

## **Perspectives of Urban Security Management in Western Balkans**

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This article addresses urban security management in the capitals of former Yugoslav republics: Ljubljana (Slovenia), Zagreb (Croatia), Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Belgrade (Serbia) and Skopje (FYR Macedonia). In analysing urban security, we are adopting a human security perspective, the concern of which is the safety and security of people, not national or international security. With the term contemporary threats we address a spectrum of contemporary security issues, and our focus in the article is posed to crime and natural disasters. The United Nations' report on urban safety and security highlights concerns relating to urban security that can be addressed through appropriate urban policy, planning, design and governance. In addition, we find participation of various national and local actors in providing security in cities as crucial. Special skills, knowledge, and integrity are prerequisites for successful work of urban managers for security, safety and crisis management.

A comparative study based on semi-structured interviews with municipal security experts and officials, as well as university researchers, who deal with or manage security issues, was conducted, and interviewees identified the most and least challenging security issues/problems and priorities. They assessed strategies of security management in their cities and expressed their opinion on collaboration of various state, and local organizations which jointly contribute to the provision of security and safety in urban settings. Furthermore, interviewees evaluated the required competencies, knowledge, and skills required for urban security managers with the purpose of improving safety and security management and coordination of the provision of security and safety more efficiently and effectively. The article also presents a secondary analysis of statistical data on crime and public disorder offences which are the most burdensome security issues in the cities along with the natural disasters and factors of uncertainty (poverty, unemployment, low birth rate).

**Keywords:** urban security, security manager, urban environment, former Yugoslav states

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