

Criminological aspects of the international waste trade

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In the last few decades, the world has witnessed industrial and technological progress that is also reflected in people's lifestyle. Modernisation and development have brought about a dark side of life – a vast quantity of waste, which can be due to inadequate procedures of recycling and disposal harmful and even life-threatening to people and the environment. The expensive and time consuming procedures of waste recycling can be in part responsible for the development of the waste trade, the goal of which is to export and dispose of waste outside the borders of the country of origin. Since the costs of illegal export of waste are considerably lower than recycling and legally prescribed disposal of waste, profit also plays an important role here. The aim of this paper is to draw attention to the extent of the problem of the waste trade and to highlight some solutions that have proved to be effective in the past.

The contribution presents a survey of the international professional literature and newspaper publications related to trafficking in waste. It also provides an overview of international legislation on the waste trade, compares the legal regulation in individual countries, and focuses on individual cases of trafficking in waste in Slovenia and elsewhere in the world.

Illicit waste trade and waste disposal are actually much more widespread than is generally known. Each country assumes a responsibility for the management of waste produced by itself, as well for its conservation and recycling. However, there is a very thin line between illegal and legal conduct and, in many cases, it is effaced. The waste trade is not just a threat to the environment and a cause of its destruction but also an imminent hazard to people and animals. The waste trade is, at the same time, closely connected to violations of human rights and also raises the question of ecological racism.

Key words: environmental crime, organized crime, trafficking in waste, international legislation, eco-mafia, ecological crime

UDC: 504.05: 628.4