

Criminal activities through the Balkan Route: Can they be prevented?

Kire Babanoski¹

kbabanoski@gmail.com

The paper gives a theoretical explanation and empirical overview of the criminal activities in the Balkan countries within the "Balkan Route" as a passage along which illegal goods and immigrants are smuggled into Western Europe.

The main part of the paper will talk about the types of criminal activities which take place in this corridor (especially the three main sectors of organized crime activities – trafficking in drugs, human beings, and weapons), their causes and explanation of their harmful consequences to the security and stability of the Balkan countries.

The negative consequences arising from the security-political situation, complemented by the refugee crisis in the Balkans, which highly depend on the geo-strategic position of the Balkan countries, often referred to as a destroyer of the equilibrium factor for security in this region.

A qualitative approach will be used in this paper, using analysis of the current scientific literature, academic publications and scientific papers which are dealing with detecting, identifying, researching and preventing the illegal activities in the Balkan Route, as well as assessments of some international organizations about the numbers of crimes and perpetrators in this corridor.

The practical aim of the paper is to enable the way of eradicating crime by international security cooperation among all transit countries in the "Balkan Route". The conclusions that would arise should contribute to creating and updating the national strategies and optimal measures in identifying and detecting the activities related to illegal trafficking, organized crime and terrorism by the law enforcement agencies.

Keywords: *Balkan Route, criminal activities, illegal trafficking, organized crime, terrorism*

¹ *Prof.dr. Kire Babanoski, University of Skopje.*