

It is again my pleasure to introduce another English language Issue of the Journal of Criminal Justice and Security, this one edited by Jack Greene and Gorazd Meško.

Organized crime activities in Eastern and Central Europe are under increasing scrutiny within the European Union generally, since the countries located here are being used more and more as staging points for expansion of criminal structures within the greater Europe. This is especially true of countries such as Germany, and perhaps to a lesser extent France and Italy. Moreover the European integration process and the relaxation of border controls create unique opportunities for further growth of those criminal networks. Increasingly, these groups are able to tap into their specialization and acquired experience, and further enlarge their illegal activities, as has been the case over the past 20 years. With the collapse of communism in 1989, this new challenge for security authorities across the European Union has emerged and will most certainly need to be addressed further to provide safety and security to its citizens.

Focusing on criminal justice and security issues relating to organized crime in Southeastern Europe, this volume includes contributions from scholars from several countries on a variety of timely and interesting topics, specifically variations in organized crime and the ways Western Balkan countries are addressing such matters. This edition includes research and policy discussions from Bosnia-Herzegovinian, Macedonia, and Slovenia, as well as issues affecting the area more generally.

The authors, editors, and I hope you find the following contributions both interesting and educational.

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