



Risk Analysis for 2017



Risk Analysis for 2017



Frontex official publications fall into four main categories: risk analysis, training, operations and research, each marked with a distinct graphic identifier. Risk analysis publications bear a triangular symbol formed by an arrow drawing a triangle, with a dot at the centre. Metaphorically, the arrow represents the cyclical nature of risk analysis processes and its orientation towards an appropriate operational response. The triangle is a symbol of ideal proportions and knowledge, reflecting the pursuit of factual exactness, truth and exhaustive analysis. The dot at the centre represents the intelligence factor and the focal point where information from diverse sources converges to be processed, systematised and shared as analytical products. Thus, Frontex risk analysis is meant to be at the centre and to form a reliable basis for its operational activities.



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Throughout the report, references to Kosovo* are marked with an asterisk to indicate that this designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

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List of acronyms used

ALDO	Advanced Level Document Officer
BCP	border-crossing point
Daesh	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
EDF	European Union Document-Fraud
EDF-RAN	European Union Document-Fraud Risk Analysis Network
EEAS	European External Action Service
EMCDDA	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction
EPN	European Patrols Network
EPS	EASO's Early warning and Preparedness System
EU	European Union
EU+	28 EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland
EUNAVFOR Med	European Union Naval Force Mediterranean
EURINT	European Integrated Management Initiative
Eurodac	European Dactyloscopy
Eurojust	European Union's Judicial Cooperation Unit
Europol	European Police Office
Eurostat	statistical office of the European Union
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
FRAN	Frontex Risk Analysis Network
Frontex	European Border and Coast Guard Agency (formerly European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union)
FTF	foreign terrorist fighter
FYROM	former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the definitive nomenclature for this country will be agreed following current negotiations at UN level
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ICT	information and communication technology
ID	identification document
INTCEN	European Union's Intelligence Analysis Centre
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JO	Joint Operation
MRCC	Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre
MS	EU Member State
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OCG	organised crime group
PeDRA	Processing Personal Data for Risk Analysis
RAU	Frontex Risk Analysis Unit
SAC	Schengen Associated Country
SAR	search and rescue
SOLAS	International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea
THB	trafficking in human beings
UK	United Kingdom

UN	United Nations
UNDOC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council resolution
USD	United States dollar



Frontex assists Bulgarian authorities, 2016
© Frontex

1. Preface

In 2016, the EU experienced another year of intense migratory pressure at its external borders. Member States reported more than 511 000 detections of illegal border-crossing, which corresponds to roughly 382 000 new arrivals from Africa, the Middle East and Asia. This was a significant decrease in comparison with 2015, when over one million migrants came to the EU. However, the overall situation at Europe's external borders remained challenging.

The decrease in arrivals was mainly caused by fewer migrants arriving in Greece from Turkey. This drop was a result of the EU-Turkey statement of March 2016 and the introduction of strict border-control measures in Western Balkan countries, which effectively closed the Balkan route.

As a result of the EU-Turkey statement, migrants who arrived on the Greek Islands after 20 March could be returned to Turkey. Indeed, since April 2016 Frontex supported the Greek au-

thorities in returning migrants who had been issued return decisions.

While the number of migrants from Asia and the Middle East decreased, 2016 was marked with an increase in migratory pressure from Africa, in particular on the route from Libya to Italy. Italy saw the highest number of arrivals ever recorded – about 182 000, with a significant increase in the number of migrants from West Africa. Tragically, despite rescue efforts by Frontex, the Italian Coast Guard and Navy, Operation EUNAVFOR Med, and the assistance of many NGO and commercial vessels, several thousands of migrants making the crossing on overcrowded and unseaworthy rubber dinghies lost their lives in the Mediterranean.

There was also an increase in people-smuggling activities, both on routes leading to and within Europe. Many of the migrants used forged documents, which remains a challenge for border authorities. Moreover, a large number of poorly documented migrants moving

within Europe continues to constitute a threat to Europe's internal security.

Throughout the year, Frontex (since October 2016 the European Border and Coast Guard Agency) consistently deployed between 1 000 and 1 500 border guards at the EU's external borders. In its maritime operations in the Central Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea, the Agency-deployed vessels rescued 90 000 migrants. At the same time, Frontex officers ensured the registration and identification of thousands of newly-arrived migrants in Greece and Italy. In Frontex operations in Italy, Greece, Spain, Hungary, Croatia and Bulgaria, 1 265 suspected people smugglers were arrested and more than 95 tonnes of illegal narcotics confiscated.

In December 2015, the European Commission proposed the creation of a European Border and Coast Guard. The proposal was endorsed by the Member States and the European Parliament, and on 6 October 2016 the European Border and Coast Guard Agency was launched.

The Agency, built on the foundations of Frontex, with increased budget and, in the near future, with significantly more staff, is entrusted with more responsibilities in the field of migration but also internal security. The European Border and Coast Guard Agency is building the capacity to deploy border and coast guard forces rapidly and efficiently, to support return measures, and to collect and process personal data. All of these efforts support Europe's migration management process and foster closer cooperation with key non-EU countries in areas related to migration. These measures have a single aim of preserving the free movement within the Schengen area.

As part of its new mandate, Frontex created a rapid deployment pool in 2016. These 1 500 officers can now be dispatched by the Agency to border areas in need of urgent assistance. In its new role regarding coast guard functions, Frontex also increased cooperation with other European maritime agencies. In addition to its core tasks of border control and management, the Agency initiated multi-purpose operations, including environmental and commercial fishing monitoring. The Agency also began closer cooperation with Customs authorities and became more engaged in fighting different types of cross-border crime, including arms trafficking.

One of the key new tasks of the Agency is better assessment of vulnerabilities of Europe's national border authorities in the light of potential challenges at their external borders. In 2017, the Agency will conduct its first assessment of vulnerabilities at the Member States' external borders and will issue recommendations on how these vulnerabilities need to be addressed.

The European Border and Coast Guard, made up of national border authorities and Frontex, was designed to meet migration challenges faced by the EU. As migration management goes far beyond border control, only a comprehensive strategy will make it effective. In 2017, the Agency will propose an operational Integrated Border Management strategy for the EU. It will take into consideration

factors that affect migratory movements within the EU but also conditions beyond Europe's borders.

It is clear that cooperation with migrants' countries of origin and transit is one of key elements of a successful migration management. From exchange of information to cooperation on returns, Frontex has been extending its reach beyond Europe. In 2016, Frontex deployed its first Liaison Officer to Turkey. This year, Frontex Liaison Officers will be deployed to priority countries in Africa and the Western Balkans.

Last year the Agency also significantly increased its activities in the area of returns, returning more than 10 000 non-EU nationals with negative asylum decisions or no right to stay in the EU. This compares with some 3 500 effective returns in 2015. Returns remain a priority in 2017, as the overall level of effective returns to non-EU countries has not increased significantly, despite the massive number of migrants arriving in the EU. To help address the returns challenge, a newly-created pool of return experts is now at the disposal of Member States organising return operations.

In 2016, in addition to migration management, Frontex started to collect and process personal data for risk analysis purposes and in support of criminal investigations. In February, during the Joint Operation Triton in the Central Mediterranean, the Agency launched a pilot project known as Processing Personal Data for Risk Analysis (PeDRA). Its aim is to process the personal data collected during interviews with migrants newly arrived in Italy.

The new mandate of the Agency puts more emphasis on the collection of personal data. As a result, the PeDRA project has been extended to Frontex operational activities in Spain and Greece, and has recently become part of all Joint Operations as a regular practice. It allows closer cooperation with Europol and the security and law-enforcement agencies of the EU and the Member States.

The recent terrorist attacks in France, Belgium and Germany clearly demon-



strate that border management has an important security component. National authorities discovered that several foreign terrorist fighters had entered Europe posing as migrants. As Daesh continues to lose territory, many of its fighters are likely to attempt to move (or return) to Europe. Together with the national authorities and European partner agencies, Frontex remains committed and vigilant in its efforts to ensure security of Europe's borders.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'F' followed by a horizontal line.

Fabrice Leggeri
Executive Director

2. Summary

In 2016, a drop in detections reported at the external borders with Turkey and Western Balkan countries led to an overall decrease in detections of illegal border-crossing at EU level. However, with over half a million detections (511 371), the figure is still significantly higher than any yearly total between 2010 (104 060) and 2014 (282 933). This means that the pressure on the external borders of the EU remained exceptionally high in 2016.

The migratory pressure at the EU's external borders with Turkey has been easing since October 2015. An important factor in this regard is the EU-Turkey statement, which came into force in March 2016, in which Turkey agreed to secure its maritime and land borders and accept the return of irregular migrants from Greece. The statement has largely removed the incentive for migrants to take irregular migration routes to Greece and has undermined the business model of people-smuggling networks. Several measures introduced to prevent illegal border-crossing along the Western Balkan route have also discouraged many irregular migrants from making the dangerous sea crossing to the Greek Eastern Aegean Islands.

Nevertheless, Greek Hotspots saw several riots last year resulting in injuries and material damage. Similar security problems and overcrowding in Bulgaria reflected persistent tensions in reception facilities and the precarious situation of migrants and refugees.

Never before had detections been so high in the Central Mediterranean area, with 181 459 in 2016, which is 18% more than in 2015. For the third consecutive year, detections in the Central Mediterranean Sea have exceeded 100 000. At the same time, IOM data show that the number of deaths and missing persons – a rough estimate due to the absence of passenger lists and the few bodies actually recovered – increased from 3 175 in 2015 to over 4 500 in 2016. The increase in fatalities occurred despite enhanced operational efforts and the fact that most rescue operations took place close to, or sometimes within, Libyan territorial waters.

A staggering 96% of newly-arrived migrants interviewed in the Central Mediterranean region stated that they had used the services of smuggling networks to illegally enter the EU. This suggests that irregular migration via Libya is entirely dependent on the services of the smuggling networks. Therefore, any activity that would disrupt or deter these groups could significantly curb the flow of irregular migrants into the EU.

The increasing number of vulnerable persons moving through the Central Mediterranean, in particular Nigerian women, makes it very clear that effective detection of people trafficked for sexual exploitation, forced labour and other purposes remains a major challenge for border authorities.

The establishment of Hotspots in southern Italy helped to considerably improve the registration of new arriv-



als. However, many arriving migrants were also disembarked outside Hotspot areas, which undermined the uniform application of registration rules. Moreover, after having been registered in the Hotspots, many migrants simply left the reception centres without notification or proper documentation. It should be stressed that movement of people without proper documentation within the EU carries serious implications for internal security.

As in the case of the Central Mediterranean, never before had detections on the Western Mediterranean route been as high as in 2016, with more than 10 000 detections. This is 46% more than in 2015 on the same route, and 21% more than in 2011, the previous record-breaking year. As in the Central Mediterranean, most migrants were from Africa, which indicates the growing pressure of illegal immigration from this continent towards the EU.



SAR by Portuguese vessel off Lesbos, Poseidon Rapid Intervention, 2016
© Frontex

In terms of nationalities, for the fourth consecutive year, people claiming to be Syrian nationals (17% of total EU) represented the highest share of irregular migrants entering the EU in 2016. They were followed by Afghans (11%), who accounted for the second largest number of illegal border-crossings. The number of Iraqis was also notable representing more than 6% of detections.

Coinciding with an increase in the Central Mediterranean and Western Mediterranean, detections of African migrants reached a record high of over 170 000 (+22% over 2015), compared with the average of about 40 000 detections between 2009 and 2013. This influx reveals a steady increase in migration pressure from the African continent and, in particular, from West Africa. Indeed, most of the growth over 2015 was due to a higher number of detections of Nigerians (+71%), Guineans, Ivorians and Gambians. Altogether in 2016, West Af-

ricans accounted for more than 100 000 detections, a total roughly comparable with the number of migrants from the Middle East reported for illegally crossing the border from Turkey.

In 2016, more than 7 000 people were detected with fraudulent documents at the EU's external borders. This represents a decrease of about 15% compared with the previous year. However, as in 2015, the number of people detected travelling with fraudulent documents within the EU proved higher than at the external borders (almost 11 000 reported in 2016). In addition to the smuggling of migrants, document fraud emerged as a key criminal activity linked to the migration crisis. Fraudulent documents can be in fact used or re-used for many other criminal activities. This will continue to represent a substantial threat to the security of the EU in 2017.

Within the Schengen free-movement area, several EU Member States

and Schengen Associated Countries (Germany, Austria, France, Sweden, Denmark and Norway) introduced temporary controls at specific border sections. These controls have been extended until the first months of 2017 amid continued concerns about managing spontaneous flows.

Even though Turkey accepted a number of irregular migrants from Greece and a greater number of failed asylum applicants were returned to Western Balkan countries, the overall number of effective returns at EU level remained relatively stable in relation to 2015, with 176 223 effective returns reported in 2016 (+0.6%).

With regard to returns, the main issue continued to be linked to the difficulties in obtaining travel documents from countries of origin in time. This was particularly the case for some West African countries (e.g. Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Senegal) that have a limited consular presence in the EU. These countries also

showed the largest discrepancies between the number of their citizens detected for illegal border-crossing (113 935) and those effectively returned (6 497) in 2016.

Overall, there is an underlying threat of terrorism-related travel movements. This is mainly due to the fact that the Syrian conflict has attracted thousands

of foreign fighters, including EU citizens, dual-nationality holders and third-country nationals. At the beginning of 2017, the main jihadist organisations (e.g. Daesh) have experienced considerable military setbacks in Syria, Iraq and Libya. Since Daesh's military demise is now increasingly likely on the

three theatres, it might encourage some foreign fighters to return to their home countries (among others EU Member States). As some of them may pose a threat to internal security, the role of border authorities in monitoring their cross-border movements will be increasingly important.



Registration of migrants in Sicily, 2016
© Frontex

3. Introduction

Frontex operational activities aim at strengthening border security through the coordination of Member States' actions regarding the implementation of EU measures for the management of external borders. The coordination of operational activities contributes to more efficient allocation of Member States' resources and better protection of the area of freedom, security and justice. In this context, the *Risk Analysis for 2017* concentrates on the scope of Frontex operational activities and, in particular, on irregular migration at the external borders of the EU and Schengen Associated Countries.

Since the new Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 came into effect last October, the mandate of Frontex has significantly changed to ensure efficient implementation of European Integrated Border Management as a shared responsibility of the Union, the Agency and of the national authorities. The integrated border management has several key components. Some of the most important ones are: the coast

guard function and associated SAR operations; the monitoring of migratory flows towards and within the EU; the prevention and detection of cross-border crime (i.e. migrant smuggling, THB and terrorism); the analysis of risks for internal security and of threats affecting the security of the external borders; vulnerability assessments; and return operations.

Clearly, this major change has important implications for the analytical work performed by Frontex as its risk analysis should cover all aspects of Integrated Border Management and develop a pre-warning mechanism. However, since the new Frontex regulation only entered into force in October 2016, the *Risk Analysis for 2017* cannot offer an exhaustive analytic coverage of all new tasks and operational activities. These new elements will be integrated in future risk analyses. Nonetheless, the present analysis attempts to address as many of them as possible.

This annual report is structured as follows: (1) situational picture with emphasis on identified migratory trends and surveillance activities utilising a set of reliable indicators on irregular migration; (2) featured analyses on key risks affecting the security of the external borders and/or internal security (e.g. smuggling networks in Libya, return system vulnerabilities, and the situation at migrant reception centres).

The Frontex Risk Analysis Unit (RAU) would like to express its gratitude to all members of the Frontex Risk Analysis Network (FRAN) in Member States for their efforts in providing data and information, as well as Europol, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), the European Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS), EU Intelligence Analysis Centre (INTCEN), UNHCR, and all Frontex colleagues involved in the preparation of this report.



Debriefing of migrants in Sicily, 2016
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4. Methodology

A coherent and comprehensive analysis of the risks affecting security at the external borders requires, above all, the adoption of common indicators. Consistent monitoring of these indicators will allow effective measures to be taken on the ground. The analysis needs to identify the risks that arise at the external borders themselves and those that arise in third countries.

The backbone of the *Risk Analysis for 2017* is the monthly statistics exchanged among Member States within the framework of the FRAN. For the *Risk Analysis for 2017*, the key indicators collected through the FRAN were: detections of illegal border-crossing through the green border or at BCPs; refusals of entry; detections of illegal stay; detections of facilitators; detections of fraudulent documents; re-

turn decisions; effective returns; and passenger flow data (when available). Data on asylum applications are still being collected within the FRAN, but Frontex increasingly relies on data collected by EASO, which has contributed to the dedicated section on asylum.

The data were categorised by border type (land, air or sea) and those on land borders were additionally grouped by border section with neighbouring third countries. The data exchanged within the FRAN are compiled and analysed on a quarterly basis. Priority is given to the use of the data for management purposes and to their fast sharing among Member State border-control authorities.

Member States' data processed by Frontex are not treated as official statistics and thus may occasionally vary from

those officially published by national authorities. Throughout 2016, some FRAN members performed backdated updates of their 2015 statistics. These updates have been accounted for in this document, hence some data presented here may differ from those presented a year ago in the *Risk Analysis for 2016*.

Member States were not requested to answer specific questions in support of this analysis. Rather, bimonthly analytical reports and incident reports of Member States routinely collected within the FRAN, as well as other Member States' contributions submitted in 2016 were important sources of information, especially as regards the analysis of routes and *modi operandi*. Additionally, the outcomes of debriefing activities carried out in the framework of Joint Operations constituted essential analytical material. Open-source information was also effectively exploited, especially in identifying the main push and pull fac-



tors for irregular migration to the EU. Among others, these sources included reports issued by government agencies, international and non-governmental organisations, as well as mainstream news agencies and official EU reports, such as the European Commission's reports on third countries.

External borders refer to the borders between Member States and third countries. The borders between the Schengen Associated Countries (Norway, Iceland, and Switzerland) and third countries are also considered as external borders. By contrast, the borders between the Schengen Associated Countries and Schengen Member States are considered as internal borders. For the indicators on detections of facilitators, illegal stay and asylum, statistics are also reported for detections at the land borders between Schengen Member States and those Member States that have either not joined the Schengen area yet (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus,

Romania) or have opted to stay out of it (the UK, Ireland). Thus, a total for Member States and Schengen Associated Countries as a whole can be presented. It was not possible to make the aforementioned distinction for air and sea borders because Member States do not habitually differentiate between extra-EU and intra-EU air and sea connections but tend to aggregate data for all arrivals per airport.

Consistent with other law-enforcement indicators, variation in administrative data related to border control depends on several factors. In this case, the number of detections of illegal border-crossing and refusals of entry are both functions of the amount of effort spent, respectively, on detecting migrants and the actual flow of irregular migrants to the EU. For example, increased detections of illegal border-crossing might be due to a real increase in the flow of irregular migrants, or may

in fact be an outcome of more resources made available to detect them. In exceptional cases, increased resources may produce a rise in reported detections while effectively masking the actual decrease in the migratory flow, resulting from a strong deterrent effect.



5. Situational picture in 2016

SAR by Norwegian *Siem Pilot*, JO Triton, 2016
© Frontex



5.1. Main trends

In 2016, the decrease of detections of illegal border-crossing was due to fewer detections reported at the external borders with Turkey and Western Balkan countries. However, with over half a million detections of illegal border-crossing, the figure is still significantly higher than any yearly total between 2010 (104 060) and 2014 (282 933). This indicates that the pressure on the external borders of the EU remained exceptionally high in 2016.

According to EASO, the number of asylum applications made in 2016 dropped significantly after the unprecedented influx in the second half of 2015 (with around 180 000 applicants recorded in the EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland in October 2016), yet still remained higher than in previous years. In contrast to 2015, the large number of applications lodged was not fully reflective of increased arrivals at the EU external borders. More significant in this regard were initiatives undertaken in certain Member States to increase their registration capacity and better deal with the backlog of people who had arrived in 2015 but had not been able to lodge their claim for international protection. For example, both Germany and Sweden developed a new approach to the asylum procedure in order to make it more efficient.¹

Certain countries continued to see a surge in applications after the summer period. In June 2016, Greece, with the cooperation of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), set up a large-scale ex-

ercise to pre-register asylum seekers in the mainland Greece, providing them with asylum seeker cards valid for one year, pending the full lodging of their asylum application. Pre-registered persons could formally lodge their applications from September, triggering an increase in the number of applications filed in Greece.² Italy, the second main receiving country after Germany (and before France and Greece) was characterised by a gradual rise in applications for international protection, reflecting an increase in arrivals on the Central Mediterranean route.³

From the beginning of 2016 till the end of November, close to 150 000 applications were withdrawn, either explicitly or implicitly. In 2016, almost one in three withdrawn applications was an explicit withdrawal, indicating a possible shift towards more voluntary returns from important destination countries.

While activities linked to surveillance received a lot of media attention, border checks are undoubtedly the core activities of border-control authorities, with millions of checks on entry and exit carried out each year. At the macro level, two factors contributed to shape passenger flow in recent past. The first is the visa liberalisation policy and local border traffic agreements that resulted in higher passenger flows, mostly at the external land borders with Western Balkan countries. The second is the growing overall number of passengers, in particular at air bor-

1 Contribution to EPS monthly data collection: Germany, Sweden

2 EASO, *Joint Press Release: The pre-registration of asylum seekers in the Greek mainland is starting today*, 8 June 2016, accessed 28 July 2016.

3 EASO's contribution

Latest situation 2016

Reported cases

(2015)

2016

(3 303)

2 028

Detections of illegal border-crossing at BCPs

(8 365)

7 044

Detections of fraudulent document users

(12 023)

12 568

Detections of facilitators

(175 173)

176 223

Returns (effective)

(139 151)

206 656

Refusals of entry

(286 725)

305 365

Returns (decisions)

(699 374)

491 891

Detections of persons staying illegally

(1 822 177)

511 371

Detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs

ders, due to a greater number of available flight connections and increased mobility.

Based on Eurostat data, in the course of 2014 and 2015 (latest year with complete statistics available), the upward trend already observed in passenger transport by air in previous years was confirmed at EU-28 level. An increase of 4.1% was recorded between 2013 and 2014 and the figures for 2015 indicate a year-on-year rise of 4.4% compared with 2014.

At the land border, according to partial information from Member States, the largest inward passenger traffic was recorded at the Croatian external land border, followed by entries from Morocco to Spain through Ceuta and Melilla. Entries from Ukraine to Poland and from the Russian Federation to Poland and Finland were also significant.

In 2015, 14.3 million short-term uniform Schengen visas were issued, constituting a decrease of 9% compared with 2014. The decrease was mostly due to fewer visas being applied for and issued to Russian citizens, a trend attributed to the economic downturn. In contrast to the large number of short-term uniform Schengen visas, the number of long-term visas was much lower, totalling 109 505 in 2015, a number that was decreasing since 2011, when 322 034 long-term visas were issued.

Migrant smugglers frequently abuse legal channels to facilitate the entry of irregular migrants to the EU or to legalise their stay. The abuse of legal channels involves a variety of *modi operandi* including sham marriages, bogus paternity claims, false employment contracts, fake invitation letters, false medical visas, and false claims of being a refugee or a victim of human trafficking. In many cases, migrant smuggling networks operate as legal business structures in the EU, such as travel agencies, to produce fraudulent paperwork which allows irregular migrants to obtain work permits. These methods have proven very successful for the networks involved and their use is expected to further increase in the future.⁴

In 2016, a total of 206 656 refusals of entry were reported at the external borders of the EU. This is 49% higher than the year before. The increase is partially due to a change in reporting practice and thus the comparison between years does not reflect the actual annual trend. Refusals of entry represented only a fraction of passenger flow, indicating that the overwhelming number of passengers crossing the borders are bona fide travellers.

More than 7 000 people were detected in 2016 with fraudulent documents at the EU external borders. This represented a decrease of 15% compared with the previous year. As in 2015, in 2016 there were more detections of persons travelling with fraudulent documents within the EU than detections at the external borders, with almost 11 000 persons reported during the year.

In 2016, Member States reported 491 891 detections of illegal stay, which represented a generally decreasing trend compared with 2015 (-30%). As in previous years, Germany continued to rank first, which reflected its status as the main destination for most migrants who have crossed the border illegally. France followed, partly due to the fact that it was a transit country for migrants who entered the EU illegally and intended to reach the UK.

The facilitation of illegal immigration remains a serious threat to the EU and many facilitators continue to operate from third countries. Within the EU, detections of facilitators rose from 12 023 in 2015 to 12 568 in 2016. The rise was mostly due to increases reported in Spain, France and Italy. Europol noted that organised crime groups (OCGs) involved in migrant smuggling have become more flexible and sophisticated. Migrant smugglers anticipate law-enforcement actions and prepare for policy changes. Their countermeasures include shifting routes, using forerunner cars or travelling by less frequently controlled means of public transport.

Some progress was made with Turkey in accepting irregular migrants from

Greece and there was some increase in the number of migrants returned to Western Balkan countries after their asylum applications in the EU were rejected. However, the overall number of effective returns at the EU level remained relatively stable compared with 2015, with about 176 223 effective returns reported in 2016 (+0.6%).

4 Europol's contribution

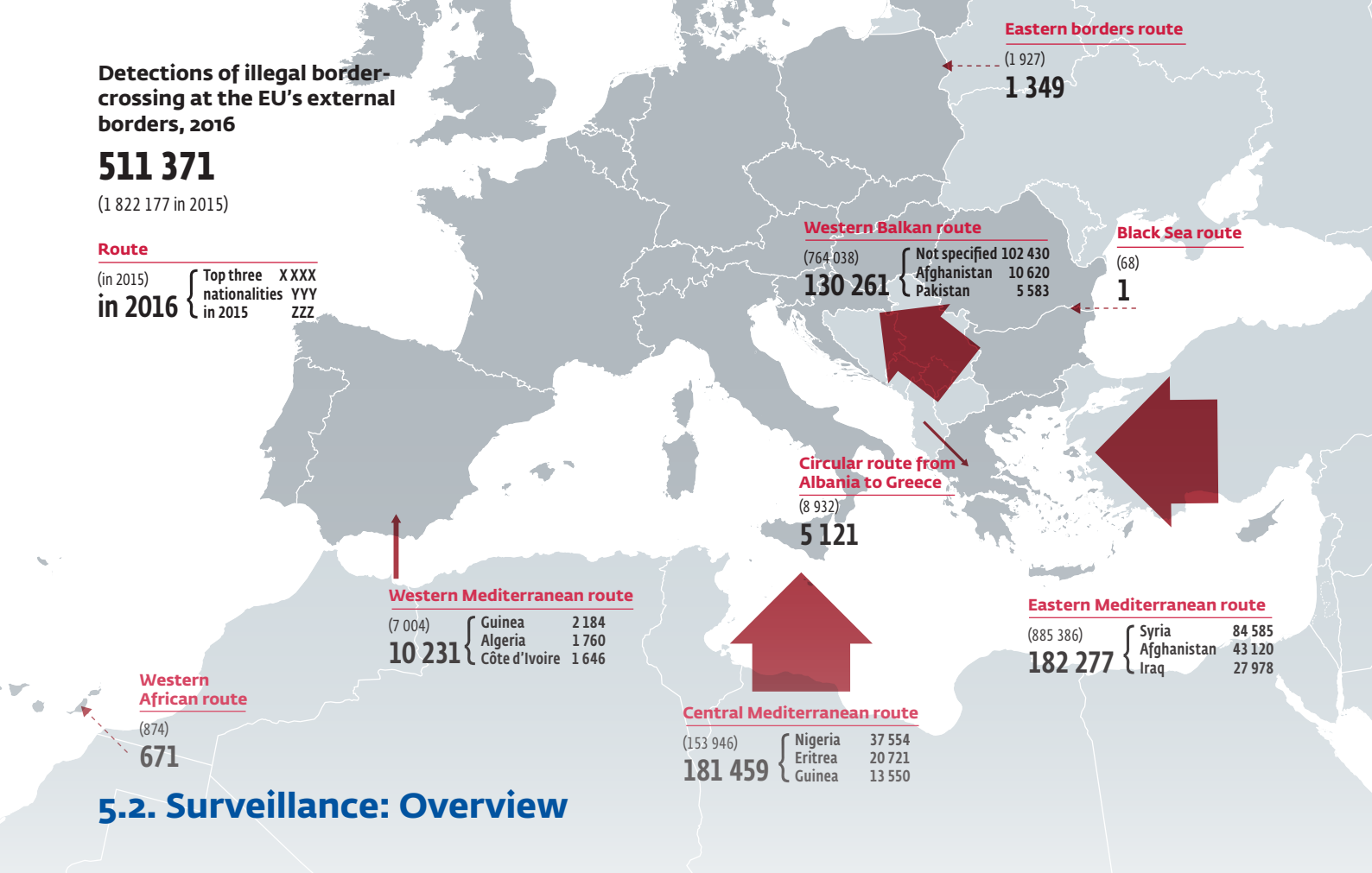
Detections of illegal border-crossing at the EU's external borders, 2016

511 371

(1 822 177 in 2015)

Route

(in 2015) { Top three nationalities XXXX in 2015 } YYY ZZZ



5.2. Surveillance: Overview

Following the record figures of 2015, in 2016 Member States reported a lower number of detections of illegal border-crossing along the EU's external borders. A total of 511 371 detections was reported by EU Member States in 2016, which represented a 72% decrease compared with 1.8 million detections in 2015.

The decrease was due to considerably fewer detections reported at the borders with Turkey and Western Balkan countries. However, with over half a million detections of illegal border-crossing in 2016, the figure is still significantly higher than any yearly total between 2010 (104 060) and 2014 (282 933). This indicates that the pressure on the external borders of the EU remained exceptionally high in 2016.

For the fourth consecutive year, persons declaring to be Syrian (17% of total EU) represented the highest share of migrants illegally entering the EU in 2016. They were followed by Afghans (11%).

Coinciding with the increase in the Central and Western Mediterranean, detections of African migrants reached a record high of over 180 000, compared with an average of about 40 000 detections between 2009 and 2013. This surge reveals a steady increase in migration pressure from the African continent, and in particular West Africa.

EU Member States also reported a large number of 'not specified' nationals (20%). Most of these were recorded during the first quarter of 2016. Later on in the year, as the number of arrivals decreased, EU Member States resumed screening migrants and reported their claimed nationalities more consistently.

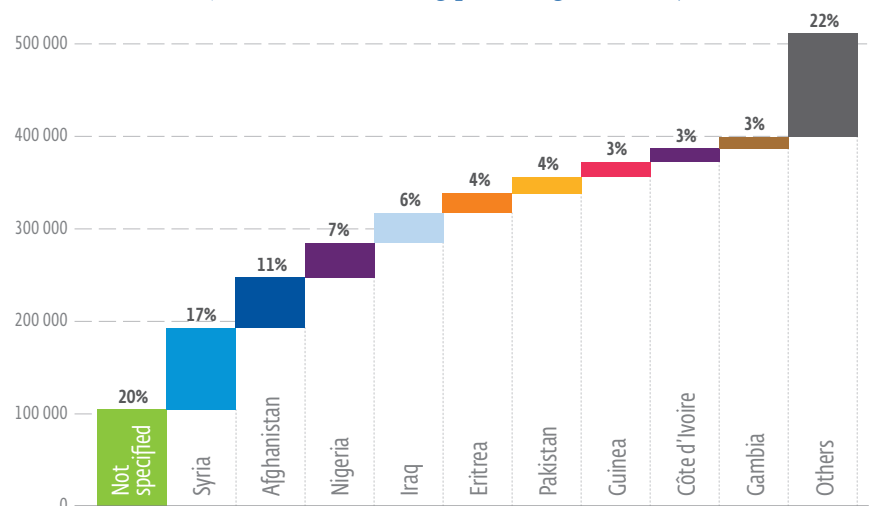
Eastern Mediterranean route

The migratory pressure at the EU's external borders with Turkey eased off starting from October 2015. An important

factor in this regard is the EU-Turkey statement that came into force in March 2016, in which Turkey agreed to secure its maritime and land borders and accept the return of irregular migrants from Greece. The statement has largely removed the incentive for migrants to take irregular migration routes to Greece and has undermined the business model of people-smuggling networks.

Although the number of migrants readmitted from Greece to Turkey remained relatively modest, readmissions, combined with a more effective prevention

Figure 1. **Detections of illegal border-crossing, by main nationalities (scale in absolute numbers, with labels showing percentages of total) in 2016**



of departures from the Turkish coast, resulted in a significant drop in arrivals even during summer months. Several measures introduced to prevent illegal border-crossing along the Western Balkan route have also discouraged many from making the dangerous sea crossing to reach the Greek Eastern Aegean Islands.

With fewer options to continue to other EU Member States, many migrants applied for asylum in Greece, where asylum applications increased significantly in 2016. However, many centres remained overcrowded leading to tensions among migrants as well as between migrants and local residents. There were persistent riots and demonstrations on Lesbos, Chios and Samos islands.

At the Greek and Bulgarian external land borders with Turkey, detections totalled over 6 000, fewer than in 2015, with relatively similar numbers of detections reported from Greece and Bulgaria. Despite the decreased number of detections at the border, more migrants were staying in camps in Bulgaria. This was the result of stricter measures against illegal stayers in the country, as well as more effective prevention of exit through the border to Serbia.

Western Balkan route

As the flow of migrants across the Western Balkans continued to reflect the influx on the Eastern Mediterranean route, detections in the region decreased sharply from 764 038 in 2015 to 130 261 in 2016. The decline was steady throughout 2016, from more than 60 000 in January to less than 2 000 detections starting from September.

The main migratory movement across the Western Balkans was the flow from the Greek land border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia towards the Hungarian land border with Serbia. In addition, higher detections were also reported on exit by Romania and Bulgaria at their respective land borders with Serbia, mostly involving migrants who had illegally entered Bulgaria from Turkey and then tried to reach other EU Member States. This took place in a context of a decreasing number of detections at the land border between Bulgaria and Turkey, thereby suggesting a higher risk of migrants crossing this border section undetected.

In Hungary, a new law was passed in July 2016 allowing the authorities to return all migrants detected up to 8 km in-

Table 1. **Detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs**

Detections reported by routes and top three nationalities at the external borders

Routes	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Share of 2016 total	% change on previous year
Eastern Mediterranean route	37 224	24 799	50 834	885 386	182 277	36	-79
Sea	4 370	11 831	44 057	873 179	174 605	96	-80
Syria	906	5 361	27 025	489 011	81 570	47	-83
Afghanistan	1 593	4 080	11 582	212 286	41 775	24	-80
Iraq	47	57	382	90 130	26 573	15	-71
Other	1 824	2 333	5 068	81 752	24 687	14.1	-70
Land	32 854	12 968	6 777	12 207	7 672	4.2	-37
Syria	6 216	7 366	4 648	7 329	3 015	39	-59
Iraq	987	372	483	2 591	1 405	18	-46
Afghanistan	7 973	2 049	893	1 349	1 345	18	0
Other	17 678	3 181	753	938	1 907	24.9	103
Central Mediterranean route	15 151	45 298	170 664	153 946	181 459	35	18
Nigeria	449	2 824	8 233	21 914	37 554	21	71
Eritrea	1 889	10 398	33 559	38 791	20 721	11	-47
Guinea	28	331	1 360	2 716	13 550	7.5	399
Other	12 785	31 745	127 512	90 525	109 634	60.4	21
Western Balkan route	6 391	19 951	43 357	764 038	130 261	25.5	-83.0
Not specified	39	38	153	556 258	102 430	79	-82
Afghanistan	1 665	2 174	8 342	53 237	10 620	8	-80
Pakistan	861	3 072	368	17 057	5 583	4.3	-67
Other	3 826	14 667	34 494	137 486	11 628	9	-92
Western Mediterranean route	6 397	6 838	7 243	7 004	10 231	2.0	46
Guinea	261	142	715	1 946	2 184	21	12
Algeria	2 015	1 436	752	1 193	1 760	17	48
Côte d'Ivoire	101	46	338	609	1 646	16.1	170
Other	4 020	5 214	5 438	3 256	4 641	45.4	43
Circular route from Albania to Greece	5 502	8 728	8 841	8 932	5 121	1.0	-43
Albania	5 398	8 592	8 757	8 874	4 996	98	-44
Afghanistan	0	20	0	0	45	1	n.a.
Syria	0	0	0	0	25	0	n.a.
Other	104	116	84	58	55	1	-5
Eastern borders route	1 597	1 316	1 275	1 927	1 349	0.3	-30
Vietnam	158	149	257	461	399	30	-13
Afghanistan	200	149	209	491	161	12	-67
Ukraine	92	130	126	102	138	10.2	35
Other	1 147	888	683	873	651	48	-25
Western African route	174	283	276	874	671	0	-23
Côte d'Ivoire	0	5	16	136	194	29	43
Guinea	2	12	50	365	174	26	-52
Morocco	104	104	52	42	94	14	124
Other	68	162	158	331	209	31	-37
Black Sea route	1	148	433	68	1	0	-99
Belarus	0	0	0	0	1	n.a.	n.a.
Afghanistan	0	62	261	5	0	0	n.a.
Syria	0	80	14	42	0	0	n.a.
Other	1	6	158	21	0	0.0	n.a.
Other	0	4	10	2	1	0	-50
Russian Federation	0	0	4	2	1	100	-50.0
Serbia	0	0	1	0	0	0	n.a.
Egypt	0	2	0	0	0	0	n.a.
Other	0	2	5	0	0	0	n.a.
Total	72 437	107 365	282 933	1 822 177	511 371	100	-72

side the country to specially designated transit zones at the country's external borders. Once they arrive in the transit areas, migrants must wait for registration and legal admission into Hungary (at a rate of 30 per day) or voluntarily return to Serbia. This legislative change also impacted Hungary's reporting standards, resulting in fewer reported detections of illegal border-crossing. However, information gathered in the framework of Joint Operations showed that the pressure at this border section persisted, despite a larger number of officers deployed and reinforcement of technical obstacles put in place along the border.

Although the total volume of migrants considerably decreased in 2016, it was also more difficult for border authorities in the region to stay abreast of the development of the migratory flows. The majority of people crossing the EU's external border illegally remain stranded in Greece. However, law-enforcement authorities cannot always trace the whereabouts of groups that decided to bypass the border barriers to reach their destinations in Western and Northern Europe. Consequently, the migrant routes running through Europe, and in particular through the Western Balkans, are getting more diversified, dynamic and dangerous. Also, more migrants are now more likely to cross undetected.

Central Mediterranean route

Detections had never been so high in the Central Mediterranean area, with 181 459, or 18% more than in the previous year. Since 2014, the number of detections in the Central Mediterranean Sea has exceeded 100 000.

This increase indicates that the route faces persistent pressure as migrants continue to arrive in Libya, which is the main departure country towards Europe with a well-established presence of smuggling networks. As in previous years, most migrants were Africans (91% of the detections on this route), mostly from West Africa. A growing number of migrants, also predominantly Africans, was reported departing from Egypt, adding to the pressure on this route.

For the third consecutive year, detections on this route exceeded 150 000, compared with an annual average of just 30 000 detections between 2008 and 2013. At the same time, IOM data show that the estimated number of deaths and missing

persons – a rough estimate due to the absence of passenger lists and a small number of bodies actually recovered – increased from 3 175 in 2015 to over 4 500 in 2016. The death toll increased despite enhanced operational efforts and the fact that most rescue operations took place close to, or sometimes within, Libyan territorial waters.

The establishment of Hotspots in southern Italy helped to considerably improve migrant registration process. However, many migrants continue to arrive outside Hotspot areas, thus undermining the benefits of uniform application of registration rules.

Western Mediterranean route

As in the Central Mediterranean, never before had detections on the Western Mediterranean route been so high, exceeding 10 000. The number represented an increase of 46% in relation to the previous year, and of 21% compared with 2011, the previous record-breaking year. As in the case of the Central Mediterranean route, most migrants were from Africa, indicating a growing pressure of illegal immigration from this continent towards the EU.

Nevertheless, the situation differed considerably at the land and sea border. At the land borders of Ceuta and Melilla, yearly detections near the fences hit a record low of about 1 000. However, in the last month of 2016, some 400 sub-Saharan African migrants – the biggest group in a decade – forced their way into Ceuta. So far sub-Saharans had tended to try and climb over the fence to Melilla. By contrast, detections at the sea border had never been so high (at over 8 000). The detected migrants departed from the Moroccan and Algerian coasts towards the southern shores of Spain. Most detections were reported around the Strait of Gibraltar, where the majority of migrants opted for small rubber dinghies to make the crossing, some equipped with a small engine. This is a very dangerous *modus operandi*, especially amid more difficult weather conditions. In contrast to vessels used in the Central Mediterranean, the boats used to reach Spain from Morocco typically carry fewer migrants. However, a large number of attempts reported also indicates that some of these boats are likely to pass undetected. Indeed, reports from the JO Indalo mention the discovery of boats, most probably

used for illegal crossing, left abandoned on the Spanish shores.

Western African routes

The number of detections on the Western African route, which connects Senegal, Mauritania and Morocco with the Canary Islands in Spain, continued at a low level, even though since 2015 the total has been higher than the average in the period between 2010 and 2014 (less than 300). In 2016, as in 2015, most departures were reported from Morocco. This low number is attributed to the Memorandum of Understanding between Spain, Senegal and Mauritania, which includes joint surveillance activities and effective return of those detected crossing the border illegally. The low number of departures resulted in relatively few casualties.

Eastern land border route

The eastern land border route is, in effect, an amalgam of illegal border-crossing detections reported by Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania. Despite the considerable total length of all the border sections, detections on this route tend to be lower than on other routes, possibly due to the long distances between major hubs and many countries of origin. Also, irregular migrants travelling on this route tend to make use of visa fraud and counterfeit border-crossing stamps rather than risk an illegal border-crossing between BCPs.

About a quarter of these detections involved nationals from neighbouring countries, mostly Ukrainians, Russians and, to a lesser extent, from Belarus and Moldova. Their illegal movements were focused mostly on the Polish and Romanian land border with Ukraine. The majority of these cases was associated either with smuggling or other reasons not related to migration.

Non-regional migrants, mostly Afghans and Vietnamese, constituted 74% of the detected cases. While Vietnamese citizens mostly targeted the Latvian-Russian border, Afghans were, by and large, detected at the Hungarian-Ukrainian section. Irregular migration was the main reason for crossing the border illegally for both Vietnamese and Afghans.

Refusals of entry, 2016

(only values higher than 1 000 are stipulated)

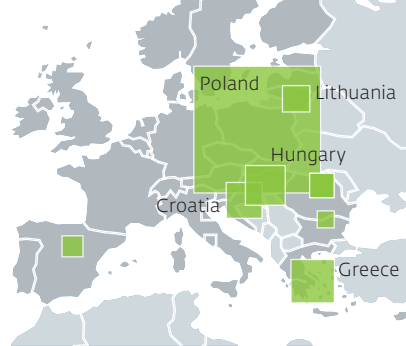
206 656 (139 151)

Number in parenthesis is for 2015

Land

151 167 (86 945)

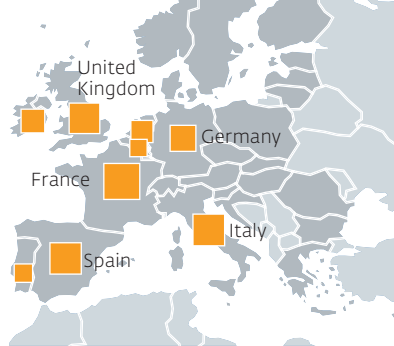
Number in parenthesis is for 2015



Air

48 268 (46 897)

Number in parenthesis is for 2015



Sea

7 221 (5 309)

Number in parenthesis is for 2015



Trend of the total



5.3. Border checks: Refusals of entry

In 2016, a change in reporting requirements was introduced, clarifying that the reports should specify the number of refusals of entry issued rather than the number of people refused. Indeed, one person may be refused several times. However, for border management purposes, it is better to capture the number representing the workload for border-control authorities, hence the focus on the number of refusals of entry rather than on persons.

In 2016, a total of 206 656 refusals of entry were reported along the external borders of the EU. This is 49% higher

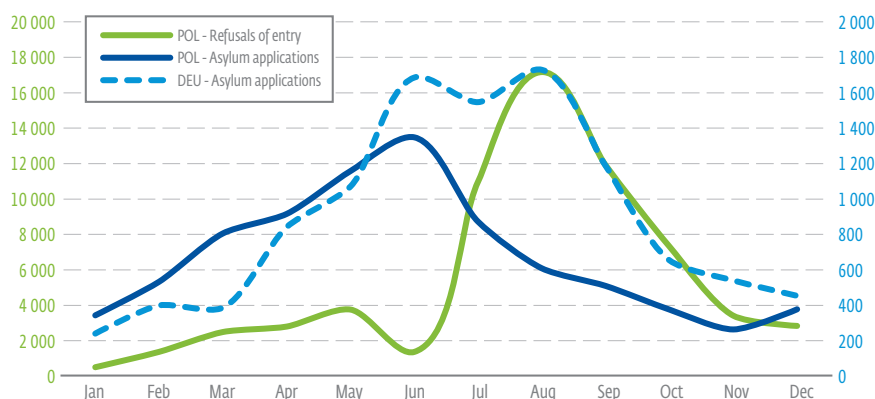
than in the previous year, but due to the change in reporting requirements, the comparison between years does not reflect the actual annual trend. Refusals of entry represented only a fraction of passenger flow, indicating that the overwhelming number of passengers crossing the borders are bona fide travellers.

Most refusals of entry were reported at the land border (151 167, or 73% of the total), even though the volume of passenger flow at the land border is lower than at the air border. This is linked to the nature of the flow at the land border,

which is mostly composed of commuters and low-budget travellers. Indeed, border-control authorities face different challenges during border checks at air and land borders.

A very significant increase (of around 170%) in the number of refusals of entry was reported at the Polish land border with Belarus. Most of the refusals were issued to Russian nationals of Chechen origin and also, to some extent, Tajiks, refusals to whom started to increase in February to reach a peak of over 17 000 in August. This situation resembles a similar phenomenon at this border section in 2013, when migrants showed up without visas and then applied for asylum. Later on, they also applied for asylum in Germany, which the vast majority of them was denied. Indeed, at EU level in 2015, about 80% of first-instance applications of Russians were rejected. The situation repeated itself at the beginning of 2016, when Poland and Germany reported coincided increased numbers of asylum applications from Russian nationals. The applications peaked over the summer, and since then the number of refusals of entry and asylum applications of Russian nationals in Poland decreased.

Figure 2. Refusals of entry to Russians and the number of Russians applying for asylum in Poland in 2016



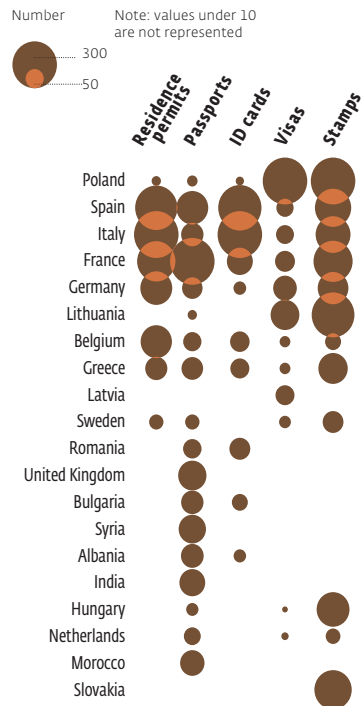
Type

Fraudulent documents, 2016

8 267 (9 680)

Number in parenthesis is for 2015

Type of fraudulent document detected, by main countries of issuance, 2016



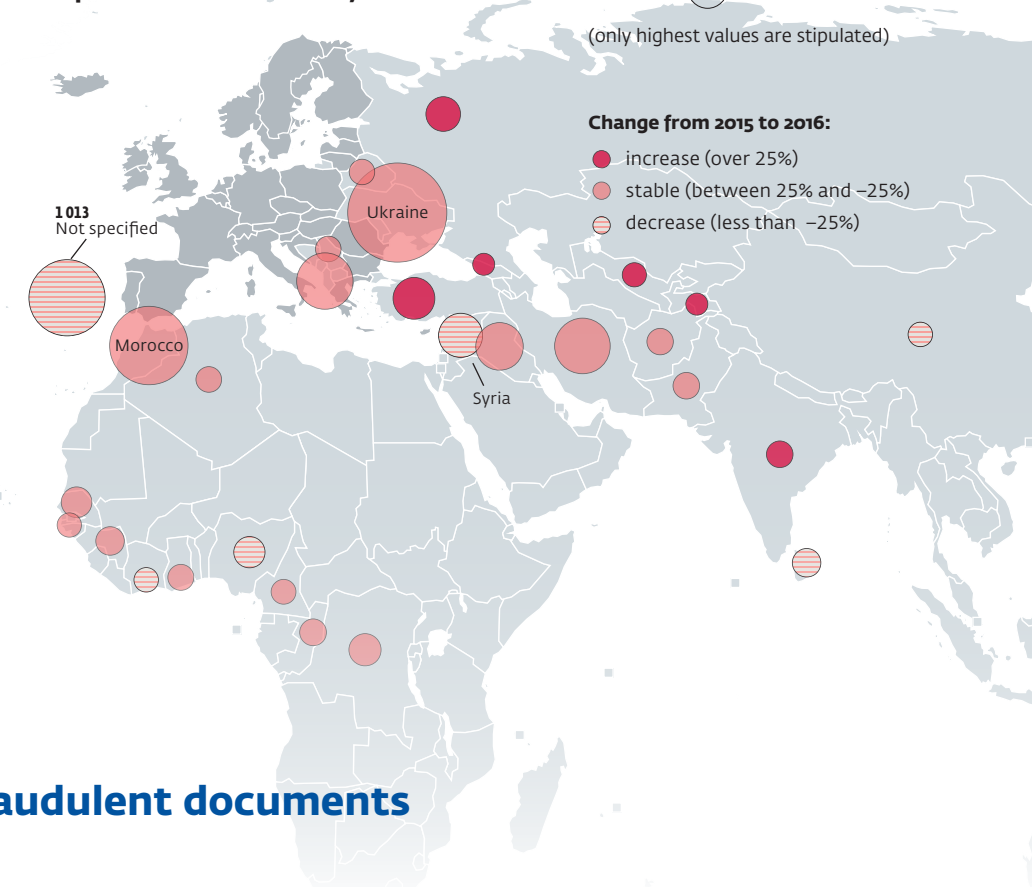
Nationality of users

Document fraudsters, 2016

7 044 (8 365)

Number in parenthesis is for 2015

Claimed nationality of persons detected with fraudulent documents, 2016



5.4. Border checks: Fraudulent documents

In 2016, more than 7 000 people were detected using 8 267 fraudulent documents on entry at the external borders of the EU. This represented a decrease of 16% compared with the previous year.

Smugglers frequently provide migrants with fraudulent travel and identity documents as a part of their 'services'. Fraudulent documents allow irregular migrants to enter and move within the EU as well as to regularise their residence status under false pretences or by using fake identities.

Both the quantity and the quality of the fraudulent documents circulating in the EU have improved over the recent years. In most cases, migrant smugglers obtain counterfeit documents from expert counterfeiters who normally work with several smuggling networks at the same time. The sustained demand for fraudulent documents has prompted established counterfeiters to increase their

output and has also prompted the creation of new print shops.¹

Out of the 128 nationalities detected using fraudulent documents to illegally enter the EU or Schengen area from a third country, the most commonly detected were Ukrainians (1 208), Moroccans (752), Iranians (375), Albanians (386) and Iraqis (273). Compared with 2015, Syrians were reported in much lower number due to fewer detections on arrival from Turkey and Morocco. The number of Nigerians detected using fraudulent documents decreased significantly, mostly at the air borders. One of the reasons for this drop might be the relatively high price of fraudulent documents compared with other *modi operandi* used to enter the EU, for example illegal border-crossing on the Central Mediterranean route. Within the EU, Nigerians were more often detected with fraudulently obtained border stamps preventing them from overstaying, especially in the UK.

¹ Europol's contribution

Istanbul Atatürk remains the top departure airport

As in the previous year, most detections of fraudulent documents were reported on air routes. At 620 detections, the number of document fraud cases from Istanbul Atatürk increased by 17% compared with 2015. Istanbul Atatürk airport remained the main last departure airport of fraudulent document users detected on arrival in Member States. Annual detections associated with flights from Istanbul Atatürk airport increased for the first time since 2013.

The second most reported last departure airport was Dakar International Airport in Senegal. However, the measures implemented by Portugal, such as the deployment of Portuguese document experts in Dakar, led to a decrease of detections in the second half of 2016.

Compared with 2015, more detections were reported of passengers flying from the two Kiev airports in 2016, mostly Ukrainian, Tajik and Uzbek nationals using fraudu-

lently obtained Latvian and Lithuanian visas. The Polish authorities also reported frequent use of fraudulently obtained Polish visas by Ukrainians.

At land and sea borders, most detections of document fraud from Ukraine and Morocco

In 2016, most of the document fraud cases at land borders were again reported at the land borders between Ukraine and Poland, mainly involving Ukrainian nationals holding fraudulently obtained Polish visas. A large number of document fraud cases was also reported from the Spanish-Moroccan land and sea borders, with Moroccans often presenting fraudulent Spanish ID cards on entry to the EU.

Overall decrease of document fraud detections on intra-EU/Schengen movements

In 2016, the number of detections of document fraud within the EU (over 11 000 in 2016) was lower than in 2015 (about 13 000), which is consistent with fewer detections of illegal border-crossing along the EU's external borders. However, as in 2015, there were more fraudulent document users detected travelling within the EU than those reported at the external borders.

According to Europol, in addition to the smuggling of migrants, document fraud is one of the most common criminal activities linked to the migration crisis. Fraudulent documents can be used or re-used for many other criminal activities. The provision of fraudulent documents will continue to represent a serious threat to the security of the EU.

Within the EU, most persons using fraudulent documents were detected on entry to the UK. Most of the detections were reported on the sea and land route between France and the UK, where Albanian and Ukrainian document fraudsters were the most detected nationalities, despite a steep decline compared with 2015. By contrast, detections of Iraqi and Iranian fraudsters remained stable.

In contrast to the decreasing trend on the routes towards the UK from other EU

Document fraud trends at Greek Hotspots

In order to mitigate the risks associated with identity and document fraud, Frontex deployed Advanced Level Document Officers (ALDOs) at the migration Hotspots during the last quarter of 2015. These experts assist in the identification of fraudulent documentation held by arriving migrants. The current lower numbers of arriving migrants from Turkey permits a more comprehensive examination of documentation to be undertaken at the Hotspots.

Frontex has been collecting detailed weekly reports drafted by ALDOs deployed at Greek Hotspots since October 2016. This has allowed for a better understanding of the extent of document fraud during the registration process.

On Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Leros and Kos, many migrants are still arriving undocumented. Among those who present travel documents, a variety of documents are being used, but mostly documents from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. Passports, ID cards and driving licences are most commonly used. Most of the cases of document fraud detections at the Hotspots are associated with one of these documents.

Between weeks 39–46 of 2016, some 1 500 documents were examined by Frontex ALDOs at the five Hotspots. Two-thirds of them were Syrian documents. Around 5% were reported as fraudulent. The highest number of examined documents was detected on Samos. Of these, only 3% or 17 documents were identified as being fraudulent. Most were poor-quality counterfeit Syrian identity cards. However, a few high-quality documents were detected (see picture).



Good-quality counterfeit of the biodata page in the Syrian passport detected on Samos

Member States, the number of persons travelling with fraudulent documents on intra-EU/Schengen movements towards Germany nearly doubled, amounting to almost 1 200 detected cases in 2016. The number of detections on the routes towards Germany reached its highest level since the beginning of 2013. The vast majority of cases were detected on arrival from Greece, in particular from the airports of Thessaloniki, Athens and Heraklion. The cases were almost exclusively related to Syrian, Iraqi, Afghan and Iranian nationals. This pattern indicated that after the closure of the Western Balkan route, a proportion of migrants stranded in Greece used fraudulent documents on intra-Schengen flights to reach their desired final destination.

Less secure EU ID cards still prevail on intra-EU/Schengen movements

EU Member States' ID cards with fewer security features remained the most often fraudulently used travel documents on intra-EU/Schengen movements, in particular those issued by Italy, Greece, Romania and Bulgaria. Less secure travel documents can be more easily forged and so are more vulnerable than well-secured ones. However, they may also be more easily detected by border-control authorities than well-secured documents, which may go largely undetected.

Detections of illegal border-crossing at BCPs (people hiding in vehicles), 2016

2 028 (3 303)

Number in parenthesis is for 2015

◆ 200



5.5. Border checks: Clandestine entries

In 2016, the number of detections of clandestine entries (people hiding in vehicles to avoid border control) at BCPs remained much lower than the number of detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs. However, this indicator is not uniformly reported by all Member States and it is likely that the total number of detections reported for 2016 (2 028) underestimates the actual situation.

The rather low number of detections of clandestine entry along the external borders contrasts with the larger number of detections of clandestine entry reported at the internal borders. For example, the UK Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration reported in July 2016 that over 6 400 migrants were found in the back of lorries or cars in Britain between 1 April and 30 September 2015, more than double the number of 2014.¹

Most of the 2 028 detections along the external borders were reported at the land border between Bulgaria and Turkey, through which a large share of the



© European Commission

Figure 3. Hungarian police officer sets a sensor of a heart beat detector and a flexible camera to search for irregular migrants during control of a lorry at the border between Hungary and Serbia near Rösztke

migratory flow transiting Turkey is channelled. The Bulgarian BCPs most affected by clandestine entries were Kapitan Andreevo and Lesovo. The Greek authorities started reporting detections of clandestine entry in June 2016.

¹ <http://icinspector.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/ICIBI-report-on-Lorry-Drops-210716.pdf>

Illegal stayers

Number of detected cases of illegal stay, 2016

491 891 (699 374)

Number in parenthesis is for 2015



5.6. Border checks: Illegal stayers, facilitators, asylum applications

Illegal stayers

In 2016, Member States reported 491 891 detections of illegal stay, which represented a generally decreasing trend compared with 2015. As in previous years, Germany continued to rank first, which reflected its status as the main destination for most migrants who had crossed the border illegally. France followed, due to its status of a transit country for the migrants who entered the EU illegally with the intention to reach the UK.

In terms of nationalities, the considerable number of Syrians, Afghans, Iraqis and Eritreans is artificially inflated by detections of people not meeting requirements for legal stay before they apply for asylum.

Facilitators

The facilitation of illegal immigration remains a significant threat to the EU. Detections of facilitators rose from 12 023 in 2015 to 12 568 in 2016. The rise was mostly due to increases reported in Spain, Italy, France.

Facilitation services related to the illegal immigration to the EU and secondary movements between Member States are in high demand and generate significant profits for facilitators involved. The facilitation of illegal immigration is a growing market prompting existing criminal groups to adapt their business models and shift to the facilitation of illegal immigration.

An increase in the number of irregular migrants reaching the EU as part of mixed migration flows will sustain and increase the demand not only for facilitation of entry to the EU, but also services associated with legalisation of stay. The latter include the use of forged identity or supporting documents, marriages of convenience to obtain residence permits and the abuse of asylum provisions in order to temporarily obtain leave to remain.

Asylum applications

In 2016, 1.1 million applications for international protection were recorded in the 28 EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland (EU+). This number came close to the 1.23 million applications reported for 2015, the highest level received in the EU since EU-level data collection began in 2008. 96% of these applications accounted for persons applying for the first time in the EU.

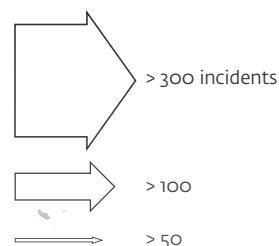
Further implementation of the relocation mechanism set up in September 2015 will be necessary for alleviating the pressure in Greece and Italy.

Cross-border crime incidents reported in the framework of Frontex Joint Operations, by border section, 2016

Smuggling of

-  Cannabis
-  Excise goods
-  Heroin
-  Stolen vehicles
-  Weapons

Number of incidents



5.7. Cross-border crime

For years, Frontex has been promoting European border management with a special focus on irregular migration flows. Based on its new mandate, the Agency will develop an operational strategy in line with the concept of Integrated Border Management. An important element of border management is supporting Member States in combating organised crime at the external borders, including the smuggling of goods and trafficking in human beings.

Smuggling of illicit drugs

Cannabis from the Western Balkans and North Africa

According to the EMCDDA European Drug Report 2016¹, more than 75% of drug seizures in Europe were of cannabis, Morocco being the main provider, although its production is in decline. Spain reported around two-thirds of the total quantity of cannabis resin seized in Europe. In addition, Spain, together with Greece and Italy, has also reported large increases in seizures of cannabis herb in recent years. In September 2016, in an operation coordinated by the Guardia

Civil, 19 tonnes of hashish were seized on a cargo ship and 12 persons arrested in the operational area of the JO Indalo. Regarding herbal cannabis, Turkey has been seizing larger quantities of herbal cannabis than all EU countries combined over the past few years.

Cocaine from South America

According to EMCDDA's calculations for 2014, 1% of the general population and 2% of young adults used cocaine in the EU. However, seizures, increasing from the mid-nineties till 2007, have been declining since 2009. Most of the cocaine is seized by Spain, but trafficking routes to Europe have been diversifying and seizures were recently made in ports of the Eastern Mediterranean, Baltic and Black Sea. However, according to available data, these routes remained of minor importance. Moreover, cocaine is smuggled on pleasure boats and through container shipments, where it is often hidden under legitimate goods, and in air freight.

At the air border, organised criminal networks often apply 'swarming tactics', consisting in 'flooding' planes with dozens of couriers per flight in the expectation that a sufficient number of them would slip through controls. As shown by examples from the Netherlands, some countermeasures have proven success-

ful, such as the establishment of joint customs and border guard teams to identify couriers. However, stricter controls on selected high-risk air routes tended to lead to the use of alternative routing.

Heroin from Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan

According to the EMCDDA, the overall quantity seized in the EU and Norway has declined from around 8 tonnes in 2009 to 5.6 tonnes in 2013, but then increased again to 8.9 tonnes in 2014. Notably, there has been a rapid increase in the size of individual shipments, with seizures of more than 100 kg, exceeding even the total quantity of heroin seizures reported in 2013.² Most of the heroin consumed in the EU is produced in Afghanistan and transported along a variety of routes, including through Turkey and Balkan countries, the Northern route, which heads through Central Asia and the Russian Federation, and the Southern route via the Persian Gulf by sea, sometimes including passages through Africa.

The latest annual statistics on seizures showed that more heroin was seized in Turkey than in all EU Member States combined, and the gap in large seizures

1 EMCDDA (2016), *European Drug Report: Trends and Developments*, p. 65.

2 EMCDDA (2016), *European Drug Report: Trends and Developments*, p. 84.

within most countries of South-Eastern Europe points to a number of undetected shipments. On this route, heroin is often smuggled into the EU by criminals posing as individual travellers in small and medium amounts. Regular cooperation between border guards and customs authorities is of particular importance for the detection of drugs smuggled in this way.

Smuggling of weapons

The terrorist attacks in France in 2015 demonstrated that the effective control of firearms is indispensable to fight terrorism. The perpetrators of the terrorist attacks of January 2015 on the Charlie Hebdo office and a kosher supermarket in Paris and of November 2015 on the Bataclan theatre reportedly used weapons from the Western Balkans.

Police investigations have generally shown a wide availability of military-grade arms including AK-47s, rocket-propelled grenade launchers on European illicit markets, especially in the dark net, which is a network that is not accessible through conventional search engines. Many of these weapons are illegally traded from former conflict regions such as the Western Balkans, where around 800 000 weapons are estimated to be in illegal civilian possession in Bosnia and Herzegovina alone. A closer cooperation and information exchange between European law-enforcement authorities (both inland and at the external border) and customs authorities is crucial in the effective fight against trafficking of firearms.

Links between migrant smuggling and other cross-border crimes

Many OCGs are involved in migrant smuggling as their main criminal activity. However, according to Europol, many of the OCGs involved in migrant smuggling are poly-criminal and so engage in other criminal activities, including document counterfeiting, trafficking in human beings, property crime, drug trafficking, excise fraud, firearms trafficking, and trafficking in counterfeit goods. Other OCGs previously involved in these criminal activities have added migrant smuggling to their portfolio.

There are tenuous links between migrant smuggling and terrorism involving the use of migrant smuggling networks and their logistics to support or fund terrorism related activities. At this point, however, there is no concrete evidence that terrorist groups maintain sustained engagement with OCGs involved in migrant smuggling. Nevertheless, it cannot be ruled out that terrorists may be using migrant smugglers' resources to achieve their goals.

Trafficking in human beings

The rise in irregular migration between 2015 and 2016 also led to a greater number of people (including minors and women) who can be easily exploited by smugglers and traffickers. According to a recently published UNODC analysis of global country-level data on THB victims and recently arrived regular migrants, trafficking in persons and regular migration flows in the case of some destination countries broadly coincide.³

Some irregular migrants are kidnapped, held for ransom, or forced to work against their will to repay their debts to smugglers. For instance, Nigerian irregular migrants rely on migrant smugglers to reach the EU. At the same time, human traffickers frequently lure Nigerian women to Europe for sexual exploitation.

Many irregular migrants become victims of forced labour or sexual exploitation at some stage during their journey to the EU. This particularly affects irregular migrants travelling on the Central Mediterranean route via Libya and, to a much lesser extent, those migrating along the Eastern Mediterranean route. Some irregular migrants who try to reach the EU are forced to work at each leg of their journey to pay migrant smugglers. Higher prices of facilitation services also increase the risk of exploitation in countries of transit and arrival.

So far, irregular migrants do not appear to be subject to systematic abuse once they reach the EU, even though individual cases were reported. For example, in December 2016, police in northern

³ UNODC *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* 2016; available at http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2016_Global_Report_on_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf

Greece freed two asylum seekers, a Syrian and an Iraqi man, who had been locked in a room for more than a week for failing to pay transit fees after being smuggled across the border from Turkey.

Exit of stolen motor vehicles

According to Eurostat, the total number of vehicles including cars, motorcycles, buses, lorries, construction and agricultural vehicles stolen in the EU was steadily falling between 1998 and 2013. Among the reasons for the decline were the advanced anti-theft technologies developed by the producers and intensified international law-enforcement cooperation.

Only a small share of the vehicles stolen in the EU is detected at its external borders, often in the context of Frontex Joint Operations.

Smuggling of excise goods

The majority of excise goods smuggled across the EU's external borders are tobacco products. According to estimates of the European Commission, the illicit trade in tobacco products costs the EU and its Member States EUR 10 billion a year in lost tax revenues. It should be stressed that it is not only individual consumers and small-scale smugglers from economically weak border regions that try to take advantage of existing price differences. In fact, also large-scale criminal businesses illicitly import cigarettes from as far away as Asia, especially to Western European markets.

In 2016, seizures of 28 000 000 illicit cigarettes were reported in the framework of Frontex JOs. Half of this number was reported from Greece, more than 11 million cigarettes were seized at the eastern borders, about 1.2 million on the Western Balkan route and almost 300 000 at the Spanish border.

In 2016, during Frontex JOs, 96 tonnes of drugs and 36 tonnes of smuggled cigarettes were seized. Several incidents of illegal fishery and pollution at sea were detected during maritime JOs, as well as a number of stolen vehicles at the land borders.

5.8. In the EU: Secondary movements

Obstacles on the way to a better situational picture of intra-Schengen secondary routes

Also in 2016, Europe saw massive movements of people who crossed the external border of the EU illegally and decided to move on to other Member States. Moving within the EU, irregular migrants use a variety of *modi operandi* and means of transport, which makes the strategic analysis of intra-Schengen secondary movements extremely difficult.

The effect of the migration crisis of 2015–2016 on secondary movements

Large migration flows, as witnessed during the crisis of 2015–2016, made secondary routes more visible for strategic analysis. The concerted efforts of the countries along the Western Balkan route to close their borders and to end the facilitated travel through their territories resulted in reducing the visible flow of people on the most frequented secondary route through the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia/Hungary and further on to Austria and Germany. However, detections reported from Member States showed that these movements continued after March 2016, although at a lower level and in a more covert way. The reinstatement of controls at the internal borders of some Member States led to a diversification in routes and *modi operandi*. Also, the rise in migration pressure at the Central Mediterranean route brought about changes in the extent to which certain Member States were affected by the migration of undocumented persons on secondary routes within the EU and Schengen area.

South-Eastern route: reported attempts to bypass Austria

In 2016, the level of intra-Schengen migration of persons coming from the East-

ern Mediterranean and Western Balkan route was far lower than in 2015 – even though secondary routes became more diverse.

In 2016, Hungary reported more than 25 000 illegal border-crossings from Serbia, which is a significant decrease from around 200 000 migrants that crossed this border section in 2015. Croatia, which became the main transit country of irregular migration after Hungary, built a technical obstacle at its border with Serbia in September 2015. It led to a significant decline in irregular migration, from more than 500 000 illegal border-crossings in 2015 to just over 100 000 in 2016.

Most of these migrants, after having transited Hungary or Croatia, continued to travel to Austria and further on to Germany. In fact, Germany reported most detections of intra-Schengen movements of nationalities typically coming through the Eastern Mediterranean route near the Austrian border. At this location, in 2016, most irregular migrants were detected travelling by train and, to a lesser extent, in private vehicles provided by facilitation networks.

Southern route: increasing importance of Switzerland as a transit country

In May 2016, when Austria upgraded the controls of its national border with Italy, the Austrian authorities started to stop migrants at this internal border and arranged for their readmission to Italy. Because of these measures, many irregular migrants who had arrived in Italy via the Central Mediterranean Sea decided to bypass Austria in their attempt to reach their desired destinations in Northern Europe.

The number of African illegal stayers who primarily entered the EU through the Central Mediterranean route significantly decreased in Austria, while at the same time grew in Switzerland. German detections of travelling irregu-

lar migrants from Africa seem to confirm this change. Whereas the number of persons entering Germany from Austria decreased, more detections were made at the border with Switzerland.

France was also affected by a growing number of migrants arriving on secondary migration routes from Italy. The number of French Eurodac hits in relation to a prior asylum application or illegal border-crossing in Italy (about 11 000) increased by more than 156% compared with the same period of the previous year. The vast majority of these hits was related to migrants who had arrived on the Central Mediterranean route.

Substantial secondary flows from Hungary to Italy and France

In addition, Member State reports in 2016, especially Eurodac data, point to an important corridor of intra-Schengen movements along the Eastern Mediterranean and then Western Balkan route towards Italy. In 2016, the country reported over 10 000 Eurodac hits related to illegal border-crossings or prior asylum applications in Hungary. They were mainly triggered by Pakistani and Afghan nationals. Moreover, Eurodac hits in Italy related to Greece increased to around 5 000. The reported Eurodac numbers clearly point to a smaller branch of the Western Balkans route leading to Italy.

Also, intra-Schengen FRAN data reported by France showed an increase in asylum applicants who had previously been fingerprinted in Hungary. Compared with the previous year, the number of Eurodac hits decreased to over 6 000 in 2016.

Western route: increase in secondary movements

While detections at the EU's external borders along the Western Mediterranean route increased by 46% compared with 2015, French data also point to increases on the secondary routes from Spain and Portugal. The number of French Eurodac hits related to prior detections of illegal border-crossings or asylum applications

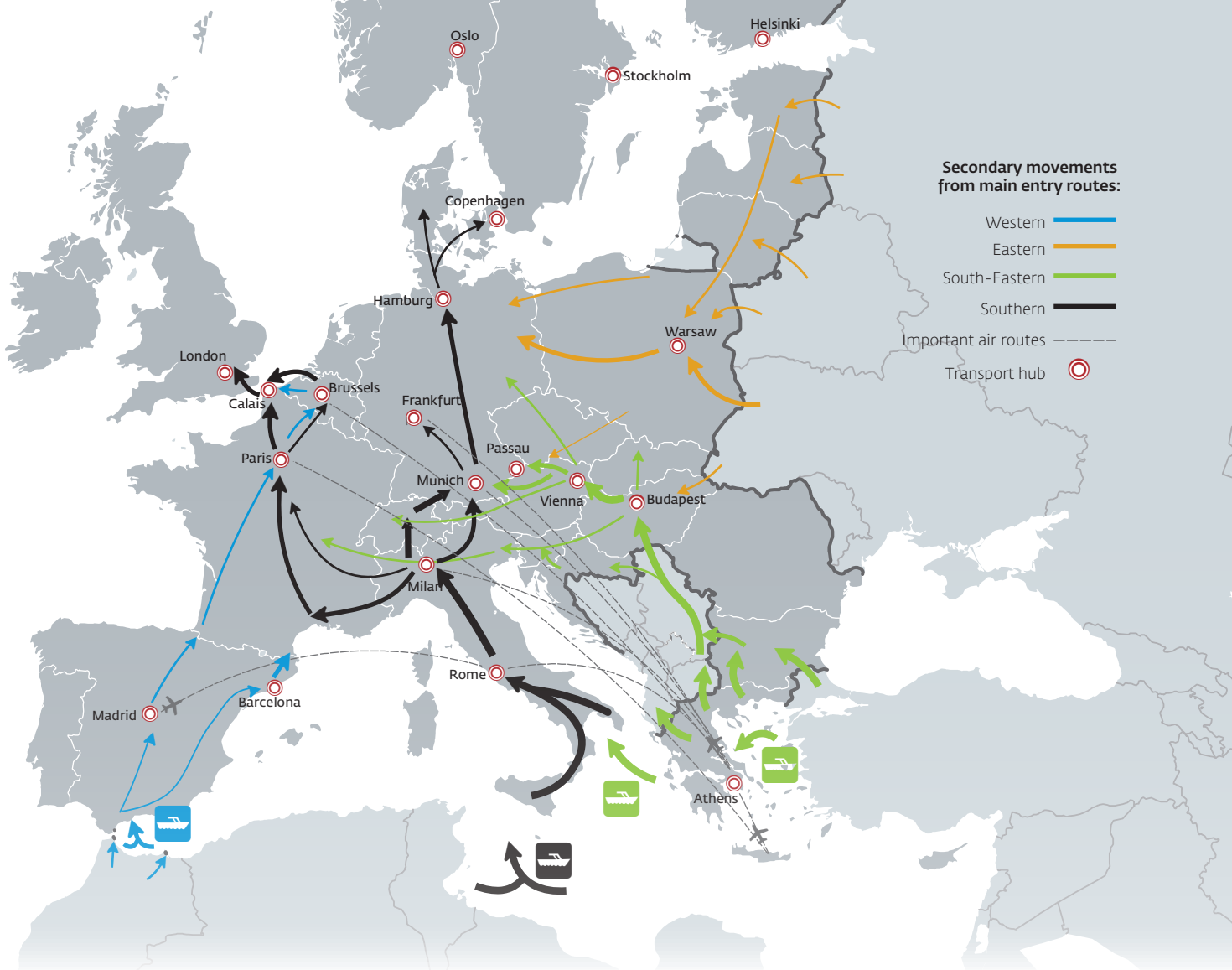


Figure 4. **Four main entry routes for secondary movements in Europe**

in Spain and, to a lesser extent, in Portugal increased by 14% (to 1 198) between 2015 and 2016.

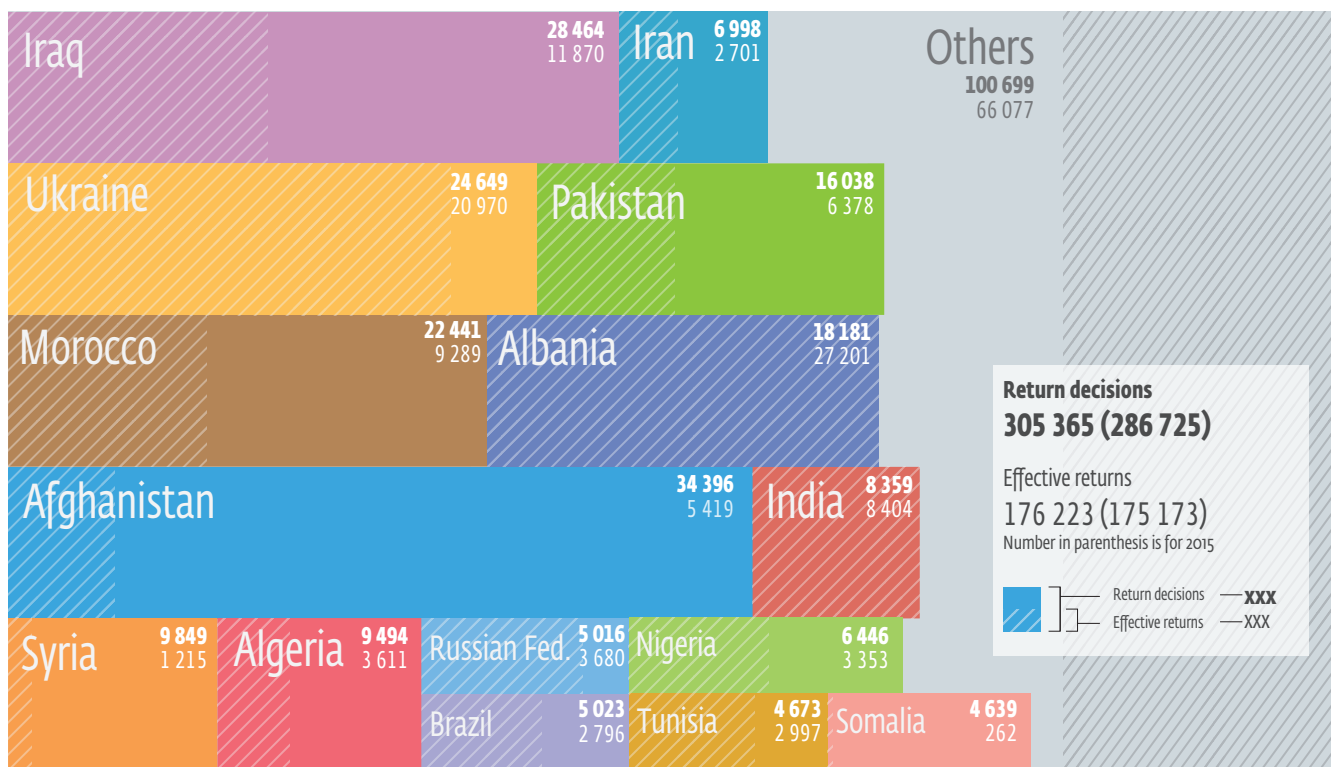
Analysis of open sources reveals that the migrants who reached Spain on the Western Mediterranean route often continued to Central and Northern Europe travelling in private cars provided by facilitators in return for a fee.

Eastern route: number of Russian nationals rising

In 2016, the German authorities detected about 2 000 irregular migrants on intra-Schengen movements from Poland. Although the number was lower than in 2015, other reports point to increasing flows from Belarus and Poland to Germany, mainly of Russian nationals of reportedly Chechen origin. Many of these

migrants travelled by train from Minsk and entered the Schengen area in the Polish city of Terespol, from where many continued their journey to Germany.

Both Poland and Germany detected a large proportion of Russian nationals in private vehicles, travelling along the European Route E30, which connects Terespol (at the Belarusian border) with Warsaw and Berlin.



The number of effective returns may sometimes be larger than that of return decisions, as a return decision issued in a given month may be effectively enforced at a later date. Also, return decisions may be issued without prejudice to the person's right to apply for asylum. Readmissions between Member States are not included (for example between France and Italy). Effective returns do not necessarily mean returns to the country of origin and, for example in the case of Syrians, they include returns of persons to third countries considered to be safe (for example from Hungary to Serbia)

5.9. In the EU: Returns

In 2016, Member States reported 305 365 return decisions issued to third-country nationals as a result of an administrative or judicial decision, which represented a 6.5% increase compared with 2015. The absolute total number of migrants subject to return decisions is still underestimated by this indicator, as data on decisions were unavailable from Austria, France, the Netherlands and Sweden till April 2016, which only reported effective returns¹ but presumably issued a high number of decisions.

As in previous years, the number of return decisions was much larger than the total number of effective returns to third countries (176 223). The main reasons for non-return relate to practical problems in the identification of returnees and in obtaining the necessary documentation from non-EU authorities. In addition, many decisions to return vol-

untarily do not materialise as the persons decide to stay illegally. Some Member States reported that, over time, several return decisions have been issued to the same individuals. Although it is not possible to quantify the phenomenon, as data at EU level are anonymised, it illustrates the difficulty to effectively implement a return decision.

Finally, return decisions may also concern voluntary returns that are not registered. In fact, for voluntary return, only few Member States, such as the Netherlands, apply a policy of controlled departure. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to ascertain that a return decision has effectively been implemented.

Within the number of effective returns to third countries, 52% were reported to be on a voluntary basis and 45% were forced returns, while for the rest, the type of return was not specified.

In terms of nationalities, there is a striking difference between the nationalities detected crossing the border illegally or staying illegally in the EU, and

those effectively returned. Indeed, many detections of illegal border-crossing or even detections of illegal stay concern migrants who will apply for asylum and thus are not returned.

The European Commission noted in its communication on return policy that data on basic parameters (such as the average length of detention, grounds for detention, number of failed returns, and use of entry bans) proved to be only available from a limited number of Member States. Moreover, common definitions and approaches concerning data collection are frequently absent, impacting on the comparability of such data across the EU.

¹ These Member States do not distinguish between decisions and effective returns and reported all as effective returns.

6. Featured analyses

Frontex assists Bulgarian authorities, 2016
© Frontex



6.1. Long-range coast guarding operations in the Central Mediterranean

In 2016, the Central Mediterranean saw the highest number of migrant arrivals ever recorded from sub-Saharan, West Africa and the Horn of Africa (181 459 migrants, increase of 18% compared with 2015). This trend, which is consistent with previous year-on-year increases, shows that the Central Mediterranean has become the main route for African migrants to the EU and it is very likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. Specifically, 89% of migrants arrived from Libya, making Italy the main entry point to the EU. As a result, most of the EU, civilian and NGO vessels in the region focused their Search and Rescue (SAR) activities on migrant boats departing from Libya.

Important changes were observed on this migratory route in 2016. During 2015, and the first months of 2016, smuggling groups instructed migrants to make satellite phone calls to the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) in Rome to initiate targeted rescues on the high seas. SAR operations were mainly undertaken by Italian law-enforcement, EUNAVFOR Med or Frontex vessels with NGO vessels involved in less than 5% of the incidents. As shown in

Figure 5, more than half of all rescue operations were initiated in this manner. From June until October 2016, however, the pattern was reversed. Satellite phone calls to MRCC Rome decreased sharply to 10% and NGO rescue operations rose significantly to more than 40% of all incidents.

Since June 2016, a significant number of boats were intercepted or rescued by NGO vessels without any prior distress call and without official information as to the rescue location. NGO presence and activities close to, and occasionally within, the 12-mile Libyan territorial waters nearly doubled compared with the previous year, totalling 15 NGO assets (14 maritime and 1 aerial). In parallel, the overall number of incidents increased dramatically.

The statistical data show that the criminal networks behind illegal border-crossings along the Central Mediterranean route continued to exploit criminal business opportunities by handling a great demand for smuggling services and thus posed formidable challenges for EU border control. Libyan-based smugglers, in particular, heavily relied on the International Convention for the Safety of

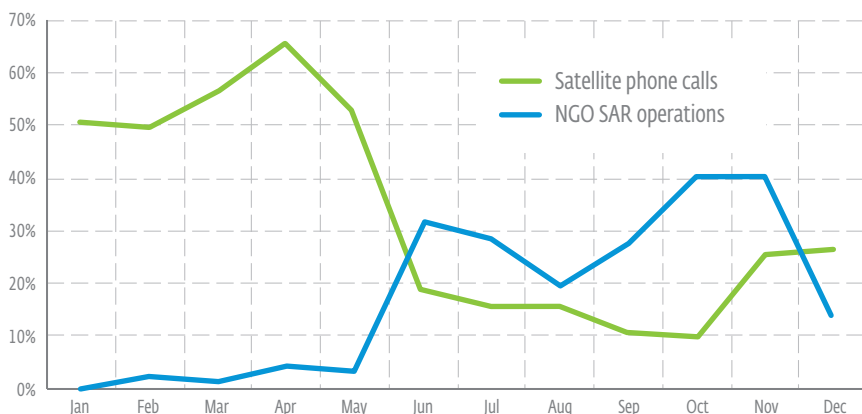
Life at Sea (SOLAS), and associated SAR as well as humanitarian assistance efforts, turning it into a distinct tactical advantage. This is not a new strategy, but the scope of the problem is alarming.

In this context, it transpired that both border surveillance and SAR missions close to, or within, the 12-mile territorial waters of Libya have unintended consequences. Namely, they influence smugglers' planning and act as a pull factor that compounds the difficulties inherent in border control and saving lives at sea. Dangerous crossings on unseaworthy and overloaded vessels were organised with the main purpose of being detected by EUNAVFOR Med/Frontex and NGO vessels.

Apparently, all parties involved in SAR operations in the Central Mediterranean unintentionally help criminals achieve their objectives at minimum cost, strengthen their business model by increasing the chances of success. Migrants and refugees – encouraged by the stories of those who had successfully made it in the past – attempt the dangerous crossing since they are aware of and rely on humanitarian assistance to reach the EU.

Closely related issues are the safety of migrants and refugees and, most significantly, the increasing number of fatalities. According to UNHCR and IOM estimates, 2016 saw the largest number of migrant deaths on record in the Mediterranean (5 083 compared with 3 777 in 2015 and 3 279 in 2014).¹ These, however, are only estimates, which also include the number of missing persons, since there is no system of recording the exact number of those who perish at sea. The estimated total of dead and missing persons in the Central Mediterranean area was

Figure 5. Monthly comparison between rescue operations performed by NGOs and rescue operations initiated via satellite phone calls of migrants in distress at the Central Mediterranean



1 IOM's Missing Migrants Project data retrieved on 26 January 2016



SAR by Norwegian *Siem Pilot*, *JO Triton*, 2016
© Frontex

4 579.² The increasing number of migrant deaths, despite the enhanced EUNAVFOR Med/Frontex surveillance and NGO rescue efforts, seems paradoxical at first glance. The rising death toll mainly results from criminal activities aimed at making profit through the provision of smuggling services at any cost. Libya-based smuggling groups became emboldened organising dangerous crossings on a daily basis using dilapidated vessels. Parallel smuggling operations continued during the winter in bad weather conditions exposing migrants to even greater risks. Ruthless criminal behaviour disregarded even the most basic safety concerns exacerbating the difficulties inherent in conducting rescue operations in the unforgiving maritime environment.

The coordination of all parties involved in SAR efforts represents an in-

creasing challenge. The more active role of NGO vessels carries important implications for border surveillance and SAR activities.

It is worth noting here that the Western African route – perhaps the most dangerous migration route – was closed thanks to an effective combination of border surveillance, return operations, and joint law-enforcement work with countries of origin/departure. This model represents one of the best ways to prevent a future migratory crisis in the Central Mediterranean.

In conclusion, SAR efforts will continue as long as the migratory crisis persists in the Central Mediterranean not only because they relate to international legal obligations, but also because they stem from European values. SAR, however, requires increased coordination be-

tween all stakeholders to minimise the number of fatalities at sea as well as the unintended effects of operating so closely to Libyan territorial waters (pull factor). Specifically, all SAR operations should follow the same procedures, e.g. when it comes to the disposal of the vessels after the migrants have been rescued. Finally, since the reactive nature of long-range border surveillance and humanitarian missions does not address the causal factors underpinning migratory and refugee movements, the situation calls for more sustainable policies and measures – in African countries of origin and transit (especially Libya) – to provide safer and legal routes to refugees and reduce migratory flows towards the EU.

² Idem

6.2. Iranians travelling undetected into the EU with fraudulent documents – a case study

Despite the lifting of international sanctions, the asylum claims lodged in 2016 by Iranian nationals in the EU increased by 50% compared with 2015 with Germany and the UK reporting the majority of applications. Significantly, the number of Iranian asylum claims has exceeded the number of illegal border-crossings by Iranians in the last two years.

It is worth noting that Iranian nationals represent one of the largest groups of inadequately documented passengers ar-

riving at UK airports. The use of various air routes and multiple documents indicates the involvement of criminal networks. Based on EDF data, document and identity fraud by Iranian nationals remains high despite a slight temporary decrease between May and August 2016. Nevertheless, the long-term increase in document fraud detections observed since EDF data collection began in 2009, has become more pronounced since the last quarter of 2015.

Approximately 28% of Iranian nationals detected on arrival to the EU/Schengen area in possession of fraudulent documents travel via third countries. This share is declining compared with the number of detections on intra-EU/Schengen movements. In the period January-October 2016 many cases of Iranian nationals with fraudulent documents were reported by Spain, Austria, Germany, Italy and Denmark. Regardless of their final EU destination,

Figure 6. An example of a complex itinerary used by Iranians to get to the EU: via the Middle East and South America





Examination of documents, 2016
© Frontex

most Iranians with fraudulent documents departed either from Iran or Turkey. Many detections at smaller Spanish airports indicate that Iranian nationals did not reach these airports directly from Iran but indirectly via Turkish airports or via more complex and expensive routes transiting, for example, South American countries.

Approximately 70% of all Iranian-related document fraud cases in 2016 involved secondary (i.e. intra-EU/Schengen) movements, the majority of which were detected between the Schengen area and the UK. Member States detected around 500 Iranians on their way towards the UK.

Apart from the UK, an increasing number of Iranian holders of fraudulent documents detected on intra-EU/Schengen routes were heading to Germany. This pattern is consistent with the record number of Iranians who have applied for asylum in Germany over the past few months.

6.3. Personal data for risk analysis – mixed methods analysis of smuggling networks in Libya

In February 2016, Frontex launched a Pilot Project (called Processing Personal Data for Risk Analysis – PeDRA) in the framework of the EPN JO Triton 2016, with the aim of processing information containing personal data collected during interviews with newly arrived migrants in the Central Mediterranean. In 2016, some 2 400 newly arrived migrants were interviewed in Italy by Frontex Guest Officers deployed from EU Member States.

Quantitative data analysis

The sample

In 2016, nearly 50 nationalities of newly-arrived migrants were interviewed after arriving in Italy, which demonstrates the variety of source countries contributing to the migration flow. The most commonly interviewed migrants were unmarried (68%) males (92%) travelling alone (59%) from countries such as Eritrea and the Gambia, followed by Sudan, Somalia and Nigeria – together accounting for 44% of all interviews. The young-

est migrants tended to be from Guinea and Mali (22 years old on average) and the oldest were from Syria and Palestine (~31 and ~36, respectively). Nearly all interviewed migrants claimed to have friends or family who were already in the EU.

The migration process

Nearly two-thirds of all migrants interviewed in the Central Mediterranean region claimed to have left their home country for economic reasons, with the remainder citing conflict as their main push factor. Correspondingly, most of the interviewed migrants were coming to the EU for economic reasons and employment possibilities, followed by access to the asylum procedure.

The most common final destination country was Italy, followed by Germany, France, Spain and the UK. Some nationalities expressed very clear preferences. For example, the most commonly claimed final destination country for Eritreans was the UK, whereas most interviewed Nigerians quoted Italy as their final destination. Migrants from Soma-

lia, on the other hand, were equally eager to get to Germany, Italy or Sweden. Overall, Syrians tended to be headed for Germany, especially the well-educated ones. Such clear preference towards certain final destination countries are likely to be linked to already established diasporas acting as a pull factor.

People-smuggling networks

In total, a staggering 96% of newly-arrived migrants interviewed in the Central Mediterranean region stated that they had used the services of smuggling networks to enter the EU illegally (Fig. 7). This is significant because it suggests that irregular migration via Libya is entirely dependent on the services provided by the smuggling networks. Given the very high number of arrivals in 2016, it is not unreasonable to assume that smuggling networks are amassing vast financial capital, averaging USD 5 000 per migrant in peak months. It is also an important finding because it implies that any activity that would disrupt or deter the smuggling networks could result in a vastly reduced flow of irregular migrants into the EU.

Moreover, 70% of migrants interviewed within the EPN JO Triton 2016 specifically stated that the reason why they decided to enter the EU illegally via

Figure 7. A staggering 96% of interviewed migrants newly arrived in the Central Mediterranean region (JO Triton 2016) claimed to have been facilitated. Note differences in sample sizes

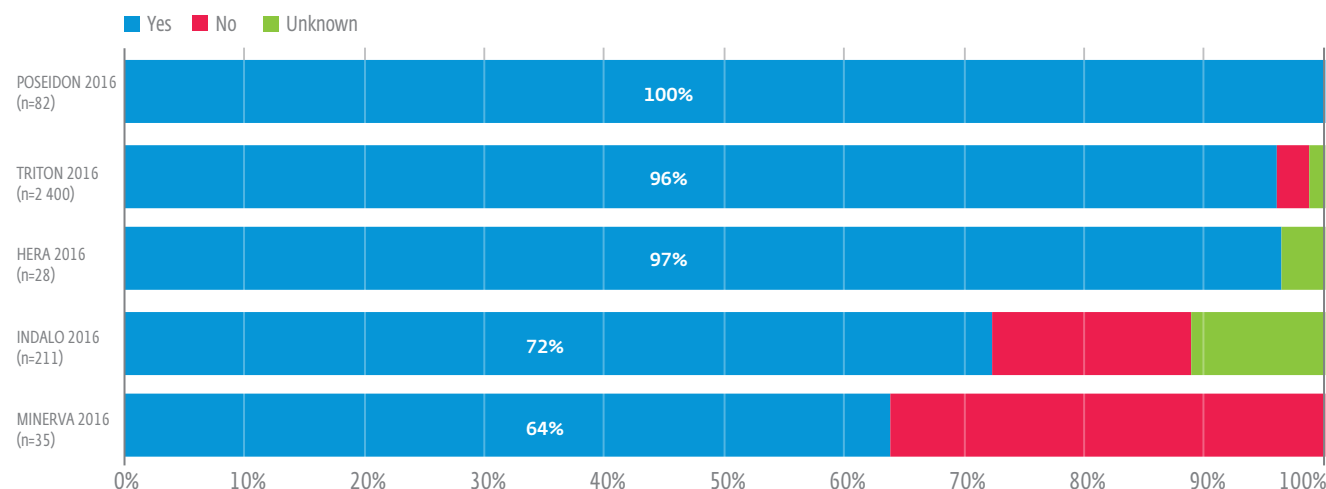


Figure 9. A network diagram showing the strength of relationships between nationalities of migrants (blue) and nationalities of their human smugglers (red). The thickness of the connecting lines illustrates the frequency in which services were provided, according to interviews of newly-arrived migrants. The network shows that Syrian migrants were facilitated almost exclusively by Libyan smugglers, whereas Senegalese migrants mostly used the services of compatriot Senegalese smugglers

Libya was the availability of smuggling services in that country (Fig. 8). This percentage rose to nearly 80% for migrants from far-afield countries, such as Pakistan and Iraq, who are clearly choosing to target the EU from Libya because of the readily available facilitation services. Even though several thousand migrants were interviewed, not one spoke about difficulties in locating smuggling networks. On the contrary, they tended to be inundated with offers from different networks.

The correlation between the nationalities of the migrants and of the people smugglers they used is illustrated in a network diagram in Figure 9. The diagram is predictably dominated by Libyan people smugglers. As a result, almost all migrants were facilitated to some extent by Libyans, and Syrian migrants were almost exclusively facilitated by Libyan people smugglers, probably because of the shared language. Other nationalities tended to use compatriots such as Sudanese migrants facilitated by Sudanese people smugglers; similar trends can be seen for Moroccans and Gambians. The exception was migrants from Somalia who were more commonly facilitated by people smugglers from Sudan than by their compatriots.

It is clear that a very large number of people smugglers are involved in faci-

tating irregular migration from a wide range of locations towards Libya and onwards to the EU. Somalian people smugglers were reported to be active not only in their home country and in Libya but also in Ethiopia, South Sudan and even in Kenya and Uganda. Similarly, Eritrean people smugglers were active not only in

Libya but also in Ethiopia and Sudan. By contrast, Sudanese and Nigerian people smugglers only appeared to be active in Libya and their home country. What is clear is that a very wide range of nationalities are involved in facilitating irregular migration towards Libya and onwards to the EU in numerous locations.

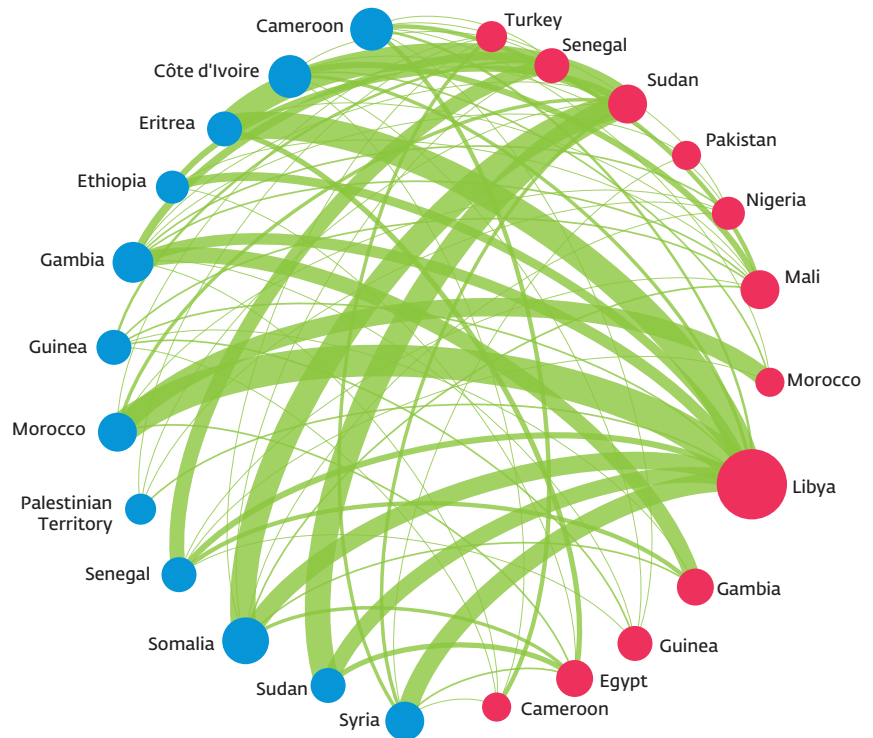
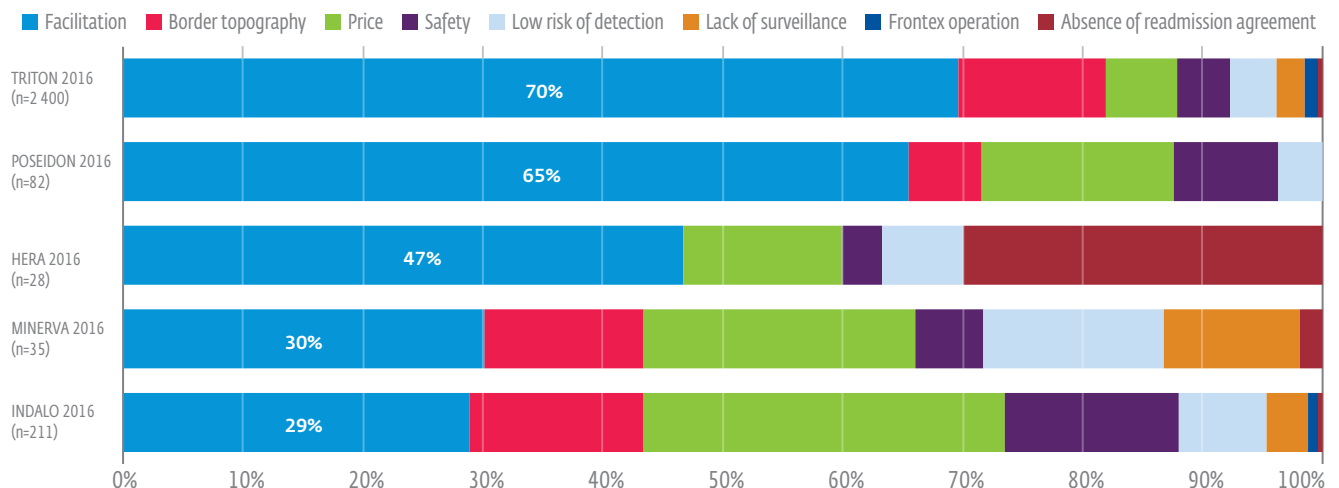


Figure 8. Some 70% of interviewed migrants newly arrived in the Central Mediterranean area, stated that access to facilitation services was the reason for entering the EU via this route. Note differences in sample sizes



6.4. Identifying return system vulnerabilities

In its preamble, the new European Border and Coast Guard Regulation¹ stipulates that the Agency should step up its assistance to Member States in returning third-country nationals to whom negative asylum decisions have been issued or who have no right to stay. In particular, the Agency shall coordinate and organise return operations from one or more Member States and organise and conduct return interventions to reinforce the return systems of Member States. Moreover, the general and tailored risk analyses conducted by the Agency shall also extend to the field of return.

Level of returns nearly unchanged in spite of migration crisis

In spite of the massive irregular movements into the EU between September 2015 and March 2016, the overall level of effective returns to third countries performed by EU Member States has not

increased significantly. The number of people effectively removed from the EU remained stable with a monthly average of less than 15 000 in 2016, which is a level similar to previous years. In fact, the monthly figures and their breakdowns did not show any change at the beginning of 2016, when many of the migrants or asylum seekers who had arrived in 2015 became subject to return (due to a failed asylum claim or illegal stay).

In spite of a rapidly rising number of negative asylum decisions following the irregular migration peak of 2015, the number of return decisions issued by EU Member States in 2016 increased by only 6.5% compared with a year before.

However, substantial differences were noticed between Member States. Greece and Italy, being the main entry points for irregular migration to the EU, reported numbers of effective returns that were approximately 10% lower than in 2015. At the same time, main EU destination countries of the irregular migration flows in 2016 reported substantially higher numbers than in 2015. In 2016, Germany increased its effective returns to third countries by 24%. Western Bal-

kan nationals accounted for 90% of these effective returns. However, other migrant nationalities with high first-instance asylum rejection rates were seriously underrepresented as regards the number of effective returns. For example, a two-digit number of Pakistani nationals was returned from Germany in 2016, while the reported number of Pakistani asylum applications doubled to over 14 000 and the first-instance asylum rejection rate of Pakistani nationals was high.

In 2016, Sweden was among the countries with the most significant increase in effective returns with a 55% growth compared with 2015. The change was mainly due to a more than six-fold increase in returns of Iraqi nationals and a 15-fold increase in effective returns of Afghan nationals to approximately 1 000. Also, Poland substantially accelerated its effective returns – especially those of Ukrainian nationals – to more than 15 000 (a 50% increase).

1 Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 September 2016 on the European Border and Coast Guard

Figure 10. Monthly detections of illegal stayers vs effective returns of Western Balkan nationals, 2013–2016

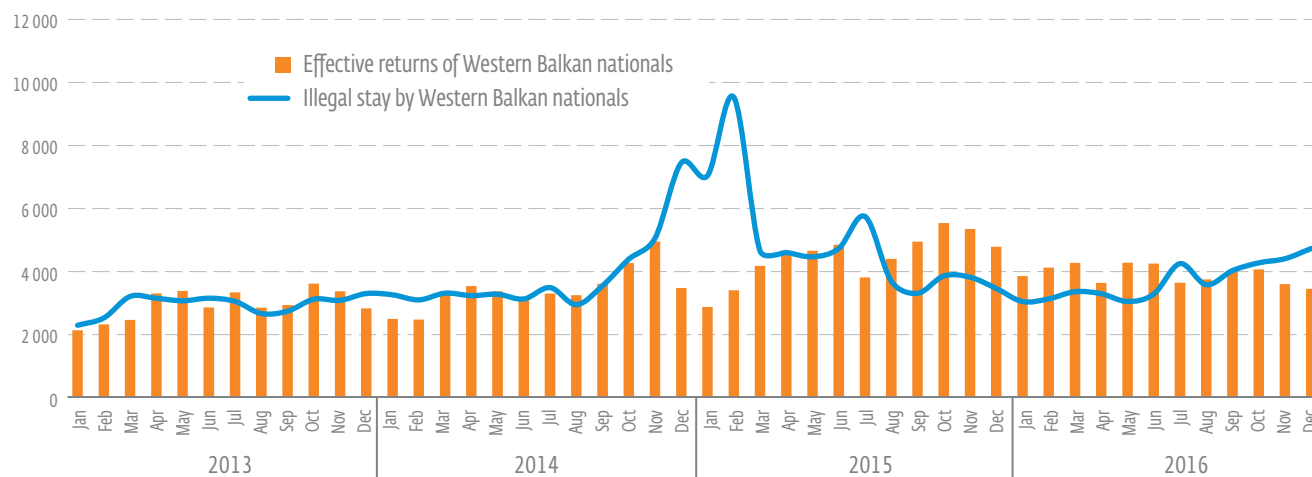
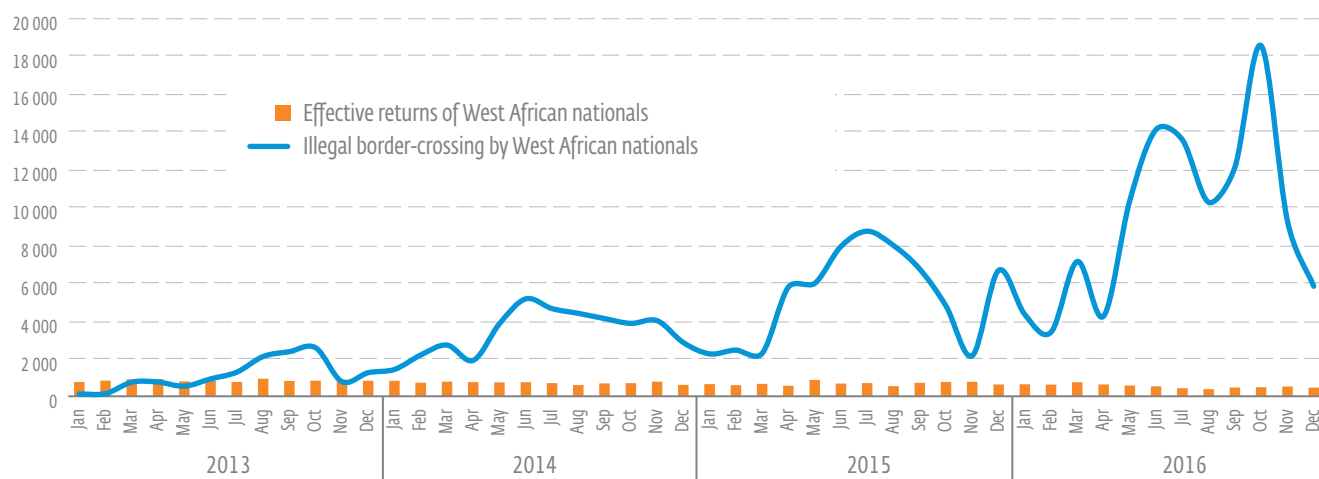


Figure 11. Monthly detections of illegal border-crossing vs effective returns of West African nationals, 2013–2016



Differences in return levels between different regions of origin

Moreover, EU-wide data on effective returns show substantial differences between regions of origin of irregular migrants. This is clearly illustrated through a comparison between nationalities from the Western Balkans and West Africa. Nationals of both regions show average first-instance asylum rejection rates of more than 70% and a comparably high irregular migration pressure to the EU.

As illustrated by Figure 10, the rising number of irregular migrants from the Western Balkans detected in the EU seems to have led to a slightly increased number of effective returns. This could be due to a relatively good level of cooperation with Western Balkan countries in terms of legal and practical return requirements. In addition, the fact that a number of EU Member States and the European Commission have designated Western Balkan countries as ‘safe countries of origin’ has contributed to the acceleration of return procedures.

By contrast, the strong increase in illegal border-crossings of West African nationals in 2016 did not lead to an increase in effective returns. The fact that peaks in irregular migration are not fully reflected in the number of returns can be associated with: gaps in Member States’ regulations and legislative frameworks; national pro-

cedures to process asylum applications and return decisions; and difficulties in collaborating effectively with the countries of origin in the identification process.

This is particularly relevant for smaller West African countries, which have a rather limited network of consular offices in the EU. The return procedure is thus slowed down due to numerous practical obstacles, especially difficulties in obtaining adequate travel documents from the authorities of countries of origin. Return agreements between Member States and countries of origin are an essential precondition for implementing effective returns. Since cooperation of countries of origin may be problematic, certain Member States have developed special strategies and operational measures. These best practices include setting up task forces; developing cross-departmental cooperation frameworks; and implementing practical initiatives with partner countries such as the European Integrated Return Management Initiative (EURINT).

Yet another effective practice is identification missions. They involve the issuance of necessary documentation by officials of countries of origin based in Member States to returnees of their own nationality. Since enhanced cooperation between Member States is indispensable in dealing with countries of origin, Member States share identification missions to ensure effective readmissions.

Development of solutions to improve the return system requires advance time

A common element of the aforementioned solutions is that they require considerable time for planning and practical implementation. For this reason, regular and detailed analysis of the EU return system with a view to forecasting future return priorities would accelerate the necessary preparatory work and help improve cooperation with countries of origin in a timely manner. Also, it would assist in identifying best practices in regard to their legislative and administrative framework, international cooperation, and voluntary return projects and in sharing them among Member States. Moreover, it would help identify vulnerabilities in the EU return system.

The analysis of return data reveals significant differences between national return systems, especially in terms of their performance in dealing with specific countries of origin with high asylum rejection rates. Return data also show that irregular migrants with low chances for a positive asylum decision already exploit the existing gaps in Member States’ return systems, such as a lack of bilateral cooperation and readmission agreements with the respective countries of origin.

6.5. Safety and security situation in reception centres

The unprecedented migratory flows to the EU via the Eastern and Central Mediterranean routes over the past two years have led to a dramatic increase in the number of detections of illegal border-crossings (503 700 in 2016 and 1 820 000 in 2015)¹ and first-time asylum seekers applying for international protection (1 255 640 in 2015 compared with 562 680 in 2014)² – the main nationalities being Iraqi, Afghan and Syrian. The ongoing migratory crisis has been particularly challenging for Greece and Italy, as they are the main entry points for the massive irregular migration flow towards the EU. To address these challenges, the ‘Hotspot’ approach was adopted as a more orderly way to manage disproportionate migratory pressures at the EU’s external borders. Hotspot centres serve the purpose of identification, registration, fingerprinting, debriefing, processing of asylum requests and return operations. In the performance of these tasks, front-line Member States are assisted by EASO, Frontex and Eurojust. It should be emphasised here that the management of recep-

tion centres and the protection of migrants and refugees is an exclusive responsibility of EU Member States.

As shown in Table 2, Greek Hotspots have significantly larger capacity than Italian ones, which is consistent with the migratory patterns over the last two years. According to the Greek authorities, the actual number of migrants accommodated on the five islands at the end of 2016 was 15 431.⁴ This reflects a dynamically changing situation as the migrants and refugees accommodated in these sites stay until the completion of registration and processing of their asylum requests. Out of the total, 9 918 (64%) were accommodated in Hotspots and 4 787 (31%) in UNHCR and other non-governmental facilities.

On four of the Greek Hotspot islands (with the exception of Leros) insufficient capacity to cater for the actual accommodation needs was reported. The situation on Chios was particularly challenging, as the overall number of persons in governmental and non-governmental reception facilities was three times higher than the existing Hotspot capacity. Overall, 62 784 people were accommodated in reception sites in the Greek mainland and on the islands by the end of 2016. However, according to UNHCR data, the overall accommodation capacity of the country amounts for approximately 35 000 people only.⁵ This means that a large number of persons were staying in other than government-run hosting facilities (e.g. apartments, buildings, hotels, hosting families, and

makeshift camps). Hence, there exists a pressing need for additional reception centres, as the current capacity has been exceeded considerably.

The accommodation of significant numbers of people in Hotspots and other reception centres has drawn attention to the safety and security concerns in these sites.⁶ Statistical data regarding the safety and security situation in EU Hotspots, and other hosting facilities, are not systematically collected. Nevertheless, Frontex as well as UNHCR and NGOs have been regularly reporting on reception conditions identifying various weaknesses. Many, if not all, of the identified issues have some bearing on the safety and security situation.

As a case in point, several riots took place in Greek Hotspots in 2016 resulting in injuries and material damage. Among others, the riot and fire at Moria Hotspot on Lesbos Island on 19 September 2016 required intervention by the anti-riot police to restore order and the fire brigade to extinguish the fire. Tensions in the facility arose in connection to its overcrowding. At the time, it accommodated more than 4 000 people, which was way beyond its maximum capacity.

Bulgaria’s largest Harmanli Refugee Camp and other camps in Elhovo, Lyubmet and Sofia experienced similar security and capacity problems. On 24 November 2016, unrest broke out in Harmanli in response to the imposition of a quarantine on the camp following an outbreak of an infectious skin disease and concerns about its possible spread among the local population. This site has a capacity of 2 700 and at the time housed 3 000 residents. During the riot, 2 000 refugees clashed with the police leaving 24 officers injured. These events in Greece and Bulgaria highlighted the tense and unstable situation in reception

Table 2. Hotspots in Italy and Greece

Italy

Lampedusa	Pozzallo	Porto Empedocle	Taranto	Trapani	Total capacity
500	300	300	300	400	1 900

Greece

Lesbos	Chios	Samos	Leros	Kos	Total capacity
1 500	1 100	850	1 000	1 000	5 450

Source: European Commission, Migration and Home Affairs.³

1 Frontex Risk Analysis for 2016

2 Eurostat data; available at <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7203832/3-04032016-AP-EN.pdf>. It is noted that 2016 data were not available at the time of publication. According to EASO, 1 100 000 asylum applications were recorded in the 28 Member States plus Norway and Switzerland until October 2016.

3 https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/press-material/docs/state_of_play_-_hotspots_en.pdf

4 <http://media.gov.gr/>

5 UNHCR Accommodation – Relocation Update; available at <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/country.php?id=83>

6 European Parliament (2016) *On the frontline: the Hotspot approach to managing migration*; available at http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/556942/IPOL_STU%282016%29556942_EN.pdf

sites and the precarious situation of migrants and refugees.

The aforementioned issues were not limited to the main entry points at the EU's external borders, but also affected other sites along the main routes leading to the final destination countries. Many security incidents, widely reported in the media, took place in makeshift camps at specific extra- and intra-EU border sections (e.g. Idomeni camp close to the border between Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia border, ferry and Channel Tunnel terminals in Calais, France) and hosting sites in certain destination countries (e.g. Germany) requiring constant police presence and interventions to restore and maintain order. As a result, refugee camps such as the 'Jungle' in Calais and Idomeni in Northern Greece were eventually shut down by the authorities.

In general, the control of reception centres poses significant challenges for the following reasons:

- The large influx of migrants and refugees creates, among others, a need for public-order policing and crowd control that falls outside the remit of border-control authorities, which are neither equipped nor trained for such actions. In certain cases, there is a need to deploy special police units to enforce order, avoid spill-over effects and alleviate feelings of fear among local populations.
- The arrival of numerous children (accompanied and unaccompanied) and female migrants and refugees indi-

cates the need to take special protection measures to protect these vulnerable groups from gender-based violence, THB and sexual crimes (e.g. separate accommodation, provision of medical and psychological assistance). According to UNHCR data, 37% of all arrivals in Greece (including 2 300 unaccompanied children) and 16% in Italy in 2016 involved children, while the percentages for females were 21% and 13%, respectively.⁷

- Riots and fights between groups of migrants and refugees frequently take place in Hotspots. Such incidents are mainly triggered by frustration over substandard conditions, prolonged registration and processing of asylum requests, spreading of rumours and uncertainty about their future. During these events, the safety of Hotspot staff and deployed guest officers is at risk. Another cause of clashes among migrants involves the mixing of different ethnicities and cultures. In particular, as a group with distinct socio-cultural and religious background, Afghan migrants were over-represented among nationals involved in incidents in the reception centres.
- Reception conditions that do not meet minimum standards (e.g. poor sanitation, hygiene, heating, food, and overcrowding) represent the most frequent causes of unrest. Even within the same country living conditions

⁷ UNHCR Accommodation – Relocation Update; available at <http://data.unhcr.org/mediterranean/country.php?id=105>

may vary between reception sites. These factors exacerbate tensions resulting in violent acts, material damages and serious harm.

- Reception facilities attract the attention of people smugglers, human traffickers and terrorist recruiters. Since this carries serious implications for public order, the authorities need to exercise constant vigilance to prevent and suppress criminal and terrorist radicalisation activities. The case of Anis Amri, a rejected asylum seeker from Tunisia who carried out a terrorist attack in Berlin, Germany on 19 December 2016, is indicative of how problems can arise affecting the internal security of Member States.
- Finally, the situation within reception centres coupled with concerns about large migratory flows can also influence the perceptions and attitudes of the general public towards migrants and refugees. Improving the safety and security in these sites could go a long way in improving relations with local communities and preventing any xenophobic reactions and hate crimes against migrants and refugees.

In conclusion, the current situation in frontline Hotspots and other hosting facilities needs improvement because it affects the safety of migrants and refugees as well as the internal security of Member States. Overall, better management of reception centres is required as an integral part of EU migration management.

6.6. Prohibited goods with possible security impacts

The Frontex Risk Analysis Unit together with participants of the Western Balkans Risk Analysis Network agreed to engage in regular data collection regarding firearms possession and smuggling cases detected by the respective border police forces. The data collection aims to create a better understanding of the international dimension of firearms smuggling and come up with more efficient solutions through a coherent and concerted regional approach. This is the first such initiative amongst the risk analysis networks coordinated by Frontex that sets in motion a statistical data exchange mechanism on firearms detections.

Provisional definitions, indicators and a standardised reporting template were created to collect relevant information on cases of firearms detections. Subsequently, information covering the year 2015 was collected at a special workshop. The process then continued with monthly reporting by participating countries throughout 2016.

Generally low detections at the borders in 2016

In the first ten months of 2016, the border police forces of the six Western Balkan countries continued to detect weapons (i.e. firearms, gas and converted) and ammunition.

Specifically, the regional reporting covered 134 cases in which 154 weapons (i.e. 115 firearms, 38 gas weapons, and one converted) and 13 741 rounds of ammunition were detected. Compared with the same period of 2015, there were approximately 34% more ammunition pieces, 77% more firearms and 36% less gas weapons. In 2016, only one converted weapon and one optical targeting device were detected (no grenades or explosive material) whereas in 2015 six converted weapons, two optical targeting devices, two grenades and 3.45 kilograms of ex-

plosive material were detected. Hence, the number of detections was quite low given the total length of regional border areas.

With regard to firearms, there were 62 handguns (i.e. pistols, revolvers), 43 long rifles (or shotguns) and 10 automatic weapons. Out of the 38 gas weapons detected, there were 33 handguns (no details available on the remaining five detections).

Most detections occurred at BCPs

In the 10-month reporting period, most detections occurred at BCPs. These included 12 863 rounds of ammunition (mainly at the borders between Serbia and Hungary, Albania and Kosovo*, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and between Serbia and Croatia), 100 firearms (mainly at the border sections of Serbia-Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina-Croatia, Serbia-Hungary and Serbia-Bulgaria), 25 gas weapons (mostly at the border sections of Serbia with Hungary and Bulgaria), one converted weapon and a rifle scope.

The authorities also detected eight firearms, 13 gas weapons and 298 pieces of ammunition in their jurisdictions but not in the immediate vicinity of their borders. Also, two firearms and 53 ammunition pieces were reported at the green border (likely linked to unlicensed hunters). Moreover, five firearms and 529 rounds of ammunition were detected by border police forces outside their area of responsibility (i.e. more than 30 km inland).

During the first ten months of 2016, 130 persons were detected in possession of the prohibited items. The majority (82) were citizens of Western Balkan countries, followed by EU nationals (29), Turks (12) and third-country nationals (5). The nationality of two persons was unknown. In seven cases, the items

were found hidden in common train compartments or abandoned in the vicinity of borders thus they could not be linked to specific individuals.

Large-scale case reported in the media

According to open source information, the Serbian national police arrested ten individuals in relation to a major firearms case in the towns of Apatin and Sombor. The police seized 100 hand grenades, 30 kilograms of explosives, two anti-armour grenades, 12 rocket launchers, eight assault rifles, a heavy machine gun, 6 000 ammunition pieces, as well as detonators and semi-automatic rifles. This was the largest seizure of weapons in Serbia in 15 years.



Figure 12. Detections of particular types of prohibited goods in the Western Balkans, January–October 2015 and 2016, by border section



FRONTEX

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7. Conclusions

Given the sustained migratory pressure at the external borders, it is evident that the pressing challenge for border-control authorities is to solve the conundrum of reconciling two vexing issues. On the one hand, there is a need for increased SAR operations, which unwittingly create conditions whereby smugglers are putting migrants' lives at risk to boost their profits. On the other hand, it is necessary to introduce effective prevention measures to relieve the pressure at the borders. While concrete measures will ultimately depend on the types of migratory flows and the political situation in the last country of departure, the solution will require a combination of rapid and efficient coast guard actions, measures in and with third countries, as well as enhanced return operations.

With the difficulties associated with proper screening and registration of a large number of arrivals, there is a risk that persons posing a security threat may be entering the EU. Several tragic events within the EU have also demonstrated that border management has an important security component.

Second-line checks on arrival are a crucial step in the identification process. They also provide an important source of information which can be further used for intelligence and risk analysis purposes. Improving intelligence and analytical capacities is thus also of great significance.

The increased number of reported vulnerable persons at the border also makes it very clear that the effective detection of people trafficked for sexual exploitation, forced labour and other purposes remains a major challenge for border authorities. In fact, victims themselves are often not aware of their fate when they arrive in the transit or destination countries.

One improvement which has been evident in the preceding years is the increasing pool of sources of information and data from the external borders. Information is key for situational moni-

toring and analytical purposes, thus the improved availability of information is of critical importance. However, with a greater amount of information comes a greater challenge in utilising it effectively. This is especially true in emergency situations when large amounts of information are available but time is scarce. Therefore, data and situational information are sometimes not enough, so authorities will require the analysis and intelligence derived from them to make fully informed decisions. The management of this knowledge-generation process is critical.

Regular passenger flows across external borders will also grow significantly in the coming years, in particular at the air border, due to increased global mobility. Visa liberalisation processes and local border traffic agreements also lead to greater responsibility for border-control authorities. Movements across external air borders are managed through a layered approach, where the border is divided into four tiers. In this context, the physical border is gradually becoming a secondary layer for risk assessment, meaning that checking and screening start well before passengers cross border-control posts at airports. Border management will be increasingly risk-based to ensure that interventions are focused on high-risk movements of people, while low-risk movements are processed smoothly.

Collaboration with Customs vary widely across EU Member States but is essential in tackling a range of criminal activities, from detecting migrants concealed in vehicles, to preventing smuggling of excise goods, weapons and drugs. In addition, collaboration with police and judicial authorities is also important to develop more effective and efficient border-control activities.

8. Statistical annex

LEGEND

Symbols and abbreviations: **n.a.** not applicable
: data not available

Source: FRAN and EDF-RAN data as of 23 January 2017, unless otherwise indicated

Note: 'Member States' in the tables refer to FRAN Member States, including both 28 EU Member States and three Schengen Associated Countries

Annex Table 1. **Illegal border-crossing between BCPs**

Detections by border type and top ten nationalities at the external borders

	2013	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
All Borders						
Not specified	3 489	309	556 434	103 953	20	-81
Syria	25 546	78 887	594 059	88 697	17	-85
Afghanistan	9 494	22 132	267 485	54 385	11	-80
Nigeria	3 386	8 706	23 605	37 811	7.4	60
Iraq	537	2 109	101 275	32 069	6.3	-68
Eritrea	11 298	34 586	40 349	21 349	4.2	-47
Pakistan	5 047	4 115	43 310	17 973	3.5	-59
Guinea	648	2 156	5 174	15 985	3.1	209
Côte d'Ivoire	451	2 000	5 010	14 300	2.8	185
Gambia	2 817	8 725	8 874	12 927	2.5	46
Others	44 652	119 208	176 602	111 922	22	-37
Total all borders	107 365	282 933	1822 177	511 371	100	-72
Land Border						
Not specified	3 469	189	556 284	102 440	70	-82
Afghanistan	4 392	9 445	55 077	12 171	8.3	-78
Pakistan	3 211	555	17 444	6 519	4.5	-63
Syria	8 601	12 189	97 551	5 920	4.1	-94
Albania	8 833	9 268	9 450	5 316	3.6	-44
Iraq	413	938	10 135	4 041	2.8	-60
Iran	214	262	1 548	997	0.7	-36
Kosovo*	6 350	22 069	23 792	927	0.6	-96
Turkey	297	361	494	921	0.6	86
Morocco	693	43	243	832	0.6	242
Others	10 719	7 426	16 345	5 909	4.0	-64
Total land borders	47 192	62 745	788 363	145 993	100	-81
Sea Border						
Syria	16 945	66 698	496 508	82 777	23	-83
Afghanistan	5 102	12 687	212 408	42 214	12	-80
Nigeria	2 870	8 490	22 666	37 759	10	67
Iraq	124	1 171	91 140	28 028	7.7	-69
Eritrea	10 953	34 323	39 774	21 284	5.8	-46
Guinea	487	1 810	4 569	15 363	4.2	236
Côte d'Ivoire	150	1 794	4 635	14 189	3.9	206
Gambia	2 722	8 642	8 699	12 854	3.5	48
Pakistan	1 836	3 560	25 866	11 454	3.1	-56
Senegal	1 391	4 769	5 999	10 378	2.8	73
Others	17 593	76 244	121 550	89 078	24	-27
Total sea borders	60 173	220 188	1033 814	365 378	100	-65

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Annex Table 2. Clandestine entries at BCPs

Detections reported by border type and top ten nationalities at the external borders

	2013	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
Border Type						
Land	558	2 972	3 288	1 896	93	-42
Sea	41	80	15	132	6.5	780
Top Ten Nationalities						
Syria	181	1 091	1 673	650	32	-61
Guinea	4	66	66	360	18	445
Afghanistan	128	1 022	966	232	11	-76
Iraq	12	85	304	152	7.5	-50
Morocco	33	16	8	130	6.4	n.a.
Algeria	48	120	72	126	6.2	75
Albania	3	13	8	73	3.6	n.a.
Pakistan	30	63	90	56	2.8	-38
Ukraine	7	18	0	30	1.5	n.a.
Congo (D.R.)	0	8	3	26	1.3	n.a.
Others	153	550	113	193	9.5	71
Total	599	3 052	3 303	2 028	100	-39

Annex Table 3. Facilitators

Detections reported by place of detection and top ten nationalities

	2013	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
Place of Detection						
Inland	5 057	6 967	4 669	5 262	42	13
Not specified	267	318	3 655	3 249	26	-11
Land	695	1 214	1 413	1 971	16	39
Sea	394	585	1 137	962	7.7	-15
Land Intra EU	566	811	872	879	7.0	0.8
Air	273	339	277	245	1.9	-12
Top Ten Nationalities						
Not specified	692	653	702	1 969	16.0	180
Morocco	366	959	1 138	1 232	9.8	8.3
Albania	279	413	611	686	5.5	12
Spain	241	510	613	638	5.1	4.1
Italy	675	487	370	503	4.0	36
France	271	417	469	490	3.9	4.5
Bulgaria	211	322	426	419	3.3	-1.6
Pakistan	227	263	349	364	2.9	4.3
Romania	225	275	413	330	2.6	-20
Syria	172	398	533	317	2.5	-41
Others	3 893	5 537	6 399	5 620	45	-12
Total	7 252	10 234	12 023	12 568	100	4.5

Annex Table 4. **Illegal stay**

Detections reported by place of detection and top ten nationalities

	2013	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
Place of Detection						
Inland	253 103	366 467	632 453	403 387	82	-36
Air	31 007	33 793	41 179	50 347	10	22
Land	17 910	15 511	18 527	28 341	5.8	53
Land intra-EU	3 216	3 929	5 763	5 938	1.2	3.0
Between BCPs	574	2 160	720	1 680	0.3	133
Not specified	38	2 372	51	1 620	0.3	n.a.
Sea	1 396	901	681	578	0.1	-15
Top Ten Nationalities						
Afghanistan	14 221	22 365	95 784	50 746	10	-47
Iraq	4 454	5 802	61 462	31 883	6.5	-48
Syria	16 414	53 630	140 336	31 632	6.4	-77
Morocco	25 707	28 416	29 731	30 038	6.1	1.0
Ukraine	12 346	15 786	22 652	28 996	5.9	28
Eritrea	5 975	32 477	39 338	24 655	5.0	-37
Albania	15 639	21 248	28 926	24 124	4.9	-17
Pakistan	14 036	12 804	23 179	19 573	4.0	-16
Algeria	14 122	14 778	14 948	17 272	3.5	16
Iran	5 396	5 682	13 918	15 247	3.1	9.5
Others	178 934	212 145	229 100	217 725	44	-5.0
Total	307 244	425 133	699 374	491 891	100	-30

Annex Table 5. Refusals of entry

Refusals reported by border type and top ten nationalities at the external borders

	2013	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
Border Type						
Land	78 606	64 512	86 945	151 167	73	74
Air	44 785	46 358	46 897	48 268	23	2.9
Sea	5 844	4 894	5 309	7 221	3.5	36
Top Ten Nationalities						
Russian Federation	22 698	10 825	16 732	70 901	34	324
Ukraine	16 380	17 312	21 763	27 861	13	28
Albania	11 564	13 008	15 030	19 551	9.5	30
Tajikistan	216	258	3 652	7 170	3.5	96
Serbia	8 181	8 659	6 971	6 876	3.3	-1.4
Belarus	4 572	5 428	6 196	5 975	2.9	-3.6
Not specified	2 087	1 827	1 750	5 574	2.7	219
Morocco	5 372	4 439	4 348	4 683	2.3	7.7
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3 523	4 007	3 785	4 107	2.0	8.5
Armenia	1 728	1 315	3 742	3 878	1.9	3.6
Others	52 914	48 686	55 182	50 080	24	-9.2
Total	129 235	115 764	139 151	206 656	100	49

Annex Table 6. Reasons for refusals of entry

Reasons for refusals of entry reported at the external borders by top ten nationalities

	Total Refusals	Reasons for refusals of entry (see description below)										Total Reasons
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	n.a.	
Top Ten Nationalities												
Russian Federation	70 088	63	19	64 901	35	1 300	343	552	165	917	295	68 590
Ukraine	26 159	105	168	7 934	27	10 015	1 439	2 067	1 029	162	2 811	25 757
Albania	18 301	143	103	287	8	6 279	912	4 378	5 264	182	860	18 416
Tajikistan	6 870	0	4	6 571	2	100	2	50	6	4	7	6 746
Serbia	6 125	157	44	360	9	931	2 301	821	1 464	34	21	6 142
Belarus	5 578	63	8	2 181	3	586	308	1 020	244	661	517	5 591
Not specified	5 118	543	159	91	14	1 686	31	2 340	174	7	79	5 124
Morocco	4 378	837	56	815	56	1 435	72	130	494	421	83	4 399
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3 835	959	4	205	0	1 306	82	1 098	121	59	13	3 847
Armenia	3 653	18	3	3 316	26	173	7	33	8	2	16	3 602
Others	56 551	2 660	950	15 111	639	17 544	3 132	4 428	3 078	773	11 617	59 932
Total	206 656	5 548	1 518	101 772	819	41 355	8 629	16 917	12 047	3 222	16 319	208 146

Descriptions of the reasons for refusal of entry:

- A** has no valid travel document(s);
- B** has a false/counterfeit/forged travel document;
- C** has no valid visa or residence permit;
- D** has a false/counterfeit/forged visa or residence permit;
- E** has no appropriate documentation justifying the purpose and conditions of stay;
- F** has already stayed for three months during a six months period on the territory of the Member States of the European Union;
- G** does not have sufficient means of subsistence in relation to the period and form of stay, or the means to return to the country of origin or transit;
- H** is a person for whom an alert has been issued for the purposes of refusing entry in the SIS or in the national register;
- I** is considered to be a threat for public policy, internal security, public health or the international relations of one or more Member States of the European Union;

Annex Table 7. Document fraudsters - external borders

Persons detected using fraudulent documents at BCPs on entry to the EU or Schengen area, by border type and top ten nationalities claimed

	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
Border Type					
Air	6 509	5 331	4 368	62	-18
Land	2 484	2 671	2 325	33	-13
Sea	409	359	351	5.0	-2.2
Not specified	1	4	0		n.a.
Top Ten Nationalities Claimed					
Ukraine	519	1 186	1 208	17	1.9
Morocco	767	867	752	11	-13
Not specified	733	1 010	710	10	-30
Albania	572	424	386	5.5	-9.0
Iran	263	340	375	5.3	10
Iraq	338	243	273	3.9	12
Syria	1 447	745	234	3.3	-69
Turkey	294	114	210	3.0	84
Russian Federation	48	51	143	2.0	180
Congo (D.R.)	142	148	123	1.7	-17
Others	4 280	3 237	2 630	37	-19
Total	9 403	8 365	7 044	100	-16

Annex Table 8. Fraudulent documents

Detections of fraudulent documents on entry from third countries to EU or Schengen area by country of issuance and type of documents

	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year	Highest share
Country of Issuance						Type of Document
Poland	489	1 011	882	11	-13	Visas (84%)
Italy	1 153	931	852	10	-8.5	ID cards (37%)
Spain	1 019	973	839	10	-14	ID cards (36%)
France	1 163	906	775	9.4	-14	Passports (32%)
Germany	396	476	466	5.6	-2.1	Visas (45%)
Lithuania	49	96	426	5.2	344	Visas (72%)
Belgium	383	477	288	3.5	-40	Residence permits (43%)
Greece	917	472	273	3.3	-42	Residence permits (23%)
Latvia	27	32	142	1.7	344	Visas (94%)
Sweden	298	162	127	1.5	-22	Visas (41%)
Others	4 859	4 144	3 197	39	-23	Passports (66%)
Type of Document						Type of Fraud
Passports	4 949	4 065	2 770	34	-32	Impostor (29%)
Visas	1 617	1 934	2 115	26	9.4	Fraudulently obtained (59%)
ID cards	1 400	1 203	1 177	14	-2.2	Counterfeit (37%)
Residence permits	1 507	1 383	1 166	14	-16	Counterfeit (42%)
Stamps	1 047	903	833	10	-7.8	Counterfeit (85%)
Other	233	192	206	2.5	7.3	Counterfeit (77%)
Total	10 753	9 680	8 267	100	-15	

Annex Table 9. Return decisions issued

Decisions issued by top ten nationalities

	2013	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
Top Ten Nationalities						
Afghanistan	9 301	11 861	18 655	34 396	11	84
Iraq	3 517	3 292	16 093	28 464	9.3	77
Ukraine	9 242	11 026	17 709	24 649	8.1	39
Morocco	12 486	19 843	22 360	22 441	7.3	0.4
Albania	17 983	21 287	26 453	18 181	6.0	-31
Pakistan	16 567	13 717	12 777	16 038	5.3	26
Syria	12 599	26 489	27 937	9 849	3.2	-65
Algeria	8 732	7 790	6 832	9 494	3.1	39
India	10 193	8 860	8 287	8 359	2.7	0.9
Iran	2 726	2 202	3 417	6 998	2.3	105
Others	120 950	125 619	126 205	126 496	41	0.2
Total	224 296	251 986	286 725	305 365	100	6.5

Annex Table 10. Effective returns

People effectively returned to third countries and top ten nationalities

	2013	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
Top Ten Nationalities						
Albania	20 544	26 442	30 468	27 201	15	-11
Ukraine	7 763	9 582	14 995	20 970	12	40
Iraq	2 584	1 932	4 829	11 870	6.7	146
Morocco	6 758	8 595	8 158	9 289	5.3	14
India	8 958	7 609	9 419	8 404	4.8	-11
Kosovo*	4 535	4 743	10 144	7 618	4.3	-25
Serbia	6 564	6 243	7 482	6 882	3.9	-8.0
Pakistan	12 127	9 609	8 089	6 378	3.6	-21
Afghanistan	3 415	3 050	1 804	5 419	3.1	200
Russian Federation	8 216	6 652	4 591	3 680	2.1	-20
Others	78 954	76 845	75 194	68 512	39	-8.9
Total	160 418	161 302	175 173	176 223	100	0.6

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Annex Table 11. **Effective returns by type of return**

People effectively returned to third countries by type of return and top ten nationalities

	2013	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
Type of Return						
Forced	87 465	69 399	72 839	79 608	45	9.3
Enforced by Member State	76 062	50 417	54 408	58 097	73	6.8
Not specified	9 832	17 014	15 878	16 219	20	2.1
Enforced by Joint Operation	1 571	1 968	2 553	5 292	6.6	107
Voluntary	64 588	63 890	82 032	92 082	52	12
Others	34 615	37 483	54 464	61 510	67	13
IOM-assisted	16 035	11 324	14 391	19 673	21	37
Not specified	13 938	15 083	13 177	10 899	12	-17
Not specified	8 365	28 013	20 302	4 533	2.6	-78
Total	160 418	161 302	175 173	176 223	100	0.6
TOP TEN NATIONALITIES						
Forced						
Albania	19 296	6 306	10 258	19 482	24	90
Morocco	2 943	7 158	7 017	7 506	9.4	7.0
Kosovo	2 265	2 707	4 743	4 916	6.2	3.6
Serbia	3 363	3 164	4 051	4 347	5.5	7.3
Tunisia	3 123	3 048	2 268	2 730	3.4	20
Algeria	2 617	2 811	2 246	2 609	3.3	16
Ukraine	1 390	1 345	1 860	2 044	2.6	9.9
Pakistan	8 369	2 942	2 067	1 812	2.3	-12
FYROM**	728	689	1 084	1 676	2.1	55
Nigeria	2 707	2 488	2 315	1 561	2.0	-33
Others	40 664	36 741	34 930	30 925	39	-11
Total Forced Returns	87 465	69 399	72 839	79 608	45	9.3
Voluntary						
Ukraine	6 248	8 122	13 054	18 904	21	45
Iraq	1 493	1 094	3 648	10 630	12	191
India	6 032	5 111	7 400	6 888	7.5	-6.9
Albania	1 171	2 013	4 647	5 526	6.0	19
Pakistan	3 663	3 507	4 479	4 268	4.6	-4.7
Afghanistan	1 016	738	694	4 069	4.4	486
Russian Federation	6 715	5 018	3 644	2 724	3.0	-25
Kosovo*	2 270	2 035	5 401	2 701	2.9	-50
Serbia	3 168	3 020	3 375	2 529	2.7	-25
Iran	671	670	589	1 933	2.1	228
Others	32 141	32 562	35 101	31 910	35	-9.1
Total Voluntary Returns	64 588	63 890	82 032	92 082	52	12

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

** former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the definitive nomenclature for this country will be agreed following current negotiations at UN level.

Annex Table 12. Passenger flow on entry

Data reported (on voluntary basis) by border type and top ten nationalities

	Air		Land		Sea		Total		Share of total	% change on
	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016		
Top Ten Nationalities										
Not specified	110 515 319	138 880 213	26 638 297	35 378 188	13 810 330	15 834 458	150 963 946	190 092 859	66	26
EU MS/SAC	5 264 816	5 424 615	10 244 412	9 793 871	1 445 091	1 586 511	16 954 319	16 804 997	5.8	-0.9
Croatia	468 717	521 888	14 535 866	15 568 235	19 503	52 006	15 024 086	16 142 129	5.6	7.4
Ukraine	286 567	378 083	12 180 800	14 260 645	52 348	56 722	12 519 715	14 695 450	5.1	17
Russian Federation	1 377 837	1 586 352	7 551 496	8 003 452	253 076	269 758	9 182 409	9 859 562	3.4	7.4
Poland	4 092 140	4 820 006	3 174 743	2 872 817	32 318	36 833	7 299 201	7 729 656	2.7	5.9
Belarus	147 439	139 865	4 451 191	4 968 733	2 700	2 872	4 601 330	5 111 470	1.8	11
Romania	304 874	487 481	3 319 891	4 562 678	332	515	3 625 097	5 050 674	1.7	39
Serbia	35 349	45 773	2 715 939	3 470 271	3 770	5 418	2 755 058	3 521 462	1.2	28
Hungary	13 219	326 825	82 237	1 765 699	25	586	95 481	2 093 110	0.7	n.a.
Total	128 264 637	160 653 122	90 575 281	110 413 189	16 209 398	18 628 408	235 049 316	289 694 719	100	23.2

Notes on FRAN data sources and methods

The term 'Member States' refers to FRAN Member States, which includes the 28 Member States and the three Schengen Associated Countries (Iceland, Norway and Switzerland). For the data concerning detections at the external borders of the EU, some of the border types are not applicable to all FRAN Member States. This pertains to data on all FRAN indicators since the data are provided disaggregated by border type. The definitions of detections at land borders are therefore not applicable (excluding borders with non-Schengen principalities) for Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. For Cyprus, the land border refers to the Green Line demarcation with the area where the Government of the Republic of Cyprus does not exercise effective control. For sea borders, the definitions are not ap-

plicable for land-locked Member States including Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Luxembourg, Slovakia and Switzerland.

In addition, data on detections of illegal border-crossing at land, air and sea BCPs (1B) are not available for Iceland, Ireland and Spain, and in Greece these detections are included in the data for indicator 1A.

Data on detections of illegal border-crossing between sea BCPs (1A) are not available for Ireland. For 2013, data from Slovenia include detections at the EU external borders only until June 2013.

Data on apprehension (FRAN Indicator 2) of facilitators are not available for Ireland and UK. For Italy, the data are not disaggregated by border type, but are reported as total apprehensions (not specified). Data for Italy and Norway also include the facilitation of illegal stay and work. For Romania, the data

include land Intra-EU detections on exit at the border with Hungary.

For the data concerning detections of illegal stay (FRAN Indicator 3), data on detections on exit are not available for Ireland, Italy and the UK. Data on detections of illegal stay inland have not been available from the Netherlands since 2012.

Data on refusals of entry (FRAN Indicator 4) at the external EU borders are not disaggregated by reason of refusal for Ireland and the UK.

The data on passenger flow (shared on voluntary basis) are not available for Austria, Ireland, Sweden and the UK. Data on passenger flow at the air border are not available according to the definition for Spain. Data at the sea border are not available for Cyprus, Malta, Spain, the Netherlands, Romania and Denmark.

For all indicators, data from Croatia are available only starting with July 2013.



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