

FRONT**EX**



**Risk Analysis
for 2022/2023**



Risk Analysis for 2022/2023

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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.

The term “illegal border-crossing” used throughout the report refers to cases of crossings of the external borders of the EU considered unauthorised at the time of the crossing under the Schengen Borders Code. This number might include persons intending to apply for asylum. The term refers to statistical data of events occurring at the border and does not presume the final legal status of the detected persons.

SOURCE MATERIAL

Insights on the development of the risks described in this document are based upon monthly statistics exchanged among Member States within the framework of the Frontex Risk Analysis Network (FRAN). The annex provides a partial overview and breakdowns of the indicators which the Agency collects. In particular, for cross-border crime analysis, EUROSUR incident reports were considered, alongside a dedicated “Request for Information” (RFI). The analysis of secondary movements incorporates asylum information provided by the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), and returns data has recently been collected via the Return Data Collection (RDC).

Member States were not requested to answer specific questions in support of this analysis. Rather, bimonthly analytical reports and incident reports from Member States routinely collected by the Agency, as well as other Member States’ contributions submitted in 2020, were used, especially as regards analysis of routes and *modi operandi*. Intelligence derived from debriefing activities carried out within Joint Operations was also analysed.

Open-source information was used, especially in identifying the main ‘push and pull factors’ for irregular migration to the EU. These sources included reports issued by government agencies, international and non-governmental organisations, as well as mainstream news agencies and EU bodies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the preparation of the *Risk Analysis for 2022/2023*, Frontex has been able to draw on a wide range of information provided by Member States, third countries and partner agencies.

The Agency would like to express its gratitude to all Member States’ representatives in its Risk Analysis Network and third country partners for their efforts in providing data and analysis, as well as Europol and the EUAA, and all colleagues involved in the preparation of this report.

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List of acronyms used

BCP	border-crossing point
CIRAM	Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model
EBCG	European Border and Coast Guard
EC	European Commission
EDF	European Union Document-Fraud
EDF-RAN	European Union Document-Fraud Risk Analysis Network
EIBM	European integrated border management
EMPACT	European multidisciplinary platform against criminal threats
ETIAS	European Travel Information and Authorisation System
EU	European Union
EU+	27 EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland
EUAA	European Union Agency for Asylum
Eurodac	European Dactyloscopy
Europol	EU Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (formerly European Police Office)
Eurostat	Statistical Office of the European Union
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
IBC	Illegal border-crossing
ICJ	International Court of Justice
ID	identification document
IDP	internally displaced person
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISIS/ISIL/Daesh	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JO	Joint Operation
MS	EU Member State
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OCC	organised crime group
RDC	Return Data Collection
SAC	Schengen-Associated Country
SAR	Search and Rescue
SBC	Schengen Borders Code
THB	Trafficking in human beings
UK	The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution



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Foreword

The recent threats and challenges at our external frontiers have tested the European Border and Coast Guard community.

The war in Ukraine has transformed Europe and the way all of us see the Eastern Borders, which until now have not experienced any events of this scale.

This first changed with the hybrid aggression by Belarus in mid-2021 through the creation of an artificial migration route and was soon followed by Russia's invasion of Ukraine – which brought millions of refugees at the EU's doorsteps and border management challenges for years to come. These may include a rise in trafficking in human beings, especially children, as well as a rise of smuggling in weapons and other illegal goods.

The war may also have a massive impact thousands of kilometres away in places like Africa, with a disruption of vital grain imports from Ukraine could add to already existing challenges, such as weather changes and water shortages caused by climate change, as well as COVID. This could put additional impetus behind the already rising number of irregular migrants venturing towards Europe. Other factors, such as the situation in Afghanistan following the return

of the Taliban, may also play a crucial role in testing the European integrated border management – both national authorities and Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency.

These unprecedented and challenging times call for reliable intelligence and risk analysis that identifies key thematic, geographical and operational risks for the border management community, allowing all its participants to better prepare and plan future operational activities at the borders.

For this reason, I am proud to present the Annual Risk Analysis 2022/23 that not only presents the events of the past year and the current picture at the borders, but also aims to predict and highlight the future challenges all of us may have to face – from growing migrant smuggling and the widening gap between return decisions and effective returns to the uncertain future role of COVID.

I am proud to say that in the face of these many challenges, as well as internal turmoil Frontex has undergone in recent years, we are continuing to support Member States and neighbouring countries with border management tasks and we have taken on many additional ones in the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.



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Frontex remains a reliable partner for the rest of the European integrated border management community.

Aija Kalnaja
Executive Director *ad interim*



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Executive summary

The Annual Risk Analysis 2022/23 identifies the most important thematic risks for European integrated border management and the most affected regions at the EU external border. While joint European Border and Coast Guard operations are already underway in many regions with the highest risk levels, the land border with Russia, which was not an issue until the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, is a new cause for concern. However, Russian actions and responses to sanctions go beyond the realm of border management, but may result in significant refugee flows from Ukraine and migratory movements from Russia and other third countries. Rapid, large-scale refugee inflows pose manifold challenges for the European Border and Coast Guard also related to fundamental rights of persons on the move. The challenges to comprehensive registration of the refugees in order to ease their entry into the EU could curtail effective access to referral mechanisms and coverage of specific protection needs or render persons more vulnerable to criminal networks.

Considerable investments will have to be devoted to the EU's eastern neighborhood. This is also because after many years in which irregular migration on the Eastern land borders was relatively insignificant, the hybrid aggression by Belarus through the creation of an artificial migration route and the Russian

invasion of Ukraine in early 2022, turned the spotlight onto what had been a relatively well-secured and well-functioning border. Volatile geopolitics in the region will continue to put the European Border and Coast Guard to the test.

The impact of the war in Ukraine on the European Border and Coast Guard, beyond the more obvious immediate term, will be profound. One of the major threats to the Union may stem from the potential undetected entry of high-risk individuals mixing among the refugees fleeing Ukraine. The presence of foreign fighters will raise security concerns and highlight the need for checks and registrations. Criminal networks may adjust their business model to the new reality and exploitable opportunities, considering the prior relevance of Ukraine as a source and transit country of cross-border criminality.

Further afield, developments in several key regions of origin foreshadow increasing migratory pressure on the EU external borders: for example, the Taliban's takeover in Afghanistan in August 2021 and the deteriorating socio-economic and humanitarian conditions as well as the poor fundamental rights situation could force more Afghans to flee to neighboring countries and trigger migration flows to Europe.

Migrant smuggling will remain an increasing trend. The almost 14 000 detections of facilitators in 2021 represent the

highest annual total in Frontex records. Europol reports that migrant smuggling activities along most of the routes to and within the EU increased compared to the previous year. Indeed, according to Frontex data, detections of people smugglers on the EU's external borders in 2021 grew by 41% compared with 2020 and by 24% compared with 2019. Migrant smuggling criminal networks continue to display their agility and adaptability, responding not only to demand, but also to new business opportunities and law enforcement measures.

The gap between return decisions and effective returns in 2020 and 2021 continues to widen, representing another continuing risk trend. Between 2011 and 2015, the number of effective returns amounted to between 60% and 70% of the number of return decisions issued to third-country nationals, but by 2019 this share had decreased to 46%. In 2020, effective returns amounted to only 21% of decisions and only marginally improved in 2021, to 22%.

In 2022/2023, COVID-19 is likely to continue to affect European integrated border management, although possibly to a lesser extent. The progress achieved through vaccination programs has been stalled by the emergence of new coronavirus variants, and the virus is far from eradicated.

Introduction

This document presents the key risks to the EU's external borders and their potential impact on EIBM. The focus of this public version is on the threat dimensions of risks according to the Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model (CIRAM)* that will play a likely role in the short term, with an approximate time horizon of one year from the time of writing.

The key risks for IBM in 2021 were analysed and projections were made in order

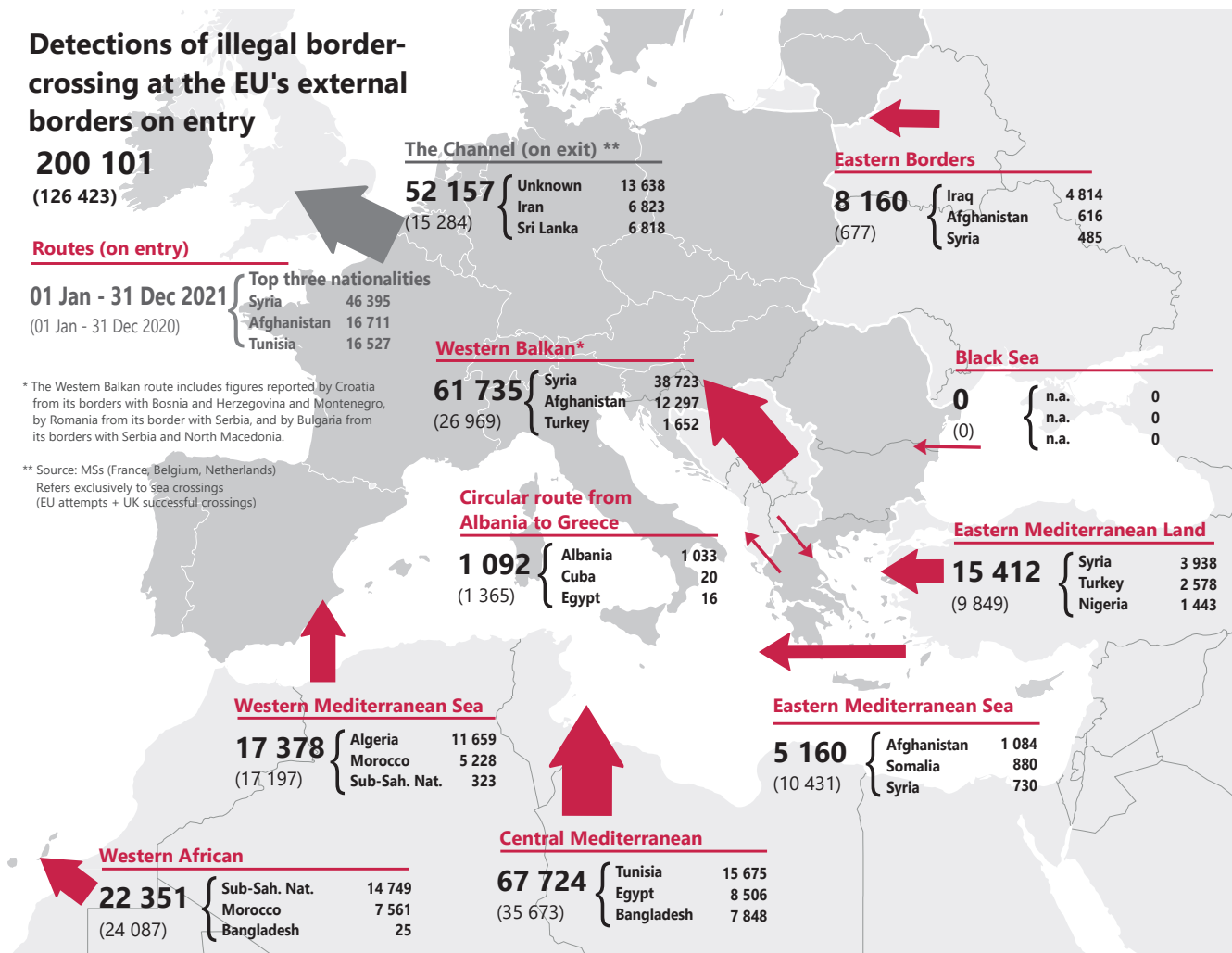
to provide an outlook in all chapters of the Annual Risk Analysis 2022/2023. The analysis of different risk categories provides a comprehensive picture of challenges and threats that jeopardise the security and functioning of the EU's external borders. Risks are grouped into three broad categories: irregular migration, secondary movements and returns, and cross-border crime. The report's conclusions provide an outlook of the overarching risks the EIBM might face over the next year

In 2021 in total about 200 000 illegal border-crossings were reported by EU Member States. This was the highest

number of registered IBCs since 2017. The Central Mediterranean, Western Balkan, and Western African routes were the top-three routes with the highest volumes of IBCs on entry recorded over the whole of 2021.

Overall, in 2021/2022 the COVID-19 pandemic continued affecting passenger and traveller flows. The hybrid aggression at the EU border with Belarus and ultimately the Russian military intervention in Ukraine in 2022 are core factors with a broad influence on different components of EU integrated border management.

* <https://frontex.europa.eu/we-know/situational-awareness-and-monitoring/ciram/>





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Irregular Migration

Irregular migration at the blue border

In 2021, Member States detected 112 616 illegal border-crossings at the blue borders, the highest number since 2018. While this number was 29 % higher than that of 2020, it was only 6 % above the pre-pandemic 2019 level. However, these illegal border-crossing figures by themselves do not adequately represent the overall migratory pressure at the sea border as key transit countries intensified surveillance and interdiction activities at their maritime borders.

With 60% of all IBC detections at sea, the Central Mediterranean played an outsized role in 2021, with migratory pressure not seen in this region since 2017, also due to the highest number of arrivals from Tunisia (over 20 000) and from Turkey (almost 13 000 – predominantly migrants smuggled in leisure boats from Turkey to the Central Mediterranean) on record. The Western African Route saw only slightly less pressure than in 2020, during its peak. With almost 20 000 arrivals from Morocco, 2021 only saw fewer arrivals on this route due to decreasing arrival numbers from Senegal. The sea corridors pertaining to the Eastern Mediterranean saw decidedly fewer reported arrivals, whereas the Western Mediterranean route reported constant numbers compared with 2020.

Faced also with stringent requirements for legal migration to Europe, often the only choice open to migrants is irregular migration which oftentimes results in a dire humanitarian situation: At the sea borders, unscrupulous people smugglers endanger migrants' lives by placing them onto unseaworthy vessels with inadequate safety equipment and insufficient fuel. This is one of many unsafe practices and poses significant challenges to Search and Rescue (SAR) operations. As a result, in the Mediterranean in 2021, 2 048 migrants were reported missing or dead, according to IOM.

The years 2022 and 2023 will likely see a further significant increase in irregular migration at sea borders. There exist political and socioeconomic push factors at the national level in a wide range of key countries of origin and transit, as

well as higher-level push factors such as persisting global inflation. In this respect, food prices were projected to remain high throughout 2022 even before the added impact of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. These factors will disproportionately affect the livelihood of low-income populations. The link between food insecurity and migration however is not straightforward: the European Commission's Joint Research Centre finds that food insecurity increases aspirations to migrate, but not necessarily rates of migration. The UN was expecting a record-breaking 274 million people globally to need humanitarian assistance in 2022 (+17 % on 2021) even before factoring in the impact of the drop in Ukraine's exports. As most of the people needing humanitarian aid live in the Middle East, as well as North, West, and Central Africa, this poses a high risk for European Border Management taking into account the size of the affected populations.

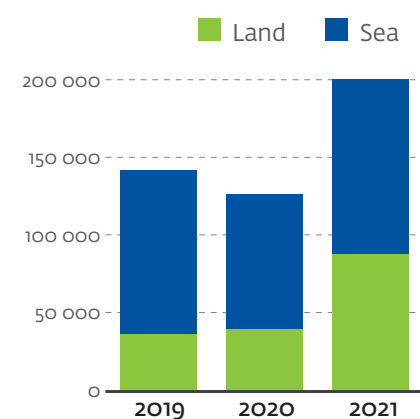
Moreover, the pandemic will continue to have a major impact on all aspects of irregular migration to Europe. While there is some chance that COVID-19 will become endemic, 2022/2023 may well be further transition years, especially if new variants of the virus emerge. However, if the trends set in 2021 continue, global mobility will likely rebound¹ as humanity learns to live with COVID-19 and new mitigation measures and treatments become available. This will allow would-be migrants who have been stranded during the pandemic to resume their journeys. The recovery of international flight networks and permissive border management regimes in place in some Northern African countries will also fuel the departure of non-regional migrants from the African shores towards the EU. As a result, a gradual return to pre-pandemic routings can also be expected.

1 However, countries that opted for a zero COVID policy, such as China, will be less likely to return to normal. While these states currently have negligible contributions to irregular migration towards the EU, China has a certain importance regarding regular passenger traffic.

An important positive aspect of easing COVID-related travel restrictions will be the revival of the tourism sector, which is vital in key countries of origin. This may actually encourage some would-be migrants not to leave their countries. Geopolitical risks abound in the Mediterranean area and may well result in migration events impacting the blue borders: In the Eastern Mediterranean, geopolitical/socio-economic and security-related tensions are compounded by the rising competition for energy resources and sovereignty and boundary disputes. Looking further south, there is considerable lingering instability and the Sahel region is plagued by militant Islamist violence and state fragility (according to the Fund for Peace's 2022 Fragile State Index, three countries of the region are amongst the countries whose conditions have deteriorated the most according to the employed conflict assessment framework). In the region's east, the UN estimates that over 50 million people will face acute food insecurity this year, triggered by a combination of shocks of climate extremes, conflict and macroeconomic challenges.

Figure 1. **Illegal border-crossings on entry by border type 2019 to 2021**

Source: FRAN data as of 19 August 2022



Irregular migration at the green border

Member States reported a total of 87 485 detections of illegal border-crossing on the green borders in 2021, the highest reported figure since 2016. This is a 124 % increase on 2020 and a 146 % increase on the pre-pandemic year, 2019. However, a substantial part of this growth was due to detections of repeated attempts on the Western Balkan route. At the Western Balkan borders, an increasing trend of reported IBCs by migrants who are being allowed visa-free entry to select Western Balkan countries, has been registered. While in 2020, these nationalities were responsible for just over 400 IBCs, their numbers grew in 2021 to over 3 000. According to Europol, facilitated crossings of the green borders on foot either occurred with the people smugglers accompanying the irregular migrants, acting as local guides, or the people smugglers providing instructions to the migrants remotely. An outsized share of 60 599 illegal border-crossings on entry were reported on the EU's borders with Serbia (69 % of all crossings at the land borders). Joining the ranks of the most used land routes was the Belarusian border, which reported significant detections (7 528) for the first time since data collection records commenced. At the EU's land borders with Turkey, the number of arrivals (5 692) was similar to 2020.

Belarus' abrupt decision to cease cooperating on border management and its aggressive instrumentalisation of migration in a hybrid campaign were the

most significant developments at the external land borders in 2021.

2022/2023 will likely see an increase in migratory pressure at the land borders. Some of this pressure will be the ordinary knock-on effect of increased pressure on sea routes (e.g., traffic on the Eastern Mediterranean route leading to more secondary migration via the Western Balkans). Significant lingering political risks (low likelihood/very high impact) remain in the Western Balkans.

Russia's aggression on Ukraine has in the subsequent months resulted in the orderly crossing of millions of Ukrainian refugees via BCPs into the EU (including also via Moldova). The EU's Temporary Protection Directive has been activated for the first time. As it was mostly vulnerable groups (women, children and the elderly) comprising this refugee inflow, challenges to protect those vulnerable groups of size have arisen and may well rise again.

The protraction or potential escalation of the conflict in the east, as well as the impact of Western sanctions acting as economic push factors, could impact the EU's land borders with Russia. The impact may materialise in the form of illegal border-crossings (or via other means, for instance by using document fraud when leaving Russia).

Concerning developments in some countries of origin, the situation in Afghanistan under Taliban rule remains of great concern. This is not an exclusive concern for land borders, although 82 % of all

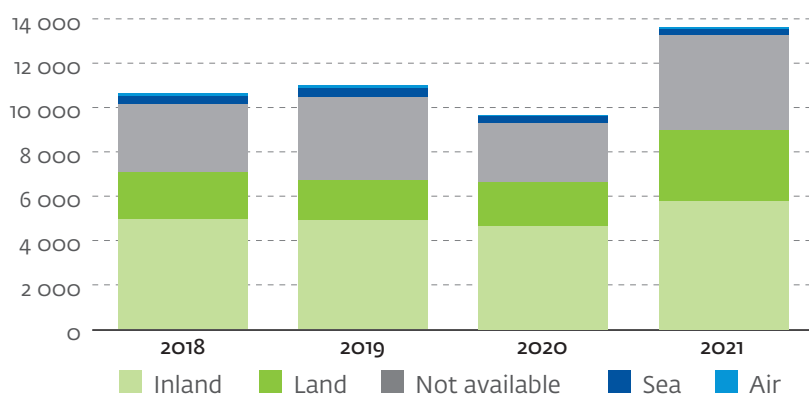
IBC of Afghans in 2021 were recorded at the land borders. Available data indicate that Afghans largely flee to neighbouring countries, mainly due to their geographic proximity and linguistic and religious similarities, as well as migrants' lack of financial resources. The precarious situation in Afghanistan, where the Afghan banking and financial systems are close to collapse while the economy continues to freefall, could lead to a further outflow of migrants. This would add to the pressure on Afghanistan's neighbours, who are increasingly demanding the international community share responsibility for managing migration flows. In view of the strengthening of border management at important border sections on the established migration routes from Afghanistan to Europe, it is conceivable that new migration routes to the external borders of the EU will form. The rise in the number of asylum applications lodged in EU Member States by Afghan nationals towards the end of 2021 is likely foreshadowing a trend.

Syrians are another top nationality detected for irregular migration at the land borders. In Syria, violence continued throughout 2021 and hostilities have re-intensified. In January 2022 the Islamic State conducted its largest attack since 2019 amid ongoing insecurity in north-west Syria, suggesting that the security situation will likely continue to be volatile. This comes on top of Syrian economic woes and the failure to make any breakthroughs towards peaceful reconstruction. In 2021, the number of asylum applications lodged by Syrian nationals in EU Member States was over 70 % higher than in 2020 and almost 50 % higher than in 2019.

Beyond Afghanistan or Syria, developments in many other countries of origin are pointing towards increased migratory pressure on Europe: Ultimately the route chosen – be it over the external land or sea borders – will be determined to a large degree by migrants' cost-benefit analysis under imperfect information. In addition to the migration routes supplied by people smugglers, migration movements caused and organized by state actors in third countries will create new challenges in the future.

Figure 2. Detections of people smugglers ('facilitators') reported at the external border by place of detection

Source: FRAN data as of 19 August 2022



Clandestine entry

Illegal border-crossings at border-crossing points, or clandestine entries, continue to pose a challenge to the European Border and Coast Guard, and are likely to do so even more in the future.

Migrants hiding in vehicles at sea-ports and land BCPs, particularly those handling large vehicle, cargo or train traffic, have been a problem for a long time. Between 2020 and 2021 there was a 15% increase in illegal border-crossing attempts on entry at land and sea BCPs. The 2021 figure was the highest since 2015.

This is a high-risk *modus operandi* associated with a particular migrant population. It tends to be used by males (96% in 2021), who are predominantly young (at least 57% under the age of 34). Over the past few years, Afghan migrants have been by a large margin the most numerous among those detected for clandestine entry at the external borders: In 2021, 55% of all cases involved Afghan migrants. The second most reported nationality, Syrian, accounted for little more than 7%.

The most frequently used *modi operandi* at the external borders reported in the Frontex Risk Analysis Network is hiding in and under trucks. Hiding on ferries is the most commonly reported practice at sea borders. Europol notes that migrant smugglers used various types of (rented)

vehicles, cars, vans, (mini) buses, lorries and trailers, campers or taxis at the external borders. According to Europol, migrant smugglers also concealed irregular migrants in the cargo area of trains, in hidden compartments, in refrigerated lorries or among goods, with or without the knowledge of the driver. At land borders, a good share of the detections of cases result from customs controls rather than border checks, as customs inspections are more likely to lead to the discovery of hidden passengers. The typical size of a group of migrants in this type of incident tends to be under ten. Linked to this, there has been an increase in the reporting of artificial (hidden) compartments in vans and lorries to smuggle migrants.

Over 65% of all cases of reported clandestine entry at the external borders were reported from only four border-crossing points, all of them in the Western Balkans. This geographical focus may be considered to some extent as an indicator of the migrants' resolve in the region and the level of border security, also expressed by the repeated attempts by migrants on the region's green borders.

From the perspective of European integrated border management and internal security, the impact of clandestine entry at the EU's external borders is far-reaching. Successful clandestine entry

enables unknown numbers of high-risk individuals to enter EU territory undetected. It also enables unimpeded secondary movements through the area of free movement (and hence potentially enables high-risk individuals such as terrorists to get to their theatres of operation). Moreover, the increasing sophistication of attempts to hide migrants in vehicles creates an increased operational imperative to employ expensive and time-consuming measures to mitigate the threat, potentially impacting the functioning of the external borders by slowing down bona fide cross-border traffic as well as diverting resources from other tasks. Furthermore, there is a humanitarian impact, as many *modi operandi* employed in clandestine entry endanger the lives of those smuggled. Numerous casualties in recent years attest to this. It is often the greed of people smugglers that leads to perilous journeys, in overcrowded hidden compartments, without sufficient levels of oxygen or to hazardous journeys in (sealed) refrigerated compartments.

In the near future, a further increase in clandestine entry is expected. As overall migratory pressure on Europe is likely to increase (see preceding chapters), attempts to cross the borders clandestinely at BCPs will most probably rise, too. In this context, the high share of Afghan

Figure 3. Demographics of individuals detected for clandestine entry at land and sea BCPs in 2021: AGE

Source: FRAN data as of 19 August 2022

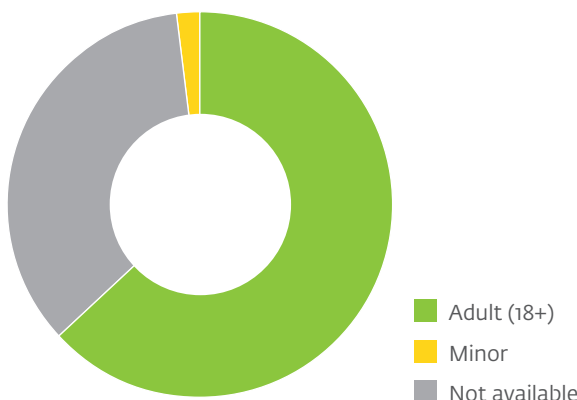
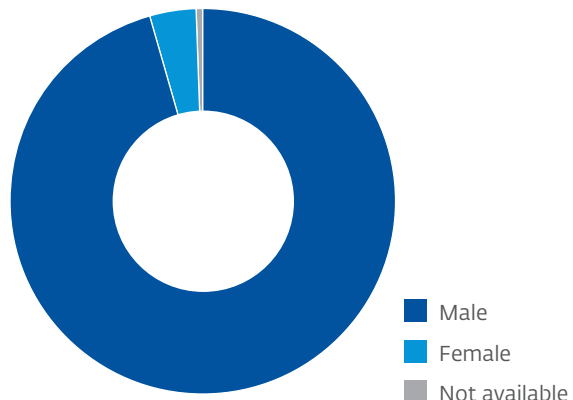


Figure 4. Demographics of individuals detected for clandestine entry at land and sea BCPs in 2021: GENDER

Source: FRAN data as of 19 August 2022

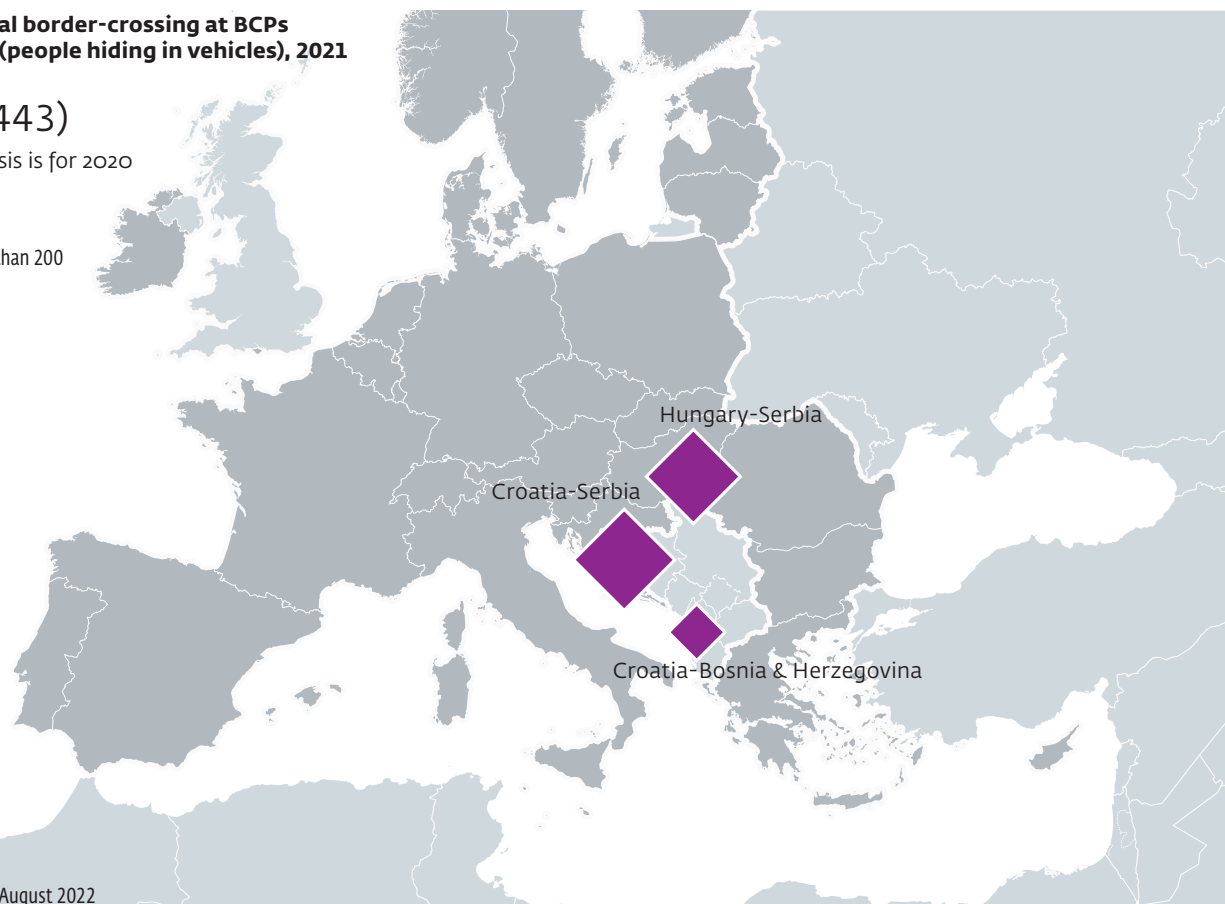


Detections of illegal border-crossing at BCPs by border section (people hiding in vehicles), 2021

3 194 (2 443)

Number in parenthesis is for 2020

◆ 200
(only values higher than 200 are stipulated)



Source: FRAN data as of 19 August 2022

migrants reported using this *modus operandi* may be significant. The expected increase in Afghan migrants coming to Europe may lead to a proportionate rise in clandestine entry attempts.

It is also possible that those looking to enter the EU will adapt to circumstances and instead of attempting to cross the green and blue borders will attempt clandestine entry at BCPs. Closed or controlled reception structures, the wider use of administrative detention for those intercepted at the green and blue borders, and the proliferation of

technical obstacles on the eastern and south-eastern green borders may contribute to an increase of clandestine entries. Faced with these challenges, it is possible that some migrants will find increasingly sophisticated *modi operandi*, or find other ways to circumvent checks.

Finally, exit checks of neighbouring countries play a crucial role: Diligent exit checks prevent unknown shares of clandestine entries and save lives at risk, and hence cooperation with neighbouring countries is essential.

However, in the context of emerging geopolitical confrontations over (but not limited to) the war in Ukraine, the commitment to exit checks of certain neighboring states are cast into doubt.

Document fraud

In 2021, the overall use of fraudulent documents as reported within the European Union Document Fraud Risk Analysis Network (EDF-RAN) increased by more than 20% in relation to 2020. EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries reported in total 19 500 fraudulent document users who used 25 000 fraudulent documents at the EU’s external borders and on intra-EU/Schengen secondary movements in 2021. The increased number of detections in 2021 resulted mostly from COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictive measures, which made border crossings much more difficult than before the COVID-19 outbreak. Apart from the increased number of counterfeit health/vaccination certificates there were a lot of other supporting fraudulent documents, in particular work-related documents, justifying the purpose of border crossings for certain categories of third country nationals who would otherwise not have been able to enter the EU/Schengen area.

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only heavily impacted the travel industry, but also document fraud. For instances, while some types of documents were used less frequently, others such as health/vaccination certificates were more extensively used. Although it may be hard to predict COVID-19 developments, a return to fewer restrictions could take place. With rising passenger flows following, changes in migrants’attempts to enter

the EU illegally can be expected. For example, fraudulent travel documents may be more widely used at BCPs.

Hand in hand with the lifting of travel restrictions, the number of fraudulent supporting documents at the external borders could start to decrease as the requirements to present them when crossing the borders should be lower.

Traditionally, one of the main *modi operandi* used by migrants to enter the EU/Schengen area relatively easily without a visa is transit visa waiver abuse. These migrants subsequently apply for asylum in the transit area of the international airport. The airports most affected are usually the biggest air hubs in the EU. Even though this *modus operandi* does not necessarily require migrants to use fraudulent documents, there have been numerous instances when the travellers have used complex routings while transiting the EU’s main airports on counterfeit travel documents to apply for asylum as well. The use of this *modus operandi* will likely continue in 2022/2023 at current or similar levels to 2021.

In terms of secondary movement, there was an increase in the number of detections particularly in Western Europe from Southeastern Europe. This development could have been caused by intensified checks of health/vaccination certificates against ID cards or passports which enabled border officials to detect a higher number of (poor) counterfeit

EU ID documents. Now that health/vaccination certificates are rarely required for travel, the number of detections pertaining to secondary movements could artificially decrease due to fewer checks of travel documents.

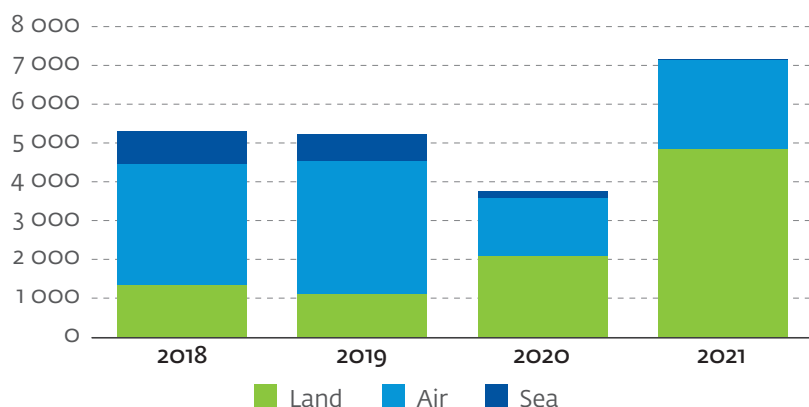
Looking ahead, document forgers are likely to continue to make strides in the quality of their forgeries, making the detection of such fraud even more complex. Meanwhile, identity fraud will be used more often in reaction to improvements put forward in the security features of travel documents.

The war in Ukraine may offer other migrants and criminals – residing in the country prior the conflict for instance – to mix in the flow of mostly Ukrainian refugees entering the EU/Schengen area from Ukraine equipped with fraudulent documents, which may impact internal security.

Regarding another of the manifold impacts of the war in Ukraine, an increased demand for fraudulent documents by Russian nationals intent on entering the EU MS/SAC under altered travel conditions (including under the impact of the suspended visa facilitation agreement) is possible. Frontex data indeed suggests that the number of Russian nationals with fraudulent documents on entry to the EU MS/SAC from third countries has risen since the onset of the war in Ukraine.

Figure 5. Persons using fraudulent documents on entry from third countries per border type

Source: FRAN data as of 19 August 2022





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The continuous abuse of health/vaccination certificates, which is still needed in certain regions and countries, may negatively impact public health as the pandemic is not yet over and new COVID-19 variants may still appear.

Mislabelling is a form of document fraud which is used to smuggle various substances that are used in the production of illicit drugs.

Fraudulent documents are also used for purposes other than migrant

smuggling. In 2021, other forms of cross-border crime involving the use of fraudulent documents were frequently recorded. The expected increase in the use of fraudulent documents in 2022/2023 will impact the EU's internal security. Notably, FTFs are among those who use fraudulent documents to enter the EU. Increased passenger flows may bring more FTFs travelling on fraudulent documents to the EU's external borders as they will have a higher chance of hiding

among traveller flows. Identity fraud seems to be a safer way of circumventing border controls for this category of travellers.

There are, however, also financial impacts arising from persons using fraudulent documents, such as tax evasion, which is linked to the trade in biodiesel, and the mislabelling of tobacco products etc.





Secondary Movements>Returns

Secondary movements*

Most secondary movements in EU MSs/SACs start from the entry points of the main irregular migration routes in the Mediterranean Sea. In 2021, the phenomenon of secondary irregular migration returned to the high levels seen before the pandemic. Data reported to Frontex show that secondary movements from Mediterranean MSs increased significantly. Recently secondary movements from countries bordering Belarus have gained significance following the migration crisis at the external borders with Belarus.

Countries in the geographic centre of the European Union will likely remain the chief destination countries that migrants try to reach. It is also worth noting that the main non-EU destination of secondary movements through the MSs/SACs is the United Kingdom. Irregular migrants typically reach the UK aboard small boats or by hiding on vehicles transported by ferries or the Eurostar train.

Irregular secondary movements from the EU's southeast towards other EU MSs/SACs, with the support of criminal networks, will most likely continue on intra-EU flights with migrants using false and impostor documents. Sea routes will also continue to be used, but most migrants arriving on the Eastern Mediterranean route to mainland Europe will continue to cross the Western Balkan states and again reach the Schengen area.

Secondary movements do not only take place right after the illegal crossing of the EU's external borders especially in the Mediterranean Sea, but also towards EU MSs/SACs that are further north and west. Reports from Member States indicate intra-EU routes of

irregular migrants in all regions and directions, very frequently with the intention of submitting a second or further asylum application. Substantial irregular migratory movements not directly deriving from the external borders are for example seen from northern Europe southwards.

When apprehended in a transit country, migrants often try to continue their trip by applying for asylum and soon afterwards, absconding. That is shown by the high rate of implicitly withdrawn applications¹ and Dublin procedures on take back requests.²

The reasons for secondary movements are multifaceted and difficult to generalise. One important aspect might be differences in reception conditions across EU MSs/SACs. Although recognition rates for some nationalities differ strongly across EU MSs/SACs, it is not clear to what extent this might encourage secondary migration. For example, there is evidence that secondary movements also took place after protection status had been granted in another EU MS/SAC. In such cases, the actual content of protection status and related integration and livelihood opportunities, which differ greatly between EU MS/SAC, may be a determining factor.

Inadequate registration procedures after detection at the EU's external borders complicate the subsequent identification of arrivals in other EU MSs/SACs

- 1 An application is withdrawn implicitly where an applicant can no longer be located and is considered to have abandoned the procedure.
- 2 Requests under the Dublin III Regulation (EU 604/2013) to take back are sent when a third-country national or a stateless person has made an application in another EU MS/SAC, withdrawn an application in another EU MS/SAC or been issued a rejection on an application in another EU MS/SAC.

and hinder the transfer to those EU MSs/SACs, on the external borders, through the Dublin procedure. If irregular migrants are not registered (e.g. via Eurodac), they cannot be returned to the EU MS/SAC of first arrival. This significantly facilitates secondary movements.

Available data point to insufficient Eurodac registrations. In 2020, 36% – more than 45 000 of those persons apprehended for illegal border-crossing according to FRAN data – were not registered in Eurodac (category 2) according to EU-Lisa data.

The discrepancies between the number of those subject to the registration process and that of successful registrations vary: In the Member States along the main Mediterranean routes registration rates fluctuated from 68% to close to 100% in relation to the reported IBCs.

Secondary movements may put pressure on host countries and may also include individuals posing a major risk to the internal security of the EU, such as radicalised persons and travelling terrorists/FTFs. Moreover, migrants who use people smugglers expose themselves to danger, for instance, by being concealed in lorries or other vehicles. During secondary movements, vulnerable persons oftentimes remain outside of the scope of authorities and therefore lack protection, making them particularly vulnerable for trafficking. Secondary movements, especially those leading to multiple asylum applications, also increase the workload of EU MS/SAC authorities involved in asylum.

The current increase in irregular crossings of the EU's external borders implies that the risk of secondary movements growing in 2022/2023 is high, which further underlines the importance of registration and accommodation of migrants crossing the EU's external borders illegally. The

* Chapter prepared in cooperation with the EUAA

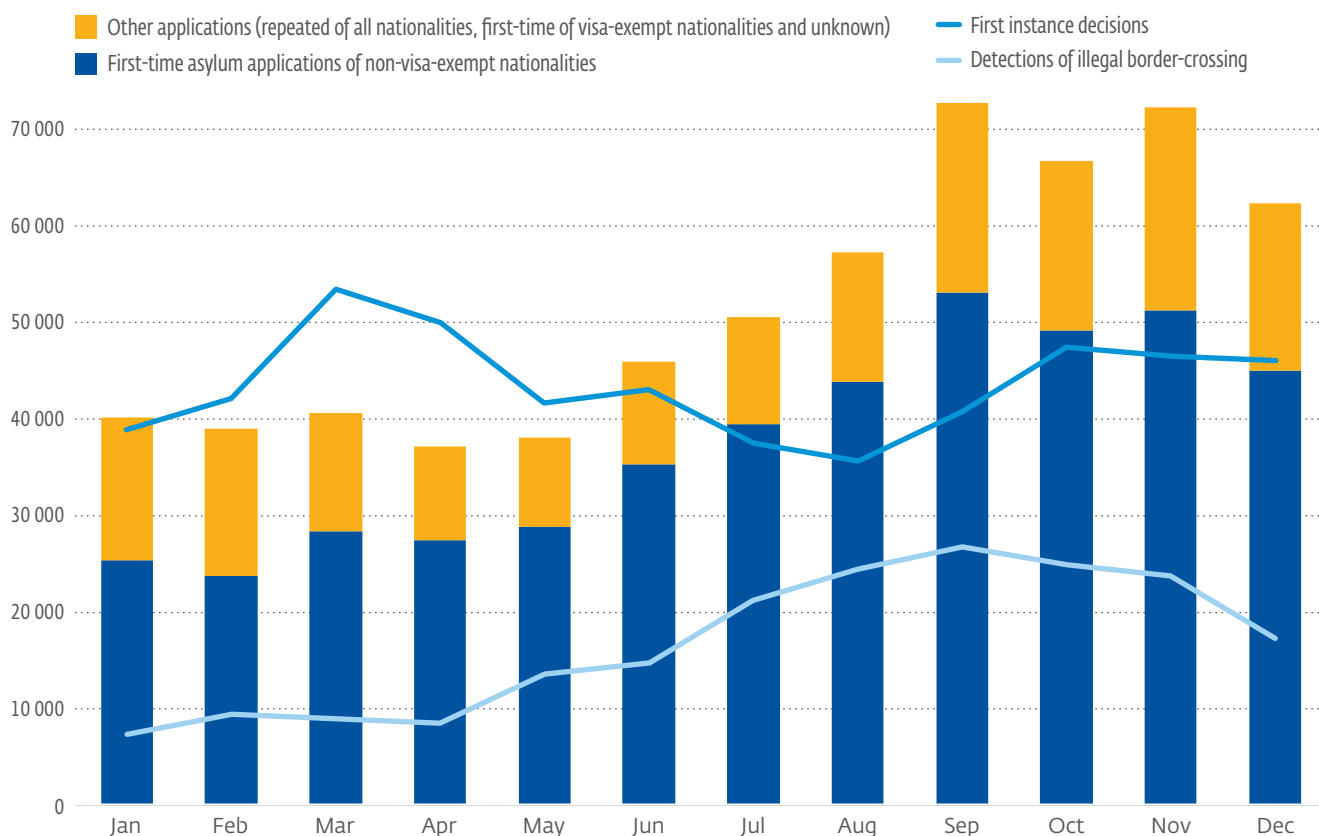


Figure 6. Asylum and other applications vs first instance decisions and detections of illegal border-crossings in 2021

The statistics presented in this analysis are based on data collected by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) and the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) under different indicators; direct comparisons between these data are thus not possible. EUAA data are provisional and cover EU Member States plus Norway and Switzerland.

recent examples of quickly evolving migratory phenomena further stress the need for solid contingency planning that enables the rapid expansion of accommodation capacity should the need arise. Increasing cases of irregular migrants hiding in lorries to remain undetected e.g., during reinstated controls of the internal borders between MSs, particularly highlight the importance of tracking and identifying secondary migration routes by increased cooperation between EU MSs/SACs. Ultimately, addressing gaps in the return systems of individual EU MSs/SACs may go a long way towards discouraging irregular

migrants from undertaking dangerous movements across Europe.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine was met with the first-ever activation of the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD). While those who in the first days of the war applied for asylum in an EU/SAC country and since then have moved onward to another EU/SAC country may technically be considered cases of secondary movements, since the TPD introduction Ukrainians may legally move onward. En route to their potentially distant destinations, vulnerable groups may lack adequate protection, including from human traffickers. For those who lack effective

prove of having crossed the border after 24 February 2022, additional burdens to the TPD applicants may arise, associated with the risk for those concerned of being left unprotected and without a proven legal status in the EU, which could undermine effective access to rights. This underlines the need for exhaustive registration of all refugees upon arrival to EU MS/SAC.

Risks to return operations

2022/2023 are likely to become challenging years for returns for a growing number of reasons. During the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic in March and April of 2020, the number of return decisions and effective returns dropped rapidly. 2020 registered a 50%-decrease in returns compared to 2019.

Shortly after the first health measures and travel restrictions imposed in March 2020 were lifted, the number of return decisions issued by EU MS/SAC exceeded pre-pandemic levels. In this regard, it is worth noting that irregular migration pressure on the EU's external borders also increased. Eventually, with 350 000 return decisions, 2021 became the year with the largest number in relation to this indicator since return data collection commenced in 2011. In fact, the figure exceeded the previous record year's (2020) by over six percent.

In 2021, the number of illegal border crossings on the EU's external borders surpass the figure for 2020, but it was also the highest since 2017. In contrast, the number of effective returns (around 78 000) was only somewhat higher in 2021 than in 2020, which was the lowest since Member States began reporting return data to Frontex in 2011.

It is worth noting that when comparing the two main return indicators, multiple return decisions may have been issued to the same individual. Moreover, because of reporting and time gaps, and procedural issues, comparisons should be undertaken with caution. Nevertheless, a long-term comparison shows a continuously increasing gap between reported return decisions and effective returns in EU MSs/SACs. While between 2011 and 2015, the number of effective returns amounted to between 60% and 70% of return decisions issued to third country nationals, this share had fallen to 46% by 2019. In 2020 and 2021, effective returns amounted to only 21% and 22% respectively of return decisions.

Efforts to harmonise effective returns and return decisions in 2022/2023 will not only be complicated by health-related developments, but also by several other factors.

The spread of COVID-19 and its variants has led to the adoption of drastic measures in most countries around the world, severely affecting international travel, including returns. Although the first set of restrictions adopted by authorities in 2020 were often replaced by more tailor-made and adjusted approaches during following waves of infections, limitations to international travel still persist.

Difficulties are reported when the concerned third-country nationals refuse COVID-19 tests as required by many third countries before boarding their flights. Receiving test results on time combined with quarantine measures upon entry and/or return pose challenges not only for third-country national concerned, but also for escorts, monitors and other on-board staff. Quarantine provisions require additional planning. Variants with higher transmission rates increase the likelihood of the concerned individuals to test positive. For this reason, contingency planning needs to ensure the timely conduct of return flights as agreed with third countries.

Even more problematic are travel restrictions that imply flight bans, countries' of destination or airlines' capping of the number of third-country national concerned on board flights or limitations on the number of flights to certain third countries. Additionally, limited capacities especially for forced returns on commercial or charter flights continue to exist in relation to some regions.

Another obstacle to return relates to consular cooperation, which suffered under the pandemic. While in 2019, third-country authorities issued more than 20 000 emergency travel documents (ETD), this number decreased to fewer

than 12 000 in 2020. Apparently, consular activities did not return to normal in 2021, e.g., due to limited prospects for return to some destination countries on account of the continued lack of flight connections and limitations on identification interviews with returned third-country nationals (both due to social distancing and limited travel possibilities for identification missions), which resulted in the issuance of only around 19 000 ETDs.

Considering the expected return workload for 2022/2023, consular cooperation is a bottleneck that could however be resolved by e.g., the promotion of contactless identification, including via third country readmission case management systems, and identification interviews through video technology, as well as the organisation of identification missions when international travel is feasible.

The number of third countries to which forced returns needed to be suspended due to security reasons has lately been increasing. The importance of thorough and timely assessments of the security and fundamental rights situation in relation to countries of origin is growing. Recent examples of a (temporary) suspension of forced returns due to a deteriorating security situation are Afghanistan, Sudan, Ethiopia and Kazakhstan.

In particular, the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation led to the suspension of forced returns to Ukraine (including the return of other third-country nationals other than Ukrainian). The existing tensions moreover affect returns to the Russian Federation.

Starting from 2020, deteriorated relations with Belarus reduced the number of returns also to this country. The number of forced returns diminished further in 2021 to only a couple of cases per month on account of the migration crisis at the EU's external borders with Belarus.

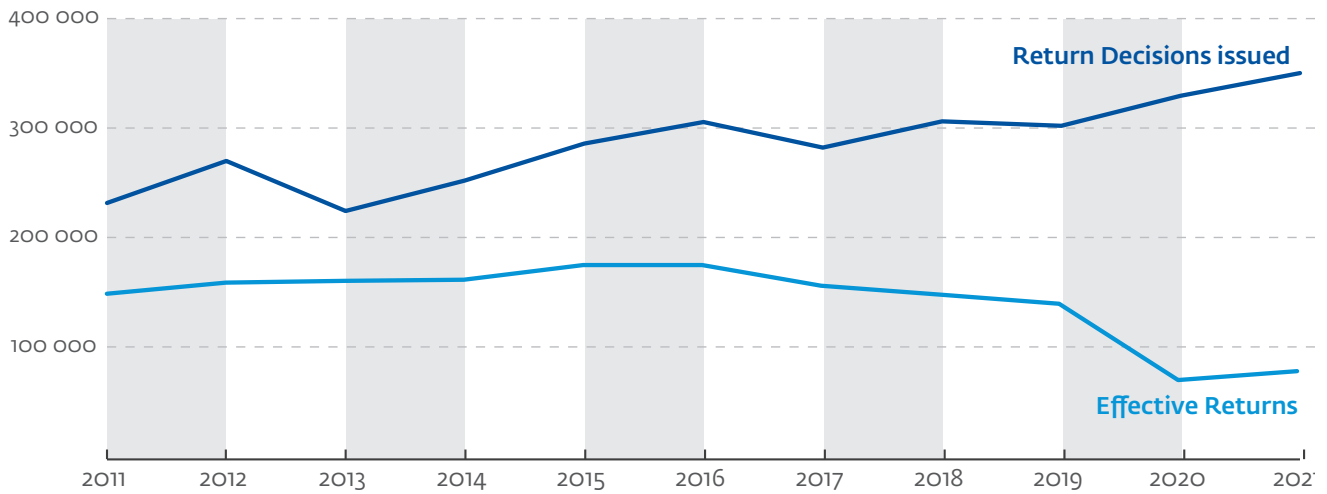


Figure 7. Return Decisions versus Effective Returns over the last decade

Source: FRAN data as of 19 August 2022

With irregular migration surpassing pre-pandemic levels in 2021 and the number of return decisions surpassing 2019 figures, return authorities in EU MSs/SACs are confronted with an increasing backlog performing returns because of health-related restrictions and other reasons. Data, however, point to differences between the types of return. While, due to the pandemic, forced returns decreased by 64% between 2019 and 2020, voluntary departures declined by a lower rate – 41%.

A particular example for the significance of voluntary departures are nationals of Central and South America: while forced returns in 2021 were 73% lower than in 2019, this decline could to a large part be compensated by voluntary departures that doubled within the same period. Testing and other health-related requirements for travel, with the support of EU MSs/SACs and/or Frontex, can be more easily complied with if the third-country national returns on a voluntary basis.

With regard to returns supported by Frontex, 2021 observed a significant growth in returns mainly due to the increase of voluntary returns and voluntary departures that were, among others, carried out utilising Frontex’s scheduled flights mechanism, which offers an increased availability of routes as well as an easier and safer way of carrying out returns of individuals and smaller groups while taking into account COVID-19 circumstances and limitations.

The arrival of voluntarily returned third-country nationals in their home countries is supported through reintegration programmes of MSs/SACs and formerly by the European Return and Reintegration Network (ERRIN). In the course of the ERRIN transfer to Frontex, a call for Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) was launched in 2021 to provide reintegration services to non-EU nationals returning to their countries of origin. The evaluation of the proposals was finalised in the following year. Consequently, six reintegration partners

were granted an FPA. The Frontex Reintegration Programme has started its reintegration services as of 1 April 2022 in 26 priority third countries. Frontex is currently expanding the range of services offered within the Joint Reintegration Services and is looking into opening more destination countries.

Notably, Member States are showing an increased interest in hosting return specialists covering different sub-activities. A continuation of this trend is expected and is already a reality for 2022. Considering new tools and services provided by Frontex (e.g. reintegration assistance) and the role of the Return Counsellors in this process, the need for Return Specialists is expected to continue to increase in the coming years.





Cross-Border Crime

Smuggling of illicit drugs

2021 was another record-breaking year for drug seizures in Europe. Moreover, huge drug busts in main producer countries and en route to Europe showed an alarming picture of the magnitude of drug-related crimes in recent years.

In 2021, Frontex supported the national authorities of Member States and third countries in the framework of Frontex-coordinated joint operations, which resulted in 609 drug-related reports and the seizure of 16 tonnes of illicit drugs.

Overall, in 2021, cooperation with Frontex led to significant results against drug trafficking with over 1 400 reports and 372 tonnes of seized drugs, an increase of 57% compared to 2020. Most of the cases concerned the smuggling of hashish (730 cases, 310 tonnes), although cocaine seizures almost doubled year-on-year (189 cases, 47 tonnes). These two categories of drugs were mainly reported on the shores, and to a lesser extent, at the air borders of Member States. Seizures of cannabis herb were mostly reported inland and at internal land borders, while the most affected external borders were in the Mediterranean. Despite the persisting supply, heroin remained underreported. Detections at EU airports included regular small to medium-sized seizures of cocaine, heroin, khat and synthetic drugs.

Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, drug trafficking networks have become more inventive and daring, seizing every opportunity to make a quick profit by offering large quantities on the illicit drug market. Traffickers include more intermediate stops at EU and non-EU ports, trying to disguise the provenance of the goods. Poly-criminality was also a distinctive feature of the organised crime. According to Europol, in 2021 migrant smuggling networks in the Western Balkans, Morocco and the Canary Islands were also reported for smuggling drugs such as cocaine, cannabis and/or synthetic drugs.

Containerized cocaine trafficking from Latin America towards Europe's main seaports in the North Sea and North Atlantic remained most notable, with consecutive record-high

quantities registered over the last few years. The high capacity and geographical location of the ports in the north of Europe has made them ideal entry points for cocaine, heroin, synthetic drugs and precursors for the whole of Europe and further east towards Russia and Central Asia. In 2021, the North Sea coast overtook the Iberian Peninsula as the primary point of entry for cocaine reaching Europe.¹ Illicit market demands in the British Isles add to the complexity of drug smuggling, impacting ferry and maritime cargo transport to the British Isles, as well as via the Channel Tunnel, with regular outflows of drugs.

Traditional links with Latin American countries have made the Iberian Peninsula one of the most targeted areas in terms of cocaine imports in Europe. In 2021, over 17 tonnes of cocaine were reported². Organised hashish smuggling from Morocco to European shores, with any means available from swimmers and backpackers to large mid-sized boats, relies on a well-functioning criminal infrastructure, which could be used for the trafficking of almost anything on demand, from people to illicit commodities. Transshipment hotspots in West and North Africa, the Canary Islands and the Azores also contributed to the rising drug supply to Europe.

The Mediterranean region continued to be affected by illicit trafficking in drugs, where smuggling networks took advantage of fast developing transport hubs and new transport corridors from Latin America to the Aegean and the Adriatic, in order to diversify trafficking routes. Land routes in the Western Balkans contribute to the distribution of various drugs (cocaine, heroin, synthetic etc) imported into the Adriatic or from Turkey. The region has also been affected by persistent cannabis smuggling, either produced in the Western Balkans

or imported into the region by sea from North Africa and the Middle East.

Heroin trafficking remained largely the same with land routes still dominant. Significant amounts seized in Turkey last year, as well as seizures in the EU, which passed through the filter of the EU's external borders, indicated a return to pre-pandemic levels of trafficking. Heroin exports on maritime routes from ports in Iran and Pakistan, or Georgia, are expected to bring about a resurgence in the trafficking of Afghan heroin towards EU ports in the Mediterranean or in the Black Sea.

In addition, a more extensive distribution of synthetic drugs towards Europe on maritime and land routes can be expected, following the booming production of captagon (Syria and Lebanon) and methamphetamine (Afghanistan) and the flooding of regional markets in Saudi Arabia, India, and Pakistan in recent years.

Increased security and military presence at the Eastern land borders, as a result of the crisis in Belarus and the war in Ukraine, have reduced the odds for opportunistic smugglers to successfully smuggle drugs across the EU's borders. Notably, the region was mostly impacted by the outbound smuggling of hashish to Belarus and Russia.

Beside regular drug smuggling by passengers on air routes from Latin America and Africa, air cargo and postal deliveries have been increasingly used as a consequence of the pandemic. Busy EU airports, considered the main passenger and cargo hubs in Europe, reported most of the seizures in 2021 (which included mostly cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, ketamine, etc.), but other airports across Europe likely faced a similar impact.

Containerised import of drugs at EU seaports will be the main threat materialising the surging drug supply and the resilience of the criminal networks. According to Europol, trafficking routes are set to diversify further, in response to law enforcement actions, taking advantage of new transport links or

1 UNODC-Europol, 2021, Cocaine Insights, <https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/cocaine-insights-1.pdf>

2 EUROSUR, 2021, Information from MS reports

increasingly attractive transit hubs such as those in African countries.

Beside the huge physical impact on people and infrastructure, drug smuggling has also become more integrated with online trade, reducing the number of intermediaries at both ends of the supply chain. Contaminated cargo and postal packages passing through air cargo terminals will be a common occurrence at many EU airports, contributing to the import of drugs to Europe or transit to other continents (Asia, North America, and Australia).

Criminal networks will try to maximise their profits by getting involved in various criminal activities, using available criminal infrastructure and business models. The infiltration of control authorities and legal business structures using corruption and bribery, violence and intimidation could severely worsen the security environment at important entry points of Europe.

Another risk is the possibility of instrumentalising criminality in conflict regions to exert pressure on the EU. The availability of arms and rising violence could increase the influence of criminal networks, involved in various crimes, including drug smuggling and distribution. The conflict in Ukraine will definitely disrupt the drug trafficking routes in Eastern Europe. The impact on socioeconomic activities in Eastern Europe and the Black Sea region will shape the medium- and long-term developments in drug trafficking, but the persistent drug supply will most likely lead to higher intensity of drug smuggling on other routes and via regional drug dealing networks.

Figure 8. Drug seizures in 2021 by type of drug (~1 400 seizures)

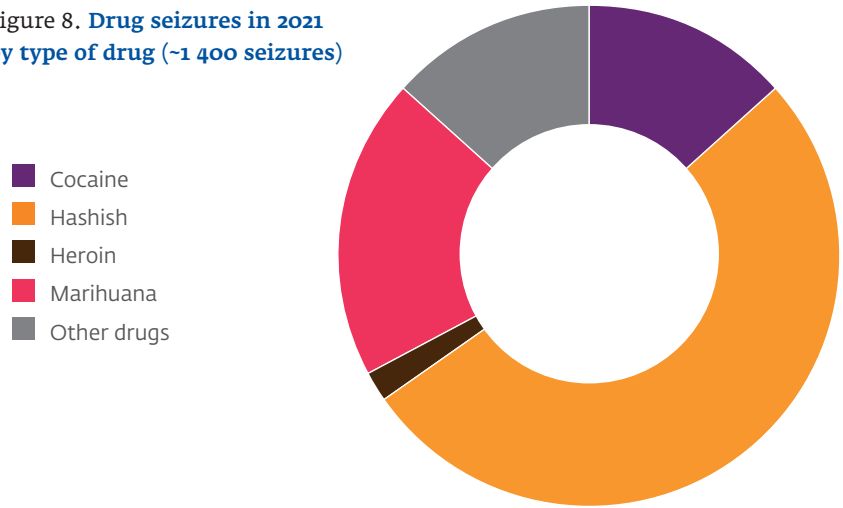


Figure 9. Quantity of seized drugs in 2021 by type of drug (~371 000 kg)

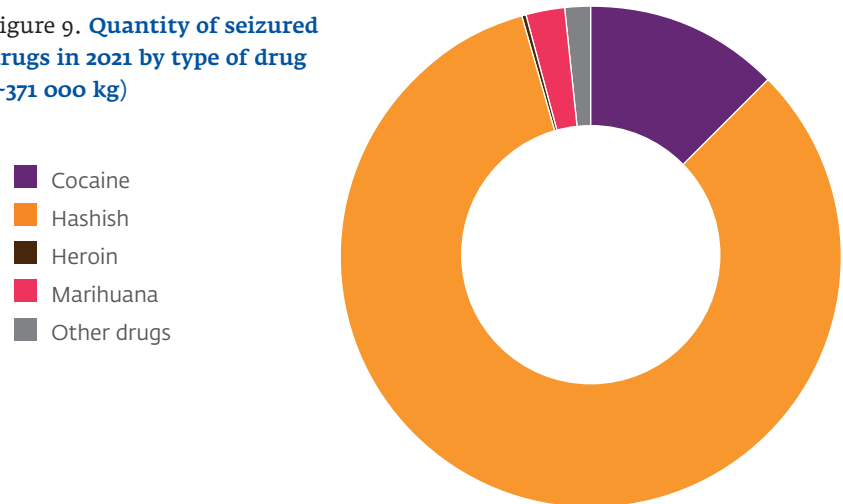
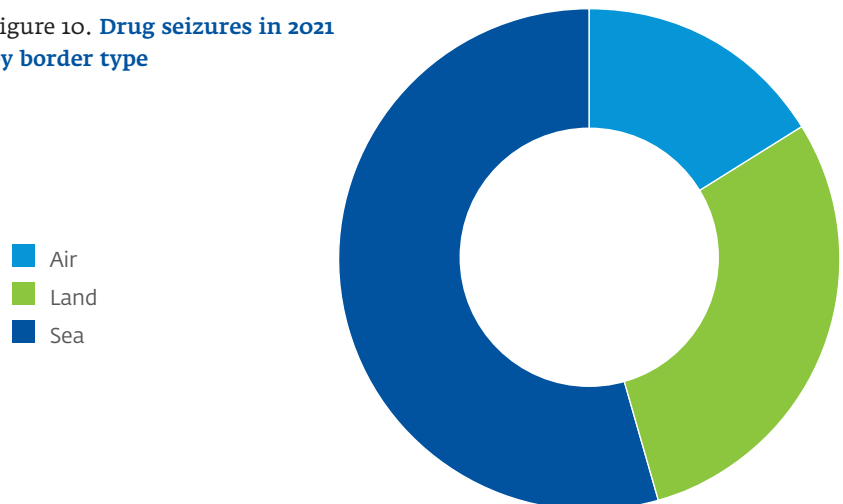


Figure 10. Drug seizures in 2021 by border type



Firearms smuggling

Illegal firearms are instrumental in violence, enable terrorism and other crimes involving coercion and intimidation, and influence the population's perception of safety. While large-scale smuggling to the EU is rare, the most common form of weapons trafficking involves small arms and light weapons smuggled by various types of criminal networks. Firearms smuggled across the EU's external borders (both on entry and on exit) are typically either diverted from legal supply chains, converted or reactivated. Some of those coming into the EU may also originate from stockpiles of weapons in third countries.

In recent years, cheap and easy-to-convert blank firing weapons have become popular among criminals and consequently subject to trafficking.

Terrorist attacks in the EU in recent years, as well as related seizures of firearms in various cross-border and inland operations illustrate the multidimensional and multi-criminal nature of the illicit firearms trade. Moreover, once they start being illegally circulated, firearms pose a lifetime risk. Thus, firearms trafficking is considered as a high threat.

In 2021, border authorities continued to seize numerous weapons, mostly apprehended during border checks. Most were cold arms or prohibited pepper sprays and stun guns – but also firearms and ammunition. The majority of such seizures were not associated with large-scale arms trafficking, but with smuggling for personal use or protection or violations of gun ownership regulations.

While smuggling activities were severely affected by travel restrictions and changes in control intensity, 2021 was marked by a return to old levels and a few major seizures. A total of 3 720 firearms were reportedly¹ smuggled in 2021. Excluding major seizures, reports increased by a factor of four and the quantity of firearms seized by a factor of eight. The fact that nearly 387 000 rounds of

ammunition were seized points to a rising trend in ammunition contraband.

As much as 78 % of all firearms and 63 % of the ammunition were seized at land borders. While the major seizures were related to shipments in vans and lorries, the use of passenger cars continued to dominate. These smuggling cases usually let to the apprehension of single perpetrators.

In Ukraine, considered a hotspot for access to illicit firearms prior also to the war, a significant proportion of these weapons assembled from parts and converted firearms was recognised. This was also true for a major seizure of inadequately documented weapons from Turkey discovered at the EU land border on entry to Ukraine.

Other major seizures in the region, also at the borders with Moldova, point to a thriving market for such weapons in the neighbouring countries and imply a shift from smuggling of small quantities to organised trafficking blended in with legal flows of goods.

Turkey is known as one of the main manufacturers of blank firing weapons, which can be cheaply converted into live-firing firearms. Many such weapons have recently been discovered both in the Balkan region and throughout Europe. The seizure of 175 converted pistols from Turkey on entry to the EU underscores the importance of border checks to disrupt smuggling.

The Western Balkan region, considered as a popular source of firearms, is also increasingly seen as a transit area for converted blank firing firearms from Turkey, usually destined for criminal markets across Europe. In 2021, the Border Police forces of the six regional Western Balkan partners continued to detect weapons and ammunition. At the regional level, the reporting includes, among others, 103 firearms, 2 converted and 31 gas-powered weapons, and almost 17 000 rounds of ammunition. The amount of ammunition confiscated is back to the long-term average, and firearms discoveries remain at a similar level as in recent years. While seizures made by national authorities in the

neighbouring post-conflict areas attest to a significant potential, the same volume of smuggling could not be confirmed by detections at the external borders.

Larger quantities of firearms are usually trafficked aboard vessels. The year 2021 was again characterised by minor detections at sea which were most reported by customs authorities.

The chance of arms and ammunition contraband being detected at airports is generally high due to the use of metal detectors, X-rays, and the detection of traces of explosives. In 2020, the number of seizures on international flights was additionally reduced by travel restrictions. In 2021, 73 % of all cases of firearms detection and 90 % of all ammunition seizures were reported at airports. Despite a high number of cases recorded, they accounted for around 9 % of all firearms detected. Frequent seizures related to small parcel and courier shipments indicate that the trend towards shipping disassembled weapons or essential parts has also reached the EU market.

The developments at the EU's external borders reflect global trends in arms trafficking. In the future smugglers can be expected to further explore the existing loopholes, such as the conversion of alarm weapons originating from Turkey. Smuggled firearms, broken down into their components, special components and accessories altering the lethality or completing sets of 3D-printed parts will pose additional challenges for border and customs controls. Moreover, there is a growing phenomenon of so-called 'ghost weapons', produced from unregistered, illegally manufactured firearms parts, 3D-printed parts, and components which can be legally obtained on external markets. In this way, criminals and terrorists can obtain fully untraceable weapons. However, online trade and 3D-printing will also increase the availability of weapons to people with no criminal connections.

Crises typically increase the perceived uncertainty, fear, and the desire for self-protection. The resulting demand may be a motivation to turn to illegal suppliers. Moreover, the post

1 16 EU Member States and EFTA countries sharing aggregated statistics on seizures at the external borders (as of 10 February 2022)

pandemic period generated an increased volatility, competition and violence between crime groups, leading to an arms race. The economic fallout caused by the current health crisis will increase the risk that firearms held – legally or illegally – by civilians and small businesses might end up in criminal cycles, as people are looking for ways to cope financially. Increased availability coupled with a growing demand drive black markets resulting in a threat of trafficking.

Looking forward, the war in Ukraine will completely transform the patterns of illicit firearms flows in Europe. There are multiple scenarios. Due to the ongoing conflict a large quantity of military weapons is uncontrolled, and the proliferation of weapons and explosives is likely to continue in Ukraine. Once hostilities are over, there is the possibility that such weapons will be subject to trafficking. Organised smugglers will most likely take advantage of the opportunities this will provide – irrespective of whether they smuggle weapons into or out of Ukraine.

A WCO report highlights that 82 % of all detections made during customs control were based on risk profiling. This underscores the significance of cooperation between border guards, customs officers, and other authorities enabling targeted detailed checks of travellers and shipments. The necessary exchange is often not implemented systematically.

Furthermore the results of Joint Action Days show that intense measures focusing on the means of transport as well as targeted border checks lead to increased detections of firearms trafficking and other smuggling activities. However, addressing increasing cross-border crime inevitably ties up additional resources and thus slows down the cross-border traffic.

The trade in illegal firearms is an enabler for other criminal activities such as drug trafficking and amplifies the threat they pose to the internal security of the EU. Armed criminals and violent crimes carried out using illegal firearms create a sense of insecurity and undermine public confidence in the rule of law.

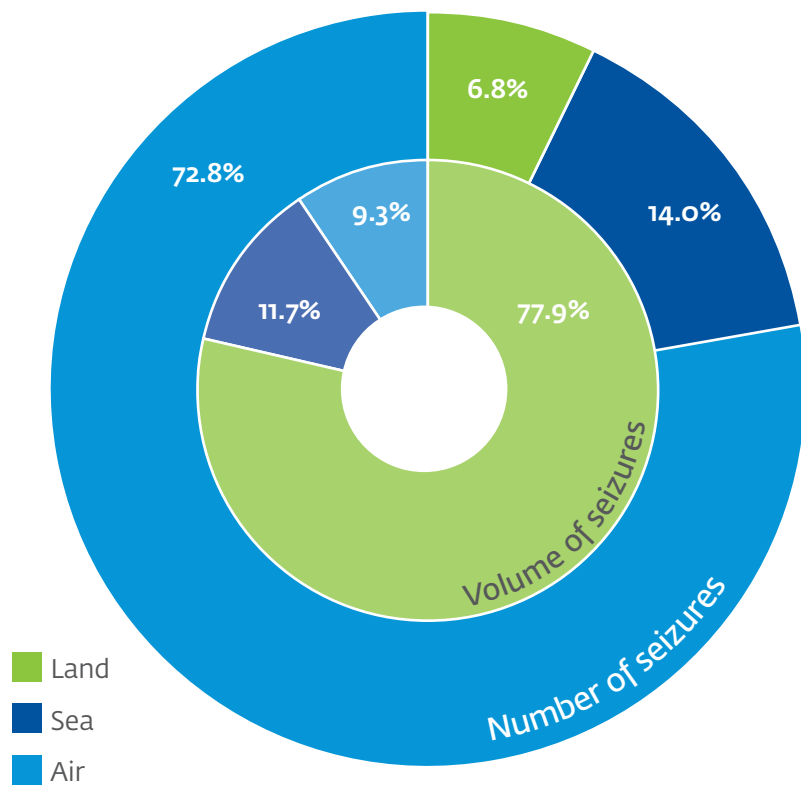


Figure 11. Cases and volume of firearms seized at the external border in 2021 per border type based on aggregated statistics shared by 16 EU Member States and EFTA countries

Detection of stolen vehicles and vehicle parts

The smuggling of stolen vehicles and parts continues to be a common problem at the EU's external borders. The high registration levels of new car thefts in 2021 highlighted that organised criminal networks continued to engage in the theft of motor vehicles.

In 2021, during Frontex-coordinated joint operations, 197 stolen vehicles were seized (145 at the EU's external borders and 52 in the Western Balkans). Additionally, 24 cases of smuggling of stolen car parts and 69 cases of vehicle-related document fraud were registered (mostly at the Eastern land borders). Despite the year-on-year increase of 40%, reporting in 2021 remained significantly lower than in pre-pandemic years. In addition, authorities carrying out border control and surveillance activities in EU Member States reported 260 stolen vehicles, seized either at the EU's external borders (132) or at internal borders and inland (128).

Most of the information referred to stolen passenger cars (77%) and lorries and semitrailers (15%), but other types of vehicles like motorcycles, campers, agricultural and construction machines were also targeted. The detections resulted mostly from a SIS II or Interpol hit (62%), but VIN manipulation (13%) and use of false registration documents and licence plates (12%) were on the rise in 2021.

In the majority of the detections the cars were driven or towed on a trailer through land BCPs. Cases of cars and parts concealed inside semitrailers or cargo vans were increasingly reported. Containerised traffic of stolen cars and parts through EU seaports was also detected.

In 2021 the main impact of stolen vehicle smuggling was at land BCPs on the main transport corridors. Different types of vehicles were trafficked in order to meet criminal market demands. The Eastern land borders, which reported 66% of all stolen vehicle-related incidents in Frontex operations last year, continued to be the most affected. While cases involving the trafficking of stolen vehicles to Ukraine and Moldova frequently occurred, the borders with Belarus and Russia continued to

report a high rate of vehicle-related document fraud. Alterations of data in vehicle registration certificates with the aim of reducing or avoiding import and registration fees, as well as using counterfeit licence plates were among the most common violations.

The Western Balkans were impacted by frequent detections of stolen vehicles at land borders and seaports, reporting roughly 23% of the incidents in 2021. Changing drivers and transport means during different legs of the journey across Europe was a usual *modus operandi*, which also included software manipulation, counterfeiting of documents, registration certificates and licence plates.

Although fewer cases were reported in 2021, trafficking of vehicles and parts at EU seaports had a big financial impact. For instance, in 2021, cases of defrauding the EU of hundreds of thousands of Euros at different seaports indicated an elevated risk of vehicle-related financial fraud. Containerised imports of stolen or damaged vehicles from the US and Canada, false registration documents, customs declarations with a significantly lowered value, VAT fraud, imports of substandard vehicles and parts, etc. were among the various criminal offences prevented by law enforcement authorities. The export of vehicles to North and West Africa was also characteristic for EU ports in the north of Europe and in the Mediterranean.

The resilience of the criminal networks and the law-enforcement countermeasures against motor vehicle crime determine the specific risks of trafficking of stolen vehicles and parts at the EU's external borders. In addition, socio-economic factors influencing the car industry in Europe, such as increased demand for personal mobility in times of COVID-19, industry slowdown and stricter environmental requirements, also have an indirect effect on crime by reducing the accessibility of new and used vehicles.

According to Europol, thefts of vehicles and spare parts in the EU feed both EU and non-EU illicit markets. Criminal networks involved in vehicle crime

can be described as mobile, collaborative and networked, often breaking down the different stages of trafficking between the different actors involved. Europol notes that for the purchase and sale of stolen vehicles and spare parts, different types of legal business structures are infiltrated by criminal networks involved in motor vehicle crime, such as official and second-hand car dealers or repair shops, among others.¹

Incentivised by the increased demand and rising prices of new and used vehicles, resulting from the reduced production capacity of the car industry, criminal groups will try to maximise their profits by stealing desired cars and equipment and selling them in EU Member States or abroad in third countries. Transporting vehicles to neighbouring Member States or immediately exporting stolen vehicles through land BCPs, will be the preferred *modus operandi*.

In addition, the fast change to electric mobility stimulates the increase of imports at EU seaports of new and used vehicles from North America and Asia, which could bring new risks of rising document fraud and customs violations. Changing customer preferences also create a niche for criminal activities. The different pace of adoption of electric mobility within Europe incentivises internal EU trafficking of stolen vehicles, as well as registration and insurance fraud. While in northern Europe a growing market of electric and hybrid cars is expected, in south-eastern Europe, the secondary market of 10- to 15-year-old combustion engine vehicles remains dominant. Based on operational reports, south-eastern Europe is often considered a destination for vehicles and spare parts, stolen in different Member States. Moreover, criminal networks try to smuggle stolen vehicles to Eastern Europe and the Middle East, using the cover of unlawfully changed EU vehicle registration.

1 Europol 2021, European Union Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (EU SOCTA 2021), accessible at https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/socta2021_1.pdf

Vehicle-related document fraud is a common risk on the EU's external borders. Cases involving counterfeit vehicle registration documents, insurance policies, lease contracts, registration plates (either false or not matching the vehicle they were mounted on), have been reported from most of the BCPs on the Eastern land borders and in the Balkans. Additional sets of registration plates, found inside vehicles (mostly on entry from Morocco), are an indication of possible misuse in criminal activities.

Stolen vehicles have often been used as a means for facilitating other criminal activities like migrant smuggling and drug trafficking. The misuse of stolen vehicles for other unlawful purposes is a persistent threat, especially in regions with a worsening security environment. Stolen cars could be used for violent and extremist acts in border regions with mounting tensions.

On the other hand, the war in Ukraine and the altered security situation in Eastern Europe may make the region much less attractive for trading in stolen vehicles, and criminal groups may hence direct their attention to other black markets in Europe and Africa. Spiking inflation and the dampened economic outlook in Europe and globally may stimulate the trade in more affordable used spare parts, many of them sourced from stolen vehicles in scrapyards across Europe.

The reduced availability of cars and spare parts, as well as limited cross-border mobility (as a result of the recent health, economic and political crises), have stimulated the growth in stolen vehicles, spare parts, and equipment with individual postal and cargo deliveries being sold online. Anonymous online trading will be a preferred *modus operandi*, with customers and transport companies often unaware that they have bought and/or delivered a stolen item. The trafficking through the borders of stolen car parts or dismantled vehicles with the aim of reassembling those vehicles in the country of destination is expected to continue at a similar pace in 2022/2023.

Figure 12. Incidents of detected stolen vehicles and vehicle related document fraud by route

- Baltic and North Sea
- Black Sea
- Adriatic
- West Med
- Balkans
- Eastern Land

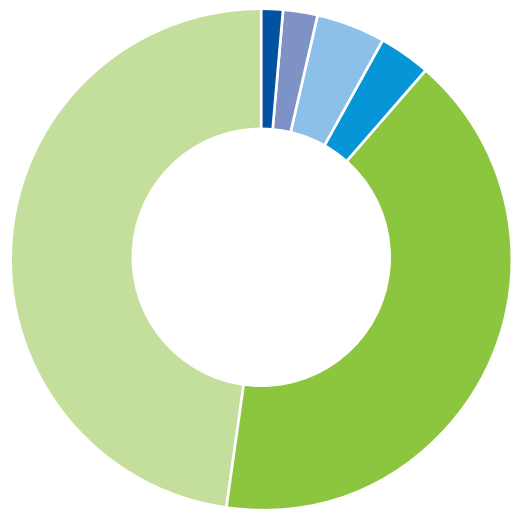


Figure 13. Detection of stolen vehicles in 2021 by reason for detection

- SIS
- Interpol
- stolen (reason unspecified)
- VIN manipulated
- false documents
- licence plates

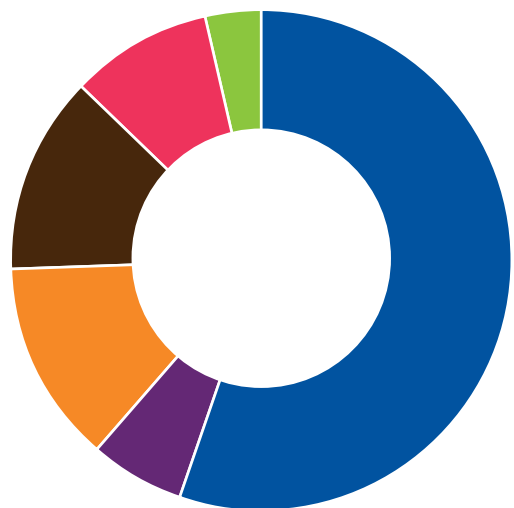
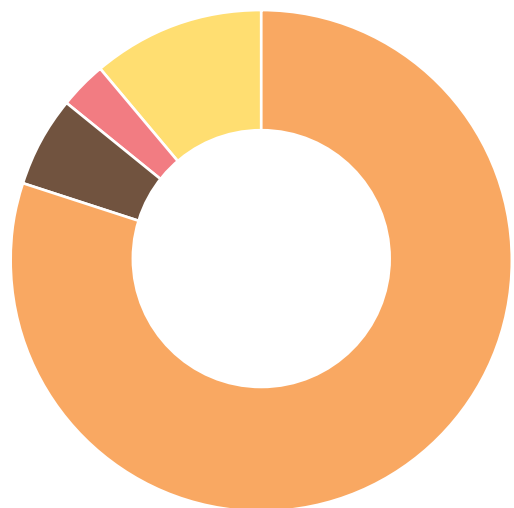


Figure 14. Detection of stolen vehicles in 2021 by transportation method through the borders

- driven
- towed
- semitrailer
- container



Tobacco smuggling

In 2019, the World Bank estimated that the global illicit tobacco trade generates enormous proceeds (between USD 40 and 50 billion per year), which clearly shows the importance of fighting the smuggling of tobacco products.

Significant price differences between Member States and between Member States and neighbouring countries are the main incentives for criminal networks involved in this profitable criminal activity. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) warned that COVID-19 has created new opportunities for organised crime to profit.

According to a study (commissioned by the tobacco industry), despite a general decline in consumption, the European market (EU, UK, Norway, and Switzerland) for illicit cigarettes continued to increase, to EUR 34 billion (7.8% of the total cigarette consumption in 2020) and generated a tax loss of about EUR 8.5 billion. A study from 2017 estimated that border authorities managed to intercept almost 10% of the illicit cigarette flow into the EU market.

Based on operational findings of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), illicit cigarettes destined for EU markets mainly originate from the Far East, followed by the Balkans, Eastern Europe, and Turkey.

In 2021, Frontex-coordinated operational activities in the Member States resulted in the seizure of around 23.3 million cigarettes and almost 3 tonnes of tobacco, which is more than in 2020 (both in the volume and number of detections) but still below pre-pandemic levels. Member States¹ reported a significant increase in smuggling activities in 2021, with 288 million cigarettes (+46%) and 528 tonnes of tobacco (18 times more than in the previous year) seized at the border. Large-scale, organised cigarette smuggling activities can be detected at all border types.

1 18 EU Member States and EFTA countries sharing aggregated statistics on seizures at the external borders (as of 10 February 2022)

The land border was the most affected in terms of the total volume of seizures. As much as 72% of all seized cigarettes and 96% of the seized tobacco were related to land border crossings, mostly on entry. Generally, the volume of individual seizures increased. The contraband was in most cases blended in with the flow of goods, hidden in lorries and trains, using 'covering shipments' or specially built compartments. The use of cargo trains was a steadily increasing phenomenon. The number of illegal Belarusian cigarettes discovered on trains in Lithuania in 2021 was as high as the sum total of the past seven years. The external land borders with Belarus, Ukraine, and Turkey were the most targeted in 2021.

Frequently observed *modi operandi* included smugglers carrying voluminous packages crossing the border on foot, often across the border river. When spotted, the smugglers would abandon the contraband and escape, mostly back to the other side of the border. Such incidents were usually committed by smaller local groups, with drivers picking up the contraband on the EU side. Additionally, the use of drones and small planes was reported, as well as the use of GPS-tracked rafts in rivers. Such cases show smugglers are constantly adjusting their *modus operandi*.

According to Europol, large-scale smuggling in shipping containers targets major seaports and free economic zones before entering the EU.

Such contraband is either smuggled to the EU directly, e.g. through Bulgarian and Romanian ports or indirectly via Ukraine, an important hub for cigarette smuggling, or the Western Balkans. In 2021, the number of illicit cigarettes seized at the EU sea borders almost quadrupled and accounted for 22% of the total volume of cigarette/tobacco smuggling to the EU. Due to the high consumer prices in Ireland and the UK, both countries are high-profit markets for contraband originating from and transiting the EU.

A strong rebound in detections was observed at air borders. While this border type is responsible for the highest

number of detected cases (78% of all seizures), the volume of the contraband accounts for only 4% of all seized cigarettes and less than 2% of seized tobacco. The most reported *modus operandi* involved items being concealed in passengers' luggage. Other, less common, methods included air mail and shipments.

The pandemic and associated restrictions temporarily disrupted supply chains in 2020. However, criminal groups were quick to prove that they are highly flexible, creative, and willing to invest to adapt to the situation and continue profiting from this illicit trade. The global health crisis and financial downturn has created the conditions for criminal networks to further exploit public demand for cheap goods while the strained economic situation of many households increases the appeal of such offers. In particular, cigarette trafficking is perceived as a 'victimless crime' and the smugglers face much lighter consequences than in the case of smuggling other illicit goods.

At the same time, the tobacco industry especially in Belarus and China has an active interest in meeting the demand of European black markets and in encouraging new generations of smokers to pick up the unhealthy habit. Moreover, the issue of illicit tobacco trade is no longer limited to cigarettes. Water pipe tobacco and raw tobacco has been increasingly smuggled in recent years. Criminals are eager to take advantage of the growing demand for innovative nicotine products, such as e-cigarettes and disposables, and profit from smuggling and selling illegal and potentially harmful counterfeits. The fact that 1.75 million forged tax/excise stamps have been seized on their way from Turkey to Ukraine is another indication of the scale of international collaboration of criminal networks.

As the demand is being fed by the pressure on consumers' purchasing power and non-domestic producers strive to take a share of the European black market, smuggling of different tobacco products, raw tobacco, and other components will be a continuous threat – even

if the general consumption is decreasing. The threat will materialise along the land borders of the EU, especially in the East, at sea borders in major ports and, to a lesser extent, at air borders. Thus, it will continue to be a challenge for customs and border controls as well as border surveillance. Enhanced border control measures and sanctions will hamper smuggling activities at the land border with Russia and Belarus. The latter will continue to face a high risk of cigarette smuggling. The war in Ukraine, which was identified as a hub for smuggling activities, will influence smuggling activities in the region and beyond. Not only that an established routes is disrupted, also sanctions may influence production capacities in eastern Europe. Shipments from the Far East will address other harbours. A high level of volatility in smuggling routes is expected. Traffickers will constantly optimise their operations making use of the latest technology, attempting to evade the border management measures in place.

Besides constituting a burden on border management, cigarette smuggling has a much broader impact. Each year, smuggling activities cause large losses in the Member States' budgets (roughly EUR 10 billion annually at EU level), bolster organised crime, and are considered a catalyst for other criminal activities. The availability of illicit cigarettes does not only undermine anti-smoking and public-health campaigns. It also poses a serious risk to the consumers' health both directly – as the production is not properly controlled – and indirectly – as smoking is the single largest avoidable health risk factor and the most significant cause of premature death in the EU, responsible for nearly 700 000 deaths every year. To mention just one environmental impact, each year 5 trillion cigarette butts, that are not properly disposed of around the globe, generate around 770 million tonnes of toxic waste and release toxic chemicals into the air, water, and soil.

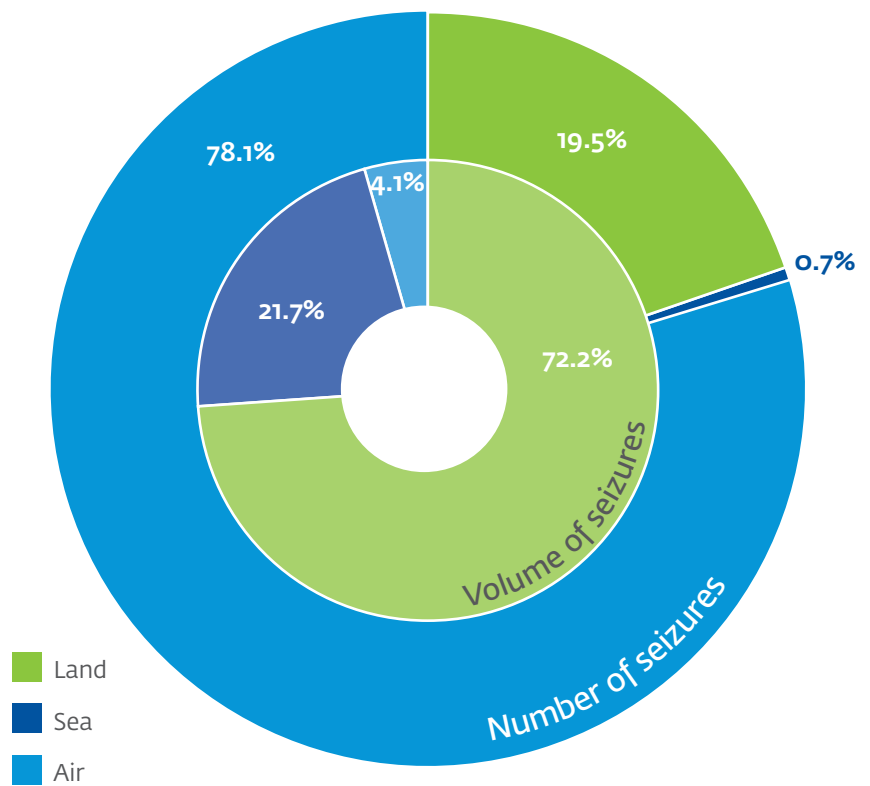


Figure 15. Cases and volume of cigarettes seized at the external borders in 2021 per border type based on aggregated statistics shared by 18 EU Member States and EFTA countries.

Trafficking in human beings

The European Union continues to be a destination for victims of human trafficking originating in third countries. Sexual exploitation (46 %) remained the prominent form of trafficking in the EU, followed by labour exploitation (21 %). Some victims were forced into criminal activities (12 %) while others were victims of domestic servitude (4 %). Women and girls comprised the largest group of THB victims, both among the EU and non-EU identified nationals, this fact being strongly correlated with the main purpose of trafficking – sexual exploitation.¹

Among the non-EU nationals, victims from Nigeria, Albania and China were most often trafficked for sexual exploitation, while Sudanese, Vietnamese, Chinese, Indian, Eritrean nationals were trafficked for the purpose of labour exploitation in various Member States. In this context, Africa remains an important source region for victims of human trafficking in the EU. Nonetheless, the data on nationalities is dynamic and often follows recent developments of humanitarian crises around the world.

Child trafficking often remains invisible to society, hidden behind family and religious customs of different national and ethnic groups. Reported cases involved sexual exploitation, forced begging and forced involvement in crime such as cannabis cultivation, the selling of drugs or pickpocketing. The rising number of unaccompanied children on the move during health and humanitarian crises significantly increases the risk of child exploitation. An estimated 42 % of all forcibly displaced people in 2020 were children², a sign of exposure to violence and exploitation in origin, transit, and destination countries.

Conflict-induced migration and internal displacements were a growing

concern in 2021. The rising number of persons on the move due to armed conflicts and socio-political turmoil exposed vulnerable groups of individuals to the influence of organised crime. Criminal networks take advantage of the characteristics of post-conflict situations and put large number of unaccompanied children, widows, and homeless in acute forms of exploitation such as using children in armed activities, including suicide attacks, selling children, forced marriages, sexual slavery, etc.³

Despite the difference between migrant smuggling and human trafficking, the lack of legal and safe travel routes exposes migrants and refugees to various forms of trafficking and creates big profit opportunities for criminal networks. Criminal activities such as the use of direct threats or force might be easy to spot, but more subtle ways of exploitation remain invisible. Migrants are victimised not only in the country of desired destination, but also along the route, in transit points and migration camps. Victims often become financially indebted to the traffickers and are thus obliged to work for the traffickers to pay back exorbitant amounts of debt. Exploitation and degrading attitudes in countries of origin could also be reasons for fleeing the country and seeking asylum in the EU.

2021 saw a significant growth in the number of sub-Saharan females arriving on the Western African route, reaching its peak in May. Worryingly, suspicious activity indicative of human trafficking remained high, as debriefing activities indicated female victims, who had been exploited either in housekeeping in Morocco, or in prostitution in Europe.

Changing migration trends in the Central Mediterranean indicate that the region is once again perceived as an attractive option to reach the EU. Certain nationalities have been increasingly

targeting Libya as an alternative to the Western and Eastern Mediterranean routes. Additionally, the socioeconomic situation in some African countries has led to a 45 % increase in the number of newly registered refugees in Tunisia, with a large part of them being Ivorian (38 %). The significant number of minors in the Central Mediterranean (47 % of all children and 91 % of all unaccompanied minors (UAM) in 2021 were Tunisian, Egyptian and Bangladeshi) is another high-risk indicator for potential exploitation.

In 2021, the Eastern Mediterranean region saw a significant increase in arrivals of African nationals. Beside the overall rise in the number of migrants from Central Africa, the notable share of female migrants raised concerns for possible sexual exploitation along the route and in destination countries. African women have been recruited by criminal networks with various delusive campaigns for work and education, and subsequently victimised and controlled based on fear, shame and religious beliefs.

The misuse of fraudulently obtained or forged EU identity documents additionally facilitates the secondary movements and the exploitation of vulnerable African nationals in different EU Member States with established African communities.

Migration from Afghanistan on the Eastern Mediterranean route could impact the EU with increased criminality, as nearly 700 000 people have been newly displaced in Afghanistan⁴ and many of them were left homeless, in poverty and indebted to their traffickers.

Western Balkan countries have been impacted by the migration of both their own residents migrating to the EU and people from non-European third countries passing through the region with the aim of entering the EU. Many of these migrants become victims of THB mainly for the purpose of sexual and

1 European Commission, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, Data collection on trafficking in human beings in the EU, Publications Office, 2020, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2837/897741>

2 UNHCR, Global Trends, Forced displacements, 2020, <https://www.unhcr.org/flagship-reports/globaltrends/>

3 UNODC, Countering Trafficking in Persons in Conflict Situations, https://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/2018/17-08776_ebook-Countering_Trafficking_in_Persons_in_Conflict_Situations.pdf

4 UNHCR, Afghanistan emergency, <https://www.unhcr.org/afghanistan-emergency.html>



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labour exploitation. The steady presence of migrant children travelling along the Western Balkan route in recent years points towards the persisting risk of victimisation and exploitation.

The unprecedented flow of people at the Eastern land borders, fleeing from the war in Ukraine, is presenting opportunities for trafficking networks for luring vulnerable people into prostitution or exploiting them in poor work conditions. The exceptional humanitarian crisis and difficulties to independently sustain their living expose many female refugees and children to trafficking. A prolonged military conflict will result in many civilian casualties and many children losing their relatives, thus increasing the number of UAM at the borders. While in the short term the pressure will be most evident on the countries bordering Ukraine, in the medium- and long-term the effects of the unprecedented displacement of people will be seen in all Member States, facing an increasing number of cases of

exploitation. In this regard, maintaining the reception capacities of the Member States is vital for providing immediate protection, but long-term care to vulnerable people and especially to children is also essential. While the majority of people fleeing the war are Ukrainians, the situation has also had a severe effect on other foreign nationals who might experience greater integration difficulties.

Vulnerabilities in the prevention of THB at the borders relate to the possible overlooking of signs of human trafficking. Specialised training of border guards and working jointly with national border guard units competent for addressing THB and human rights counsellors, disseminating information on THB-related risks and where to seek help, is recommended for ensuring timely help to THB victims.

Economic and social vulnerabilities in many third countries, fuelled by different crisis situations around the world, as well as limited institutional response for supporting large groups of vulnerable

people, will continue to generate risks for human trafficking at the EU's external borders.

According to Europol, the sustained demand for sexual services will continue to drive the sexual exploitation of victims. Irregular migrants run the risk of being victimised in exploitative working and living conditions, and in some cases as a means to repay their debt for migrant smuggling services.

African migrants, as well as children and women, arriving on sea and air routes could be considered most exposed to trafficking. Nonetheless, push factors for migration make all migrants vulnerable to different forms of exploitation.

Terrorism

Following the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, less attention has been paid to the low-level insurgency operated by ISIS remnants across Syria and Iraq to exploit governance and security vacuums to strengthen their position. Their recruitment efforts allegedly continue in displaced persons' camps in northern Syria, where easy access and dire humanitarian conditions may offer a population ripe for indoctrination. Regardless, the locus of terrorist violence has been steadily shifting to the Sahel over recent years. Al-Qaeda and ISIS affiliates have shown their political abilities by exploiting governance vacuums, local conflicts, and ethnic dynamics to recruit followers, hone their skills and project power southward. While this may indicate growing intentions and capabilities, the overall focus of the violence remains local. To date, the violence in the central Sahel has resulted in about three million Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs); a condition which

could generate migratory pressure towards the EU.¹

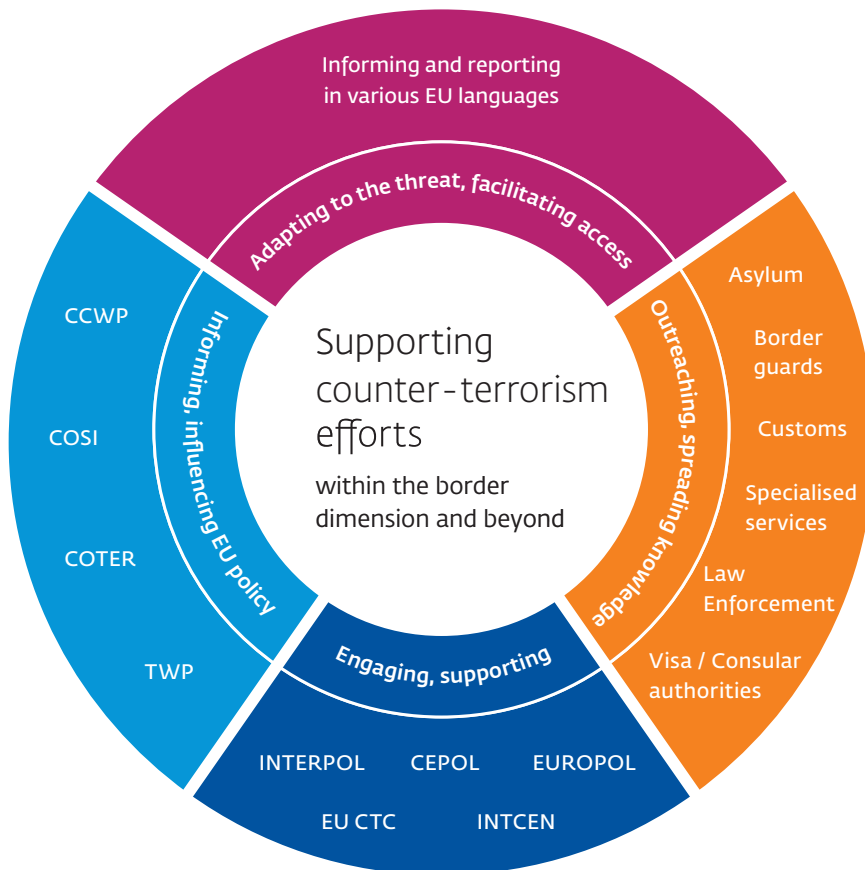
Outside conflict areas the threat will continue to spread through the internet. The pandemic increased the risk of exposure to extremist propaganda as people spend more time online – a condition which raises concerns of less sophisticated/high impact 'lone' actor attacks.² In this sense, 'we must defeat ISIL in cyberspace.'³ With terrorist activities scattered across diverse battlefields, social media platforms become the primary operational space for recruitment and disseminating propaganda. If this is allowed to continue, counterterrorism

- 1 <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/sahelcrisis>
- 2 Letter dated 12 February 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council (securitycouncilreport.org)
- 3 Ibid

efforts will only result in short-term tactical results.

Overall, thousands of FTFs who fought in the ranks of ISIS in the Levant are still unaccounted for. To avoid capture some might have left one battleground to relocate elsewhere, taking their skills and experience with them. Tracking them becomes complicated as they may have moved between several countries over a long period of time before joining other fronts or attempting to get to Europe. That said, undetected entries of high-risk individuals at the external border – such as FTFs and/or subjects linked to some extent to terrorism – will continue posing a major security challenge to the EU. Hence the need for synergies with security constituencies to strengthen multilateral intelligence sharing and cooperation and to better tackle their mobility and reduce the consequent impact on the internal security of the Schengen area.

The Schengen Borders Code requires systematic checks of all persons entering/exiting the external borders against relevant databases. Identifying and addressing operational gaps in database checks is hence paramount. This is of particular concern during the summer when malicious individuals may try to take advantage of busy maritime routes between North Africa and Southern Europe to enter the Schengen area. Frontex support to Member States by screening passengers and referring 'subjects of interest' for detailed second-line checks, e.g., during JO Neptune III, has in this context been proving itself of value. Yet, the pressure stemming from the conflict in Ukraine has also shown the difficulties in exercising effective control at land borders; a condition which may be leaving space for manoeuvre to FTFs/subjects of interest to attempt illegal border-crossing.





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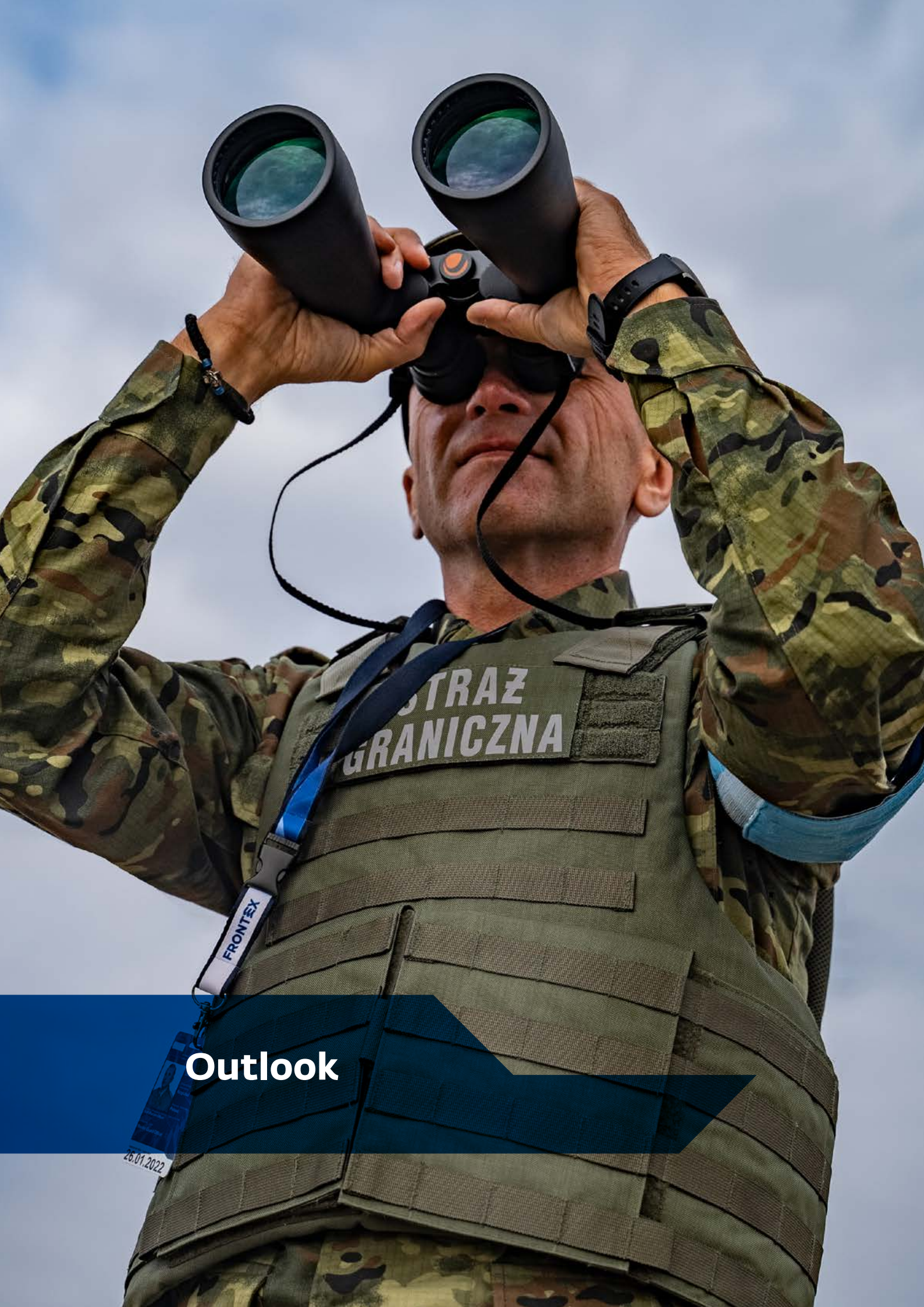
Security threats to the EU do not solely stem from travelling terrorists though. Operational information shows how the criminal economy intersects with militants' and terrorist groups' economic and political aspirations. Local/regional marriages of convenience may further strengthen these bonds.

To this end, their ambitions will be increasingly intertwined with the exploitation of the migratory flow for financial gains. People smugglers might also take advantage of the crisis in Ukraine to offer migrants currently stranded in Belarus viable options to resume their journey or to deflect toward Ukraine to blend in as legitimate workers/residents in the

country to move to the EU. It cannot be ruled out that people linked to some extent to terrorism might seize this opportunity to mix amongst these groups. This also applies to foreigners fighting in the Ukrainian conflict who may decide to enter/return to the EU. Available information shows that so far, these included individuals from the central Asian republics, traveling through Ukraine and/or residing in these countries prior the conflict. Infiltration by returning fighters could have a severe impact on the EU's internal security. This becomes particularly relevant when considering FTFs' family members. The challenge here is avoiding re-victimisation, while

ensuring accountability for those individuals who have committed or played an active role in violent acts, in line with international law.

A number of people have joined the conflict in Ukraine, including some individuals (loosely) linked to the far-right milieu, yet also – and mostly – regular citizens and/or adventure seekers. The risk here for the internal security of the Union is their return with combat experience/exposure to atrocities/traumas. Yet this might also give extreme elements more credibility/legitimacy to recruit/spread their ideology upon returning to their home countries.



Outlook

The key risks affecting European Integrated Border Management in 2022/23 are: irregular migration on the well-established migratory routes to the EU; cross-border crime and terrorism; instrumentalisation of migration as a political pressure tool; and the increasing gap between return decisions and effective returns. All these risks are expected to be exacerbated by the multifaceted, long-term consequences of the war in Ukraine.

The ripple effects of the war in Ukraine are likely to be critical for international and irregular migration. Inflationary pressures, food and energy shortages most severely affecting the least resilient countries, supply chain reorganisation and the withdrawal or redeployment of Russian troops and mercenaries are likely to trigger a wide range of economic, security and political repercussions that may affect not only European but also international border management.

Less clear are the specific implications of the war on the EBCG's long-term operational posture. Much depends on the evolution and eventual outcome of the war, Russia's response to sanctions, and on whether hitherto effective cross-border cooperation in the east can be salvaged. A return to Cold War-style, militarised border management on the Eastern borders, with very limited cross-border cooperation but heavily secured and thus impermeable borders, may be the most likely scenario. A situation where the instrumentalisation of migration as a pressure tool becomes the "new normal" on the EU's eastern borders is likewise conceivable.

People smuggling over the green and blue borders, and the considerable gap between return decisions and effective returns of third-country nationals, will continue to be two of the most enduring challenges for European border management. The risk persists of irregular migrants being victimised in exploitative working and living conditions, in some cases as a means to repay their debt to migrant smugglers.

These developments will combine with the lingering impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has exacerbated socio-economic problems in many countries of origin and widened the gap between the affluent West and the rest of the world. The interplay with other megatrends, most notably climate change as outlined in the Frontex Strategic Risk Analysis 2022, will intensify push and pull factors for migration. Migration trends in 2022/2023 will therefore likely reflect the strong rebounding effect observed in 2021: 200 000 detected illegal border-crossings between border-crossing points in 2021 is the highest figure since 2017 and is a 58% increase compared with 2020 and a 41% increase compared to 2019.

The UK will remain a major destination country, and significant outflows of migrants will likely continue in 2022/2023, calling for enhanced border surveillance and search-and-rescue (SAR) operations to prevent fatalities in the English Channel.

Considering crucial regions of transit and origin, developments in the Sahel region, which continues to be plagued by militant Islamist violence, are of particular concern. Despite international counterterrorism efforts, violence has also increased in Somalia, northern Mozambique and the Sinai Peninsula. In the long term, the deteriorating socio-economic and security situation in the Sahel region might push migrants towards the EU.

Regarding cross-border crime, in 2022/2023 and beyond, the crime-as-a-service approach (where experienced criminals develop tools or services that are either put up for sale or rent to others) will drive poly-criminality, with criminal groups at different levels ready to smuggle anything through the EU's external borders, from cigarettes through illicit drugs and weapons to desperate irregular migrants. Global online trade and encrypted/untraceable communication will require ever more focus on efficient customs controls at cargo terminals at sea, land and air borders, which

in turn calls for timely intelligence and precise cargo profiling.

European border management will likely have to contend with the effects of an increasingly turbulent, volatile and hostile international environment. Crises of different nature, hybrid interference, and a higher frequency of extreme events around the world acting as push factors will have far-reaching consequences. Crisis preparedness, as well as stronger links between border management authorities and the wider law enforcement, customs and security constituencies, will therefore be crucial as EU border management will very probably continue to be tested. To respond to emerging threats with agility, EBCG rapid border interventions are crucial in supporting EU MSs/SACs, as seen in Greece (2020) and Lithuania (2021). Rapid deployment to a third country (Moldova) was demonstrated in 2022.

Statistical annex

LEGEND

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

Source: FRAN and EDF-RAN data as of 19 August 2022, unless otherwise indicated

Note: 'Member States' in the tables refer to FRAN Member States, including both 27 EU Member States and three Schengen Associated Countries.

Annex Table 1. Illegal border-crossing between BCPs, on entry

Detections at the external borders by border type, gender and age group

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Share of total	% change on prev. year	Highest share
Border Type							Nationality
Sea	113 643	106 246	87 390	112 616	56	29	Tunisia (14%)
Land	35 474	35 600	39 033	87 485	44	124	Syria (49%)
Gender							Nationality
Female	28 547	32 987	10 781	16 916	8.5	57	Syria (15%)
Male	113 770	106 690	109 510	169 942	85	55	Syria (26%)
Not available	6 800	2 169	6 132	13 243	6.6	116	Tunisia (21%)
Age Group							Nationality
Adult	114 183	96 947	86 362	119 517	60	38	Morocco (12%)
Minor	30 948	32 554	15 159	22 038	11	45	Tunisia (12%)
Not available	26 430	4 009	3 522	4 762	2.4	35	Unspec. sub-Saharan nationals (24%)
Accompanied	765	23 542	5 996	6 391	3.2	6.6	Afghanistan (19%)
Unaccompanied	3 753	5 003	5 641	10 885	5.4	93	Tunisia (19%)
Not available	3 986	12 345	24 902	58 546	29	135	Syria (66%)
Total	149 117	141 846	126 423	200 101	100	58	

Annex Table 2. Illegal border-crossing between BCPs, on entry

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

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Share of total	% change on prev. year
All Borders						
Syria	14 378	24 339	21 631	46 395	23	114
Afghanistan	12 666	34 154	10 140	16 711	8.4	65
Tunisia	5 230	2 799	13 185	16 527	8.3	25
Morocco	13 498	8 020	17 594	16 482	8.2	-6.3
Unspecified sub-Saharan nationals	69	14 346	13 250	15 077	7.5	14
Algeria	6 101	5 314	12 987	13 702	6.8	5.5
Egypt	709	996	1 519	9 218	4.6	507
Bangladesh	2 043	2 254	5 426	9 041	4.5	67
Iraq	10 114	6 433	2 066	8 690	4.3	321
Turkey	8 412	7 880	3 947	4 673	2.3	18
All Other	75 897	35 311	24 678	43 585	22	77
Total all borders	149 117	141 846	125 223	200 120	100	60
Land Border						
Syria	6 083	7 546	18 697	43 149	49	131
Afghanistan	2 863	5 812	5 746	13 640	16	137
Iraq	3 348	2 256	977	5 771	6.6	491
Turkey	7 954	7 322	3 709	4 377	5.0	18
Pakistan	2 883	2 109	1 071	1 911	2.2	78
Somalia	343	248	255	1 623	1.9	536
Nigeria	92	328	358	1 486	1.7	315
Morocco	112	197	674	1 468	1.7	118
Congo (Kinshasa)	26	41	181	1 242	1.4	586
Albania	4 576	2 055	1 429	1 160	1.3	-19
All Other	7 194	7 686	5 936	11 658	13	96
Total land borders	35 474	35 600	38 956	87 509	100	125
Sea Border						
Tunisia	5 204	2 699	12 988	15 680	14	21
Unspecified sub-Saharan nationals	69	14 191	13 237	15 072	13	14
Morocco	13 386	7 823	16 920	15 014	13	-11
Algeria	5 943	5 089	12 719	13 342	12	4.9
Egypt	578	693	1 174	8 713	7.7	642
Bangladesh	1 188	868	4 539	7 955	7.1	75
Côte d'Ivoire	5 219	1 462	2 310	4 009	3.6	74
Iran	774	2 160	1 165	3 976	3.5	241
Syria	8 295	16 793	2 934	3 246	2.9	11
Afghanistan	9 803	28 342	4 394	3 071	2.7	-30
All Other	63 184	26 126	15 010	22 538	20	50
Total sea borders	113 643	106 246	87 390	112 616	100	29

Annex Table 3. **Illegal border-crossing between BCPs, on entry**

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

Routes	2018	2019	2020	2021	Share of total	% change on prev. year
Central Mediterranean Route	23 485	14 003	35 673	67 724	34	90
Tunisia	5 182	2 690	12 985	15 675	23	21
Egypt	276	267	1 124	8 506	13	657
Bangladesh	583	750	4 447	7 848	12	76
All Other	17 444	10 296	17 117	35 695	53	109
Western Balkan Route	5 869	15 152	26 969	61 735	31	129
Syria	323	4 643	16 644	38 723	63	133
Afghanistan	1 669	5 338	5 251	12 297	20	134
Turkey	407	623	155	1 652	2.7	966
All Other	3 470	4 548	4 919	9 063	15	84
Western African Route	1 323	2 718	24 087	22 351	11	-7.2
Unspecified sub-Saharan nationals	0	1 709	11 230	14 749	66	31
Morocco	902	949	11 972	7 561	34	-37
Bangladesh	0	1	9	25	0.1	178
All Other	421	59	876	16	0.1	-98
Eastern Mediterranean Route	56 561	83 333	20 280	20 572	10	1.4
Land	22 547	17 370	9 849	15 412	75	56
Syria	5 733	2 897	2 031	3 938	26	94
Turkey	7 468	6 619	3 486	2 578	17	-26
Nigeria	85	328	356	1 443	9.4	305
All Other	9 261	7 526	3 976	7 453	48	87
Sea	34 014	65 963	10 431	5 160	25	-51
Afghanistan	9 597	28 273	3 473	1 084	21	-69
Somalia	737	2 630	898	880	17	-2.0
Syria	8 173	16 707	2 665	730	14	-73
All Other	15 507	18 353	3 395	2 466	48	-27
Western Mediterranean Route	56 245	23 969	17 370	18 466	9.2	6.3
Sea	54 820	23 557	17 197	17 378	94	1.1
Algeria	4 339	4 007	11 195	11 659	67	4.1
Morocco	11 881	6 336	3 775	5 228	30	38
Unspecified sub-Saharan nationals	69	12 482	2 007	323	1.9	-84
All Other	38 531	732	220	168	1.0	-24
Land	1 425	412	173	1 088	5.9	529
Mali	216	102	63	332	31	427
Sudan	0	9	21	208	19	890
Morocco	0	0	13	158	15	1 115
All Other	1 209	301	76	390	36	413
Eastern Borders Route	1 084	722	677	8 160	4.1	1 105
Iraq	90	43	43	4 814	59	11 095
Afghanistan	37	54	41	616	7.5	1 402
Syria	8	4	20	485	5.9	2 325
All Other	949	621	573	2 245	28	292
Circular Route from Albania to Greece	4 550	1 944	1 365	1 092	0.5	-20
Albania	4 319	1 867	1 326	1 033	95	-22
Egypt	0	0	0	16	1.5	n.a.
All Other	231	74	33	23	2.1	-30
Black Sea Route	0	2	0	0	n.a.	n.a.
Other	0	3	2	1	0	-50
Total	149 117	141 846	126 423	200 101	100	58

Annex Table 4. **Clandestine entries at land and sea BCPs**

Detections reported by border type, age group, gender and top ten nationalities

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Share of total	% change on prev. year	Highest share
Border Type							Nationality
Land	1 998	2 119	1 823	2 480	95	36	Afghanistan (58%)
Sea	260	431	464	141	5.4	-70	Tunisia (28%)
Age Group							Nationality
Adult	1 709	2 436	1 726	1 644	63	-4.8	Afghanistan (49%)
Minor	391	113	93	51	1.9	-45	Iraq (27%)
Not available	158	1	468	926	35	98	Afghanistan (67%)
Gender							Nationality
Female	145	84	114	102	3.9	-11	Iraq (15%)
Male	2 101	2 464	2 170	2 516	96	16	Afghanistan (57%)
Not available	12	2	3	3	0.1	0	Tunisia (33%)
Top Ten Nationalities							
Afghanistan	1 041	1 646	1 275	1 436	55	13	
Syria	64	51	134	195	7.4	46	
Pakistan	245	69	60	125	4.8	108	
Turkey	65	49	51	113	4.3	122	
Morocco	43	45	125	104	4.0	-17	
Iraq	120	52	13	77	2.9	492	
Serbia	1	0	13	72	2.7	454	
Kosovo*	36	9	39	64	2.4	64	
Tunisia	59	263	146	58	2.2	-60	
Bangladesh	84	33	33	50	1.9	52	
All Other	500	333	398	327	12	-18	
Total	2 258	2 550	2 287	2 621	100	15	

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 5. Facilitators

Apprehensions reported at the external borders, by place of detection and top ten nationalities

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Share of total	% change on prev. year	Highest share
Place of Detection							
Inland	4 958	4 912	4 657	5 775	42	24	Unknown (12%)
Not available	3 033	3 765	2 651	4 286	31	62	Spain (19%)
Land	2 139	1 804	1 979	3 202	23	62	Romania (10%)
Sea	402	404	310	286	2.1	-7.7	Turkey (17%)
Air	110	104	78	77	0.6	-1.3	Georgia (10%)
Top Ten Nationalities							
Unknown	614	488	704	937	6.9	33	
Spain	477	507	418	842	6.2	101	
Morocco	696	1 039	616	748	5.5	21	
France	655	595	568	644	4.7	13	
Romania	176	213	342	643	4.7	88	
Syria	522	460	485	631	4.6	30	
Albania	609	758	418	535	3.9	28	
Turkey	319	403	299	519	3.8	74	
Venezuela	11	19	299	466	3.4	56	
Algeria	226	326	233	466	3.4	100	
All Other	6 337	6 181	5 293	7 195	53	36	
Total	10 642	10 989	9 675	13 626	100	41	

Annex Table 6. **Illegal stay**

Detections reported by place of detection, age group, gender and top ten nationalities

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Share of total	% change on prev. year	Highest share
Place of Detection							Nationality
Inland	273 807	307 248	274 235	375 325	80	37	Afghanistan (10%)
on Exit	91 929	92 411	95 885	90 684	19	-5.4	Moldova (34%)
Not available	1 530	3 419	4 395	2 710	0.6	-38	Pakistan (25%)
Age Group							Nationality
Adult	236 900	359 515	344 206	415 843	89	21	Moldova (9%)
Minor	21 052	22 227	18 074	32 502	6.9	80	Afghanistan (36%)
Not available	109 314	21 336	12 235	20 374	4.3	67	Afghanistan (27%)
Gender							Nationality
Female	38 957	62 069	63 351	73 401	16	16	Moldova (19%)
Male	154 294	247 782	243 250	316 031	67	30	Syria (9%)
Not available	174 015	93 227	67 914	79 287	17	17	Algeria (12%)
Top Ten Nationalities							
Afghanistan	14 104	15 675	18 129	40 396	8.6	123	
Moldova	9 536	13 990	20 425	36 177	7.7	77	
Syria	9 248	9 433	16 172	34 991	7.5	116	
Algeria	16 383	21 409	22 647	33 320	7.1	47	
Morocco	21 891	32 669	33 164	32 275	6.9	-2.7	
Ukraine	36 299	39 759	46 012	32 099	6.8	-30	
Albania	21 639	24 994	21 940	25 892	5.5	18	
Iraq	21 850	19 933	11 552	21 081	4.5	82	
Mali	3 160	4 597	4 436	14 086	3.0	218	
Pakistan	15 605	19 207	14 335	13 629	2.9	-4.9	
All Other	197 551	201 412	165 703	184 773	39	12	
Total	367 266	403 078	374 515	468 719	100	25	

Annex Table 7. Refusals of entry

Refusals of entry at the external borders reported by border type, age group, gender and top ten nationalities

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Share of total	% change on prev. year	Highest share
Border Type							
Land	131 641	145 494	102 456	93 726	73	-8.5	Ukraine (51%)
Air	54 952	62 859	26 628	31 025	24	17	Albania (12%)
Sea	4 037	4 129	2 845	4 487	3.5	58	Albania (51%)
Not available	28	5	1	0	0	-100	n.a.
Age Group							
Adult	141 049	175 356	123 907	122 250	95	-1.3	Ukraine (41%)
Minor	14 757	19 411	5 030	3 547	2.7	-29	Ukraine (28%)
Not available	34 852	17 720	2 993	3 441	2.7	15	Russia (14%)
Gender							
Female	42 185	53 271	30 740	29 502	23	-4.0	Ukraine (48%)
Male	105 198	132 998	92 881	89 872	70	-3.2	Ukraine (41%)
Not available	43 275	26 218	8 309	9 864	7.6	19	Brazil (12%)
Top Ten nationalities							
Ukraine	57 576	70 313	56 004	51 512	40	-8.0	
Albania	24 386	21 630	11 653	17 725	14	52	
Moldova	6 378	6 174	8 668	7 798	6.0	-10	
Serbia	7 658	7 198	6 321	7 274	5.6	15	
Turkey	4 836	4 767	3 140	4 124	3.2	31	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4 142	3 316	6 672	3 759	2.9	-44	
Russia	25 951	34 546	8 271	3 344	2.6	-60	
Georgia	4 094	5 154	1 900	2 831	2.2	49	
Belarus	7 955	7 691	5 514	2 820	2.2	-49	
North Macedonia	2 739	2 664	1 877	2 303	1.8	23	
All Other	44 943	49 034	21 910	25 748	20	18	
Total	190 658	212 487	131 930	129 238	100	-2	

Annex Table 8. Reasons for refusals of entry

Refusals of entry at the external borders reported by reasons for refusal and top ten nationalities

	Refusal persons Total	Reasons for refusals of entry (see description below)										Reasons Total
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	n.a.	
Top Ten nationalities												
Ukraine	51 512	81	50	1 410	7	14 165	4 276	1 809	5 733	19 441	5 315	52 287
Albania	17 725	122	47	338	4	8 106	990	472	4 065	3 829	120	18 093
Moldova	7 798	10	1	286	5	4 776	327	72	1 428	608	313	7 826
Serbia	7 274	193	93	270	6	1 783	1 911	112	1 573	1 389	13	7 343
Turkey	4 124	212	56	1 762	39	958	269	289	184	433	32	4 234
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3 759	73	13	66	0	2 760	130	119	383	259	2	3 805
Russia	3 344	30	11	911	102	536	65	49	147	1 595	88	3 534
Georgia	2 831	20	1	135	1	857	121	68	1 186	498	83	2 970
Belarus	2 820	11	1	459	2	298	105	33	97	1 526	366	2 898
Brazil	2 211	20	5	486	1	807	26	185	171	623	115	2 439
All Other	25 840	2 687	649	6 089	344	5 538	785	1 270	1 602	7 505	2 773	29 242
Total	129 238	3 459	927	12 212	511	40 584	9 005	4 478	16 569	37 706	9 220	134 671

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 9. Persons using fraudulent documents

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

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Share of total	% change on prev. year	Highest share
Border Type							Nationality Reported
Land	1 324	1 085	2 079	4 828	67	132	Ukraine (62%)
Air	3 131	3 450	1 494	2 295	32	54	Georgia (9%)
Sea	848	693	179	46	0.6	-74	Morocco (78%)
Top Ten Nationalities							
Ukraine	392	249	1 258	3 067	43	144	
Moldova	56	99	167	351	4.9	110	
Turkey	286	402	265	350	4.9	32	
Georgia	19	20	64	257	3.6	302	
Unknown	313	244	210	205	2.9	-2.4	
Serbia	71	64	75	198	2.8	164	
Russia	224	119	172	198	2.8	15	
Iran	384	406	74	154	2.1	108	
Kosovo*	99	155	92	143	2.0	55	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	15	12	10	141	2.0	1 310	
All Other	3 444	3 458	1 365	2 105	29	54	
Total	5 303	5 228	3 752	7 169	100	91	

* 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 10. Fraudulent documents used

Detections on entry at the external borders, by country of issuance of the document and type of document

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Share of total	% change on prev. year	Highest share
Country of issuance							Type of Document
Poland	433	286	1 455	3 121	36	115	Other (93%)
Ukraine	47	46	97	723	8.3	645	Other (98%)
France	581	720	377	451	5.2	20	Passport (37%)
Italy	574	616	217	400	4.6	84	Visa (29%)
Germany	374	439	260	365	4.2	40	Visa (38%)
Hungary	115	101	169	329	3.8	95	Border Stamp (88%)
Spain	1 037	895	324	314	3.6	-3.1	Residence Permit (27%)
Serbia	40	96	86	265	3.0	208	Other (55%)
Belgium	192	186	144	231	2.7	60	Residence Permit (42%)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	11	10	8	211	2.4	2 538	Other (97%)
All Other	3 225	3 205	1 639	2 293	26	40	Passport (38%)
Type of Document							Type of Fraud
Other	184	164	1 551	4 601	53	197	Counterfeit (97%)
Passport	2 374	2 691	1 006	1 294	15	29	Impostor (35%)
Border Stamp	810	699	740	963	11	30	Counterfeit (93%)
Visa	1 231	1 150	456	700	8.0	54	Fraudulently obtained (51%)
Residence Permit	904	855	530	668	7.7	26	Counterfeit (64%)
Id Card	1 126	1 041	493	477	5.5	-3.2	Counterfeit (65%)
Total	6 629	6 600	4 776	8 703	100	82	

Annex Table 11. Return decisions issued

Decisions issued by age group, gender and top ten nationalities

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Share of total	% change on prev. year	Highest share
Age Group							
Adult	170 159	154 894	257 406	265 813	76	3.3	Albania (9%)
Minor	10 096	9 741	20 420	18 674	5.3	-8.6	Iraq (12%)
Not available	125 727	137 388	51 541	65 773	19	28	Algeria (20%)
Gender							
Female	48 346	49 738	64 224	66 096	19	2.9	Albania (6%)
Male	205 064	204 824	258 882	273 281	78	6	Morocco (9%)
Not available	52 572	47 461	6 261	10 883	3.1	74	Afghanistan (29%)
Top Ten Nationalities							
Morocco	22 151	23 553	25 472	25 613	7.3	0.6	
Albania	17 273	17 272	24 036	24 561	7.0	2.2	
Algeria	11 375	12 727	19 566	22 543	6.4	15	
Pakistan	14 458	17 086	20 217	18 656	5.3	-7.7	
Ukraine	33 903	33 406	21 247	18 055	5.2	-15	
Afghanistan	18 969	18 516	22 467	17 029	4.9	-24	
Mali	8 809	4 131	7 357	12 793	3.7	74	
Iraq	16 816	13 272	10 342	12 546	3.6	21	
Syria	7 559	13 590	15 435	12 272	3.5	-20	
Turkey	6 207	7 553	11 685	10 151	2.9	-13	
All Other	148 462	140 917	151 543	176 041	50	16	
Total	305 982	302 023	329 367	350 260	100	6.3	

Note: Data are not available for France and Iceland. Data from Denmark are not available for April 2020. Data for Portugal are not available for July 2020.

Annex Table 12. Effective returns

People effectively returned to third countries by age group, gender and top ten nationalities

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Share of total	% change on prev. year	Highest share
Age Group							Nationality
Adult	76 380	96 053	56 158	61 201	79	9	Ukraine (15%)
Minor	2 963	5 411	5 375	5 517	7.1	2.6	Georgia (13%)
Not available	68 472	37 913	8 237	11 132	14	35	Colombia (18%)
Gender							Nationality
Female	16 259	21 374	16 337	17 977	23	10	Ukraine (14%)
Male	56 958	75 211	52 852	59 119	76	12	Albania (13%)
Not available	74 598	42 792	581	754	1.0	30	Brazil (20%)
Top Ten Nationalities							
Ukraine	27 264	26 594	11 580	9 633	12	-17	
Albania	19 243	15 629	7 935	8 702	11	9.7	
Georgia	5 021	7 344	4 774	5 316	6.8	11	
Serbia	3 548	3 261	3 382	3 222	4.1	-4.7	
Turkey	2 451	2 887	1 935	2 712	3.5	40	
Pakistan	4 305	2 984	1 986	2 699	3.5	36	
Colombia	1 313	1 850	1 644	2 550	3.3	55	
Moldova	3 531	4 027	2 579	2 537	3.3	-1.6	
Tunisia	3 854	3 564	2 429	2 419	3.1	-0.4	
Russia	4 628	4 820	2 180	2 273	2.9	4.3	
All Other	72 657	66 417	29 346	35 787	46	22	
Total	147 815	139 377	69 770	77 850	100	12	

Note: Data are not available for France Data for November 2021 are not available for Belgium.

Annex Table 13. Effective returns by type of return

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

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Share of total	% change on prev. year	Highest share
TYPE OF RETURN							
Forced return	75 030	71 672	26 351	29 051	37	10	Albania (19%)
Not applicable	0	0	26 351	29 051	100	10	Albania (19%)
Enforced by Member State	54 015	50 614	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Not available	18 741	17 218	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Enforced by Joint Operation	2 274	3 840	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Voluntary return	72 773	67 656	42 087	47 068	60	12	Ukraine (17%)
Without assistance	33 335	34 342	29 397	29 463	63	0.2	Ukraine (22%)
Not applicable	0	0	12 690	17 605	37	39	Georgia (10%)
IOM Assisted	1 538	22	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Not available	27 556	22 223	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Others	8 442	4 758	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AVRR	237	4 179	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
AVR	1 665	2 132	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Not available	12	49	1 332	1 731	2.2	30	Albania (21%)
Total	147 815	139 377	69 770	77 850	100	12	
TOP TEN NATIONALITIES							
Forced							
Albania	16 341	12 505	4 801	5 398	19	12	
Tunisia	3 545	3 347	2 232	2 254	7.8	1.0	
Georgia	2 290	3 514	1 703	1 942	6.7	14	
Morocco	9 977	9 074	2 098	1 722	5.9	-18	
Turkey	1 478	1 342	932	1 578	5.4	69	
Ukraine	2 635	2 542	2 027	1 485	5.1	-27	
Serbia	2 594	2 126	1 470	1 398	4.8	-4.9	
Moldova	1 092	1 848	1 072	1 211	4.2	13	
Pakistan	1 434	1 168	708	1 093	3.8	54	
Kosovo*	1 868	1 278	674	964	3.3	43	
All Other	31 776	32 928	8 634	10 006	34	16	
Total Forced Returns	75 030	71 672	26 351	29 051	100	10	
Voluntary							
Ukraine	24 629	24 052	9 537	8 131	17	-15	
Georgia	2 731	3 824	3 000	3 202	6.8	6.7	
Albania	2 901	3 095	2 771	2 944	6.3	6.2	
Colombia	441	699	1 269	1 950	4.1	54	
Serbia	954	1 135	1 769	1 705	3.6	-3.6	
Russia	2 946	3 040	1 663	1 684	3.6	1.3	
Iraq	3 945	2 667	1 314	1 665	3.5	27	
Pakistan	2 871	1 816	1 270	1 575	3.3	24	
Moldova	2 439	2 179	1 496	1 296	2.8	-13	
Brazil	1 153	1 118	1 424	1 164	2.5	-18	
All Other	27 763	24 031	16 574	21 752	46	31	
Total Voluntary Returns	72 773	67 656	42 087	47 068	100	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.

Annex Table 14. Passenger flow on entry

Data reported (on voluntary basis) by border type and groups of nationalities

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Share of total	% change on prev. year	Highest share
Border Type							
Air	184 938 437	183 234 297	46 197 350	56 058 336	49	21	Unknown (37%)
Land	101 249 852	104 334 084	45 877 456	55 043 835	48	20	Unknown (18%)
Sea	18 912 570	16 752 610	2 618 651	3 827 018	3.3	46	Unknown (63%)
Groups of nationalities							
EU MS/SAC	89 587 420	89 644 947	32 536 351	48 659 959	42	50	
Third-country	74 583 251	74 123 935	22 585 236	33 434 596	29	48	
Not specified	140 930 188	140 552 109	39 571 870	32 834 634	29	-17	
Total	305 100 859	304 320 991	94 693 457	114 929 189	100	21	

Not reported Member States:

Austria, Ireland, Portugal (data available since 2021), Sweden (data available since 2021)

Data not available for:

Land: Belgium (data available since 2020), Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland
Sea: Cyprus, Denmark, Iceland, Malta (data available since 2021), the Netherlands, Sweden

Notes on FRAN data sources and methods

The term 'Member States' refers to FRAN Member States, which includes the 27 Member States and 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, reported detections along the Green Line are linked to arrivals of migrants by sea or air in the areas where

the Government of the Republic of Cyprus does not exercise effective control. The Green Line does not constitute an external border of the EU according to Council Regulation EC No. 866/2004. For sea borders, the definitions are not applicable 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 Austria, Iceland, Ireland and Switzerland.

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, Portugal and the UK. 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.

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 are not available for Austria, Ireland, Portugal 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, Denmark and the Netherlands.

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

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