug-related deaths.¹

Drug trafficking remains a serious concern given that drug use, distribution, trafficking routes, and the drugs themselves have been seen to alter and diversify at an unprecedented rate. The specific illicit activity has been highly observed in the South Eastern European region. The region's sovereign nations and territories contain: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, and East Thrace, part of Turkey. Because of political, socioeconomic, historical, cultural, and geographical aspects, as well as the spectator's perspective, the region's borders can differ significantly and they are extensively contested.

Drugs continue to be a substantial revenue source for organized crime networks, however business practices are evolving, with criminals making the most out of technological advances – including the dark web – to change the dynamic of the illicit drug trade and the different kinds of parties involved in this process, with looser, horizontal networks and smaller groups being more and more essential. New, innovative drug delivery methods highlight the importance of involving other sectors,

¹ “World Drug Report 2017: 29.5 Million People Globally Suffer from Drug Use Disorders, Opioids the Most Harmful.” United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime, www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2017/June/world-drug-report-2017-29-5-million-people-globally-suffer-from-drug-use-disorders--opioids-the-most-harmful.html.

for instance postal services, in the battle against drug trafficking. Organized criminal groups have expanded their unlawful activity repertoire. Some new types of crime have appeared, such as cybercrime and environmental crime. According to Europol’s findings, over two-thirds of drug trafficking organizations operating in European Union nations are engaged in additional crimes, and this proportion has been growing for years.

The way drugs are consumed and trafficked is continuously evolving, and the methods of trafficking are becoming more technological and organizationally sophisticated. What hasn't changed is the drug trade's profitability. Every year, citizens in the EU spend billions of euros on illegal substances, particularly drugs. The participating organized criminal groups are getting increasingly specialized and interconnected. And, as a result of globalization, the total rate of change is increasing. Trafficking operations are becoming more concentrated in certain geographic locations, while instability in neighboring parts of the EU might have a significant impact on the European drug market.



Figure 1: Heroin Trafficking from Afghanistan to the Russian Federation and to Europe ²

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Drug

² "HEROIN", UNODC <https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta/5.Heroin.pdf>

“Medicine or other substance which has a physiological effect when ingested or otherwise introduced into the body. The most common kinds of drugs include: cocaine, heroin, amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS), cannabis, and opiates.”³

Drug trafficking

Drug trafficking is an international illegal trade that involves the production, manufacturing, distribution, and sale of substances that are prohibited under drug regulations.

State and Federal Drug Charges

Federal drug charges often entail harsher penalties and lengthier prison sentences, and they are frequently prosecuted as felonies. State drug charges for possessing without intention to sell can be felonies or misdemeanors, with the latter typically carrying a lighter penalty.

Organized crime

Organized crime is a network of highly centralized companies that are set up to engage in criminal operations. Cargo theft, fraud, robbery, kidnapping for ransom, and the demand for "protection" fees are all crimes committed by such groups. The provision of illicit but continuing public demand for products and services, such as drugs, is the primary source of income for these crime networks.

Competent Authority

A competent authority is any individual or organization who has been lawfully allocated or endowed with the authority, ability, or power to carry out a certain task. Likewise, once an authority is assigned to undertake a specific act, only the competent authority has the power to account for it.

Corruption

Corruption is characterized as unethical conduct performed by those in positions of power, such as executives or government officials. Examples of corruption include offering or accepting bribery, improper payments or inappropriate gifts, under-the-table transactions, influencing elections, diversionary funds, money laundering and scams.

Extradition

³ “DRUG: Definition of DRUG by Oxford Dictionary on Lexico.com Also Meaning of DRUG.” *Lexico Dictionaries | English*, Lexico Dictionaries, www.lexico.com/definition/drug.

Extradition is the process by which one jurisdiction transfers a person suspected or guilty of committing a crime in another jurisdiction to the law enforcement of the other jurisdiction. It is a collaborative law enforcement mechanism between the two jurisdictions that is dependent on the agreements reached between them. Extradition entails the physical transfer of custody of the individual being extradited to the legal authority of the requesting jurisdiction, in addition to the legal components of the procedure.

Money laundering

Money laundering is when large amounts of money gained through a crime, like drug trafficking or terrorist funding, look like they have come from a legal source. The money gained via unlawful activities which is "laundered" by this procedure, seems clean.

Precursor chemicals

Precursor chemicals, also known as scheduled substances or drug precursors, are substances that have been linked to the unlawful production of narcotics and psychotropic substances.

European Arrest Warrant

The European Arrest Warrant (EAW) is a tool for extraditing people wanted in connection with major criminal offenses between EU member states.

Rule of Law

Rule of law is a principle under which all people, institutions and entities are responsible to obey the law that is publicly proclaimed, implemented equitably, adjudicated independently and complies with the norms of international human rights. In upholding the rule of law, the courts serve an essential role.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Southeastern Europe drug routes and trafficking trends

Substantial domestic demand currently exists and may be expanding along all trafficking routes, with drug trafficking functioning as a further destabilizing element in nations already dealing with major political, social, health, and economic challenges. Advances on the "Southern route"—from Afghanistan to Pakistan or Iran, across the Persian Gulf and East Africa—are of particular concern, considering the role of major significance of this route in providing Europe with heroin and other narcotics, as well as the detrimental effect on African countries.

Numerous drug trafficking pathways to Western and Central Europe pass through South-Eastern Europe. Flows originate from a variety of directions. Cocaine is imported from South America, while nearly all amounts of heroin are imported from Afghanistan. Internally, South-Eastern Europe produces a significant amount of cannabis, particularly in Albania.

The Balkan route of heroin

The Balkan heroin route splits after reaching South-Eastern Europe due to border constraints, network adherence, and risk assessments carried out by the traffickers themselves. Although complicated, heroin movements across the Balkans may be classified to some extent based on broad pathways and overall trends discovered via data analysis. Based on geography and known paths, the Balkan route may be split into three branches.

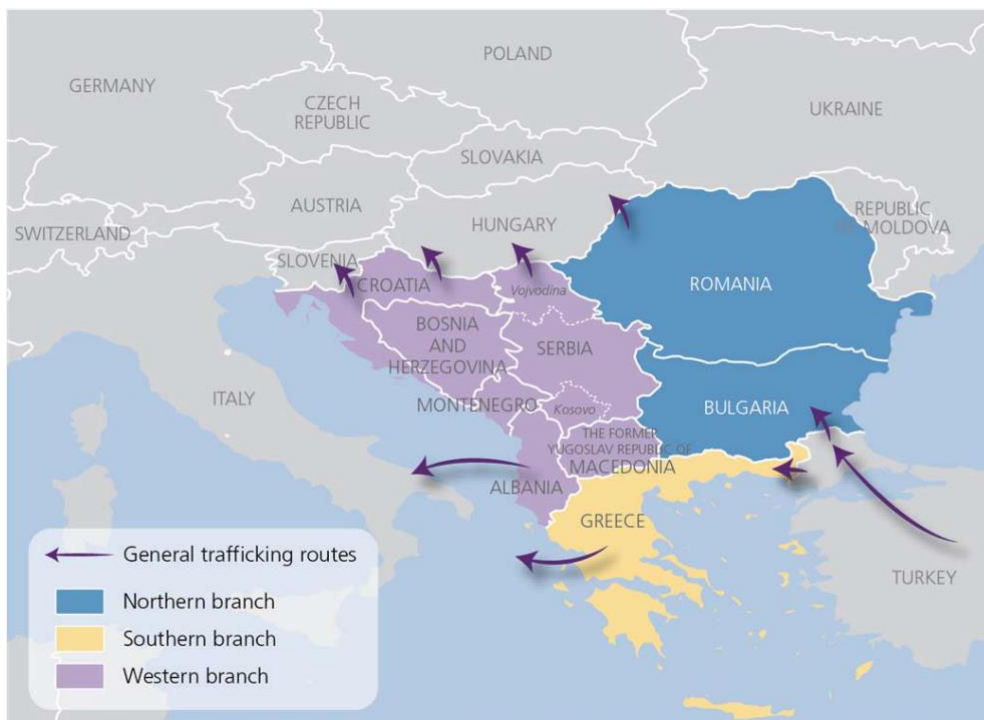


Figure 2: Identified branches of the Balkan route of heroin in South Eastern Europe ⁴

Nonetheless, it should be emphasized that the branches depicted on the map above are to be regarded as mostly suggestive and not definite. Branches may split out to various nations along the Balkan route, and there are several subsidiary routes that may or may not be included. Furthermore, routes and trajectories are not entirely static and may alter and/or overlap as

⁴ "The Illicit Drug Trade through South-Eastern Europe." UNODC, [www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Illicit DT through SEE REPORT 2014 web.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Illicit_DT_through_SEE_REPORT_2014_web.pdf).

a result of traffickers' actions in reaction to external variables like demand, law enforcement operations, or modifications in border control.

A sequence of sales and re-sales across one branch may progressively advance the drug towards its point of greatest return. To boost earnings, cargo may be repacked and laced with adulterants along the way. This tends to be a characteristic of both the "southern branch" from Greece to Italy and the "western branch" through the Western Balkans to Western Europe. Certainly, these traits are not fixed in terms of space, and any of the three branches may exhibit any of them.

It is also possible for massive deliveries to be systematically managed from origin to user, which is what usually happens for certain mass trafficking cases on the "northern branch" (Turkey-Bulgaria-Romania-Western Europe), particularly for routes to Germany and the Netherlands. The northern branch is mostly composed of terrestrial traffic, but the western, as well as southern branches incorporate sea transportation at critical points.

Cocaine

According to most indications and studies, cocaine is the second most dangerous substance in the world after heroin in the context of negative health repercussions, as well as the most troublesome drug in the context of trafficking-related violence. It is estimated that 788 to 1,060 tons of cocaine are manufactured globally each year. Cocaine, in relation to heroin, is more generally accepted by the public and has a greater degree of incidence and use. Nonetheless, recent trends in coca bush development, cocaine seizures, and prevalence indicate that cocaine markets are decreasing internationally. Statistics for South-Eastern Europe show a decreased tendency of cocaine use, but yearly prevalence seems to be less than the global average.

Cocaine is mostly supplied from a few South American nations, including Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia. Traditional routes led from South America to North American markets, with a brief detour to Europe. However, as demand in Western and Central Europe has risen since 2000, additional routes to Europe's markets, notably through West Africa, have become increasingly popular.

Reliable and precise mapping of prevalent routes is challenging due to a shortage of data. The major departure nations for cocaine traversing South-Eastern Europe, as can be deduced from SELEC's data, are Bolivia and Paraguay, however certain nations also identify Brazil, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Uruguay, and Argentina as departure locations.

Cannabis

When addressing cannabis in South-Eastern Europe and Europe as a whole, it is necessary to distinguish between markets for cannabis herb and markets for cannabis resin (hashish). Cannabis herb is usually locally grown for local use, frequently in huge amounts, with little cross-border trafficking, whereas cannabis resin is supplied externally and trafficked across several countries, making it more vulnerable to apprehension. Having said that, both types of cannabis are derived from the same plant and may be considered as a single market.

Cannabis seems to be the most often used drug in high-demand nations, since it has the highest possible level of societal acceptance. It is claimed that around 78 million Europeans have used cannabis at some point in their lives, with the highest overall rate among those aged 15 to 24.

The European picture has gotten increasingly complicated over the latest years. Several nations have noted that cannabis use is leveling off or even falling, but a few countries may be seeing a rise. Nonetheless, compared to other illegal substances, cannabis use continues to rise in both the South-Eastern European area as well as Western and Central Europe.

In 2011, slightly over 20% of UN Member States cited Morocco as their primary source of cannabis resin, while about 17% named Afghanistan. Morocco is Europe's top source of cannabis resin, accounting for 302 tons, or 85 percent of all seizures in Spain. The major entrance ports into Europe are Spain, Portugal, Italy, and France, which correlates to their respective geographical closeness to Morocco and the importance of their hashish markets.

Transporting such massive amounts of cannabis resin needs extensive logistical assistance and well-developed infrastructure. The narcotics were being shipped into the Bulgarian port of Burgas and then transported overland via Romania and Hungary to Western Europe (Belgium). In the western side of the Balkan Peninsula, there are proportionally little hashish seizures. One example is the interception in Greece in 2011 of 113 kg of cannabis resin bound for the Netherlands but with no apparent route.

Based on recently released reports, Afghanistan may be encroaching on Morocco in the worldwide cannabis resin trade, particularly in Europe. Latest multi-ton captures suggest that Afghan hashish is making its way to the United Kingdom and Belgium via ship from Pakistan, either around Africa or through the Suez Canal. Pakistan claims that 100% of its hashish comes from

Afghanistan. It's worth noting that these routes take the southern route instead of the well-traveled Balkan route to get Afghan hashish into Western and Central Europe.

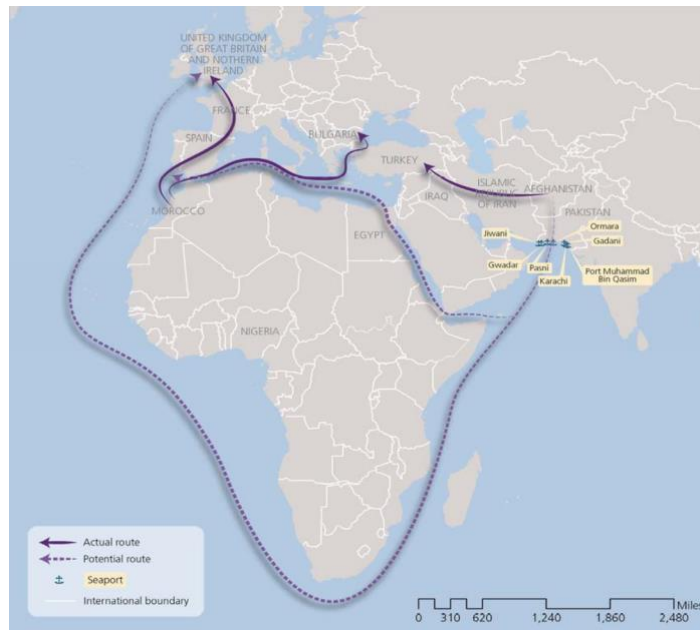


Figure 3: General cannabis resin routes into Europe ⁵

Main challenges

To address the issues occurring because of the Balkan route, it is necessary to look beyond organized crime and trafficking tendencies for heroin and other substances and chemicals that currently pass via South-Eastern Europe. All of the many forms of drugs have a significant influence on South-Eastern Europe in terms of drug usage, risks to the rule of law, and dangers to attempts to combat these impacts through collaboration and capacity building.

The domestic drug market

Other than in the country of Croatia, almost no general population surveys have been conducted in the area since 2011. Due to a lack of resources, it is impossible to fully comprehend the health consequences of illicit substances in the region. Furthermore, information on the types of data provided is rarely updated on a regular basis, and statistics are frequently reused over the span of the last couple of years.

In absolute terms, the heroin industry in South-Eastern Europe is equivalent to the four greatest heroin consuming markets in Western and

⁵ "The Illicit Drug Trade through South-Eastern Europe." UNODC, [www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Illicit DT through SEE REPORT 2014 web.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Illicit_DT_through_SEE_REPORT_2014_web.pdf).

Central Europe. Considering such a circumstance, the area should be seen not only as a transit route or hub, but also as an area with its own consumption issues. The heroin market in South-Eastern Europe continues to be a primary concern for regional health professionals, however there are other health-related consequences which need to be observed. In 2011, for instance, there were HIV outbreaks associated with drug injection in Greece and Romania.

With the exception of Croatia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro, the frequency of ATS (amphetamine-type stimulants) use across South-Eastern Europe is lower than the world average (0.7%). Bulgaria noted recent drops in heroin usage among chronic drug users, as well as a significant shift toward other substances, mainly ATS, among new users. Cocaine usage is still very low in South-Eastern Europe, with incidence rates averaging less than 1% among those aged 15 to 64.

Corruption

“Drug trafficking is an entire criminal industry that largely relies on corruption to function. Eliminating corruption will go a long way in reducing the supply of drugs in the EU.”⁶ It is essential to realize that South-Eastern Europe is not just a transit region and has its own drug consumption issues and is subject to corruption.

Traffickers will frequently exploit vulnerabilities and gaps in law enforcement systems in an attempt to enable the movement of illicit substances across borders and their distribution on local markets. This could include paying bribes or engaging in various sorts of corruption.

In the region, only a few examples of corruption connected to drug trafficking have been reported. An example is the arrest of a Greek Customs officer as part of a massive cocaine trafficking operation in 2011. Corruption, particularly as it concerns organized crime, is being handled aggressively in Serbia. “According to a European Commission report, the Serbian Special Prosecutor for Corruption and Organized Crime launched 115 corruption investigations in 2011.”⁷

The recent evaluation of the country's enactment of the United Nations Convention against Corruption contributed to the acknowledgement of the

⁶ “Drugs in Europe: Enhancing Law Enforcement Responses to High-Risk Organised Crime.” *Europol*, 1 Jan. 2021, www.europol.europa.eu/newsroom/news/drugs-in-europe-enhancing-law-enforcement-responses-to-high-risk-organised-crime.

⁷ “The Illicit Drug Trade through South-Eastern Europe.” *UNODC*, [www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Illicit DT through SEE REPORT 2014 web.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Illicit_DT_through_SEE_REPORT_2014_web.pdf).

necessity to guarantee the cohesiveness and effectiveness of existing laws on the protection of reporting individuals, as well as to prevent unnecessary fragmentation in executing relevant initiatives in practice; and to maintain attempts to overcome issues and delays experienced in the Financial Intelligence Unit's collaboration with other state entities, notably in the prompt transmission of information between them.

COVID-19 pandemic and the drug situation

To react to information demands and acquire understanding of the current public health emergency, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) collaborated with other EU agencies and local data providers to develop mechanisms for the opportune and effective identification and exchange of data important to different stakeholders. The EMCDDA has also carried out a series of rapid 'trend spotter' investigations that combine information from essential sources, nationwide focal points, online drug-use surveys, city-based wastewater analyses, and emerging knowledge from existing and developing indicators and research papers. While the absence of complete data demands caution and the acceptance of any findings as preliminary, it is helpful to reflect on the current understanding of advances that have occurred.

The drug market has been surprisingly robust to the pandemic's disruption. Travel limitations and border barriers have forced drug traffickers to adapt. This is mirrored in certain modifications in routes and techniques at the wholesale level, with increased emphasis on trafficking via intermodal containers and business supply networks and less dependence on human couriers. Even though street-based retail drug marketplaces were impeded throughout the first lockdowns, and some localized shortfalls occurred, drug producers and consumers have seemed to have adjusted by enhancing their use of encrypted communications services, social media apps, online sources, and mail and home delivery services. This increases the possibility that the pandemic's long-term consequence will be to further digitally empower drug markets.

As shown by survey results, people who used drugs infrequently prior to COVID-19 may have reduced or perhaps stopped using them during the pandemic, whereas more-regular users may have expanded their drug usage. Even though these findings are preliminary and need further investigation, they might have significant ramifications if the observed alterations are verified and continue in the future. By June 2020, drug services throughout Europe had restarted operations, albeit at a lower capacity owing to COVID-19 preventative measures. Treatment programs in prisons frequently report service interruptions as a result of social distance and restrictions on outside service providers. Limitations on access to prisoners by outside visitors and contractors have also been claimed to have temporarily restricted the supply of drugs in certain jails.

Penalties for drug trafficking

Although state laws on drug trafficking vary greatly, all states have laws that punish drug trafficking activities. A person can be convicted of drug trafficking if he produces, transports, sells, or distributes illicit narcotics. Nevertheless, drug trafficking is also a crime of weight and measurement. If a person is caught with a certain amount of any illicit substance, he might be charged with drug trafficking. This is applicable even if he did not produce, buy, sell, or transport the drugs. If someone has drugs in his possession and the amount surpasses the defined by law trafficking level, he may be found guilty of drug trafficking.

Drug trafficking charges are quite harsh, and anybody convicted of these offenses might face years or decades in jail. Though the magnitude of punishment for drug trafficking convictions vary significantly per state, all jurisdictions impose severe penalties for drug trafficking.

Fines

The fines for a drug trafficking conviction are similarly severe. Convictions for state trafficking can result in penalties ranging from \$25,000 to \$100,000 or more. Convictions for federal drug trafficking might surpass \$10 million.

Probation

In some trafficking instances, probation sentences are feasible, but only as part of a plea bargain in which the defendant chooses to plead guilty to a less serious offense. People condemned to probation must comply with particular terms imposed by the court, like for example being observed by a probation officer, agreeing to unsystematic but mandatory drug testing, not having the ability to leave the state without the probation officer's approval, and not violating any other laws. Probation terms are typically at least 12 months long, with penalties of three years or more.

Mandatory minimum sentences

Mandatory minimum sentences are frequently imposed under drug trafficking legislation. This implies that if an individual or group is convicted, they must serve a certain period of time and cannot be released on parole until that time has gone. For instance, if a person is condemned to ten years in prison for drug trafficking and his state has a three-year obligatory minimum, he will not be eligible for parole until he has served at least three years in jail.

Imprisonment

Even for first-time convicts, drug trafficking penalties usually result in imprisonment exceeding a year. A trafficking accusation can possibly result in a jail sentence of ten years or more, however some states have much harsher punishments than others. For drug trafficking crimes, life sentences are also possible.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

United Kingdom (UK)

The United Kingdom is considered to have one of Europe's largest opiate marketplaces. The United Kingdom was the only large market to record a 136% rise in seizures in 2011 in comparison to the prior year, accompanied by a significant drop in 2012. For many years, the Balkan route through Turkey has provided the British market. The UK claimed a "significant decrease in heroin entering the UK through Turkey and a rise in heroin entering the UK straight from Pakistan" in 2011, adding that "approximately two-thirds of heroin confiscated at UK borders had been smuggled straight from Pakistan." Official records from Pakistan indicate that the United Kingdom is a popular destination.

Belgium

While not a significant market, Belgium serves as a transit hub for heroin bound for the Netherlands (typically for onward distribution within Europe) and the United Kingdom. The Balkan route has historically supplied heroin to Belgium. The route is mostly overland, although cargo can also be transported by sea from Turkey. The most recent example of this happened in 2010, when Belgian Customs confiscated 130 kilograms at Antwerp harbor, which was destined for onward transit to the Netherlands. A huge cargo of 393 kg of heroin headed for Belgium was halted on the Turkey-Bulgaria border in August 2013, in the most recent example of the traditional overland trajectory.

Netherlands

Though not a major market, the Netherlands is an important redistribution station for heroin from the Balkan route. The nation continues to function as a site of convergence for flows from both the southern and Balkan routes, as well as a supplementary distribution center for other European countries. According to a 2011 report to the EMCDDA by the Netherlands, the Balkan route was the major pathway for heroin into the Netherlands, however it stated that "this route could be less appealing due to the enhanced enforcement actions in Turkey." Seizures in the

Netherlands have been decreasing since 2008, although this might be due to law enforcement priorities as well as genuine flow reductions.

Afghanistan

South-Eastern Europe has historically been a key stage on the “Balkan route,” a well-traveled heroin supply route that traverses westward by land from Afghanistan to the wealthy target markets of Western and Central Europe. According to the most recent UNODC estimates, 60-65 tons of heroin enter South-Eastern Europe each year. There have been improvements that may have contributed to a reduction in this flow, most prominently the rise of substitute pathways in the form of a “southern route,” which goes southward from Afghanistan, whether it be through Pakistan or rather the Islamic Republic of Iran, to Western and Central Europe.

Except for Latin America, Afghan heroin is transported across the world. Trafficking heroin from producing nations to consumer markets entails a worldwide network of channels as well as assistance by domestic and international criminal organizations. Although the different paths are continuously changing, there are certain well-established heroin trafficking routes from Afghanistan and other manufacturing nations to worldwide customers. Certain routes are chosen due to their location, whereas others are correlated with reduced risk, greater profitability, or simpler logistics.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's primary objective is to contribute to international peace and security, human rights, and prosperity by trying to make the world safer from drugs, crime, corruption, and terrorism. UNODC seeks to support Member States in developing their ability to uphold the rule of law, particularly via necessary criminal justice reforms, as well as to defend and safeguard the legal rights that people and organizations are entitled to under domestic and international law.

In practice, the Office strives to incorporate a human rights-based approach into its work, which encompasses the mindful and methodical inclusion of human rights into all phases of the programming cycle - strategic planning, program development, capacity building, management and evaluation, and reassessment. This involves planning while having the values of equality and nondiscrimination, participation and inclusion, accountability, and the rule of law as a base.

Southeast European Law Enforcement Center (SELEC)

SELEC's mission, within the scope of Competent Authorities' cooperation, is to offer aid to Member States and improve coherence in deterring and fighting crime,

including severe and organized crime, where such crime contains or seems to encompass an element of transnational operation. “The member states of the SELEC are: Republic of Albania, Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republic of Bulgaria, Republic of Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Hellenic Republic, Republic of Hungary, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Republic of Serbia, Republic of Slovenia and Republic of Turkey.”⁸

European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol)

Europol is the European Union’s law enforcement agency, with the mission of making Europe safer through supporting law enforcement authorities in EU member nations. Europol assists national law enforcement officials in combating drastic global crime and terrorism. Europol, with its prominent position in the European security infrastructure, provides a unique set of services, including: a) assistance for law enforcement operations on the ground, b) a center for information on criminal activity, and c) a center of law enforcement expertise.

International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)

Interpol offers operational support, research results, and guidance to national security forces in order to assist them in combating large-scale drug trafficking. Interpol has organized multiple drug trafficking activities throughout the globe and aids drug operations and investigations undertaken by national or multinational agencies. They seek to impede the movement of certain items across pathways that influence target areas or worldwide illegal drug flows.

European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)

Independent, scientific knowledge is an essential tool for helping Europe comprehend the implications of its drug issues and respond to them more effectively. The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) was founded in 1993 on this basis, in the face of an increasing drug problem. The EMCDDA seeks to supply the EU and its Member States with a factual overview of European drug challenges, as well as a strong evidence base to back up the drug debate. Nowadays, it provides policymakers with the data they need to develop informed drug laws and policies. Moreover, it assists experts and practitioners in the sector in identifying best practices and new research areas.

While the EMCDDA's primary focus is on Europe, it also collaborates with organizations from other parts of the world, exchanging ideas and insights.

⁸ “Southeast European Law Enforcement Center (SELEC).” *Ministry of Internal Affairs*, police.ge/en/ministry/structure-and-offices/international-relations-department/international-legal-cooperation/regionaluri-tanamshromloba/samkhret-aghmosavlet-evropis-samartaldamtsavi-tsentri-selec.

Partnership with European and worldwide drug-related organizations is also essential to its activities in order to improve understanding of the global drug issue. The EMCDDA relies on the assertion that reliable information is the key to a successful drug policy. Even though it does not suggest policies, the agency's analysis, standards, and resources are now having a significant influence on decision-making.

Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC)

CARICC operates as a permanent regional intelligence and communication intergovernmental agency, assisting in the organization, execution, and coordination of agreed-upon joint international operations to address and eliminate illegal drug trafficking. In addition, the Center guarantees the gathering, storage, safeguarding, research, and dissemination of data on transnational crime related to drug trade.

International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)

The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) is the United Nations' autonomous and quasi-judicial⁹ surveillance agency for the application of global drug control agreements. It was founded in 1968 in compliance with the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs. It has forerunners in previous drug control accords dating back to the League of Nations era.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

| Date | Description of event |
|------------------------|--|
| December 2005 | Treatnet initiative by the UNODC. |
| December 4, 2012 | UNODC and SELEC reached an agreement to combat illicit trafficking, criminality, and money laundering in Southeastern Europe, the Memorandum of Understanding. |
| November-December 2013 | The UNODC assists civil society in receiving training regarding the TREATNET program. |
| December 9, 2013 | Bosnia and Herzegovina hosted an Anti-Corruption Regional Conference. |
| November 28-29, 2013 | The Paris Pact Initiative - EUROPOL Expert Working Group to strengthen measures against precursor chemical diversion. |
| November 2013 | UNODC published South East Europe survey findings on the effects of crime and corruption. |

⁹ The authority to hold hearings and launch investigations into contested claims and suspected violations of laws and restrictions, and make judgments in the broad manner of courts, is partially judicial in character.

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| November 26, 2015 | Release of the latest UNODC study that concentrates on drug money and opium trafficking on the Balkan Route. |
| November 19-20, 2015 | The UNODC organized a regional seminar on the assessment of drug policy efficiency. |
| November 21-24, 2016 | TREATNET drug dependency treatment management training for Southeast European health care providers. |
| October 2-4, 2017 | Training for Port Control Units for Drugs and Precursors occurs in Sarajevo. |
| December 13-14, 2018 | The UNODC met with the European Commission to consider future collaboration on the drug situation in the Western Balkans. |
| November 29, 2019 | UNODC launched the South Eastern Europe Regional Program 2020-2023 aiming to minimize transnational organized crime and related risks, improving safety and expanding treatment and drug prevention and dependency coverage. |
| December 14, 2020 | A thorough report was released by UNODC, which examines the nature, features and degree of organized crime in the western Balkans with specific emphasis on the involvement of organized crime in drug manufacturing and trafficking. |
| May 10, 2021 | UN Volunteers assist the UNODC in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. |
| May 17-24, 2021 | The UNODC assists practitioners in South Eastern Europe and Italy in treating drug use disorders among adolescents. |
| June 21-25, 2021 | The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime organized a Strategic Trade and Export Administration Training for Port Control Units in South Eastern Europe. |

RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol¹⁰

The purpose of this Convention is to prevent drug abuse via coordinated worldwide action. There are two types of intervention and supervision that coexist. Primarily, it attempts to restrict drug possession, consumption, trading, distribution, purchase, export, manufacturing, and production for medicinal and scientific reasons solely. Additionally, it tackles drug trafficking by enlisting global collaboration to prohibit and dissuade traffickers.

¹⁰ "Single Convention On Narcotic Drugs". United Nations : Office On Drugs And Crime, 2021, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/single-convention.html?ref=menuaside>.

Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 ¹¹

The Convention provides a global system of regulation for psychoactive drugs. It reacted to the diversification and extension of the drug misuse spectrum by imposing limits on a variety of synthetic substances based on their abuse risk on the one hand and their medicinal usefulness on the other.

United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 ¹²

This Convention includes extensive anti-drug trafficking measures, such as restrictions against money laundering and the transfer of precursor chemicals. It calls for international collaboration in areas such as extradition of drug traffickers, regulated delivery, and the transfer of proceedings.

United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) ¹³

The United Nations Convention Against Corruption is the only legally binding worldwide anti-corruption instrument. The Convention's broad scope and the mandatory nature of many of its provisions make it a one-of-a-kind tool for formulating a comprehensive solution to a worldwide crisis. The Convention addresses five major issues: preventative measures, criminalization and law enforcement, international collaboration, asset recovery, and technical aid and information sharing. The Convention addresses several distinct types of corruption, including bribery, influence trading, function abuse, and other acts of corruption in the private sector. The Convention is signed by the great majority of United Nations Member States.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

Treatnet–International Network of Drug Dependence Treatment and Rehabilitation Resource Centres

Treatnet was established in December 2005 by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) as a method for enhancing the effectiveness of drug dependency treatment and rehabilitation via the sharing of experiences among

¹¹ *CONVENTION ON PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES, 1971*, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, www.unodc.org/pdf/convention_1971_en.pdf.

¹² *UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST ILLICIT TRAFFIC IN NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES, 1988*, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, www.unodc.org/pdf/convention_1988_en.pdf.

¹³ *UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION*, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, www.unodc.org/documents/brussels/UN_Convention_Against_Corruption.pdf.

members and partners. Treatnet's mission is to improve the quality, accessibility, and affordability of drug addiction treatment and rehabilitation programs throughout the world.

Monitoring of suspicious patterns

The UNDCP monitors patterns and trends in drug usage across the globe, such as those that are at risk of becoming or are currently abusing drugs. Equipped with this knowledge, it collaborates closely with governments and non-governmental organizations to create a strategy for consumption-reduction prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation methods.

Strategies designed by the UNDCP are aimed at individuals who have never used drugs, people who have used drugs but are not (yet) addicted, and those who are addicted. Analyzing who uses drugs, why they use them, what drugs are consumed, and how they are supplied assists in focusing prevention and treatment initiatives in the necessary locations.

Regional and international cooperation

Since the termination of political tensions and turmoil in South-Eastern Europe, regional collaboration efforts have emerged, often aided by foreign support. Most nations in the area have created extensive and, to varying degrees, substantial frameworks of global cooperation for judicial cooperation in criminal issues. This may be ascribed to their membership in regional instruments on various types of worldwide collaboration in general, along with multilateral instruments on corruption, money laundering, and organized crime, which include provisions on global collaborative work in criminal cases. It could also be justified by the willingness of countries that are already EU members to introduce domestically new legislative tools on international criminal cooperation, such as the European Arrest Warrant.

Paris Pact Initiative

The Paris Pact Initiative, a collaboration of over 70 nations and international organizations, is among the most prominent frameworks and coordinating bodies aiming at reacting to the issue of Afghan opiates. This involves locating information centers and combining strategic analyses along the entire length of the Balkan route, especially in South-Eastern Europe.

Commission on Narcotic Drugs

In 1946, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) formed the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) to help the ECOSOC in overseeing the implementation of international drug control agreements. The General Assembly (GA) extended the CND's authority in 1991, allowing it to serve as the UNODC's governing body. The CND

was instructed by ECOSOC Resolution 1999/30 to organize its agenda into two separate segments: a normative component for fulfilling treaty-based and normative responsibilities, and an operational component for executing the role of UNODC's governing body.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Enhancing exchange of information, analysis, criminal intelligence, and forensic capabilities

To maintain coherence and permanence in the use of criminal intelligence software across the region, as well as to help the EU standards process, future interventions must be devised in close collaboration with European partners. Expert seminars on future support and the proper method to integrate information and intelligence gathering in Balkan nations with those of Europol, SELEC, and CARICC, as well as align training programs, are necessary.

The region's national drug testing and forensic laboratories must be coordinated to fulfill globally acknowledged requirements. Quality forensic services are critical for the allocation of evidence-based data and documents for purposes of investigation, as well as for judicial prosecutions, and therefore the progress of quality management systems in forensic laboratories, expert training, and regional collaboration among law enforcement, court officials, and laboratories are primary concerns.

Creation of a crisis map

The UNSC could call for the collection of all incident reports of drug trafficking and create a crisis map - a map that indicates incident density and shows the more vulnerable areas and the areas that the proposed measures and any efforts within the SC or outside of it should be focused on. This will not only help the SC in recognizing the specifics of the conflict, it will help the nations suffering the effects of such trafficking.

Enforcement of border security

Border security can be increased through various measures. This particular solution is perhaps one of the more realistic ones that can be given and definitely more easily implementable than others. Measures such as personnel increases, surveillance upgrades can be of major use when it comes to preventing, detecting and combating international drug trafficking where necessary. Funding can come from the UN but pouring funds into a conflicted nation and expecting results is rather utopic, which is

why there should be some way to ensure that the money is used for the achievement of the goals that it was provided for.

Para-military intervention

A potential, more drastic solution that could definitely be of use if the situation was to continue (or worse, escalate further) would be intervention through a task force or UN peacekeeping forces along the borders. Both can be created under the authority of the UNSC and in the case of the taskforce, the UN can oversee and see to it that it serves its purpose. Of course, national sovereignty needs to be taken into account when implementing this measure, as the nations involved may not consent to such actions, in which case they may only be implemented in the case of a crisis. While the authority of the SC is great, it cannot violate the right to sovereignty.

Raise of awareness concerning forensics laboratories

It is critical to raise awareness among the judiciary and law enforcement about the importance of forensics in a just and successful criminal justice process. Although foreign funding to certain of the national research facilities in the concerned countries has shown excellent outcomes, a consistent regional approach to capacity building for greater regional cooperation is essential.

Addressing and eliminating corruption

Although few petty corruption cases have been prosecuted, there is no proof of any major corruption instances. Greater transparency in public administration is necessary to achieve success in the prevention of corruption, and specialized anti-corruption policies targeting susceptible sectors of the public sector must be established.

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