

Challenges of Ensuring Safety and Security in Local Communities of Posavje – Not Only Roma Issues, but Also Roma Issues

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The municipality is responsible for carrying out many tasks in the broader field of security, from the organisation of municipal warden services, civil protection, fire services, to civil defence. In addition, municipalities are involved in solving problems produced by various (security) phenomena, regardless of whether they are responsible for solving them or not. This is ultimately expected of them by the local population, the state and the general public. In this regard, mayors, in particular, face numerous challenges, ranging from (non) competence, lack of information for timely and quality decision-making, to misunderstanding and non-acceptance of their opinions, decisions and measures by the broader social community. This article presents a case study of the Posavje (statistical) region, which is heterogeneous in terms of security due to its geographical location, proximity to the border, energy and transport critical infrastructure, etc. This represents a challenge for both state and local organisations for ensuring security and order, protection and rescue, as well as for the mayors themselves. The results of the study are also based on interviews with mayors of five Posavje's municipalities, so they facilitate an easier understanding of the thinking and behaviour of mayors in situations when their municipality is faced with a certain (security) challenge that needs to be solved, regardless of who is actually responsible for solving it. Migrant and Roma issues also introduce a special dynamic into the security situation. The Roma issue is far from being the only (security) challenge, but it is also too important for the competent institutions to ignore. The mayors from Posavje region therefore support the proposal for legal amendments submitted in 2022 by the mayors of eleven municipalities, which is intended to contribute to a more effective resolution of the Roma issue.

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