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INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMS COOPERATION IN COMBATING ORGANIZED CRIME¹⁷

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ABSTRACT

Organized crime poses a serious obstacle to social development and economic progress of any country. As a result of the way of organizing and executing, organized crime as a form of crime is increasing, passing the national borders and increasingly takes the characteristics of a transnational or international crime. For these reasons, the fight against this type of crime can't remain only within national borders but it is based on cooperation between countries at all levels, including among institutional cooperation that involves cooperation between customs administration. Modern forms of criminality need modern ways of combating and dealing with it.

The role and significance of the Customs in the fight against organized crime has crucial meaning especially if we consider that a strategic decision of each customs administration is to protect the health and safety of citizens and society. In this context, and bearing in mind that the competence of the Customs is the detection, prevention, and clarification of customs crime, which according to its crime characteristics is an organized crime. Authors of the paper analyze the results of the research concerning the role of the Customs in the fight against customs crime on a national and international plan.

In the fight against crime, extremely important is the international cooperation between customs administrations, and in this context the role and importance of the Customs Administration, as well as the establishment and implementation of customs policies as an essential precondition for successful cooperation in all fields, especially in the fight against crime.

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Keywords: organized crime, international cooperation, the Customs, combat, customs crimes.

INTRODUCTION

The issue of crime is undoubtedly one of the greatest and most present problems of today. Today the world is facing modern forms of criminal behavior. Crime is seen as a negative social phenomenon and is a serious obstacle for the social and economic development.

Organized crime is a negative social phenomenon which undermines, degrades and deforms while man creates a positive value to society. As a consequence of the existence of organized crime occurs endanger of the functioning of the state, the economic system, financial performance, independent judiciary and so on. (Malish - Sazdovska, 2014) Therefore, "organized crime gets the qualifier" "the most dangerous" crime but also because of the fact that this type of crime threatens the physical, economic, social, legal certainty and security of peoples' life." (Arnaudovski, 2002).

Considering the fact that organized crime occurs in every sphere of social life and poses a real threat to the world, the need for preventive, and repressive action to combat it is more than needed. Today, "there is almost no country that is not infected with various offenses which are a cachet of organized crime." (Sulejmanov, 2002)

In this sense, neither the Republic of Macedonia nor the countries in the region and beyond are spared from the manifestations of this type of crime. On the contrary, crime in the Republic of Macedonia is correlated and closely related to crime in the region as well as with the European countries and the other countries in the world. Criminal acts, organized groups and criminals in the region, are the same or are connected and in this way represent a threat to all countries equally.

The transitional period in Macedonia and the Balkan countries represented and still represents a fertile ground for the emergence and activity of a great number of criminal groups acting planned and organized while using all the benefits of modern living, succeeded and still succeed to adapt easily to the social circumstances, fulfilling their interests through criminal and illegal activities. Of course, this results in a large financial gains and acquisition of power in every sense, especially economic and political power.

Criminal organizations perform their activities to the criminal market in a similar way that the legal entities do on the legitimate market because their

activities often are compared to legal work. Both aim at making a profit by selling goods and services, both use the profit to pay the people who work for them. The money after that is being invested in purchasing new technologies and equipment, hiring new people and/or improvement of existing human resources in order to enhance the productivity. (Markovich, 2011)

If the generally accepted view is that the existence of ratio and functioning of organized crime is gaining wealth expressed in money, property or any other form of material benefit, and primarily in an unlawful manner, committing crimes, then from that inevitably arises that these actions by nature ensure the acquisition of large funds, that they have expressed lucrative dimension. The range of such acts is extremely wide and it would be ungrateful to attempt to name them, in their totality, in one place. Hypothetically, everything that can bring criminal organizations material profit can enter in their criminal opus although the tendency is within organized crime to express only those illegal activities that can be characterized as highly profitable. (Marinkovich, 2010)

DEFINING ORGANIZED CRIME

Today organized crime is a major challenge for both the theory and practice of criminal law and the democratic society and its institutions as a whole. The challenge of criminal law is seen in the necessity of finding adequate ways of incriminating this criminal phenomenon, i.e. the necessity of establishing effective procedures for detecting and proving crimes falling within its range of expression. The challenge of the legal system and democratic institutions of the country is contained not only in specific crimes but much more in the opportunities, organized crime, indirectly or directly, influencing the state decisions in the sphere of its economy or politics. (Marinkovich, 2008)

Nowadays organized crime represents a modern criminological-security problem. It is a fact that a number of specific forms of criminal activities which today are one of the manifestations of the organized crime existed since ancient times. For example smuggling, frauds, forgery, extortion, prostitution, murder, theft and etc. But modern life has contributed to the emergence of new, contemporary forms of criminal activities.

The rapid development of organized groups and organized crime, created the need for its definition, as one of the first and crucial steps in its detection, prevention, and proving. In order to find a proper definition of what constitutes organized crime, experts had different approaches and many doubts about its definition, as well as finding a definition that would be most

suitable and that would encompass everything that this term includes. A number of international events and expert meetings were held in order to discuss this specific problem.

Today, there are different views and opinions on the definition of organized crime. Some start from the standpoint that organized crime is any serious crime and others that there is a close connection with corruption and related structures of the government. (Stojanovski, 2004)

Certain authors determined the notion of organized crime among which V.Vodinelikj who thinks of organized crime as “knowingly and willfully organizing, intending to remain secret, a joint criminal acting of members by the principle of conspiracy, inside and out, and division of work with a wide modus operandi and unscrupulous conduct “.(Angeleski,2004)

According to the author M. Angeleski, the term organized crime refers to “groups of ways of acting of systemic and permanent criminal attacks in several spheres of social and economic life, through which certain organized groups of professional delinquents, and members of criminal organizations tightly organized on hierarchical level with split roles that they fully respect, realize high criminal profits made in an unscrupulous manner and applying highly professional delinquent tactics and technique”.

In order to unite the forces of the countries in the fight against organized crime, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime was adopted on November 15, 2000. According to the Convention, countries must have identical criminal law approach to the following offenses: participation in an organized criminal group, money laundering, corruption and obstruction of justice. The Convention defines the organized criminal group as a structured group of three or more people working together in order to do serious offense to provide financial or material benefits. To this behavior is also added the organizing and directing or assisting in the committing serious crime by an organized criminal group.

The Convention defining organized crime focuses on the following elements:

- Organized criminal group means a structured group of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acts in order to perform one or more serious crimes or offenses, in order to obtain direct or indirect financial or another material benefit.
- Serious crimes are those crimes for which a prison sentence of four years or more is given.
- The definition accepts a particular internal structure of the criminal group which refers to a strict formality in the establishment, internal organization, participating in it and the ability to achieve rapid changes in

accordance with the dynamics of this crime.

- Transnational organized crime is placed in the field of property (economic) crime and the term "property includes: whether corporeal or incorporeal, movable and immovable real estate, tangible and intangible goods, public documents or interests in such assets.
- Gains from crime shall mean any property that arose or obtained by a direct or indirect commitment of the offense: material and spiritual goods, rights, interests and etc.
- Problems of treatment of the gains from criminal activity are resolved by replacing or seizure of what is the subject of the criminal activity, confiscation of acquired goods and so on.
- Regional economic integration is a form of organizing countries for consistent enforcement of obligations under this Convention in the fight against transnational organized crime.

Macedonia has adopted the Action Plan to combat organized crime in 2003 and established the following law enforcement organizations: the Organized Crime Department at the Ministry of Interior, Sector for drugs at the Ministry of Interior, the Agency for Money Laundering at the Ministry of Finance, the Customs Administration at the Ministry of Finance and the Financial police at the Ministry of Finance.

Regarding the definition of serious crimes that under the Macedonian Criminal Code are crimes with a prison sentence of three years or more. This means that in RM the "punishment threshold" is lower than the one of the United Nations Convention, where for "serious crimes" offenders get at least four or more years of imprisonment.

According to Article 2 of the Europol Convention, organized crimes are terrorism, drug trafficking, trafficking in nuclear and radioactive substances, illegal migration and human trafficking and smuggling motor vehicles.

As an annex to this article, crimes against life, body or personal freedom are added. Crimes against property or public goods include fraud, illegal trade or environmental crimes related to money laundering. (Malish Sazdovska, 2009).

ORGANIZED CRIME IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA AND THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST ORGANIZED CRIME

For the occurrence of organized crime, in the Republic of Macedonia and the countries in the region, largely contributed the transitional processes

characterized by changes in the state on the legal, social, political and economic plan. These changes were suitable for acting of organized criminal groups which quickly adapted to the new social events. This has resulted in the emergence of an increasing number of criminal activities, confirmation of that is “the occurrence of the racketeering, planting explosives, trafficking in drugs and weapons, the emergence of pyramid saving banks, smuggling oil, cigarettes and other goods, the existence of “gray economy”, frauds in the financial and banking operations and several organized murders.” (Sulejmanov, 2002) The cause of this is the unemployment and impoverishment of the population, economic instability and crisis in the country, changes in social values and system of social norms, political instability, dysfunctioning of the law and other factors that act as criminogenic factors for organized crime in the Republic of Macedonia. (Malish Sazdovska, 2014).

In terms of organized crime in Macedonia, the Global Competitiveness Report of the World Economic Forum for 2013-2014, Macedonia ranks on the 98th place out of 148 countries with a value of 4.6. Organized crime is more present in countries with low rule of law, with a few exceptions to this rule. Factors that influence on fighting organized crime are the independence and the integrity of the institutions responsible for respecting the rule of law and in this sense the independence and integrity of the Customs Administration. (Report on monitoring the risks of corruption and organized crime, 2015).

Integrity is a question of essential meaning and it affects the legitimacy and can significantly increase the capacity to effectively fulfill its basic mission and vision of the Customs Administration. (Annual Report 2015, 2016)

The fight against corruption is one of the main elements of any crime related to organized crime. It is the Customs Administration’s strategic decision.

Based on the determination of the Customs Administration to effectively prevent corruption, which also is a part of the Euro-Atlantic strategic goals and interests of the Republic of Macedonia and in accordance with the recommendations contained in the Revised Arusha Declaration, the Customs Administration in 2015, continuously took activities to prevent the abuse of official duties and to respect the established professional standards for employees.

Many acts are brought, such as the Strategy for Integrity and Anti-Corruption in the Customs Administration in RM 2015-2018. Then, “the Customs Administration took part in the realization of the State Program for Prevention and Repression of Corruption and the State program for the

prevention and reduction of the appearance of a conflict of interests with the Action Plan 2011-2015.”

In order to prevent corruption in their ranks, the Customs Administration has been continuously working on conducting internal inspections and controls. In 2015, 108 internal investigations/controls were conducted. Thereto, 39 cases set reasonable doubt that the customs officials didn't comply with the legislation and bylaws. In 2015, were conducted 71 internal inspections (in 2014 were conducted 94 internal inspections), of which 25 cases were irregularities (in 2014 were found 23 cases of irregularities). (Annual Report 2015, 2016)

Considering the fact that the damages resulting from crimes that characterize organized crime are high and reflect the overall social life, it is necessary to highlight the importance of international cooperation in the fight against this type of crime, especially the institutions responsible for the implementation of the laws as most relevant to detect, prevent and prove criminal acts, primarily the Ministries of Interior and all other institutions whose responsibilities include combating crime.

International customs cooperation takes place within the administrative cooperation between the customs services in the world, which is “a powerful tool in the fight against trafficking, facilitating legitimate trade and increase the security of states, and the protection of life and health of the population.

THE ROLE OF THE CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST ORGANIZED CRIME ON A NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

The Customs Administration within its authorities has the leading role in the protection of the society and the citizens and it represents its strategic commitment.

The Customs is an important link in the chain of support for international trade. Modern customs service has an extremely important role in the security system of each country - it is an integral part of the system to prevent illegal trade and unfair competition and prevention of trafficking in prohibited goods and financing terrorism, protection of peoples' life and health, as protection of the environment and cultural heritage.

To achieve safety and security of citizens, the protection of the fiscal interests of the state, protection the society from illegal trade, protection of the market against unfair competition and support of legitimate business activities, increasing the competitiveness of the domestic economy, creating an electronic surrounding, the fight against frauds, organized crime and

terrorism, particularly significant is the cooperation with relevant institutions acting in this field at national and international level.

In promoting international customs cooperation and promoting simplification of customs procedures, must be taken into account: the role of customs in the integrated management of borders, creating a paperless environment for the customs and trade and changes in national customs legislature to include safety aspects, risk management and the concept of the authorized economic operator. (Strategic Plan of the Customs Administration, 2008)

Customs service can significantly benefit from the cooperation and information provided by other customs services in the world.

International cooperation based on common standards and mutual recognition of the results of the conducted controls to effectively reduce the burden of legal trade and prevention of illegal trade and customs irregularities.

Fight against this type of crime undoubtedly requires a global approach because, there is a tendency for increased activity of organized criminal groups in smuggling drugs, arms, human trafficking, prostitution, economic and financial crime. (Spasovski, 2006)

Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia under its authorities undertakes activities to detect various types of crime, including organized crimes, such as smuggling, customs fraud, trafficking in drugs, weapons, migrants, activities for the protection of the environment, etc. The customs undertakes these measures by customs controls which represent the performance of specific acts such as examining goods; verifying the existence, reliability and accuracy of the documents; review of business books and other records; examination and search of the means of transport; examination and search of personal luggage and other goods that persons carry with them; carrying out official procedures and other similar actions with regard to ensuring that customs rules are applied and where necessary to other regulations applicable to goods which are a subject to customs supervision.

Customs Administration performs its duties under the legal provisions of the Customs Administration Law, the Customs Law, the Customs Tariff Law and other laws governing the import, export and transit of goods and to carry out other activities under other laws but fall under its authority.

With the changes of the Code of Criminal Procedure, in 2004, the Customs Administration received special authorizations, becoming an important body in the fight against crime. This arose from the need for prevention, detection, and investigation of criminal offenses and customs violations. With these authorizations, customs officials are allowed to carry

out investigation and intelligence measures envisaged under the Law on Criminal Procedure. That necessitated the establishment of specialized units and for that purpose, the Control and Investigation Sector (CIS) was formed. Within this sector are the following departments: Department of Intelligence, Department of Investigation, Department of Operative Affairs, Risk Management Division and Division for control of trading companies.

Intelligence Department is responsible for collecting, analyzing and processing information in order to prevent smuggling drugs, weapons, excisable goods, cultural goods, prohibited and dangerous goods etc., planning and organizing activities related to the intelligence of various criminal activities, creates a collaborative network and work with informants.

Investigation Department is composed of two divisions, namely: Department for Combating Smuggling and Department for Combating Economic Crimes. The main responsibility of this department is conducting investigations for detection and prevention of crime and customs offenses, then discovering the perpetrators and providing evidence for their prosecution, and filing of criminal charges against them to the competent prosecution offices. There are mobile customs teams within the Department of operative affairs in order to perform tasks on the whole territory of the Republic of Macedonia. They are equipped with special equipment and trained for fast acting and effective inspection of goods and vehicles entering, leaving or transiting through the customs territory of the Republic of Macedonia. Risk Management Department - responsible for setting up criteria and risk profiles, based on which the selectivity of goods, passengers, vehicles, etc. is done, for partial or detailed control (review), while the Department for control of trading companies is responsible for after customs control of trading companies situated in the Republic of Macedonia.

The main responsibility of these specialized units is detecting, preventing, clarifying and proving the crimes, as well as cooperation and exchange of information at national and international level with all relevant institutions (law enforcement authorities) competent for the fight against organized and other types of crime.

Physical customs control is carrying out with specific actions on the customs territory of the Republic of Macedonia, such as: examining goods, checking transport vehicles, personal luggage and other goods carried by passengers. Customs control means carrying out official procedures aimed at compliance with the customs regulations, and other regulations applicable to goods subject to customs supervision.

Customs officers in more than 25 actions carried out in 2015 prevented smuggling of about 57 kilograms of various drugs, of which 50 kg of

marijuana, 6 kg of heroin, 192 grams of amphetamine powder, 80 cannabis seeds and etc. Then, in 16 attempts in 2015 smuggling of over 4000 pieces of weapons and explosive materials and objects was stopped, including guns, ball and hunting ammunition, firecrackers, rockets, and fireworks. 77 actions stopped the smuggling of 427,703 cigarettes and 399 kg of cut tobacco. In 34 cases were revealed 1,404 illegal migrants trying to cross the borders of the country.

In the Annual Report of the Customs Administration for 2015, are listed a large number of other seizures of large amounts of cash in various currencies, jewelry, medications and other various goods.

In the fight against organized crime, the action of customs inspectors from Control and Investigation Sector (CIS), in Skopje, a factory was detected for a full production of counterfeit sports shoes from famous brands.

The Customs Administration took part in the project of the World Customs Organization for the Protection of Intellectual Property.

Once through the implemented control or specific checks sufficient information and evidence will be collected, that a certain person has a reasonable suspicion that has committed a criminal offense prosecuted for ex officio, at the same time may be initiated a formal investigation which includes the opportunity to apply measures affecting his interests, rights and freedoms (arrest, search, special investigative techniques, seizure of objects, etc.). (Buzarovska, Karnasas, 2010)

The basic condition for initiating a criminal proceeding is a detection of a crime and its perpetrator. In this sense, in terms of customs operations - detection of crimes is under the authority of customs officers and conduction of the preliminary investigation of the Customs Administration is under the authority of the Control and Investigation Sector - Investigation Department. Customs inspectors in the pre-acting follow the orders of the Public Prosecutor, i.e. collecting necessary information, which are then submitted to him. In a case of a detected criminal offense - ex officio, CIS filed a criminal complaint to the Public Prosecutor, which is the basis for initiating criminal proceedings against the perpetrators. They are obliged to provide clues and evidence needed to clarify and prove the case to gather all information that might be useful for a successful criminal procedure, to take appropriate measures to preserve the traces of the crime, the objects that the crime was committed on or with which the crime was committed and to find the perpetrator of the crime. The complaint shall give all the available evidence and are known to the CIS.

All further provided evidence, clues and information regarding the crime under criminal proceedings the customs inspectors are obliged to submit to

the Public Prosecutor. In 2015, the Customs Administration filed 110 criminal charges against 123 individuals and 48 legal entities.

Departments within the CIS and according to the Law on Criminal Procedure may take special investigative measures. These measures court granted upon prior written request, and in a case when there are grounds for suspicion that a crime is preparing, it is during its committing or it is already a committed crime.

According to the Criminal Procedure Law, the authorized persons of the Customs Administration working on detection of crimes fall into the category of judicial police taking measures and actions upon the orders or directions of the Public Prosecutor. Thus, customs officers have the right to conduct searches of homes and other premises by order of a judge of the preliminary investigation. During these searches, assets resulting from criminal acts are found.

At national level, and in order to effectively detect crime and successfully tackle criminal groups, the Customs Administration cooperates with the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and has signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Interior - Bureau of Public Security and the Ministry of Finance - Customs Administration and a protocol for implementation of the memorandum. The goal is coordinated implementation of controls on cross-border traffic, to ensure legal passage across the border, to detect and disrupt illegal activities, to improve the situation of public security and maintain the law and the order of the state border. Besides the Ministry of Interior, Customs Administration cooperates with the following institutions: the Financial Police, the Intelligence Agency and the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption. With some of these institutions, the Customs Administration has signed memorandums and protocols of cooperation, defining the cooperation in the fight against crime and conducting criminal proceedings. Except for these institutions, the Customs Administration cooperates with the National Coordination Centre for border management, where all institutions responsible for border management are participating.

In this context, the rapid development of information technology and the possibilities it offers, have a great importance and potential in the fight against organized crime, for which it is necessary to establish Information and Communication Technology (ICT) system that will create conditions and would offer data for successfully handling crimes regarding of entities, goods, routes (movement of goods and entities) etc.

In the fight against crime crucial for selectivity and targeting of revealing activities are the risk profiles. For proper profiling of paramount importance are the previous discoveries and experience. From here, the way (modus operandi), place (locus operandi) and time (tempus operandi) of the

performed criminal actions entered in the ICT system, would be the basis on which you can define indicators and risk profiles. The indicators would create behavior patterns of a possible crime.

It is about advanced techniques used for research, advanced analysis and detection of crimes, potential offenders (subjects) and the connection between them. Data mining essentially is a process of searching raw information already existing in the system, and removal of their meaning. Then, by analyzing those data from different perspectives that apparently are unrelated information, finding relations between them and the system connects them.

Data mining enables research and analysis of large amounts of data, based on revealing specific rules and templates for carrying out criminal activities. Data mining actually engages in building models based on input algorithms, on the basis of which are obtained adequate output models.

In this way, the system provides for the possible trends of criminal acts and behavior of potential perpetrators.

Especially important is the role of the **World Customs Organization** as the only intergovernmental organization exclusively focused in the field of customs. It works on the development of global standards, the simplification and harmonization of customs procedures, facilitation of international trade and the implementation of other activities related to customs matters. It was founded in 1952 with 179 members of customs administrations worldwide. Within the international customs cooperation in the fight against and repression of organized crime, the Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia is a member and cooperates with many others international organizations and institutions. Despite WCO, the Customs Administration is associated with other international organizations, for example, INTERPOL, CITES, the European Anti-Fraud Office - OLAF - competent to investigate potential crimes and serious irregularities and look after the financial interests of the European Union and its taxpayers, Regional Intelligence Liaison Offices of the World Customs Organization - established in order to create a global intelligence network, SELEC (Southeast European Law Enforcement Center) established to provide support for the Member States and enhance coordination in preventing and combating crime, including serious and organized crime, where such crime involves or appears to involve elements of cross-border activity, and also many other organizations.

In the framework of international cooperation, in order to a successful prosecution of the perpetrators since 2004 in the Republic of Macedonia is active a program for export control and border security - EXBS funded and supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Security of the United States of America. The purpose of this program is to help and support

the Macedonian police forces - the Ministry of Interior and the Customs Administration. The help and support consist in exposing and deterring the illegal transfer of weapons of mass destruction, through specialized training and provision of equipment.

International cooperation of the Customs Administration with other organizations and institutions in the fight against cross-border crime is based primarily on the mutual exchange of information. Here is important to mention that the Customs Administration provides an access to CEN (Customs Enforcement Network) database of the World Customs Organization. This database is used for intelligence purposes and contains data and information on all seizures of narcotics, cigarettes, weapons, which the Member States have notified the WCO. Through specified contact persons takes place the exchange of intelligence information also with RILO, SELEC, and other organizations.

For recording, processing and exchange of information separate systems and applications are used: Intelligence Database (Intell database), base for case management in the Department of Investigation (Case database), an electronic messaging system (SEMS), database for managing calls on the open line 197, SEED (Systematic Electronic Exchange of Data) - project for the Western Balkans in order to exchange information between the institutions responsible for law enforcement, CLS - Central list of suspects, etc.

The Customs Administration of the Republic of Macedonia in the international customs cooperation in the fight against organized crime contributes and participates in various international events and activities. It is especially important to participate in international operations and actions organized in order to detect crimes. In 2015, the Customs Administration participated in 9 international operations: GLOBAL SHIELD - monitoring and detecting illegal trade in precursor chemicals that could be used to make improvised explosive devices; CLEAN EARTH - identifying, preventing and combating trafficking in counterfeit products for plant protection and hazardous waste; BALKAN GATE - identify and prevent illegal trade in counterfeit and pirated goods; WESTERLIES 3 - combating trafficking in amphetamines and other drugs by passengers in air traffic; AUNT II - monitoring the smuggling of small quantities of cigarettes; CATALYST - preventing trade in new psychoactive substances; WESTERN BALKAN ACTION DAY within EMPACT FIREARMS - combat against illegal arms trafficking; SKY-NET II - combating illegal trafficking drugs and precursors in the postal and express parcels; KNOW HOW - identify and prevent the import, export and transit on the territory of the Member States of SELEC of all kinds of counterfeit and pirated goods in commercial and non-commercial

deliveries. Also extended is the regular cooperation with UNODC through the contact of UNODC for Macedonia, with EU-TWIX and OLAF through an exchange of information with the customs authorities of Albania, Bulgaria, Germany, France, Croatia, Serbia, Kosovo and Turkey. (Annual report 2015, 2016)

Especially should be emphasized the active participation of customs officials in various seminars, training, meetings, conferences and similar events that are extremely important for their professional upgrading, establishing contacts and achieving cooperation. It is equally important to maintain the continuity of existing collaboration.

In 2015, especially is significant the participation in the training intelligence, conducted by high representatives of the Turkish Customs, during which they exchanged views and shared best practices in the field of strategic, tactical and operational intelligence and work with informants). The Customs Administration participated in an international workshop in Germany, including police services in Balkan Info system for information exchange to combat drug smuggling.

In 2015 a survey was conducted for the purpose of a master's thesis "Criminal investigation of customs offenses - smuggling, customs fraud and concealment of goods subject to smuggling and customs fraud" and with the results an analysis was made and it was found that respondents (80% of 144 respondents) believe that the Customs Administration is successful in preventing and detecting criminal acts of smuggling, customs frauds, forgery and other offenses. (Zivkovic Davitkova, 2015)

CONCLUSION

Organized crime has a clearly defined history through which is continuously changing with the only goal - to stay the same – highly profitable, on the one hand, and untouchable for the police and other security services, on the other hand. Today it has become a synonym for those forms of crime that are considered dangerous especially for the individuals, the state, and society. Despite intense academic and professional discussions worldwide in order its clarification and definition, it still remains partly unclear and nebulous. (Markovich, 2010)

Modern living and the rapid development of technology imposed the modern trends of its planning, organization, and execution. With the growing number of persons, vehicles and goods crossing the borders greatly burden the implementation of customs and other controls. Introduced is the system of risk analysis, which entails establishing appropriate criteria and risk profiles, based on which the selection is made in order to perform customs

controls? It is also based on operational and analytical intelligence, at national and international level. Thanks to the development of technology, today the exchange of information between institutions is on a high level, it runs smoothly and it doesn't represent any problem.

The fight against any form of crime, including the organized crime, must be correlated with its development, expansion and mode of execution. It requires the establishment and application of modern measures for the detection, proving and repression. It implies also the establishment of appropriate legislation and prescribing criminal law instruments in order to effectively combat organized crime.

The Customs Administration is constantly working on the introduction of new systems in order to facilitate customs procedures and customs control as well as on the modernization of the service. Especially important is the accession to the Convention on a common transit procedure and the introduction of the new computerized transit system - NCTS for processing of transit declarations, which makes it easier and cheaper movement of goods, simpler and faster customs formalities. The system is the basis for the implementation of the transit procedure through the

exchange of electronic messages between participants in the customs procedure and serves as a tool for management and control of transit operations and provides a modern and effective management.

From the results and analysis of data obtained through the survey, and in terms of training of customs officials to detect and prevent criminal activities across borders and inside the customs area, arose conclusion that although most respondents believe that employees are appropriately trained, a significant is the percentage of those who believe that they are not adequately trained. If we take into account that organized crime is a sophisticated form of criminality, then these results represent a strong indicator that shows the need for specialized training of appropriate vocational training of customs officials for a successful and efficient fight against customs criminality, and in a broader sense and against organized crime.

Based on what has been said so far, it can be concluded that the cooperation of the Customs Administration at the national and at international level is successful. It is also important that gives its contribution in the fight against organized crime in the world.

As recognition of this is the positive experience in international cooperation in combating illicit trafficking in drugs and other psychotropic substances, smuggling migrants and various goods prohibited and dangerous to human health and the environment, customs frauds, protection of intellectual property and etc.

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