



# Risk Analysis for 2016







# Risk Analysis for 2016



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



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

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The Frontex *Risk Analysis for 2016* has been prepared by the Frontex Risk Analysis Unit. During the course of developing this product, many colleagues at Frontex and outside contributed to it and their assistance is hereby acknowledged with gratitude.

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# 1. Preface

The year 2015 was unprecedented for the EU and its external borders, with 1.8 million detections of illegal entries associated with an estimated one million individuals. Unlike almost any other year since World War II, the scenes of chaos and the tragic images of those who have lost their lives have sharpened the focus on migration issues.

Given the proximity of conflict areas and the persistent economic disparity between the EU and many countries of origin, many would-be migrants will remain motivated to depart towards the EU.

It can be a challenge to provide for the continuous functioning of border-control activities in a situation where thousands of migrants of mixed backgrounds, circumstances and nationalities arrive at the border in a very short space of time. Ensuring the rescue, safety, registration and identification of thousands of vulnerable individuals is an extremely onerous task and one that implies a certain level of inherent risk and vulnerability at the external borders.

In response to the varying locations and the scale of the threats witnessed, the authorities at the borders must have a capability for risk mitigation at the time of emergency. Often the response calls for intensified interagency cooperation. This is an important tool for responding when a particular border is under an extensive strain.

The already difficult problem of irregular migration was rendered even more complex by the tragic attacks in Paris in November 2015 and the growing threat from foreign terrorist fighters. This was a dreadful reminder that border management also has an important security component. It demonstrates that all Member States, be they of entry, transit or destination, are bound by the links of shared responsibility. This responsibility calls for initiatives that unite.

The European Commission is proposing to establish a European Border and

Coast Guard – designed to meet the new challenges and political realities faced by the EU, with regard to both migration and internal security. According to the proposal, the European Border and Coast Guard should be composed of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and the national authorities and coastguards responsible for border management.

I encourage all Member States to support the core elements of this proposal and swiftly conduct the work ahead for its implementation. This ambitious proposal relates not only to the management of the external borders, but furthermore – and let’s make no mistake about it – to the preservation of free movement within the Schengen area.

At the onset of 2016, the Agency has received additional funding and staff. Risk analysis, like the one presented in this report, is an essential tool for deciding how these new resources should be allocated. One of the most pressing challenges for border guards is clear: how to distinguish legitimate asylum seekers who arrive at the external border with no papers from individuals posing a security threat and economic migrants attempting to abuse the system by claiming a false nationality? This difficulty is exacerbated in situations of intense migratory pressure. It is clear that in response to these challenges, greater emphasis must be placed on increased screening, registration and debriefing activities. Moreover, let me reiterate that Frontex urgently needs to be given access to SIS, VIS, Eurodac, Europol and Interpol databases which are relevant for border checks.

This report also shows that efforts should be pursued urgently in the area of returns. Indeed, one of the incentives for irregular migrants is the knowledge that the EU’s return system – meant to return irregular migrants or those whose asylum applications have been refused – works imperfectly.

Operations against criminals involved in migrant smuggling can be sharpened



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by actionable intelligence. We need to invest in knowledge, information sharing and cooperation. We are advancing in that direction with the proposal to set up in Frontex a risk analysis centre with the capacity to carry out risk analysis covering all aspects of integrated border management. Moreover, facilitating the exchange of information with Member States, the European Asylum Support Office, Europol or Eurojust will be at the heart of Frontex processing of personal data.

Finally, irregular migration is a very dynamic and complex phenomenon, drivers of which can change rapidly and unexpectedly. Basing future analyses merely on trend analysis or environmental scans will no longer be effective or adequate. The *Risk Analysis for 2016* describes a series of alternative future scenarios developed in collaboration with experts from relevant organisations. I encourage all stakeholders to make use of them as a foresight instrument at a strategic level.

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

**Fabrice Leggeri**  
Executive Director

## 2. Summary

In 2015, Member States reported more than **1 820 000 detections** of illegal border-crossing along the external borders. This never-before-seen figure was more than six times the number of detections reported in 2014, which was itself an unprecedented year, with record monthly averages observed since April 2014.

The year 2015 began with extremely high levels for the month of January (over 20 000 detections, against the 2009–2014 January average of 4 700 detections), and each subsequent month set a new monthly record. In July, a turning point was reached with more than 100 000 detections, coinciding with a change in the law in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia allowing migrants to legalise their stay for a 72-hour period after they express a wish to apply for international protection. It resulted in a further increase of the flow and throughout the summer months scenes of chaos from the border areas spoke of a situation that appeared out of control. In September, public bus and train services were requisitioned in Western Balkan countries and in some Member States to transport migrants, but the flow continued to grow until October. As of November, the situation eased a little, but the EU's total for December, at over 220 000 detections, was still way above the figure for the entire 2013.

There is no EU system capable of tracing people's movements following an illegal border-crossing. Therefore it is not possible to establish the precise number of persons who have illegally crossed two sections of the external borders of the EU. Only an estimate of about **1 000 000 persons** can be provided, based on the

assumption that all migrants first detected irregularly crossing in Greece were then detected for a second time re-entering the EU from the Western Balkans.

The largest number of detections was reported on the **Eastern Mediterranean route** (885 386), mostly between Turkey and the Greek islands in the Eastern Aegean Sea. However, few applied for asylum in Greece and instead crossed the border to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and continued through the Western Balkans, initially towards the Hungarian border with Serbia, where they applied for asylum, and then to their final destinations in the EU. As of mid-September, the flow shifted towards the Croatian border with Serbia, following the construction of a temporary technical obstacle in Hungary and the establishment of transit areas for immediate processing of asylum applicants with the possibility of return to Serbia.

In contrast, on the **Central Mediterranean route**, the number of detections of illegal border-crossing was about 154 000, a slight decrease compared to the previous year, but this figure was still higher than total detections recorded for the entire EU in 2011, i.e. the year of the Arab Spring (141 051). The decrease was due to a lower number of Syrians (about 40 000 in 2014, and 7 448 in 2015), who seemed to have shifted to the Eastern Mediterranean route.

On the **Western Mediterranean route**, the cooperation between Spain and Morocco is key in maintaining detections on the land route between the two countries at a relatively low level. As a result, sub-Saharan migrants, who tended



to make a sea crossing to Spain, now increasingly opt for departing from Libya.

On the **Western African route**, which connects Senegal, Mauritania and Morocco with the Spanish Canary Islands after a treacherous journey on the Atlantic Ocean, the numbers remain negligible despite an increasing trend of departures from Morocco. This low number is attributed to the joint surveillance activities and effective return of those detected crossing the border illegally.

On the **Eastern land border**, a new route emerged in 2015 at the land borders of Norway and Finland with the Russian Federation (the so-called **Arctic route**). The main targeted border crossing point (BCP) was the Norwegian BCP of Storskog, which registered an unusually high number of applications for asylum in 2015 (over 5 200). The situation in Norway eased in December, when the Russian Federation resumed its practice of preventing the exit of travellers with-





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out a travel document that would allow them to enter the EU. However, at the onset of 2016, the situation remains a concern in Finland, though with fewer cases than in Norway so far.

Those declaring to hail from **Syria** (594 059) and **Afghanistan** (267 485) represented the highest share of detections of illegal border-crossing on entry to the EU in 2015. While Syrians undeniably constitute the largest proportion, their exact number is difficult to establish due to the fact that many other migrants also claim to be from Syria in order to accelerate their travel. Establishing the identity of a large number of poorly documented migrants is one of the main challenges border-control authorities are confronted with.

Since 2014, the number of detected West Africans has been steadily increasing, to reach over 64 000 detections in 2015, of whom nearly 85% on the Central Mediterranean route. In contrast to East

Africans, who tend to apply for asylum in other Member States, West Africans apply for asylum in Italy and in fact account for the largest share of asylum applicants in this country.

While Greece and Italy have been under particularly intense pressure as the two main entry points reporting several thousand arrivals per day, the large-scale inflows of migrants have been a new experience for several other Member States. The main challenges include the widening of the surveillance areas, the growing need for and the extension of search and rescue operations, the lack of facilities to receive and accommodate thousands of persons over a short time, the lack of expertise to detect non-typical travel documents, difficulties in addressing fraudulent declarations of nationality or age, and non-systematic entry of fingerprints to the Eurodac. Last but not least, the process of registration at the borders should more thoroughly

take into account the risks to internal security.

The Paris attacks in November 2015 clearly demonstrated that irregular migratory flows could be used by terrorists to enter the EU. Two of the terrorists involved in the attacks had previously irregularly entered through Leros and had been registered by the Greek authorities. They presented fraudulent Syrian documents to speed up their registration process.

As the vast majority of migrants arrive undocumented, screening activities are essential to properly verify their declaration of nationality. False declarations of nationality are rife among nationals who are unlikely to obtain asylum in the EU, are liable to be returned to their country of origin or transit, or just want to speed up their journey. With a large number of persons arriving with false or no identification documents or raising concerns over the validity of their

claimed nationality – with no thorough check or penalties in place for those making such false declarations, there is a risk that some persons representing a security threat to the EU may be taking advantage of this situation.

The unprecedented number of detections of illegal border-crossing has also led to a surge in violent incidents along the EU's external borders. People smugglers, motivated by profit, increasingly put migrants' lives at risk and even threaten border guards to recover boats or escape apprehension. Also, situations when a large number of people are crossing the border *en masse* have led to violence requiring public order policing, a task for which border-control authorities are neither adequately equipped nor trained.

It is dauntingly difficult to estimate fatalities among migrants irregularly crossing the border because it is not possible to keep an accurate tally of missing persons. Frontex does not record these data and can only report the number

of bodies recovered during Joint Operations. In 2015, 470 dead bodies were reported in the Mediterranean area, an increase of 112% compared to 2014. According to IOM estimates, more than 3 770 persons went missing or died in the Mediterranean area in 2015.

In spite of the popular perception that mass migration may pose a threat of the spread of infectious diseases, WHO 'Public Health Aspects of Migration in Europe' (PHAME) indicates that there is no evidence to suggest such connection. Refugees and migrants are mainly exposed to the infectious diseases that are common in Europe, independently of migration. The risk that exotic infectious agents will be brought to Europe is extremely low.

In a situation of continued pressure on the EU's external borders, it is presumed that these challenges will be best addressed in a coordinated manner, requiring harmonised application of legislation and pooling of resources. In addition, efforts should be pursued in

the area of returns. Indeed, in its European Agenda on Migration, the Commission states that 'one of the incentives for irregular migrants is the knowledge that the EU's return system – meant to return irregular migrants or those whose asylum applications have been refused – works imperfectly.'

Frontex has created scenarios to form a basis for an annual monitoring of changes in the environment in which the Agency operates. Very different stakeholders can make use of these scenarios to develop their own internal strategies or monitor how these strategies fit into a changing environment. Seven scenarios are outlined in the present report, spanning a large variety of possible futures.



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### 3. Introduction

The *Frontex Risk Analysis for 2016* has been developed for decision-makers to make informed decisions on common and concerted actions that are most likely to have sustainable effects on the management of the external borders and ultimately on the internal security of the EU.

Frontex operational activities aim to strengthen border security by ensuring the coordination of Member States' actions in the implementation of Community measures relating to the management of the external borders. The coordination of operational activities also contributes to better allocation of Member States' resources and protection of the area of freedom, security and justice.

The *Risk Analysis for 2016* concentrates on the current scope of Frontex operational activities, which focus on irregular mi-

gration at the external borders of the EU and Schengen Associated Countries. Central to the concept of integrated border management (IBM), border management should also cover security threats present at the external borders.

This annual analysis is developed in the following sequence: (1) description of the situation by utilising a range of indicators on irregular migration as exchanged among Member States; (2) featured analyses representing the current key risks identified at the external borders; (3) scenarios aimed at preparing the management of the external borders to face a range of situations in the coming years.

The Frontex Risk Analysis Unit (RAU) would like to express its gratitude to all members of the Frontex Risk Analysis

Network (FRAN) in Member States for their efforts in providing data and information, as well as Europol, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), the Fundamental Right Agency (FRA), the Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS), EU Intelligence Analysis Centre (INTCEN), UNHCR, OECD International Migration Division, WHO and all Frontex colleagues involved in the preparation of this report.



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## 4. Methodology

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

The backbone of the *Risk Analysis for 2016* is the monthly statistics exchanged among Member States within the framework of the FRAN. For the *Risk Analysis for 2016*, the key indicators collected through the FRAN were: detections of illegal border-crossing through the green border or at BCPs; refusals of entry; detections of illegal stay; detections of facilitators; detections of fraudulent documents; re-

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

The data were categorised by border type (land, air, and sea) and those on land borders were additionally categorised by border section with neighbouring third countries. The data exchanged within the FRAN are compiled and analysed on a quarterly basis. Priority is given to the use of the data for management purposes and to their fast sharing among Member State border-control authorities. Member States' data that are processed by Frontex are not treated as official statistics, and thus may occa-

sionally vary from those officially published by national authorities.

Throughout 2015, some FRAN members performed backdated updates of their 2014 statistics. These updates have been accounted for in this document and so some data presented here may differ from the data presented a year ago in the 2015 *Annual Risk Analysis*.

Member States were not requested to answer specific questions in support of this analysis. Rather, bi-monthly analytical reports were important sources of information, especially as regards the analysis of routes and *modi operandi*.

Open-source information was also effectively exploited, especially in identifying the main push and pull factors for irregular migration to the EU. Among others, these sources included reports issued by government agencies, international and non-governmental organisations, as well as mainstream news agencies and official EU reports, such



as the European Commission's reports on third countries.

For the development of the scenarios, the services of an external company, Scenario Management International (ScMI), were used. A computer-aided scenario method has been designed by ScMI to assist in the computation and selection among millions of combinations, as set of relevant possible futures. About twenty experts participated in the development of these scenarios, half of them from various Frontex units, and the others half experts delegated by Member States (Finland, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands) Europol, EASO, FRA, the Commission, EEAS, EU INTCEN, UNHCR and OECD migration division.

External borders refer to the borders between Member States and third countries. The borders between the Schengen Associated Countries (Norway, Iceland, and Switzerland) and third countries are also considered as external borders. The borders between the

Schengen Associated Countries and Schengen Member States are considered as internal borders. For the indicators on detections of facilitators, illegal stay and asylum, statistics are also reported for detections at the land borders between Schengen Member States and those Member States that have either not joined the Schengen area yet (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Romania) or have opted to stay out of it (the UK, Ireland). Thus, a total for Member States and Schengen Associated Countries as a whole can be presented. It was not possible to make this distinction for air and sea borders because Member States do not habitually differentiate between extra-EU and intra-EU air and sea connections but tend to aggregate data for all arrivals per airport.

Consistent with other law-enforcement indicators, variation in administrative data related to border control depends on several factors. In this case, the number of detections of illegal bor-

der-crossing and refusals of entry are both functions of the amount of effort spent detecting migrants and the actual flow of irregular migrants to the EU. For example, increased detections of illegal border-crossing might be due to a real increase in the flow of irregular migrants, or may in fact be an outcome of more resources made available to detect migrants. In exceptional cases, increased resources may produce a rise in reported detections while effectively masking the actual decrease in the flow of migrants, resulting from a strong deterrent effect.



## 5. Situational picture in 2015



## 5.1. Main trends

The year 2015 was marked by an unprecedented number of detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs, revealing a migration crisis without equivalent in Europe since World War II. There were three choke-points: the maritime border between Turkey and Greece, the Central Mediterranean border and, as a consequence of the entry through Greece, the border with Western Balkan countries. The situation is described in detail in subsequent chapters.

Despite this crisis situation at the borders in Southern Europe, most of the workload of border-control authorities at EU level continues to be directed towards checking the regular flow of passengers. This regular flow is constantly increasing, mostly at the land borders, due to the visa liberalisation policy and local border traffic agreements and at air borders, following a general increase in the number of air passengers worldwide. According to Eurostat, extra-EU air arrivals rose by 6% between 2013 and 2014.<sup>1</sup> The increase could partly be linked with the rising number of passengers transiting through the Middle East region, in particular Dubai and Doha airports, before arriving in the EU.

The regular flow of passengers is composed of EU nationals, as well as third-country nationals not requiring a visa and those requiring one. By contrast to the first two flows, the number of short-term Schengen visas issued decreased between 2013 and 2014, following a sharp fall in the number of visas issued in the Russian Federation and Ukraine in the wake of the economic crisis. However, excluding these two countries, the number of visas issued increased by 11%, reflecting growing mobility worldwide and the attractiveness of the EU for many travellers.

The number of refusals of entry at border crossing points (BCPs), as defined in the Schengen Borders Code, remained relatively stable between 2014 and 2015 (118 495 in 2015 and 114 887 in 2014). This is a very low level, considering the increasing migratory pressure, as well as the very large number of regular passengers (several million per year), but it reflects facilitators' choice to direct irreg-

ular migrants between BCPs (an area often referred to as the green border, from where detections of illegal border-crossing are reported), rather than through BCPs, where passengers not meeting the requirements for entry will be refused.

Overall, the ratio of refusals of entry per 100 000 passengers is higher at the land than at the air border, revealing the very different nature of the flows at these border types. The large differences in refusal rates among Member States also suggest differences in flows of passengers arriving through Member States.

Among regular passengers, the number of persons detected using fraudulent documents, mostly at airports remained at a very low level (fewer than 9 000 detections on entry from third countries) despite large movements across the borders. The results and observations collected during an exercise carried out under Frontex umbrella highlighted a series of vulnerabilities in the travel document inspection process. This points to the risk for detections of document fraud to underestimate the actual number of persons entering the EU upon presentation of fraudulent travel documents.

Within the EU, the number of asylum applications and the number of detections of illegal stay rose to unprecedented levels, over 1.35 million. These increases are directly connected with the arrivals at the external borders.

The number of return decisions (issued by authorities other than border-control authorities) and the number of effective returns (usually implemented by border-control authorities) remained relatively stable. There is a striking difference between the nationalities detected crossing the border illegally or staying illegally in the EU, and the nationalities effectively returned. Indeed, most people detected crossing the border illegally travelled within the EU and then applied for asylum and thus were not returned.

### Latest situation 2015

Reported cases

(2014)

2015

(3 052)

3 642

Detections of illegal border-crossing at BCPs

(9 421)

8 373

Detections of fraudulent document users

(10 234)

12 023

Detections of facilitators

(114 887)

118 495

Refusals of entry

(161 309)

175 220

Returns (effective)

(251 990)

286 725

Returns (decisions)

(424 967)

701 625

Detections of persons staying illegally

(282 962)

1 822 337

Detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs

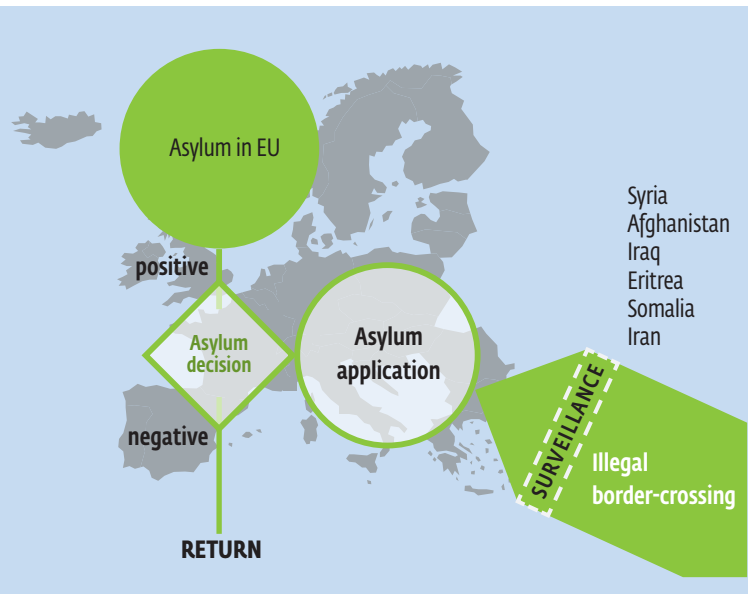
<sup>1</sup> Latest year with complete statistics.  
[http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Air\\_transport\\_statistics](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Air_transport_statistics)



### Three main types of irregular migration flow:

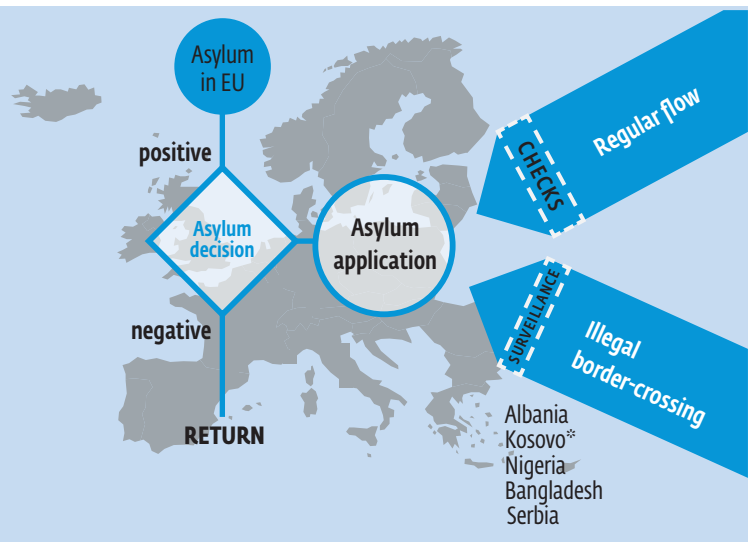
#### Nationalities very likely to obtain asylum in the EU:

Efforts at the border should be geared towards their fast identification and prompt access to protection. Among the same flow, however, a proportion of applicants is likely to make false declarations of nationality, and the challenge for border guards is to identify those persons. If they do not need protection, measures should be undertaken to return them promptly to safe countries. The EU law (the Asylum Procedures Directive) considers a country safe when there is a democratic system, as well as, generally and consistently, no persecution, no torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, no threat of violence and no armed conflict. This flow corresponds mostly to detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs, where border-control authorities perform surveillance activities.



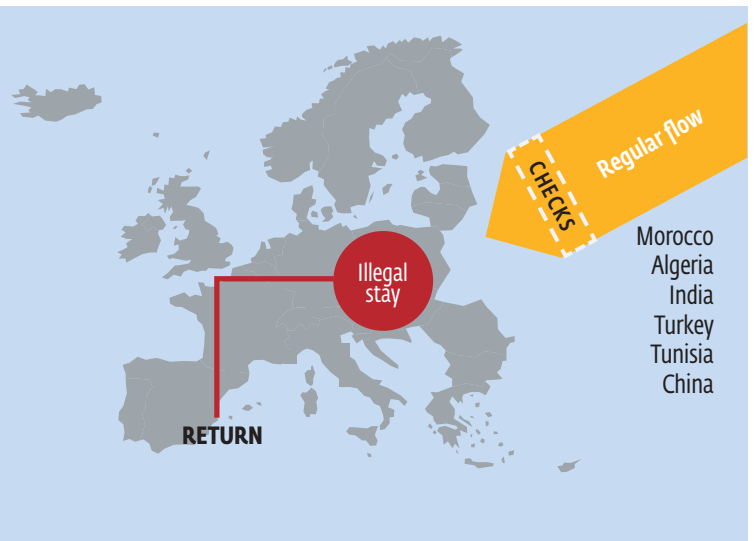
#### Asylum applications in a Member State different than the Member State of entry and unlikely to receive a positive asylum decision:

Here, the first challenge is to detect those crossing illegally between BCPs and rapidly identify those likely to apply for asylum in other Member States. The second and most difficult challenge is to identify among the large flow of bona fide travellers those who will eventually apply for asylum. Finally, border-control authorities are also involved in implementing the return of those who received a negative decision on their asylum application. The challenge here is to increase the ratio between return decisions and effective returns in line with the EU return policy.



#### Persons who are likely to be found staying illegally in the EU, mostly by overstaying a regular entry or not being detected at the border:

The main challenges here are to increase the detection of those entering clandestinely, for example hidden in vehicles, and to refuse entry to those who are likely to overstay their legal period of stay. This can only be done by increased collaboration with police authorities inland and the joint analysis of the profile of vehicles and persons crossing the border illegally. Prompt and harmonised return policies among Member States are essential to avoid migrants deciding to stay in Member States where the likelihood of return is low. This flow mostly corresponds to flows at BCPs, where border-control authorities perform checks.

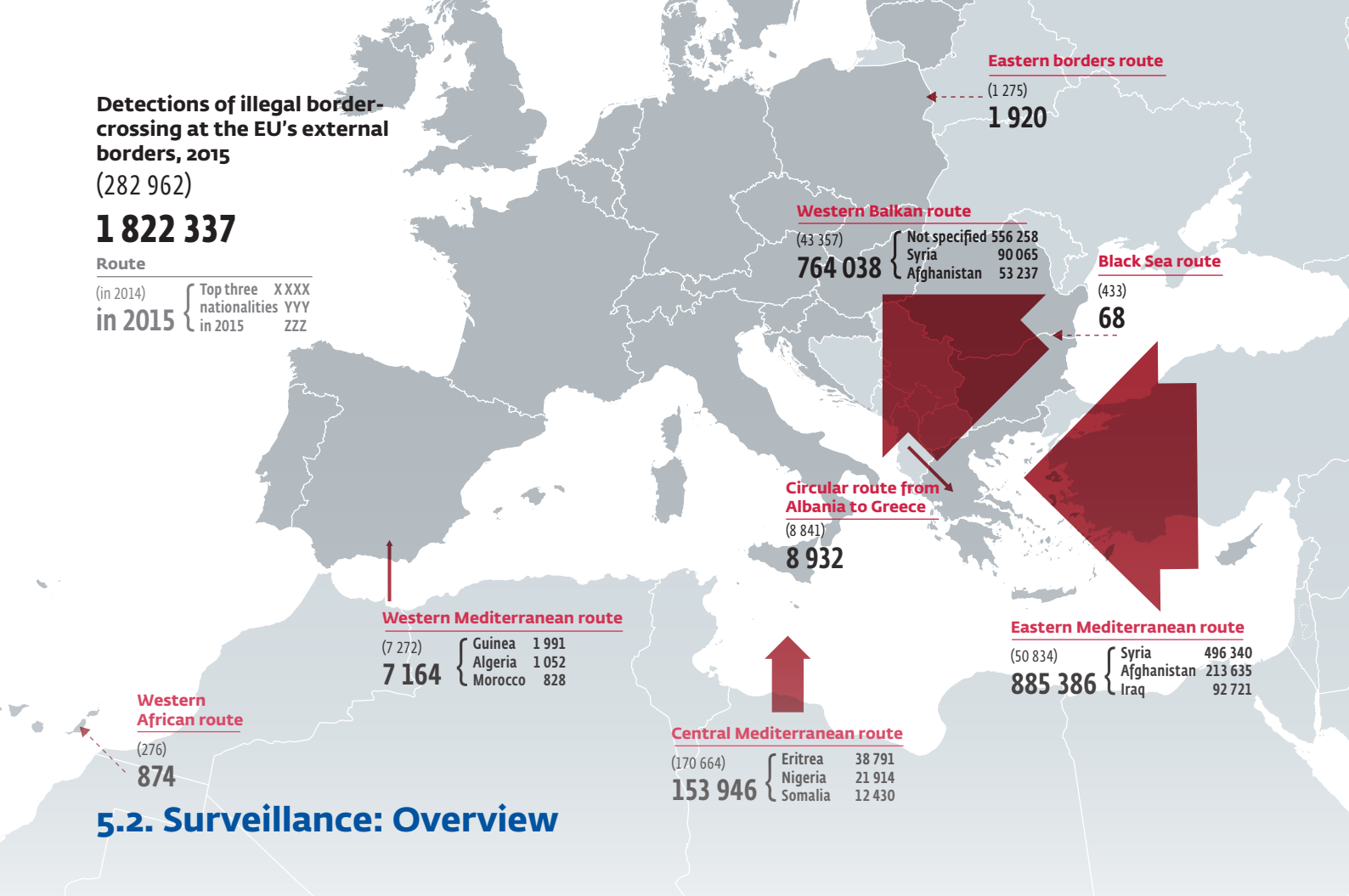


**Detections of illegal border-crossing at the EU's external borders, 2015**  
(282 962)

**1 822 337**

Route

(in 2014) { Top three nationalities XXXX  
in 2015 { in 2015 YYY  
ZZZ



**5.2. Surveillance: Overview**

Surveillance consists in the activities of border-control authorities carried out between BCPs. During these surveillance activities, in 2015, more than 1 820 000 detections of illegal border-crossing along the EU external borders were reported, i.e. six times more than in 2014. Throughout 2015 and in particular during the summer, not only inflows surged but the routes used by asylum seekers also changed.

On the Eastern Mediterranean route, most detections (872 938) corresponded to the arrivals on the Greek islands of the Aegean Sea. Syrians accounted for the largest proportion of arrivals, although towards the end of the year, the share of Afghan nationals has risen significantly.

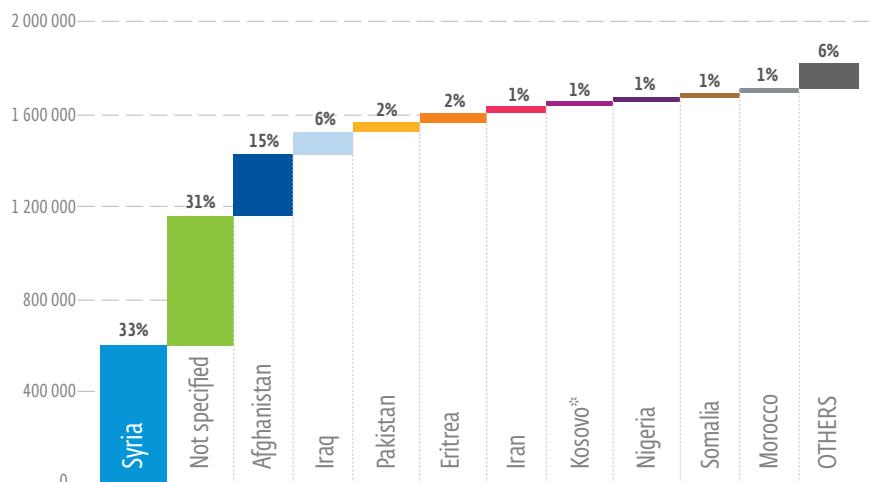
A total of 764 038 detections were recorded on the Western Balkan route, mainly on Hungary's and Croatia's borders with Serbia. Most of the migrants had earlier arrived on one of the Greek islands and then left the EU to travel through the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia. After Hungary constructed a temporary technical obstacle along its border with Serbia and tightened border controls in September, the migrants have begun crossing Croatia's border with Serbia in record numbers.

In contrast, the Central Mediterranean route saw the number of people crossing to Italy decreasing by about 10% in 2015. This was in large part due to a decrease in the number of Syrians opting for this route, as the majority preferred the shorter Eastern Mediterranean route, bringing the figure down to 153 946 compared with approximately 170 000 in the same period of 2014. Mostly Africans, from Eritrea and West Africa, were reported on this route, and their detections increased compared to 2014.

Search and rescue operations were crucial in saving the lives of an unprecedented number of migrants. However, it is on this route that the largest death toll was reported among migrants crossing the border illegally. IOM estimates that around 3 770 persons went missing or died at sea in 2015.

On the other traditional routes, the situation remained comparable to previous years, with 7 164 detections reported from the Western Mediterranean route (-1% compared to 2014), 8 932 on the cir-

Figure 1. Detections of illegal border-crossing, by main nationalities in 2015



cular migration route between Albania and Greece, and 68 in the Black Sea.

Detections associated with surveillance activities on the eastern land border remained at relatively low levels (1 920), but an unusual increase in unfounded asylum applications at BCPs was reported at the Norwegian and Finnish borders with the Russian Federation (the Arctic route). On this route, starting from September 2015, an increasing number of migrants, in particular from Afghanistan and Syria, were reported crossing the border without proper documents and then applying for asylum.

Citizens from Syria and Afghanistan represented the highest share of detections of illegal border-crossing in 2015. The vast majority arrived from Turkey in Greece, and only approximately 7 448 Syrians and 117 Afghans were reported on the Central Mediterranean route. The breakdown by nationality, however, should be considered with caution as thorough interviews of a proportion of migrants during the screening procedure indicated a high degree of falsely claimed nationalities. Indeed, many migrants claimed to be from Syria or Afghanistan, to avoid being returned to Turkey or their country of origin, and so speed up their journey within the EU. Establishing the identity of a large number of poorly documented migrants is one of the main challenges border-control authorities are confronted with.

Eritreans ranked first in terms of the nationalities of migrants arriving on the Central Mediterranean route, with 38 791 detections, or 25% of this route's total. However, as regards regional totals, West Africans (54 828) represented the largest share of migrants arriving on this route.

The unprecedented number of detections of illegal border-crossing also meant that in several Member States, the authorities were not able to register the nationality of the persons arriving. Thus, the category 'not specified' for illegal border-crossing represented 30% of the total. Most of the cases under this category were reported after mid-September 2015, when the flow of migrants entered through Croatia.

Since 2014, the number of detections of West Africans has been steadily increasing, to reach 64 169 detections in 2015, nearly 86% of which on the Central Mediterranean route. While this number pales in comparison to the record annual total, this is a growing trend that needs

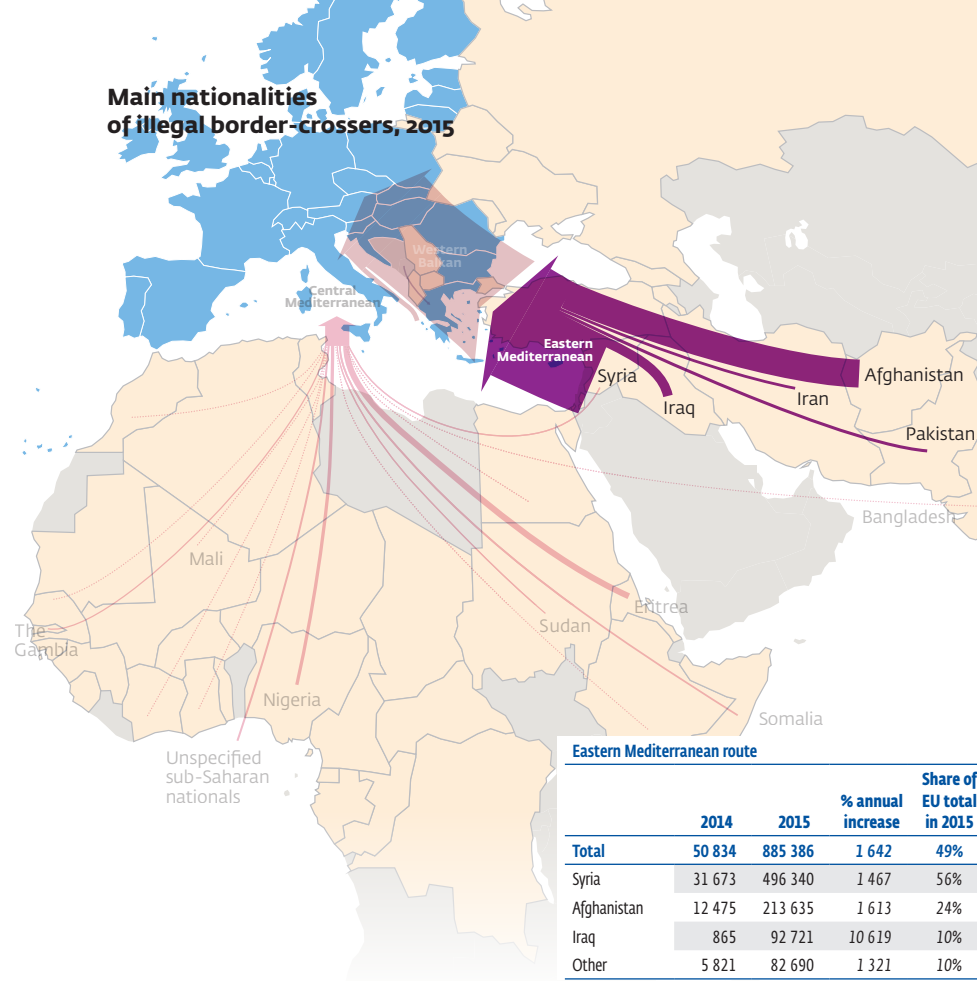
Table 1. **Detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs**

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

Routes	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Share of parent row total	% change on previous year
<b>Eastern Mediterranean route</b>	<b>57 025</b>	<b>37 224</b>	<b>24 799</b>	<b>50 834</b>	<b>885 386</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>1 642</b>
<b>Sea</b>	<b>1 467</b>	<b>4 370</b>	<b>11 831</b>	<b>44 057</b>	<b>873 179</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>1 882</b>
Syria	76	906	5 361	27 025	489 011	56	1 709
Afghanistan	310	1 593	4 080	11 582	212 286	24	1 733
Iraq	76	47	57	382	90 130	10	23 494
Other	1 005	1 824	2 333	5 068	81 752	9.4	1 513
<b>Land</b>	<b>55 558</b>	<b>32 854</b>	<b>12 968</b>	<b>6 777</b>	<b>12 207</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>80</b>
Syria	1 216	6 216	7 366	4 648	7 329	60	58
Iraq	1 054	987	372	483	2 591	21	436
Afghanistan	19 308	7 973	2 049	893	1 349	11	51
Other	33 980	17 678	3 181	753	938	7.7	25
<b>Western Balkan route</b>	<b>4 658</b>	<b>6 391</b>	<b>19 951</b>	<b>43 357</b>	<b>764 038</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1 662</b>
Not specified	75	39	38	153	556 258	73	363 467
Syria	34	178	1 171	7 320	90 065	12	1 130
Afghanistan	983	1 665	2 174	8 342	53 237	7.0	538
Other	3 566	4 509	16 568	27 542	64 478	8.4	134
<b>Central Mediterranean route</b>	<b>64 261</b>	<b>15 151</b>	<b>45 298</b>	<b>170 664</b>	<b>153 946</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>-9.8</b>
Eritrea	659	1 889	10 398	33 559	38 791	25	16
Nigeria	6 078	449	2 824	8 233	21 914	14	166
Somalia	1 416	3 403	4 506	5 785	12 430	8.1	115
Other	56 108	9 410	27 570	123 087	80 811	52	-34
<b>Circular route from Albania to Greece</b>	<b>5 269</b>	<b>5 502</b>	<b>8 728</b>	<b>8 841</b>	<b>8 932</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>1</b>
Albania	5 022	5 398	8 592	8 757	8 874	99	1
FYR Macedonia	23	36	21	31	16	0	-48
Georgia	21	7	23	14	13	0.1	-7
Other	203	61	92	39	29	0.3	-26
<b>Western Mediterranean route</b>	<b>8 448</b>	<b>6 397</b>	<b>6 838</b>	<b>7 272</b>	<b>7 164</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>-1</b>
Guinea	392	261	142	769	1 991	28	159
Algeria	1 772	2 015	1 436	734	1 052	15	43
Morocco	775	508	282	476	828	12	74
Other	5 509	3 613	4 978	5 293	3 293	46	-38
<b>Eastern borders route</b>	<b>1 049</b>	<b>1 597</b>	<b>1 316</b>	<b>1 275</b>	<b>1 920</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>51</b>
Afghanistan	105	200	149	209	491	26	135
Vietnam	23	158	149	257	461	24	79
Syria	4	22	64	98	153	8.0	56
Other	917	1 217	954	711	815	42	15
<b>Western African route</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>874</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>217</b>
Guinea	4	2	12	50	365	42	630
Côte d'Ivoire	0	0	5	16	136	16	750
Gambia	2	39	3	22	85	10	286
Other	334	133	263	188	288	33	53
<b>Black Sea route</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-84</b>
Syria	0	0	80	14	42	62	200
Iraq	0	0	0	90	12	18	-87
Iran	0	1	0	45	9	13	-80
Other	0	0	68	284	5	7.4	-98
<b>Other</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-10</b>
Syria	0	0	0	0	5	56	n.a.
Russian Federation	0	0	0	4	2	22	-50
China	0	0	0	0	1	11	n.a.
Other	1	0	4	6	1	11	-83
<b>Total</b>	<b>141 051</b>	<b>72 437</b>	<b>107 365</b>	<b>282 962</b>	<b>1 822 337</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

to be monitored. Compared to East Africans who do not apply for asylum in Italy but rather in other Member States, West Africans do apply for asylum in Italy and in fact constitute the largest contingent of asylum applicants in this country.

## Main nationalities of illegal border-crossers, 2015



The breakdown by nationality should be considered with caution as thorough interviews of a proportion of the migrants during screening procedure revealed a high degree of falsely claimed nationalities.

The vast majority of migrants do not apply for asylum in Greece. Syrian migrants receive special authorisation to stay in Greece for up to six months and many use this authorisation to travel through the country to the border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and then continue through the Western Balkans to other EU Member States.

### Land border

At the land border, detections of illegal border-crossing increased by 80% between 2014 and 2015. Detections were twice as high at the Bulgarian land border with Turkey as at the neighbouring Greek land border. However, the gap narrowed after September 2015, coinciding with the transportation measures set up from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia border, rendering the journey through the Greek Thrace region more attractive than the journey through Bulgaria and then Serbia.

The composition of the flow was roughly similar to the flow of migrants crossing the Aegean Sea, with the top three nationalities being Syrian, Afghan and Iraqi.

## 5.3. Surveillance: Eastern Mediterranean

The largest number of detections was reported on the Eastern Mediterranean route (885 386), mostly between Turkey and the Greek islands in the Eastern Aegean Sea. However, few applied for asylum in Greece and instead left Greece across the border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and continued through the Western Balkans.

### Sea border

Most detections were reported from the islands of Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Leros and Kos, though the number of islands targeted by the smuggling groups is growing. As resources at the border are increasingly stretched in order to attend to unprecedented numbers of arrivals, it is also more likely that an unknown number of migrants cross undetected.

With the rapid increase in the number of migrants seeking facilitation, smugglers are becoming more and more aggressive and ruthless to increase their profit, forcing migrants to board already overcrowded boats. Such behaviour led to lives being lost in the Aegean Sea, in-

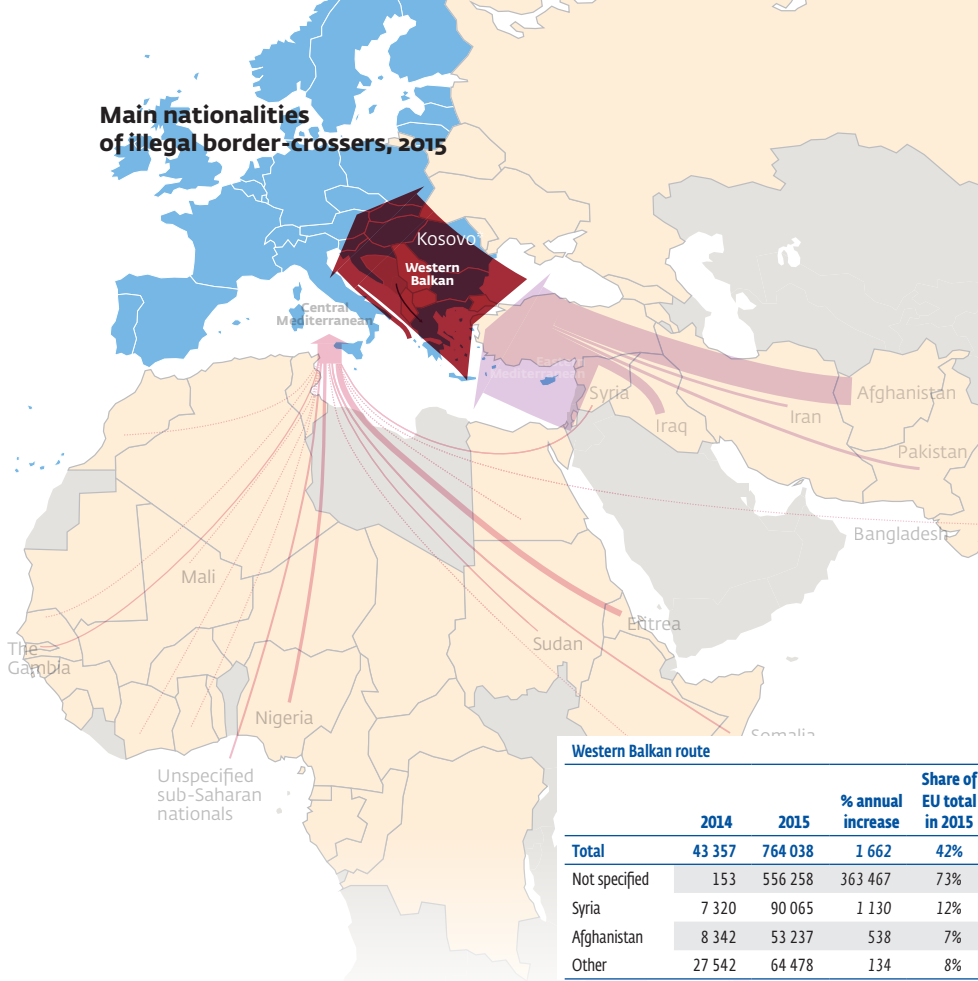
cluding that of a three-year-old boy near Bodrum, Turkey.

Most persons illegally crossing the border in the Aegean Sea were Syrians and Afghans. Many travelled in family units, which meant that many migrants belonged to vulnerable groups requiring special attention.



Figure 2. Landing beaches on the shore of Greek islands near Turkey littered with discarded life jackets

## Main nationalities of illegal border-crossers, 2015



## 5.4. Surveillance: Western Balkans

In 2015, 766 038 detections of illegal border-crossing were reported from the borders with Western Balkan countries. Between January and February, most of the detections concerned persons from Kosovo\*, i.e. a regional flow. As of March, detections were associated with non-regional flow of migrants who had initially crossed illegally from Turkey to Greece and on their way to Western Europe, mostly Germany.

Detections of non-regional migrants dramatically increased in July as a result of the increase in arrivals in Greece after April 2015. This increase also coincided with the amendments made to the Asylum Law of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia that allowed for a 72-hour period of legal transit and access to public transportation, with the measures announced by the Hungarian government aimed at curbing the irregular migratory flow entering from Serbia, and with a declaration in Germany that there was ‘no upper limit to the right for asylum’.

As a consequence of the continued pressure, Hungary constructed a temporary technical obstacle along its border

with Serbia, which was completed in mid-September 2015. This resulted in a sharp decrease of detections, and confined the flow of migrants at BCPs. Migrants applying for asylum at Hungarian BCPs would be returned to Serbia, considered as a safe country. The main flow of migrants thus quickly moved to the Croatian-Serbian land border, at a daily average of over 6 400 between mid-September and the end of October. Once in Croatia, migrants were transported by trains towards the border with Hungary. Hence, Hungary extended its construction to its land border with Croatia, thus moving the flow towards Slovenia as of mid-October.

The main reported nationalities were Syrians and Afghans. However, the large number of migrants made it impossible for the authorities to identify all of them, leading to a massive increase in the proportion of migrants whose country of origin is reported as unknown.

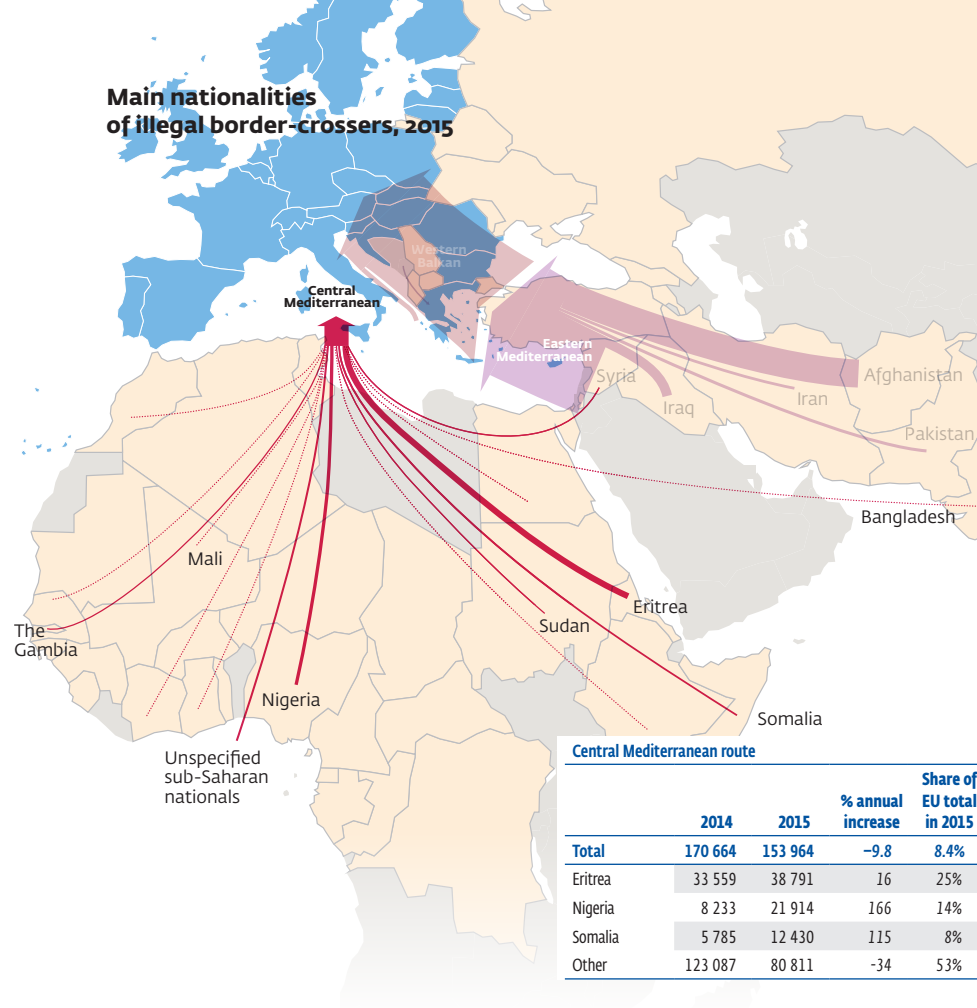
Although various prevention measures were attempted (i.e. the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia tried to close the border with Greece, Serbia deployed additional personnel and

equipment), the authorities in the Western Balkans, like their EU neighbours, could not contain the large number of migrants arriving. In reaction to public security concerns, the authorities of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia focused their efforts on transporting migrants by trains and buses towards the next border in order to facilitate their exit. Only a fraction of the migrants were screened and fingerprinted as would normally be the case.

Kosovo\*, being the only Western Balkan country that has not signed a visa liberalisation agreement, remains the main regional source of migrants crossing the border illegally. Their detections at the Hungarian-Serbian borders started to grow in August 2014, reached a peak in February 2015 and dropped afterwards, following the introduction of concerted international countermeasures. Their numbers have remained very low since then.

An increasing number of Albanians travelled legally to EU Member States, mostly Germany, where they applied for asylum. The increase started in January 2015 and peaked in August 2015. According to EASO, the rejection rate for asylum applications of Albanians between January and July 2015 was 96% at EU level. Organising the return of those not granted asylum increases the burden on the authorities in charge of return activities.

## Main nationalities of illegal border-crossers, 2015



## 5.5. Surveillance: Central Mediterranean

In 2015, there were 153 946 detections of illegal border-crossing on the Central Mediterranean route, representing a 10% decrease compared to 2014. The decrease is due to a fall in Syrians (about 40 000 in 2014, but fewer than 7 500 in 2015) after a shift towards the Eastern Mediterranean route. However, **the number of East and West Africans steadily increased from below 80 000 in 2014 to more than 108 000 in 2015 (+42%)**. This increase indicates that this route also faces very strong pressures and migrants continue to arrive in Libya, where smugglers have established a strong foothold.

Most migrants were Africans (89% of the detections on this route), but due to the large volume of arrivals preventing their adequate identification, the nationality of a share of migrants remained unknown (6%). The nationality most often reported was Eritrean, but the regional composition of the flow indicated that the majority of the detected migrants came from West Africa.

The vast majority of migrants departed from Libya and were rescued by border-control authorities after issuing

a distress call. Smugglers typically make use of frail, overcrowded boats, with a limited fuel supply to maximise their profits, putting migrants' lives at considerable risk. Search and rescue operations were crucial in saving the lives of an unprecedented number of migrants. Nevertheless, they also contributed to the enrichment of smugglers who could cut on travel costs and advertised to susceptible migrants that rescue operations make the journey safer, thus increasing the demand for crossings. IOM estimates that around 3 770 people died or went missing at sea in 2015.

On several occasions, smugglers threatened border guards and rescue teams to be able to recover the rubber or wooden boats. The share of rubber boats has increased in 2015, an indication of the limited availability of large wooden boats. This shortage may be a limiting factor in the number of crossings, whereas the demand remains high.

Upon arrival, less than half of the migrants who were rescued subsequently claimed asylum.

### The decisions to apply for asylum upon arrival is largely dependent on nationality.

The majority of migrants from Nigeria, the Gambia, Senegal, Bangladesh, Mali, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire make an asylum application upon arrival. However, data on asylum decisions at first instance between January and July 2015 at EU level (EASO) showed that the large majority of these applications are rejected. However, very few will eventually be returned. As regards these seven nationalities, together accounting for over 54 000 detections of illegal border-crossing at EU level, only fewer than 8 000 were returned in 2015. The information of the low likelihood of being returned and the ease of travelling within the EU after arrival, is circulating among migrants and encourages those at home to attempt a perilous journey to the EU.

The remaining half (mostly from Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Ethiopia) who do not often apply for asylum upon arrival will either stay illegally in Italy, or continue towards other EU Member States, where they will apply for asylum.

### Migrant's testimony

*Some of my friends went to Europe and when they came back, they had money and bought cars for their family. One day I thought, 'I am the same as these people, I should do the same.'*

Anonymous, Côte d'Ivoire, 25

Source: Migration Trends Across the Mediterranean: Connecting the Dots, IOM, June 2015

## 5.6. Surveillance: Other routes

### Western Mediterranean

The cooperation between Spain and Morocco is key in maintaining low level of detections on the land route between the two countries, and the Moroccan authorities regularly prevent attempts to climb over the fences to Melilla and Ceuta. Moroccan authorities have also dug a moat and built a high fence on its own territory in the most vulnerable areas of the perimeter near the border with the Spanish cities. These measures, combined with the implementation of the readmission agreement, reinforcement of Moroccan Border Guard Units protecting the fence and dismantlement of migrants' makeshift camps, have reduced the number of attempts to cross illegally.

As a result, sub-Saharan migrants are trying to take the sea route towards Spain. During debriefing many claimed that they made several attempts to jump the fence in Melilla before taking the sea route. Migrants are also more and more encouraged to depart from Libya, as the likelihood of return in the case of detection is much lower.

### Western African routes

On the Western African route that connects Senegal, Mauritania and Morocco with the Canary Islands in Spain the numbers remain negligible despite an increasing trend for departures from Morocco. This low number is attributed to

the Memorandum of Understanding between Spain, Senegal and Mauritania, that includes joint surveillance activities and effective return of those detected crossing the border illegally. The low number of departures resulted in relatively few casualties. Still, at least 12 people died in March 2015 in two separate incidents involving boats that departed from Morocco.

### Eastern land border

On the eastern land border, a new route, called the Arctic route, emerged at the land border of Norway and Finland with the Russian Federation. The main targeted BCP is the Norwegian BCP of Storskog, which registered an unusually high number of applications for asylum, with more than 5 200 applications in 2015. People seeking asylum in Norway have taken to using bicycles to cross the border from the Russian Federation because pedestrian traffic is banned and drivers of vehicles are fined if they carry passengers across without proper documents.

Until mid-October 2015 the majority of asylum applicants were from Syria, but then the number of nationalities widened, and in November Afghans took over as the main nationality. In Norway, the situation eased of as December, after the Russian authorities stopped clearing transit travellers without a Schengen visa.

### Increasing number of Syrian asylum seekers in Ceuta and Melilla

In March 2015, the International Protection and Asylum Offices were inaugurated at BCPs in Ceuta and Melilla (Spain). The decision came as response to the increase, since November 2014, of Syrian families applying for asylum. Most applications were made in-land in Melilla, suggesting that many entered fraudulently.

However, there has been a clear displacement to the Finnish border.

After crossing the border by bicycle has been banned, migrants now acquire cars and drive to the border by themselves. Some of them have lived in the Russian Federation for a long period of time. However, the share of those in transit through the Russian Federation has been recently growing, indicating that the knowledge about the route in the origin countries is spreading.

## 5.7. Border checks: Regular flow

While activities linked to surveillance, i.e. activities between border crossing-points, received most media attention, border checks are undoubtedly the core activities of border-control authorities, with millions of checks on entry and exit carried out on a daily basis, at BCPs.

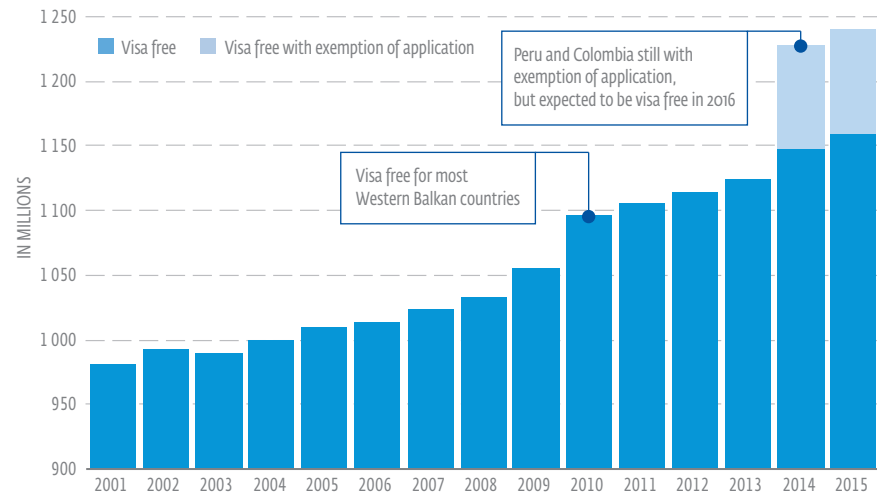
At the macro level, two factors contributed in the recent past to shape the flow of passengers: the first is the visa liberalisation policy and local border traffic agreements that resulted in higher passenger flows, mostly at the land borders with Western Balkan countries. The second is the growing overall number of passengers due to globalisation, in particular at the air borders.

Based on Eurostat data<sup>1</sup>, the upward trend already observed in air passenger transport for previous years has been confirmed: the figures available for 2014 indicate a year-on-year rise of 4.4%. Particularly remarkable is the growth observed for Greece (+16%) and Luxembourg (+12%) as well as Portugal and Poland (+10%). Athens registered the highest rise among the largest airports (+20%), followed by Brussels (+14%) and Lisbon (+13%).

In 2014, international intra-EU flights represented more than 44% of all passengers carried at EU-28 level, followed by extra-EU flights (more than 38%) and national flights (almost 18%). In 2014, passengers on arrival from extra-EU flights totalled almost 169 million, compared to 164 million in 2013.<sup>2</sup>

At the land border, some Member States started to regularly report monthly data on regular passenger flow to Frontex. However, the information still contains gaps and it is not currently possible to report an EU total. Based on partial information from Member States, the largest and increasing inwards passenger traffic, was at the Croatian land border with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Entries

Figure 3. Population in third countries under Annex II of the Visa Code, listing countries not requiring a visa, in millions



Source: UN Population Division

from Ukraine and the Russian Federation are also significant at the Polish and Finnish borders.

In 2014, 15.6 million short-term uniform Schengen visas were issued, constituting a decrease of 3.1% compared to 2013 (16.1 million). The decrease was mostly due to fewer visas being applied for and issued from the Russian Federation, a trend attributed to the economic downturn. The overall visa rejection rate remained stable, at about 6.2%, with rate for Africa (for a relatively low number of

visa issued: 1.7 million) standing out at about 20%.

In December 2015, the worldwide roll-out of the **Schengen Visa Information System (VIS)** was completed. The VIS database now contains all data related to visa applications by third-country nationals who require a visa to enter the Schengen area, including biometric data (fingerprints and a digital facial image). Each time a visa holder enters the Schengen area, their fingerprints should be checked against the database.

### Peru and Colombia granted visa-free regime

Peru and Colombia signed short-stay visa-waiver agreements with the EU in 2015. As a result Peruvian and Colombian citizens will no longer be required to request a visa for travel to the EU. Certain conditions will still apply, however; namely holding a return ticket, financial means for the visit and a biometric passport. Due to delays in the availability of biometric passports in Peru, the agreement may not take practical effect until sometime in 2016. The risks arising from a visa waiver for Colombian and Peruvian citizens will likely remain modest and concern mostly drug trafficking and trafficking in human beings. As in other visa liberalisation cases, passenger flow and refusals of entry are likely to increase.

Visa liberalisation dialogues are ongoing between the EU, Kosovo\*, Georgia and Ukraine with the aim of taking gradual steps towards the long-term goal of visa-free travel, provided that conditions for well-managed and secure mobility are in place.

1 [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Air\\_transport\\_statistics](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Air_transport_statistics)

2 Eurostat, Air passenger transport by reporting country, avia\_paoc, last update of data 19.10.2015

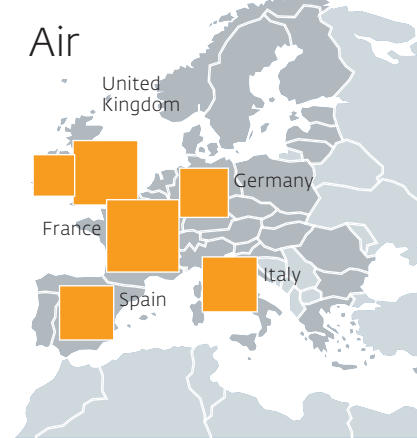


**Number per border type, 2015**  
(only values higher than 500 are stipulated)

**Total: 66 503** (63 701)  
Number in parenthesis is for 2014



**Total: 46 713** (46 292)  
Number in parenthesis is for 2014



**Refusals of entry**

**Total: 5 279** (4 894)  
Number in parenthesis is for 2014



**Trend of the total**



**5.8. Border checks: Refusals**

In 2015, among regular travellers, Member States reported a total of 118 495 refusals of entry at the external borders of the EU, a stable trend compared to the previous year. Refusals of entry represented only a fraction of passenger flow, indicating that the overwhelming number of passengers crossing the borders are bona fide travellers.

Most refusals of entry were reported at the land border (66 503, or 56% of the total). This is linked to the nature of the flow at the land border, which is mostly composed of commuters and low budget

travellers. Indeed, border-control authorities face different challenges during border checks at air and land borders.

As in 2014, Ukrainians were the top ranking nationality for refusals of entry at EU level. Among Member States, Poland reported the largest number of refusals of entry in absolute terms, mostly to nationals of Ukraine at the land borders. However, it is at the land border between Hungary and Serbia that the number of refusals of entry is the largest per passenger. This particular pressure is due to the higher passenger flow follow-

ing visa liberalisation in the Western Balkans, and the subsequent increased role of border-control authorities in checking entry requirements, which was previously the responsibility of consular authorities.

At the air borders, as in 2014, Albanians continued to rank as the top nationality. Albanians ranked first for refusals of entry at the air border in eight Member States and Schengen Associated Countries. This predominance of Albanians in the data on refusals of entry coincides with the visa liberalisation regime that entered into force in 2011 for Albanians.

As in previous years, the main reasons for refusals of entry were the lack of valid visa (25%) and the lack of appropriate documentation justifying the purpose of stay (28%). The number of persons refused entry due to an alert in the SIS system represented only about 8.2% of the total, with 9 762 refusals issued in 2015.

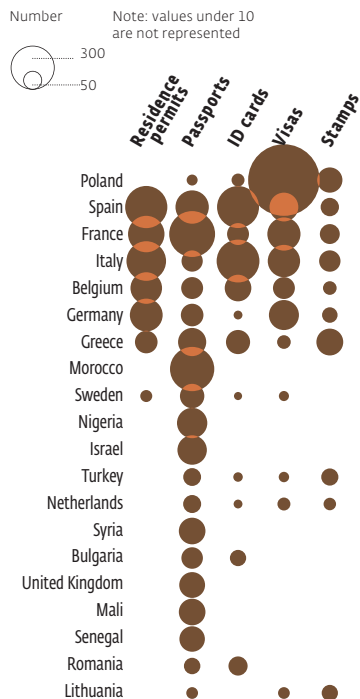


© European Commission

Figure 4. ABC devices used for checking passengers at Madrid Barajas airport

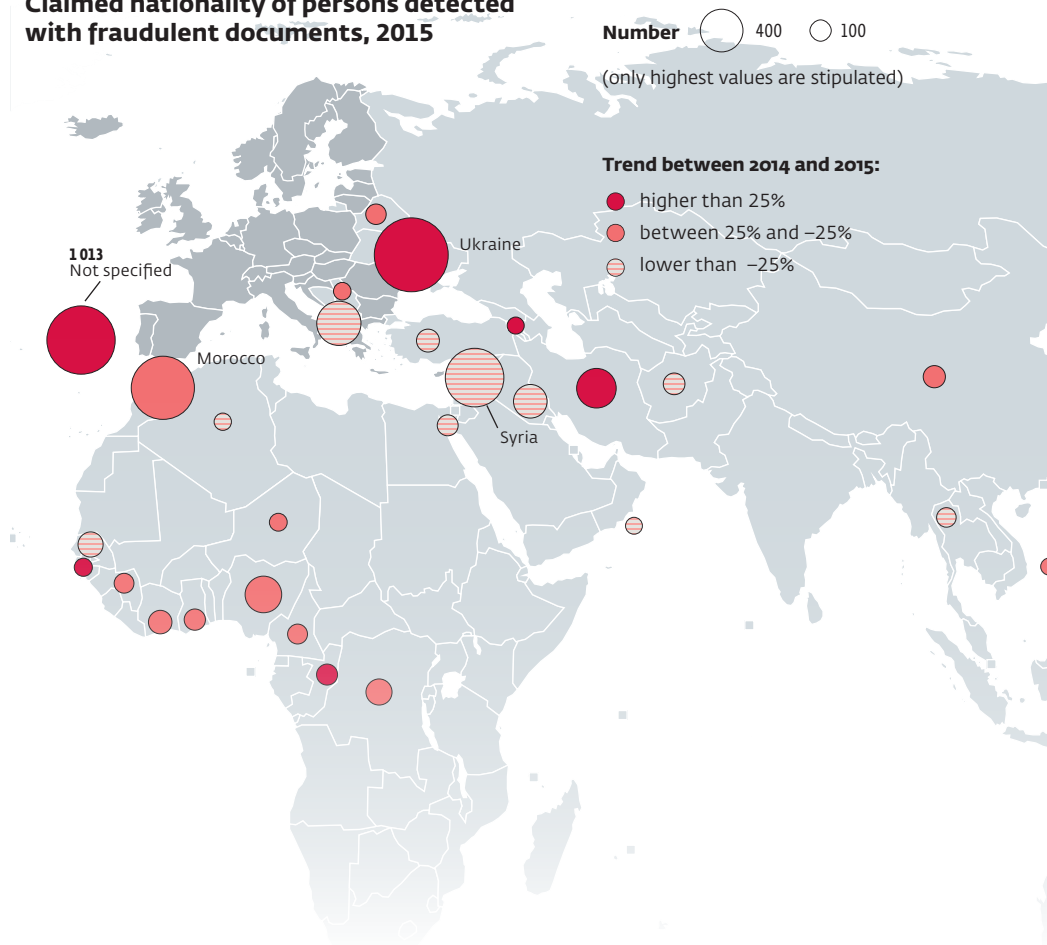
## Type

### Type of fraudulent document detected, by main countries of issuance, 2015



## Nationality of users

### Claimed nationality of persons detected with fraudulent documents, 2015



## 5.9. Border checks: Fraudulent documents

In 2015, Member States reported a total of 8 373 document fraudsters at BCPs on entry from third countries to the EU. This represented a decrease (-11%) compared to the previous year. The most commonly detected nationalities were Ukrainians (1 186), Moroccans (867) and Syrians (745).

### On air routes, most detections continue to be reported from Turkish airports

As in previous years, most detections were reported on air routes. At 529 detections, the number of fraudulent document users arriving from Istanbul Atatürk decreased by 29% compared to the previous year, yet it remained the top last departure airport for detections of fraudulent documents. The displacement of the passengers using fraudulent docu-

ments to Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen airport was, however, observed in the autumn of 2015 pointing to the increasing importance of this smaller, budget airport.

From Nigeria to the EU, detections steeply increased at the beginning of 2015, mostly at Rome Fiumicino, but the trend reversed when Alitalia withdrew its Accra/Lagos/Rome service at the end of March 2015. Hence most document fraud detections involving departure places in Africa were recorded on the routes leading from Dakar (Senegal) and Bamako (Mali) towards the EU.

Syrian nationals remained the most prevalent nationality detected with fraudulent documents at the air borders, mainly arriving from Turkish airports, although the number of related detections on flights from third countries was only half as high as during 2014.

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

In 2015 most of the detections of fraudulent documents at land and sea borders were reported between Morocco and Spain, mostly involving Moroccans detected upon arrival from Tangier, Morocco, and in the Spanish exclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, often using fraudulent Spanish documents.

The most often reported land border section for detection of document fraud remained the Polish-Ukrainian border, which is attributable to the Ukrainian nationals abusing Polish fraudulently obtained visas.

## Security risks associated with continued recognition of Syrian passports

The massive migration inflow of 2015 raised many questions related to the identity of arriving people. Concerns related to the abuse of Syrian documents have been confirmed by the observations made during the registration process. The level of security of the Syrian supporting documents (in particular ID cards, family books, military books, etc.) is very low. Forgeries detected during the registration process are of different quality, although most of these documents could be detected during proper document checks.

The situation is much more complex in the case of the abuse of Syrian passports. Although the protection level of these documents is relatively low compared to EU passports, the biggest problem lies in the security (and the overall reliability) of the issuing process. Criminal organisations have access to a large number of stolen blank Syrian passports and printers used for their personalisation. This allows them to produce genuine-looking passports, which may be difficult to identify even by experienced document experts.

The very unreliable and non-secure issuing process of Syrian passports together with the very low security protection of the Syrian breeder (supporting) documents would normally lead to non-recognition of Syrian passports for the purpose of travel. Recently issued ordinary Syrian passports are, however, recognised for travel and for affixing a visa by all EU Member States. By contrast, similarly unreliable passports of Somalia are not recognised by most EU Member States.

### Intra-Schengen

By contrast, the number of document fraud incidents on intra-EU Schengen movements showed a marked increase. For the second year in a row, there were more fraudulent documents detected on intra-EU/Schengen movements than during border checks on passengers arriving from third countries. This is partly due to the large number of migrants undertaking secondary movements within the EU, often with fraudulent documents obtained in the country of entry to the EU.

The number of persons aiming to get to the UK with fraudulent document significantly increased (+70%) compared to 2014. This trend is mostly attributable to the increasing number of Albanian nationals often misusing Italian and Greek ID cards followed by Ukrainian nationals abusing authentic Polish ID cards. Other nationalities aiming to reach the UK with fraudulent documents were Syrian, Iranian and Chinese nationals.

The current migration crisis is obviously also having an impact on the detections of fraudulent document users on the air routes between Greece and Germany, a 20% increase compared to 2014. Most of these detections were attributable to the Syrian nationals who decided to take the fast air route to reach their final destination.

### Vulnerabilities in detecting fraudulent documents

There is no EU-wide system of document inspection performance in place and thus analyses focus on the threat of document fraud as detected at the border, rather than on the vulnerabilities related to the means deployed (staff and equipment). However, the continuous development and sophistication of the physical, optical and electronic security features of travel documents currently in circulation brings significant challenges for border-control officers.

The outcome of an exercise carried out by Frontex<sup>1</sup>, showed that the performance of the technical equipment shows a degree of variability, indecision and inconsistency, resulting in a number of false documents being incorrectly accepted as genuine. On the other hand, the performance of border-control officers is also variable and subjective. Although some experts have very high accuracy levels, short time available for first-line check negatively affects the detections of false documents.

A number of measures could mitigate these vulnerabilities, including for example routine testing of deployed operational systems against performance requirements, establishing quality assurance process, development of intra-EU mobility programs for the exchange of first-line border-control officers and testing their skills and performance on a regular basis.

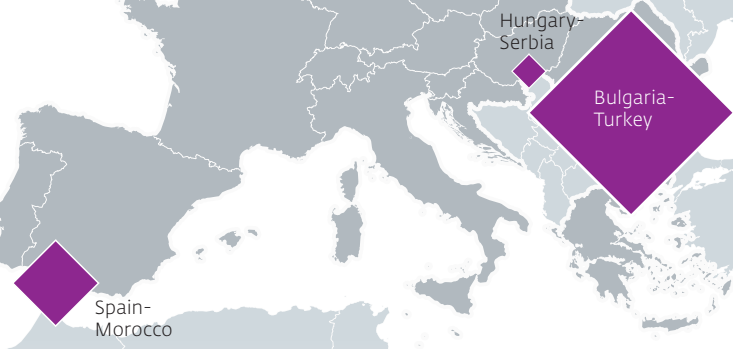
<sup>1</sup> *The document challenge II*, Frontex, October 2014

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

Number, 2015

Total: **3 642** (3 052)

Number in parenthesis is for 2014



## 5.10. Border checks: Clandestine entry

In 2015, the number of detections of clandestine entries at BCPs during border checks (people hiding in vehicles to avoid border control) remained much lower than the number of detections between BCPs during surveillance activities (detections of illegal border-crossing). However, this indicator is not uniformly reported by Member States, and for example Greece reports clandestine entries as part of detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs, while other Member States do not report any detections although police information reveals such cases.

**The total number of detections (3 642) thus underestimates the actual situation.**

This is further confirmed by the large number of detections of clandestine entry reported at the internal border (for example between France and the UK), as well as by police reports of in land detections. The tragic discovery of 71 dead bodies in a lorry that travelled from Hungary to Austria in August 2015 illustrates that **this dangerous *modus operandi* is often used by smugglers, regardless of its deadly consequences.**

Most of detections were reported at the land border between Bulgaria and Turkey, through which a large share of the migratory flow transiting Turkey is channelled. The Bulgarian BCPs most affected by clandestine entries were Kapi-

tan Andreevo and Lesovo. This pressure is a consequence of intensified surveillance along the Bulgarian and Greek land borders with Turkey. Although no data are collected, it is also likely that the use of this *modus operandi* also increased at the Greek land border, as demonstrated by detections of migrants on the motorway soon after the border.

While checking all vehicles would introduce undue waiting time for many bona fide travellers, targeted checks on some vehicles meeting specific risk criteria would make it possible to determine with more precision the extent of the phenomenon and better prevent it. Oper-

ational risk analysis techniques, similar to those used by customs or for checking lorries at the border between Schengen Member States and the UK, could be adapted to the specificities of the external borders. This is an area of work for border-control authorities that would greatly benefit from gathering and pooling intelligence at EU level. This would result in preventing clandestine entries and reduce the number of casualties.

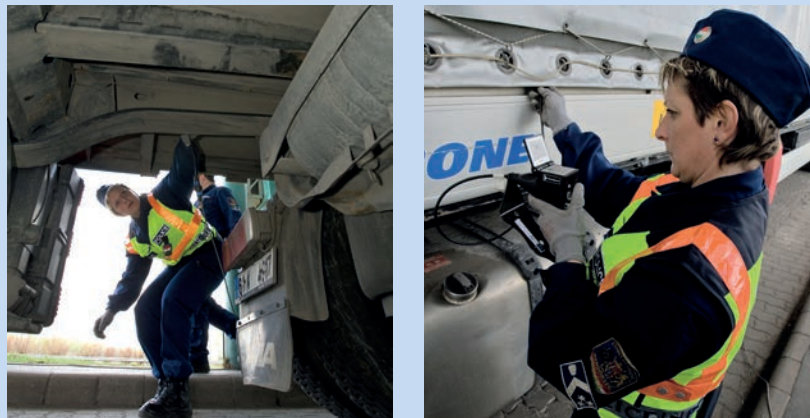


Figure 5. Hungarian police officer sets a sensor of a heart beat detector and a flexible camera to search irregular migrants during control of a lorry at the border between Hungary and Serbia near Rösztke

© European Commission

## People hiding in vehicles is a growing concern of the road transport industry

People hiding in vehicles is a growing concern for the road transport industry, including threats to drivers, breaking into trucks and damaging loads, with inevitable economic consequences. The problem is particularly acute at specific locations near border areas, when slowly moving or stationary trucks provide an

opportunity for migrants to get in. The border between France and the UK, near Dover and Calais, is a vivid example of this phenomenon.

Some private sector solutions are being introduced, for example drivers buy CO<sub>2</sub> detectors which can send an SMS or e-mail alert in case of the level of the sat-

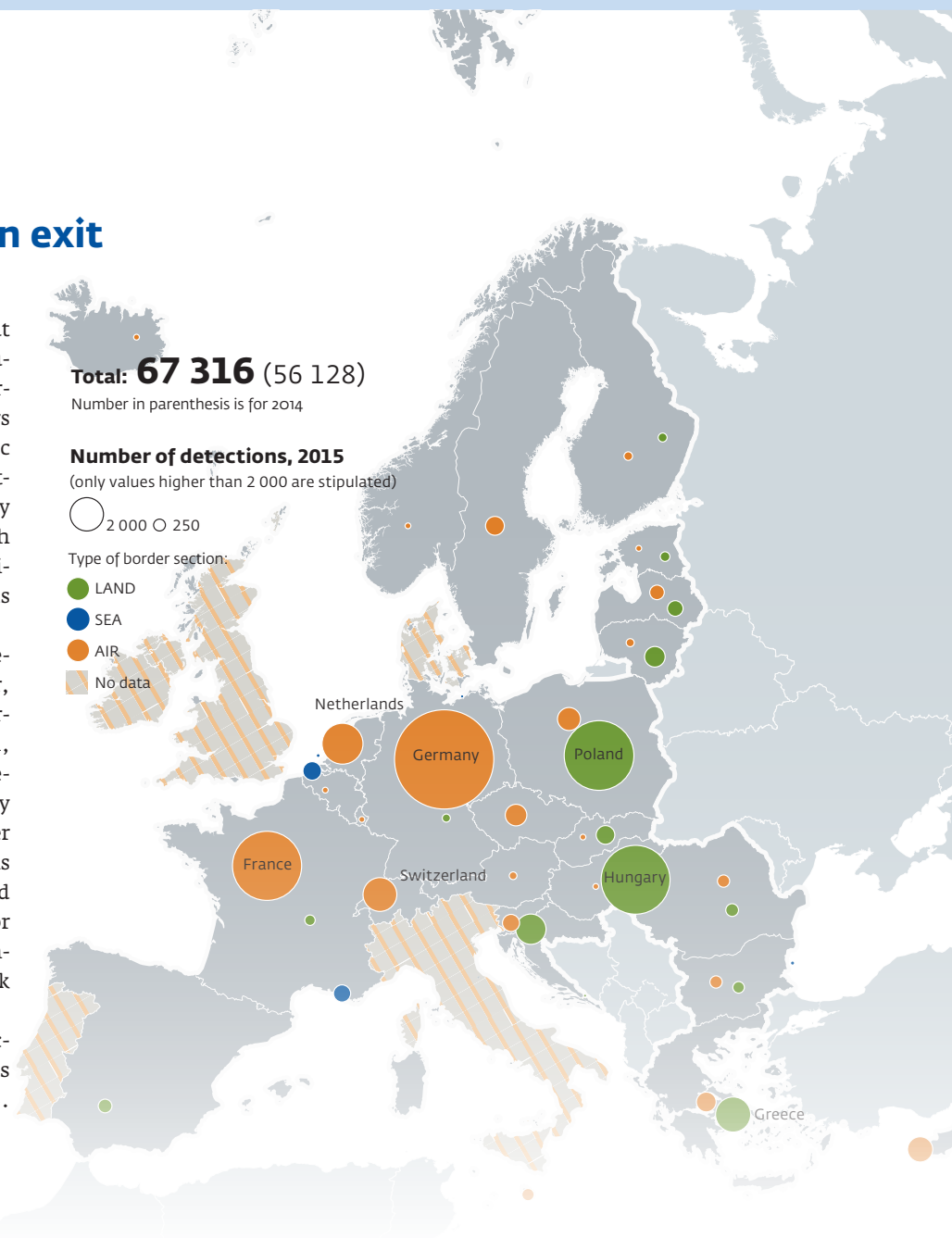
uration changes. Some Member States have developed a code of conduct, which sets out how drivers should secure their vehicles, but improvements and a uniform EU approach on this issue are still needed.

## 5.11. Illegal stayers on exit

Border-control authorities also carry out checks on exit. This offers an opportunity to record the exit of potentially overstaying third-country nationals, holders of a Schengen visa or simply a biometric passport in the case of travellers benefiting from visa liberalisation who may stay up to three months within a six-month period. In 2015, border-control authorities reported a total of 67 316 detections of illegal stayers on exit.

Most illegal stayers on exit were reported by Germany at the air border, mostly nationals from Kosovo\* and Turkey returning home. At the EU level, the largest number of detections was related to Ukrainians, mostly reported by Poland. The comparatively low number of illegal border-crossings of Ukrainians indicates that most of them had entered the EU legally and then overstayed, or had entered the EU abusing legal channels, such as fraudulently obtained work or business visas.

In most cases, following a detection on exit, the person continues to travel and is recorded in the SIS.

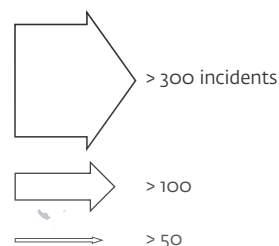


## CBC incidents reported through JORA by border section in 2015

### Smuggling of

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

### Number of incidents in 2015



## 5.12. Cross-border crime

Frontex promotes European border management with a special focus on irregular migration flows. Applying the concept of Integrated Border Management, it additionally supports Member States in combating organised crime at the external borders, including the smuggling of goods and trafficking in human beings.

### Smuggling of illicit drugs

#### Cannabis from the Western Balkans and North Africa

According to the EMCDDA European Drug Report 2014<sup>1</sup>, 80% of drug seizures in Europe were of cannabis, Morocco being the main provider although its production is in decline. Spain reported around two thirds of the total quantity of cannabis resin seized in Europe, but routes are diversifying, and other EU countries are increasingly used as entry points. In June 2015, two vessels of the Italian Guardia di Finanza and Frontex assets intercepted a Turkish flagged cargo ship sailing from Morocco and seized 12 tonnes of cannabis resin worth more than EUR 40 million. Ten crew members, all Turkish nationals, were

arrested on a tip received from the Turkish police.

Regarding herbal cannabis, Turkey has been seizing larger quantities of herbal cannabis than all EU countries combined. At the same time, Greece has reported large increases, pointing to an emerging route in the Eastern Mediterranean.

#### Cocaine from South America

According to EMCDDA's calculations cocaine is the third most intensively smuggled drug in Europe. However, seizures, increasing from the mid-nineties till 2007, have been declining since 2009. Most of the cocaine is seized by Spain, but trafficking routes to Europe are diversifying and seizures were recently made in ports of the Eastern Mediterranean, Baltic and Black Sea. Cocaine is moreover smuggled on pleasure boats and through container shipments, where it is often hidden under legitimate goods and by air freight.

At the air borders, organised criminal networks often apply a 'shotgun approach', consisting in 'flooding' aeroplanes with dozens of couriers per flight in the expectation that a sufficient number of them would slip through controls. As shown by examples from the Neth-

erlands, some countermeasures have proven successful, such as the establishment of joint customs and border guard teams to identify couriers through pre-flight checks and risk profiles. However, stricter controls on a set of high-risk air routes tended to lead to the use of alternative routes.

#### Heroin from Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan

According to the EMCDDA, more than five tonnes of heroin were seized in the EU in 2014 (the latest year for which data are available), following a continuous decrease in heroin use in Europe over the past decade. Most of the heroin consumed in the EU is produced in Afghanistan and transported along a variety of routes, including through Turkey and Balkan countries, the Northern route, which heads through Central Asia and the Russian Federation, and increasingly the Southern route via the Persian Gulf by sea, sometimes including passages through Africa.

The latest annual statistics on seizures showed that more heroin was seized in Turkey than in all EU Member States combined, and the gap in large seizures within most countries of South-Eastern Europe points to a substantial num-

<sup>1</sup> EMCDDA (2014), *European Drug Report: Trends and Developments*, p. 17.

ber of undetected shipments. On this route, heroin is often smuggled into the EU by individual travellers in small and medium amounts. Regular cooperation between border guards and customs authorities is of particular importance for the detection of drugs smuggled by criminals posing as individual travellers.

### Smuggling of weapons

The terrorist attacks in France in 2015 have shown that the effective control of firearms is indispensable to fight terrorism. Few days before the November attack, during a routine check German police officers discovered pistols, hand grenades, Kalashnikov rifles with ammunition and an explosive agent. The weapons were transported from Montenegro to France in a car of a man probably linked to suspects behind the Paris attacks.

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

## Tackling cross-border crime requires uniform standard of collaboration between border guards and customs officers

Law-enforcement experience shows that in contrast to most locally committed crimes, cross-border crimes are highly complex, as their planning and execution reaches into several countries. Thus local solutions are limited in their effectiveness, and law-enforcement and political cooperation with third countries is indispensable for a substantial reduction of these offenses.

In addition to the requirement to cooperate internationally, cooperation is also needed between the different competent law-enforcement authorities. However, due to the legal and institutional national characteristics, border guard authorities along the external borders of the EU have different types and degrees of responsibilities in the fight against transnational crime. Regarding the prevention of smuggling of illicit goods, in certain Member States border-control authorities play only an assisting role, while in other Member States they share their tasks with customs or are able to conduct investigations. Only with a more coherent approach to implementing Integrated Border Management including closer cooperation between the different authorities operating at the external borders, can cross-border criminality be more effectively prevented.

ties will be crucial in the effective fight against trafficking of firearms.

### Exit of stolen motor vehicles

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

Only a small share of the vehicles stolen in the EU are detected at its exter-

nal borders. Detections at the borders reported to Frontex showed a decrease from over 430 in 2014 to almost 350 in 2015, including cars, lorries, trailers, boats, excavators, agricultural machines and motorbikes.

### Smuggling of excise goods

Most excise goods smuggled across the EU's external borders are tobacco products. According to estimates of the European Commission, the illicit trade in tobacco products costs the EU and its Member States EUR 10 billion a year in lost tax revenues. Not only individual consumers and small scale smugglers from economically weak border regions try to take advantage of existing price differences. Large-scale criminal businesses illicitly import cigarettes from as far away as Asia, especially to Western European markets.

In 2015, the largest share of illicit cigarettes reported to Frontex was smuggled across the EU borders from Turkey: More than 228.7 million pieces of cigarettes were seized by the authorities in over 300 cases. In turn, more than 11.8 million cigarettes were seized at the eastern borders, about 0.8 million on the Western Balkan route and half a million at the Spanish border.

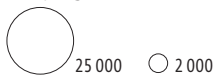


Figure 6. The Western Balkans region remains the focus of EU efforts on tackling illicit firearms trafficking through the external borders

## Illegal stayers

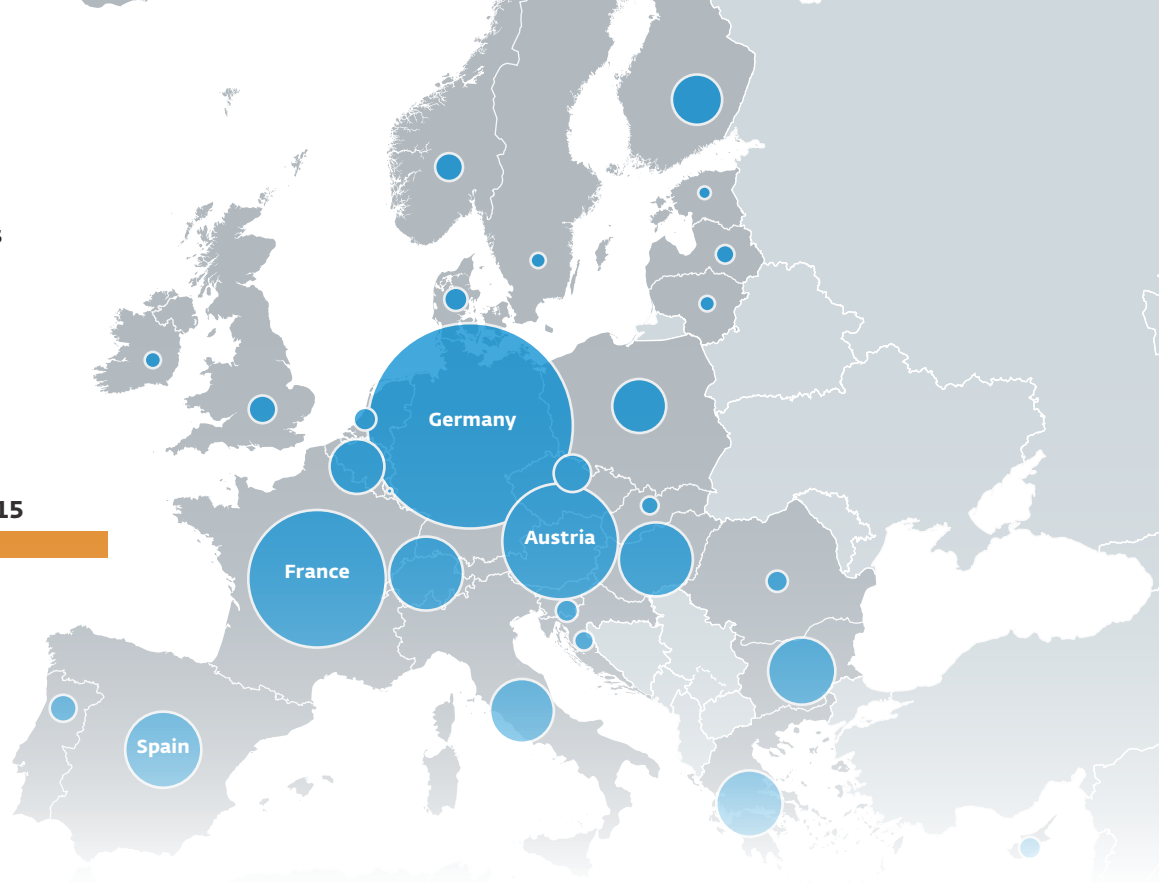
### Number of detected cases of illegal staying, 2015

(only highest values are stipulated)



## Facilitators

### Number of facilitators, 2015



## 5.13. In the EU: Illegal stayers, Asylum, Facilitators

### Illegal stayers

In 2015, Member States reported 701 625 detections of illegal stay, which represented a generally increasing trend compared to the previous year. However, it should be borne in mind that the Netherlands, since 2012, due to technical reasons, only reported detections on exit and not those inland.

In terms of nationalities, the large numbers of Syrians, Afghans, Iraqi and Eritrean are artificially inflated by detections of people not meeting requirements for legal stay before they apply for asylum.

Looking at detections over the past few years, Moroccans stand out as one of the main nationalities detected staying illegally (above 20 000 annual detections between 2009 and 2015), although their detections at the external borders remain much lower. This indicates that Moroccans tend to cross the external borders legally, but then exceed their legal period of stay within the EU. The same applies to Algerians, although their number is lower (about 10 000 annual detections since 2009).

### Facilitators

The facilitation of illegal immigration remains a significant threat to the EU. Detections of facilitators rose from 10 234 in 2014 to 12 023 in 2015. The rise was mostly due to increases reported in Spain, France and Italy.

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

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

There is also a heightened risk of human trafficking (in the form of forced labour, prostitution, crime) in connection with payments demanded from the migrants by their facilitators.

### Asylum

According to EASO, over 1.35 million applications for asylum were registered in 2015 – double the number in 2014. This number marked the highest level received in the EU since EU-level data collection began in 2008 and exceeds the numbers of refugees received by the then EU-15 in the 1990s during the Balkan wars. According to EASO, 95% of this total was comprised of persons applying for the first time in the EU. The main nationalities of applicants were Syrians (over 334 000), Afghans (over 168 000) and Iraqis (over 114 000), together accounting for 50% of all applications. Applicants from Western Balkan countries comprised 16% of the total (over 192 000), despite an extremely low recognition rate, thus hampering Member States' ability to provide protection to those clearly in need.

EASO data include figures on implicit withdrawals of asylum applications, where a person applies for asylum in one



Member State and then absconds. Many of those implicitly withdrawing subsequently apply for international protection in another Member State and may eventually be returned in accordance with the stipulations of the Dublin III Regulation. In 2015, implicit withdrawals were particularly high in Hungary (56% of all withdrawals) and Bulgaria. Implicit withdrawals might indicate potential misuse of the asylum procedure whereby an individual makes an application for international protection at the border in order to circumvent the normal requirements.

A number of Member States faced difficulty, in the context of the migration crisis, in transposing and implementing the new requirements on Member States under the asylum *acquis* that came into force on 20 July 2015. The situation in main countries of arrival (Italy and Greece) indeed demonstrated that large numbers of potential applicants for asylum arriving in an irregular manner by sea can lead to severe difficulties in the registration foreseen by the new legislation. Even full implementation of existing legislation, in particular the requirement to upload into the Eurodac system the fingerprint records of all illegal border-crossers and asylum applicants, has shown to be extremely difficult in areas where authorities were faced with huge numbers of daily arrivals, often in remote locations.

In September 2015, an emergency relocation mechanism was triggered via the passing of two Council Decisions

to assist Greece and Italy by moving persons in clear need of international protection to other Member States to process their asylum claims. The relocation mechanism was aimed at nationals of countries who have an average EU-wide asylum recognition rate equal to or higher than 75%, which threshold in 2014 was passed for Syrians, Eritreans and Iraqis. Frontex and EASO worked together in hotspots to identify the nationalities and ensure that they were informed of the possibility to be relocated and assisted with the registration of the asylum application. However, due to the practical challenges of implementing this entirely new system by the end of 2015, only 272 applicants had been relocated from Italy and Greece to other Member States.

In October 2015, Frontex and EASO both instituted emergency data collections in order to keep track of the massive flows of migrants via the Eastern Mediterranean and Western Balkan routes. This showed that while the numbers of illegal border-crossers to the Greek islands corresponded to the eventual numbers of formally lodged asylum applications, they were made almost exclusively in countries of destination rather than those of transit: while the initial route had been through Hungary, after the closure of the green border in September 2015, asylum seekers did not effectively need to apply for asylum until they reached Austria and countries further north and west.

## Difficulties in implementing the Dublin asylum system

In its 2011 decision in *M.S.S. v. Belgium and Greece*, the European Court of Human Rights found that the living conditions for asylum seekers in Greece amounted to inhuman and degrading treatment, and that shortcomings in the asylum procedure placed refugees at risk of being returned to a country where they could be persecuted (known as ‘refoulement’ and illegal under international law). The decision was the first time Dublin transfers from across the European Union had effectively been suspended to a particular Member State. Returns to Greece have not resumed nearly five years after the decision.

In 2014, in its decision on the *Tarakhek* case, the Court held that there would be a violation of Article 3 (prohibition of inhuman or degrading treatment) of the European Convention on Human Rights if the Swiss authorities were to send the applicants back to Italy under the Dublin Regulation without having first obtained individual guarantees from the Italian authorities that the applicants would be taken charge of in a manner adapted to the age of the children and that the family would be kept together. The effects of the *Tarakhel* case could already be seen in early 2015. In the Netherlands, authorities have already implemented new procedures for transfers to Italy requiring individual guarantees that reception standards will be met, and allowing for claims to be processed in the Netherlands if obtaining a guarantee takes an unreasonable amount of time. German authorities implemented a similar procedure for families to be transferred to Italy; and the decision has also been used successfully to challenge transfers in national courts in Switzerland, Germany, and Belgium.

Sources: ECHR, Factsheet – ‘Dublin’ cases, July 2015  
The Migration Policy Institute Europe, *EU Dublin Asylum System Faces Uncertain Future after Ruling in Afghan Family’s Case*, April 2015



Figure 7. A member of the Belgian Immigration Office speaks with a Palestinian woman

© European Commission

## 5.14. In the EU: Secondary movements

In 2015, subsequent to the massive arrivals of persons crossing the border illegally, secondary movements of people within the EU reached unprecedented levels. Indeed, the vast majority of the people who entered illegally through Greece, and a large proportion of those entering through Italy, undertook secondary movements to their final destinations, mostly Germany, resulting in about a million persons travelling through the EU without proper travel documents. The unprecedented volume of these secondary movements created new challenges for Member States, including the registration and transport of large flows of persons, as well as internal security issues linked to the challenges in determining the identity and motivation of the migrants.

Following chaotic scenes at the external borders in September 2015, when migrants forced their way through the border and onboard trains and buses, several Schengen Member States rein-

troduced temporary internal border controls. Additional internal border controls were reinstated after the terrorist attack in Paris in November 2015. In most cases, the reintroduction of internal controls means the presence of police patrols with the authority to perform border checks. Their intensity and frequency are, however, not comparable to the controls at the external borders.

The main effect of the reintroduction of controls at internal borders has been the restraining of the chaos at the borders. However, between September and December 2015, internal controls have not reduced the general migratory flow, neither at the external nor internal borders.

### Public-private cooperation at EU internal borders

Some Member States have introduced measures to involve transport companies in the prevention of undocumented migrants from entering their territories. Norway requires ferry providers to ask passengers for a valid travel document, both when passengers buy the ticket and before they board the ferry to Norway, for example on Danish or German soil. Denmark's parliament has approved a bill, which could, under certain circumstances, oblige bus, train, and ferry operators to refuse transportation across Danish borders to passengers who cannot present a valid travel document. In a law, which entered into force in December 2015, Sweden required cross-border transport providers to have all passengers controlled on foreign soil before they enter Sweden. While Sweden's state-owned train operator SJ has stopped services across the Öresund bridge from Denmark because it did not see itself in the position to carry out the demanded identity checks in time, Öresundståg, another train operator which runs a Denmark-Sweden commuter service introduced an around 30-minute-long stop at Kastrup station to allow for document checks.



Figure 8. Syrian refugees at the Slovenian border with Croatia

# Reintroduction of control at internal borders between Schengen Member States after September 2015

In November, **Sweden** reintroduced controls on its ferry connections from the south and on the bridge to Denmark. Those migrants who enter the country on entry routes that are covered by the controls and who apply for asylum are systematically registered and fingerprinted. Under a new Swedish law, which entered into force on 4 January 2016, transport companies are obliged to ensure that passengers on the way to Sweden have a valid travel document.

**Norway**, also facing an increased migratory flow, reintroduced border controls in November to identify among the migrants those who want to apply for asylum.

**Denmark** reintroduced border controls with particular focus on the sea and land borders with Germany on 4 January 2016.

On 13 September 2015, **Germany** reintroduced temporary border controls at internal borders, with a special focus on the land border with Austria. The controls enable systematic monitoring, registration and dispatching of these persons to Germany. In November, following the terrorist attack in France, the Federal Police reinforced its controls of the border, covering also smaller routes.

**Belgium** has stepped up police controls on the main roads from France on the basis of risk analysis. The Belgian police has detected irregular migrants during random police checks on routes from neighbouring Member States, mostly on trains, lorries and on intra-EU/Schengen flights.

After the terrorist attack in Paris in November, and coinciding with the measures planned for the COP21 conference in Paris in December, **France** has reinstated controls at its borders with Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Italy and Spain. Mobile controls were set up, while fixed controls were only re-established for a few days before the opening of the COP21.

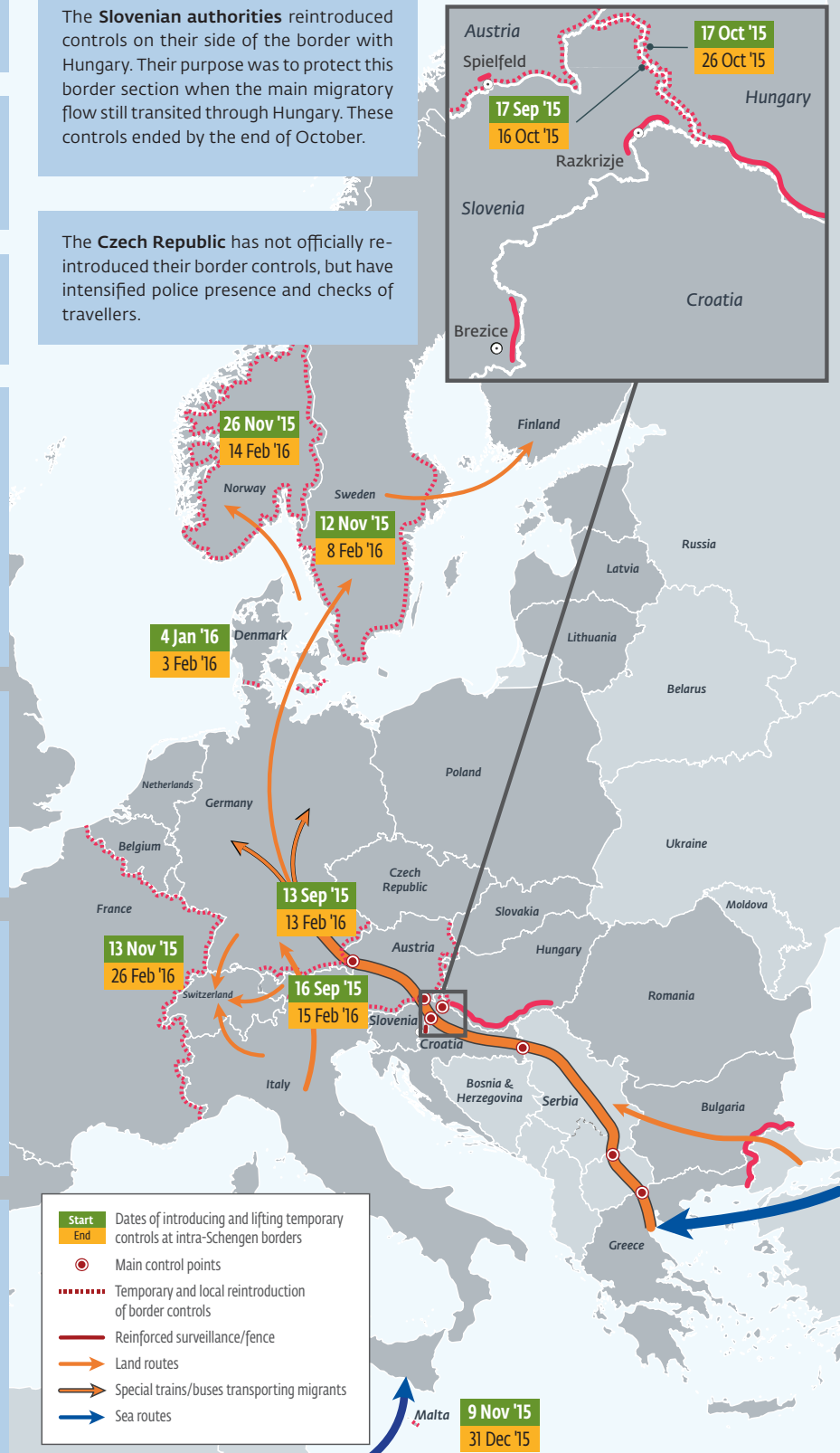
**Malta** reinstated temporary internal border controls during November until end December 2015 due to the Valletta Conference on Migration and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. The reintroduced controls led to a number of detections of persons travelling with fraudulent documents on intra-Schengen movements.

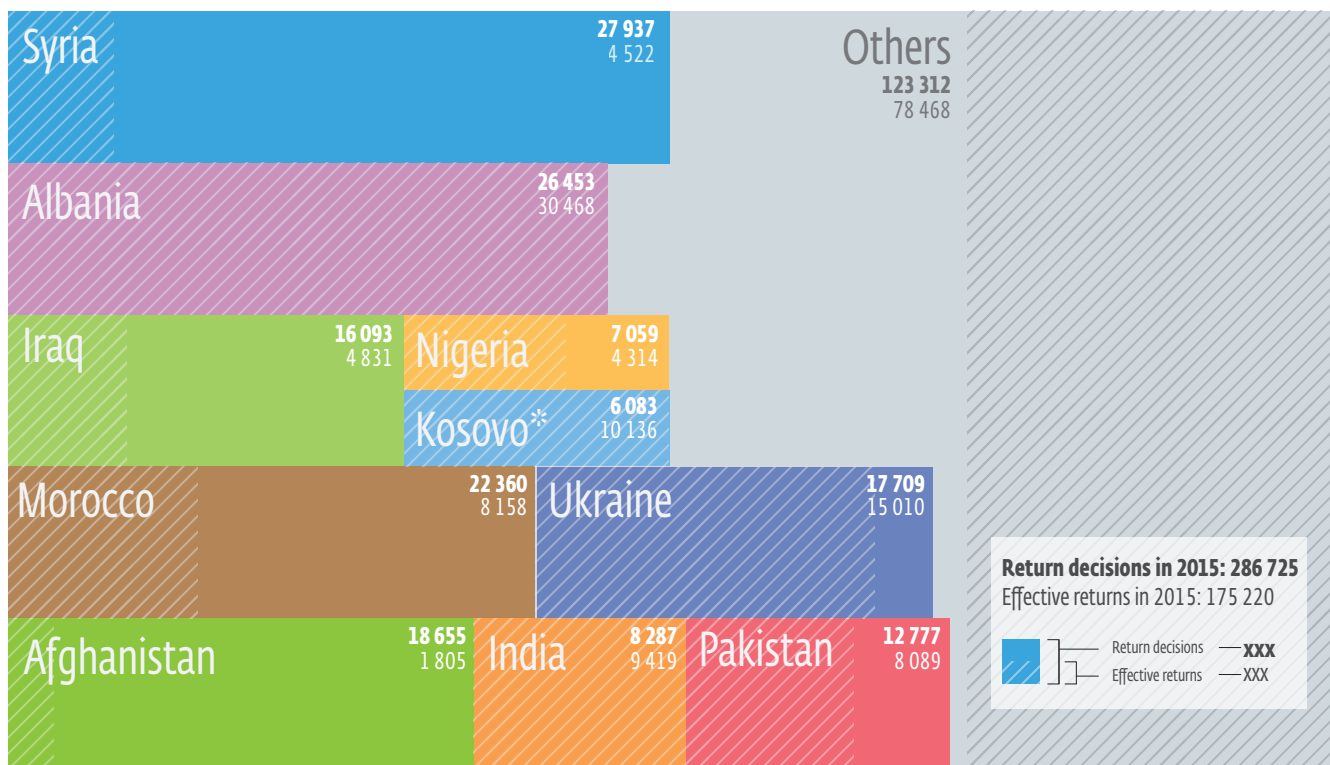
**Austria** reintroduced temporary controls at its border with Slovenia, Italy, Hungary and Slovakia, from where the largest flow of persons without legal travel documents is arriving. Checks are carried out in a flexible manner, adapting to the situation on the basis of intelligence.

The **Slovenian authorities** reintroduced controls on their side of the border with Hungary. Their purpose was to protect this border section when the main migratory flow still transited through Hungary. These controls ended by the end of October.

The **Czech Republic** has not officially reintroduced their border controls, but have intensified police presence and checks of travellers.

In mid-October, **Hungary** reintroduced controls at its border with Slovenia for ten days. The step was taken after Hungary had extended its temporary technical obstacle with Serbia also to Croatia, which effectively stopped migration through Hungary and diverted the transit of migrants to Slovenia and further to Austria.





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

## 5.15. In the EU: Return

In 2015, Member States reported 286 725 return decisions issued to third-country nationals as a result of an administrative or judicial decision, which was a 14% increase compared to 2014. The absolute total number of migrants subject to return decisions is still underestimated by this indicator, as data on decisions were unavailable from, inter alia, France, the Netherlands and Sweden, which only reported effective returns but presumably issued a high number of decisions.

As in previous years, the number of return decisions was much larger than the total number of effective returns to third countries (175 220). The main reasons for non-return relate to practical problems in the identification of returnees and in obtaining the necessary documentation from non-EU authorities.<sup>1</sup> In addition, many decisions to return voluntarily do not materialise as the persons decide to stay illegally. Some Member States reported that, over time, several

return decisions have been issued to the same individuals. Although it is not possible to quantify the phenomenon, as data at EU level are anonymised, it illustrates the difficulty to effectively implement a return decision.

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

Within the number of effective returns to third countries, 47% were reported to be on a voluntary basis and 41% were forced returns, while for 12%, the type of return was not specified.

On an annual basis, the number of effective returns has remained relatively stable over the years, despite large fluctuations in the number of detections of illegal border-crossing and detections of illegal stay. This stability illustrates that the number of effective returns largely

depends on available resources, in particular on the number of officers and the detention capacities prior to the return.

In terms of nationalities, there is a striking difference between the nationalities detected crossing the border illegally or staying illegally in the EU, and those effectively returned. Indeed, many detections of illegal border-crossing or even detections of illegal stay concern migrants who will apply for asylum and thus are not returned. In 2015, more than half of the effective returns concern nationals whose nationalities were not easily granted asylum at first instance.

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

<sup>1</sup> Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on Return Policy, COM(2014) 199 final

## 6. Featured analyses



## 6.1. Key countries of origin and transit

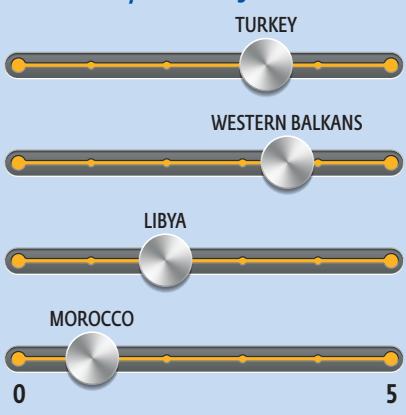
### Transit country index

The index is designed to capture the current transit status of selected third countries related to the risk of illegal border-crossing at the external borders. It is calculated using FRAN data for illegal border-crossings. As there are large differences among countries, a logarithmic scale has been used for the detections of illegal border-crossing of transiting migrants. The transit nature of a country is also captured by the number of nationalities detected.

The outcome stretches from 0 to 5, where a score near 5 shows the countries with the highest importance for transit of migrants then detected for illegal border-crossing along the external borders.

This score provides for a guide of where efforts related to transit countries, for example the development of a cooperation assistance package or the posting of a Liaison Officer, are likely to make the largest immediate impact. This index focuses on the risk of illegal border-crossing. It does not consider other risks, for example risks typically associated with the air border, where third-country airports may play a significant role.

#### Transit Country Index in 2015

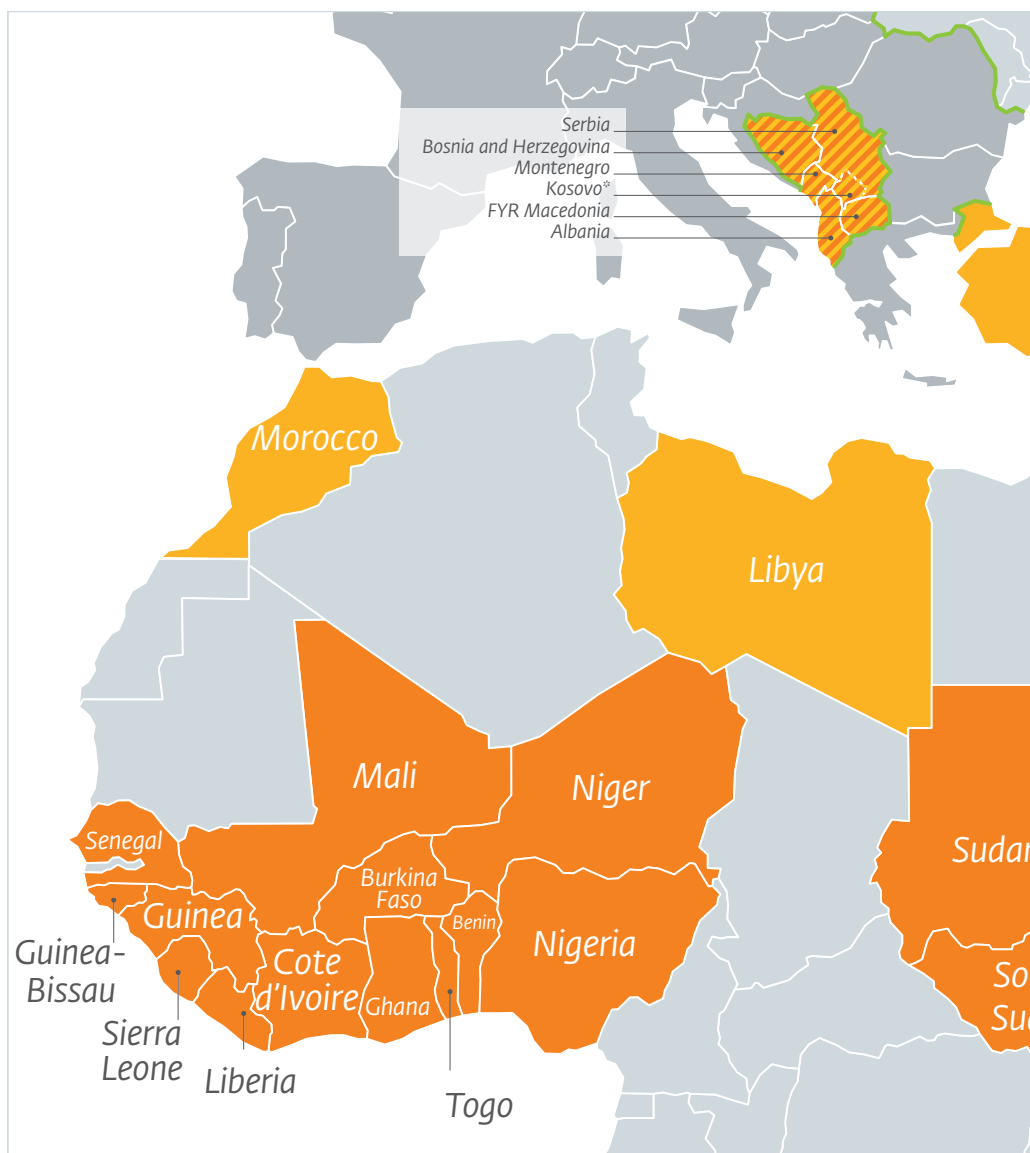


For risk analysis the four-tier access model indicates the different areas in which the analysts will seek information. The first tier represents third countries, analysed from the point of view of irregular migration in countries of origin and transit towards the EU.

This analysis therefore briefly looks into the key third countries from where most of people are likely to continue to come or which most will have to transit before irregularly entering the EU. For the first time, indicators on transit countries and countries of origin based on FRAN data are

proposed to gauge the relative importance of a set of third countries, with a focus on the risk of detection of migrants crossing illegally the land or maritime external borders. This risk is indeed currently the most pressing to address.

The third countries assessed as origin or transit countries include Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Western Balkan countries, Libya, Turkey, Morocco, and the countries of the Horn of Africa and West Africa. Together, they represent more than 90% of all detections of illegal border-crossing in 2015.



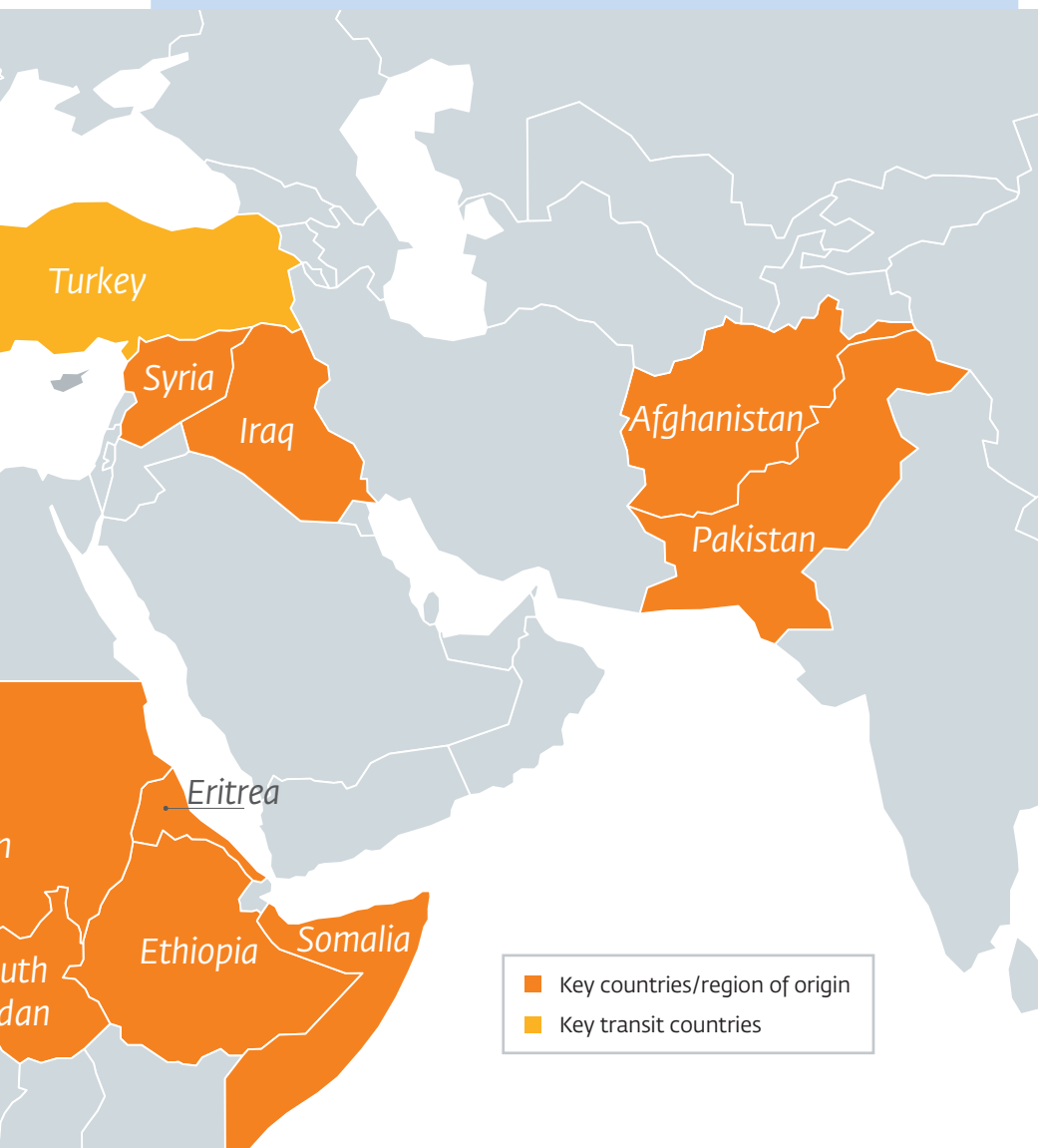
The deployment of the Frontex Liaison Officer in Turkey, planned for the spring of 2016, aims at improving the exchange of information and the operational cooperation between Member States and Turkey, essential also for developing better risk analysis to fight irregular migration and address possible security threats posed by criminal activities related to smuggling of migrants, as well as for facilitating Joint Operations coordinated by Frontex. The same objectives are also fostered under the EU-Turkey Visa Liberalisation Dialogue carried out since December 2013 and its Roadmap, which is currently being implemented.

### Origin country index

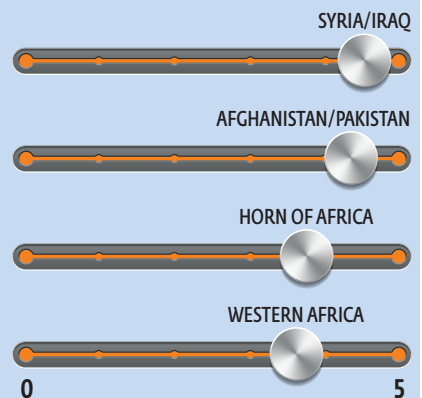
The index is designed to capture the status of selected third countries of origin. It is calculated using FRAN data for illegal border-crossings. As there are large differences among countries, a logarithmic scale has been used to compare detections of illegal border-crossing per country or region of origin.

The outcome stretches from 0 to 5, where a score near 5 shows the countries with the highest importance as origin countries of migrants then detected for illegal border-crossing along the external borders. This score provides for a guide of where efforts related to origin countries, for example the development of a cooperation assistance package or the posting of a Liaison Officer, are likely to make the largest immediate impact.

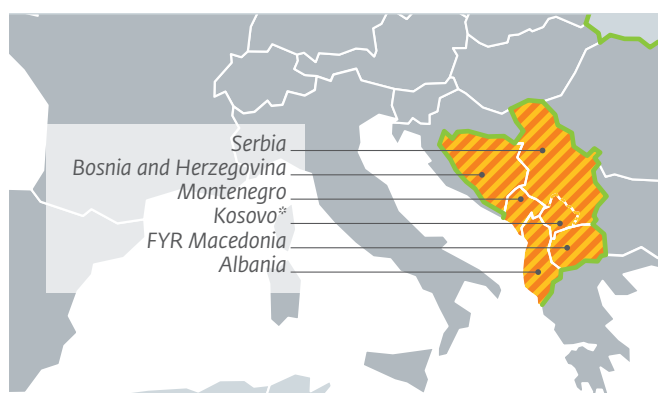
This index focuses on the risk of illegal border-crossing at the external border. It does not consider the impact of these detections, for example the subsequent asylum applications or the possibility of effective return.



#### Origin Country Index in 2015



## Transit countries



TURKEY	
Transit Country Index (TCI)	<b>3</b>
Number of claimed nationalities in transit	<b>77</b>
Number of people detected at the external borders after transiting this country/region	<b>884 038</b>
Own nationals detected for illegal border-crossing	<b>NEGLECTABLE</b>
Visa policy comparable to the EU	<b>NO</b>
Readmission agreement with the EU	<b>YES</b>
Within the framework of the external relations policy of the EU	<b>YES</b>
Member of existing regional risk analysis networks of Frontex	<b>YES</b>
Cooperation on return of TCNs	<b>YES</b>

WESTERN BALKANS	
Transit Country Index (TCI)	<b>3</b>
Number of claimed nationalities in transit	<b>86</b>
Numbers of people detected at the external borders after transiting this country/region	<b>764 038</b>
Own nationals detected for illegal border-crossing	<b>MODERATE</b>
Visa policy comparable to the EU	<b>YES</b>
Readmission agreement with the EU	<b>YES</b>
Within the framework of the external relations policy of the EU	<b>YES</b>
Member of existing regional risk analysis networks of Frontex	<b>YES</b>
Cooperation on return of TCNs	<b>YES</b>

Turkey is the most important transit country for a large number of people who are routing through it on their way towards the EU. This is facilitated by geographical position of the country and its visa policy for countries which constitute the main source of irregular migrants to the EU. Turkey is also aiming at becoming a major tourist destination, entering the list of the top five countries receiving the highest number of tourists by 2023. In 2014, more than 200 different nationalities entered Turkey through official BCPs.

Well-developed facilitation and smuggling industry is able to procure boats, safe houses, vehicles and fraudulent travel documents. Turkey is also hosting a large number of Syrian refugees and is increasingly expanding its national air carrier's network of routes in Africa, the Middle East and South-east Asia. This, in turn allows a large numbers of potential irregular migrants to gain easy access to the external borders of the EU.

EU-Turkey agreement of 29 November 2015 offers great incentives for Turkey when it comes to slowing down and stopping irregular movements across the common borders. Furthermore, EU-Turkey readmission agreement offers many opportunities to engage in supporting Turkey's return of third-country nationals to their countries of origin (e.g. Pakistan), which in turn should reduce Turkey's appeal as a transit country.

The Western Balkans region is a very important transit area, impacted by a large number of people routing through it after first transiting Turkey on their way towards the EU. Throughout 2015 the Western Balkans region was transited by an unprecedented number of migrants, which overstretched the capacities of the affected countries, triggering various reactions by the authorities (from border closures to providing organised transportation). The Western Balkans were also a source region for migration, especially at the end of 2014 and the first quarter of 2015, which was marked by high outflows of Kosovo\* nationals subsidised since. Towards the end of 2015 this flow remained at low levels.

Concerted measures aimed at reducing the massive flow transiting the region towards the EU by increased prevention at successive border sections; enhanced screening and registering capabilities to reduce security threats; supporting Western Balkan countries to return third-country nationals to their countries of origin, which would reduce the region's appeal as a transit area.





### LIBYA

Transit Country Index (TCI)	<b>2</b>
Number of claimed nationalities in transit	<b>55</b>
Numbers of people detected at the external borders after transiting this country/region	<b>136 872</b>
Own nationals detected for illegal border-crossing	<b>NEGLECTIBLE</b>
Visa policy comparable to the EU	<b>NO</b>
Readmission agreement with the EU	<b>NO</b>
Within the framework of the external relations policy of the EU	<b>N.A.</b>
Member of existing regional risk analysis networks of Frontex	<b>NO</b>

While Libya's appeal as a destination country has diminished, the country is still attracting thousands of transiting migrants from African and Southeast Asian countries who aim to reach Europe via irregular maritime routes. The Central Mediterranean route might have registered a slight decrease in 2015 when compared to 2014 but these figures are still as high compared with the overall number of illegal border-crossings in the EU in previous years.

Libya's inability to have a post-conflict political transition resulted in two opposing power blocs. All state institutions are fragmented and weak, including Libya's security establishment and the judiciary. Therefore, the country's vast land and sea borders remain largely uncontrolled.

All these uncertainties have been exploited by the facilitation networks, whose ruthlessness has resulted in a number of maritime tragedies.

Libya is also very important theatre of jihad, which is also the closest to the EU's external borders. Moreover, Libya has been attracting battle-hardened jihadists from Syria, which has resulted in the same atrocious *modi operandi* being utilised elsewhere besides Syria.

The UN-brokered peace talks, also facilitated by other regional actors, have brought about a rapprochement between the House of Representatives and the General National Congress. The deal signed on 17 December in Morocco to form a unity government offers hope but not a guarantee for a smooth political transition. The challenge is to identify the right interlocutors within the Libyan establishment who could over time make Libya less attractive for transiting irregular migrants.

### MOROCCO

Transit Country Index (TCI)	<b>1</b>
Number of claimed nationalities in transit	<b>52</b>
Numbers of people detected at the external borders after transiting this country/region	<b>7 164</b>
Own nationals detected for illegal border-crossing	<b>INCREASING</b>
Visa policy comparable to the EU	<b>NO</b>
Readmission agreement with the EU	<b>NO</b>
Within the framework of the external relations policy of the EU	<b>YES</b>
Member of existing regional risk analysis networks of Frontex	<b>YES</b>

Flow of irregular migrants via the land border to Morocco remains relatively modest but important as the main entry points from Algeria saw a decreased migration flow following border management changes in Algeria (closed BCPs with Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Libya and border areas turned into military zones) in response to terrorism threat. At the same time, following increased surveillance measures on both side of the borders in 2014, irregular migration through Ceuta and Melilla remains at a low level. Similarly, the route to the Canary Islands remains practically closed, notably thanks to effective cooperation agreements between Spain and Morocco. With regards to air routes, Casablanca remains the most popular air hub for sub-Saharan migrants (frequently detected in possession of false documents).

As for entry to Morocco, the growing risk of the abuse of passports of ECOWAS countries falling under the visa-free regime with Morocco cannot be excluded.

Establishing an EU-Morocco readmission agreement. Implementation of stricter exit controls from Morocco to Ceuta and Melilla. Working on better effectiveness of the Spanish-Moroccan repatriation agreement (signed in 1992) with regards to other than Moroccan nationalities.

## Origin countries



### SYRIA and IRAQ

Origin Country Index	4
Population	18 / 19 million
Detections of illegal border-crossing	594 059 / 101 285
Readmission agreement with the EU	NO

In Syria, while the talks held in Vienna and New York in late 2015 are expected to launch the peace process, the humanitarian situation remains dramatic: civilian populations are left with few options: relocate to areas under the control of the al-Assad's regime; relocate to areas under the control of the Syrian armed-opposition; exit the country and remain in the immediate region; and/or flee Syria and the region altogether. The latter option accelerated in 2015 when the Syrian humanitarian crisis led to a migratory crisis in the EU.

The staggering number of EU citizens who joined the conflict as jihadists has resulted in a number of returnees opting to use irregular means of travelling. Islamist extremists will exploit irregular migration flows whenever such movements' fit their plans.

In Iraq the volatile security situation has brought about the internal displacement of at least 4 million people. IS/Da'ish has been able to take control over vast areas and thus also contributed to movements of people both within the country and the immediate region, and also to Europe.

The EU-Turkey Action Plan should further assist fleeing Syrians in the immediate region. However, in the absence of a resolution to the conflict, it is assessed that Syrians will continue to leave the country.

There are more and more international players supporting the Iraqi authorities. The success of these initiatives depends on political stability and security, without which there will be more outflows of Iraqi citizens.

### AFGHANISTAN and PAKISTAN

Origin Country Index	4
Population	13 / 130 million
Detections of illegal border-crossing	267 485 / 43 314
Readmission agreement with the EU	NO / YES

Afghans represent the second most detected nationality at the EU external borders. The security situation in Afghanistan represents an important push factor for migration. In addition, Iran is estimated to host around 3 million Afghans of various status and Pakistan hosts minimum 2.5 million Afghans. These two countries are becoming increasingly unwilling to host the Afghan communities, and this can be an important push factor for migration.

The main factors pushing Pakistanis to migrate are of economic nature as 80% of persons interviewed in a study on *Determinants of International Migration in Pakistan*<sup>1</sup> consider low paid jobs as reasons to migrate and 70% see salaries as pull factors. The security situation (assessed to have improved following increased government actions) plays a lesser role in migration.

The main destination for the Pakistani economic migrants is the Gulf region, hosting roughly 3.5 million Pakistanis. If oil prices remain low, that will negatively impact Pakistani employees in the Gulf region and make other destinations like the EU more attractive. The EU is also host to a large Pakistani diaspora, which can play a role in attracting migration.

Establishing an EU-Afghanistan readmission agreement; supporting the authorities to reintegrate returned Afghan migrants.

A better implementation of the EU-Pakistan readmission agreement and increasing the share of persons effectively returned could help reduce the share of economic migrants among Pakistanis detected crossing the border illegally.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.mcser.org/journal/index.php/mjss/article/viewFile/3948/3864>



### HORN OF AFRICA

Origin Country Index	<b>3</b>
Population	<b>115 million</b>
Detections of illegal border-crossing	<b>70 442</b>
Readmission agreement with the EU	<b>NO</b>

Migration flow from the Horn of Africa consists of young men from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and more recently also from Sudan. It is driven by regional security issues, slow economic development, and lack of long-term livelihood options for refugees in the region. While the security situation is improving in Somalia, many Somalis were forced to return from Yemen given the civil war there. In turn, this may increase the number of persons going to Europe.

Nationality swapping is very likely, as people living in different countries often speak the same or very similar language (e.g. Ethiopians claiming Eritrean nationality or Sudanese claiming Somali origin). Security concerns associated with arrival of persons active in terrorist groups, such as Al Shabab, are assessed as negligible given the local agenda of these groups. Migratory movements from the Horn of Africa are often financed by members of diaspora, which in turn creates a self-sustaining dynamics. The more migrants are able to settle in Europe, the more people are likely to attempt the dangerous journey.

Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Sudan are part of the Khartoum Process, which, with EU funding, aims at assisting countries in setting up and managing reception centres and developing a regional framework to facilitate the return of migrants, mostly from Europe. In 2015, Ethiopia and the EU signed a joint declaration which will enable them to better address the issue of migration and mobility.

### WEST AFRICA

Origin Country Index	<b>3</b>
Population	<b>278 million</b>
Detections of illegal border-crossing	<b>54 085</b>
Readmission agreement with the EU	<b>YES</b>

Most West Africans who cannot obtain an EU visa and still wish to reach the EU illegally now opt to first travel by land to Agadez in Niger. From there, smuggling services can be easily found. Up to 6 000 weekly arrivals in Agadez were registered in 2015, according to media reports, and from there migrants cross the Sahara desert to reach Europe via the Central Mediterranean route, making a maritime crossing departing from Libya. Routing through Niger is currently the preferred option despite the turmoil in Libya and a high risk of loss of life when crossing the Mediterranean. Part of the challenge for the Nigerian authorities is the fact that the smuggling service industry is fragmented rather than controlled by one group. Authorities in Niger also face transiting migrants who are determined to reach Libya and Italy, and have entered the territory of Niger legally (under ECOWAS free-movement protocol) and for the most part are able to finance their onward journey. Evidence from debriefing suggest that many have started their journey after receiving information or encouragement from friends or relatives already in the EU. The suggestion was that it is now fairly easy to reach the EU regardless of the heightened risk of dying in the desert or at sea. The motivation for migration may vary among individuals, but most are believed to be pushed by economic motivations.

The EU Action Plan against migrant smuggling (COM(2015) 285 final) acknowledges that a lack of effective return of persons arriving from West Africa and not eligible for protection is encouraging others to try their chances, leading to unnecessary human suffering as migrants face harassment, exploitation, violence and even death while trying to cross the desert or the Mediterranean Sea. The Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (launched at Valletta summit at the end of 2015) will benefit a wide range of countries across West Africa. The Fund will be addressing root causes of irregular migration.

## 6.2. Border authorities not equipped to deal with large flows

Border authorities have been under intense pressure for years, but the large and growing annual number of detections of illegal border-crossing along the EU external border has exposed the difficulties they face to adequately perform border control. Although Greece and Italy have been under particularly intense pressure as the two main entry points reporting up to 6 000 arrivals per day, for several other Member States, large-scale inflows of migrants was a new experience, revealing the complexity of the challenge to manage sudden large flows. In an environment of continued pressure on the EU's external borders, these challenges will be best addressed in a coordinated manner, requiring harmonised applications of legislations and pooling of resources.

In the Aegean Sea, although the main landing areas continued to be Lesbos, Chios and Samos, smugglers have spread their activities to a larger number of islands, from south to north, thus stretching the surveillance capacities. In these conditions it is difficult for Member States to ensure an efficient, high and uniform level of control at their external

Figure 9. **Having arrived on Greek islands, a large number of migrants were ferried to Greek mainland**

borders, as stipulated by the Schengen Border Code. It was not possible to detect many migrants during their crossing, and many migrants got in contact with authorities once on the islands. In these circumstances, it is likely that

**an unknown proportion actually crossed and continued their journey without being detected**

by any law-enforcement authorities.

At the same time, border-control authorities are increasingly expected to be engaged in search and rescue operations covering vast areas, as well as being the first interlocutors for a growing number of persons presenting themselves at the EU borders in search of international asylum. Most of the resources are thus allocated to search and rescue operations, as well as local reception facilities to register migrants. The challenge is complicated due to the fact that many are undocumented and therefore their registration has to be based on their declaration. In these circumstances,

**fraudulent declarations of nationality are rife.**

Even when migrants hold some sort of identity document, it is not always possible to conduct a thorough check due to time pressure to register migrants, the

lack of equipment for electronic checks and also the fact that most of the documents are not proper travel documents but rather simple identity documents. Under strenuous circumstances, as it was the case in Greece starting from August 2015 when more than 100 000 arrivals were observed each month, there is risk that some migrants may be registered on the basis of forged documents or using some else's genuine documents as impostors. Border-control authorities need time to mobilise extra resources. In the Aegean Sea, the situation had improved by the end of 2015, with the deployment of document experts and a decrease in the number of arrivals. However, a resurgence of flow comparable to the autumn of 2015 would require the mobilisation of yet additional resources.

In Greece, for most of 2015, the sheer number of migrants did not permit efficient practical measures to be set up to address simultaneously the rescue at sea, registration, screening and identification of new arrivals taking into account security issues, the provision of assistance to those in need of assistance, the prevention of secondary movements within the EU, and the prevention of illegal border-crossing for persons not in need of protection.

An integrated approach is required to tackle these challenges simultaneously,





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Figure 10. **It is not always possible to conduct thorough check due to time pressure to register migrants**

including strengthened collaboration with asylum authorities to guarantee the most effective treatment of arriving migrants (even when they do not apply for asylum on arrival) and enhanced collaboration with law-enforcement authorities to thwart the development of the criminal networks involved in forging identity and travel documents. It also calls for strengthened measures in providing civil protection assistance to face sudden and large flow of arrivals.

In the Central Mediterranean area, the large number of simultaneous departures does not enable the same rapid intervention on all distress calls. Some have to be given priority, putting the lives of others at risk. This is particularly dangerous when facilitators actually integrate the presence of vessels used for search and rescue operations into their planning, and therefore minimise fuel and food provisions onboard.

In addition to these operational considerations aiming at detecting, rescuing and accommodating migrants, a large number of simultaneous arrivals also creates challenges for Member States to apply the EU regulation concerning the collection and sharing of migrants' fingerprinting. Indeed, the Dublin III regulation<sup>1</sup> requires Member States to promptly take the fingerprints of every third-country national or stateless person of at least 14 years of age who is apprehended by the competent border authorities. In addition, these biometric

data must be transmitted to the Eurodac central system within 72 hours.

The reality is that

**fingerprinting of all persons detected crossing illegally the border is not possible or of poor quality, and in any case, is often not transmitted promptly to the Eurodac central database.**

Apart from the fact that this tool may not be used for analysis or to support the relocation mechanism, the biometric data of many migrants are missing<sup>2</sup>, which prevents law-enforcement authorities in the EU from effectively using the Eurodac (the EU fingerprint database for asylum seekers and irregular border-crossers) for the purposes of preventing, detecting or investigating serious criminal offences or even terrorist offenses.

The UNHCR has established that 'some of the procedures in place before June 2015 are no longer functioning (in particular full registration with all aspects of identification and fingerprinting for Syrian arrivals) due to a lack of capacity on the islands caused, to a large extent, by the austerity measures affecting the Greek public sector. Along the same lines, removals for persons not in need of international protection have decreased by 60%

in 2015 due to a lack of resources and non-cooperation with some third countries'.<sup>3</sup>

The situation was addressed in the autumn, with the establishment of dedicated registration teams including two screeners, two interpreters, two Greek Police officers for registration, two EASO officers, and four officers doing Eurodac registration, photographing migrants and producing release papers for them. The procedure is also being optimised, and the objective is to reduce the average processing time.

As of December 2015, Frontex started the deployment of Advanced Level Document Officers (ALDO) in the hotspot areas in Greece and Italy. Additional experts are expected to join.

A particularly striking and worrying characteristic of the current refugee crisis is the large number of unaccompanied minors (UAMs) among the asylum seekers. Regardless of whether unaccompanied minors are considered as legitimate asylum seekers or not, responsibility for them falls on the state – and often the municipality – where they are identified. Even when minors come from countries from which asylum applications are rarely successful, they often go into the asylum process.<sup>4</sup>

**The rising number of unaccompanied minors is one of the challenges requiring greater coordination between border-control and asylum authorities.**

In the case of minors travelling undocumented or with forged documents, the issue is complicated by the lack of formal proof of the age of the person. Indeed, with no unambiguous scientific methods to determine with sufficient accuracy and precision the age of a person, some migrants may falsely declare their age. The large proportion of unaccompanied migrants applying for asylum in Sweden has led the authorities to strengthen the measures to determine their age.

1 Regulation (EU) No 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013

2 Chapter VI of Regulation (EU) 603/2013 of 26 June 2013 on the establishment of 'Eurodac'

3 Highlights from the UNHCR High Level Mission to Greece on 27 July-1 August 2015

4 OECD, Migration Policy Debates, September 2015

## 6.3. Managing violence at the borders

The unprecedented number of detections of illegal border-crossing has led to a rise in violent incidents along the EU external borders. The most life-threatening incidents are related to violence of the smugglers against the migrants. Motivated by profits, smugglers increasingly put migrants' lives at risk. Smugglers may also use violence directly threatening border guards to recover boats or escape apprehension. Finally, the large number of people crossing the border *en masse* has led to violence requiring public order policing, an area for which border-control authorities are not adequately equipped or trained. Violence between groups of migrants have also been reported.

Figure 11. **On 7 September 2015, during a demonstration on the island of Lesbos, migrants set fire to a Frontex registration container in Kara Tepe, delaying the transfer of additional facilities to the site**

### Violence of the smugglers against migrants

In the Central Mediterranean route, smuggling networks have entered a more ruthless phase as regards the seaworthiness of the vessels utilised and their lack of regard in the face of bad sea conditions. In some cases armed smugglers threatened migrants to board flimsy inflatable craft in rough weather conditions.

The smugglers' quickening of migrant departures in an attempt to dispatch as many migrants as possible into a tight window of opportunity is also assessed to be the reason for frequent simultaneous departures from the Libyan shoreline. The proximity of search and rescue operations to Libya and the multitude of concurrent incidents makes it increasingly difficult for responding authorities to coordinate their activities.

On the Eastern Mediterranean route, there were reports from migrants that facilitators on the Turkish coast purposely sank their boats, so that migrants would

On 14 December 2015, a Swedish asset involved in a Frontex JO near Lesbos attempted to intercept a boat with about 12 migrants on board. After the repeated use of light and sound signals by border guards, the driver of the boat fired two shots in unknown direction. A crew member of the Swedish asset, following the rules of engagement in such situation, fired two warning shots in the water (safe sector). The boat continued its course and its driver fired again twice in the air. Another round of warning shots were fired by the Swedish asset to the water. The driver of the boat fired again two shots and escaped by entering Turkish territorial waters.

have to pay for several crossing attempts. This strategy put migrants' lives at enormous risk.

### Violence against border-control authorities

In the Central Mediterranean route, the reuse of vessels by smuggling networks, a phenomenon identified already in 2014, suggests that there is an apparent lack of seaworthy vessels that can be used for irregular migration purposes. This resulted in more aggressive behaviour of smugglers to recover these assets, as demonstrated in two serious incidents, one in February and another in April 2015, during which border guards were held at gunpoint.

Near the Greek islands, some smugglers are using powerful boats to sail from Turkey to Greece, or in some cases to Italy. These assets are costly and thus smugglers are ready to take risks and resort to violence to hold on to them.



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## Violence of crowds

The rapid and massive increase in detections of illegal border-crossing resulted in large crowds forming near reception centres along the external borders, and later on, as they approached other border areas.

Many migrants from the Turkish coast arrived in dispersed order on the Greek islands, often camping out in the main town's parks and squares. The exiguity and relative isolation of the Greek islands resulted in rapid overcrowding. The area of the island of Leros is less than 75 square kilometres and yet is registered around 32 000 migrants in the first nine months of 2015. That's roughly quadruple the island's total population.

Attempts to relocate them to nearby registration centres or large public spaces, such as a stadium, involves forming large crowds of people. Managing the movement of large groups of people is difficult, and often results in unrest, as several incidents demonstrated, for example, in August in several Greek islands, where thousands of new arrivals were registered daily.

Similar unrest was also reported near border areas on the route used by migrants during their journey within the EU. After Greece, incidents were reported in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Hungary (until September) and then in Croatia. Incidents were also reported at borders between Mem-

ber States, in particular near Sentilj, at the border between Slovenia and Austria.

Incidents involving migrants ignoring the orders of border officials or even, when they are in large groups, showing aggressive behaviour towards officers is becoming commonplace. Incidents at the border between Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and between Serbia and Hungary have shown that many migrants do not stop when requested to do so by border guards, they do not obey orders of border authorities and are not afraid to engage in physical contact while crossing the border.

A common characteristic of these incidents was that they involved crowds of more than 1 000 persons who were temporarily stopped in their movement. They gathered people from very different backgrounds and nationalities, rendering the communication of orders and the circulation of basic information difficult. The crowds also mixed young single men with more vulnerable families, including women and children, sometimes purposely put in front of the groups to facilitate their progression. This makes them different from other types of crowds typically managed by law-enforcement authorities, for example during sport events, demonstrations or political riots, and drastically limits the type of responses that can be used.

Constant arrival of new migrants also requires a complex response, as the difficulty in managing crowds is not directly

proportional to the number of people but rather exponential. One of the first responses is to prevent the formation of large crowds, a condition difficult to meet on islands or near border areas where crossing is usually confined.

In many instances, the unrest was exacerbated by migrant's frustration. Many expected to be welcomed in the EU, as often reported in the media, but instead had to face registration and long waiting times in overcrowded conditions, leading to their infuriation.

The reactions of border-control authorities, whether in the EU or in transit countries, have been diverse but eventually resulted in organising the transport of migrants to their final destinations. The priority of ensuring smooth transport resulted in fewer scenes of chaos scenes at the border, but also less scrutiny in the registration process. This is evidenced by the growing difficulty to report on basic facts like the nationality of the migrants.

These types of violent incidents were not confined to the external borders but were also reported along the main routes to the final destinations of the migrants. The number of incidents has increased near Calais, France, at the ferry and Channel Tunnel terminals to the UK, and, this year, incidents also developed at the borders between Slovenia and Austria. These unusual events within the EU, widely reported in the media, required the intervention of police authorities to restore and maintain order.

## 6.4. Preventing casualties at the border

Estimating fatalities among migrants crossing the border illegally is dauntingly difficult. Frontex does not record these data and only has at its disposal the number of bodies recovered during Joint Operations. In 2015, 470 dead bodies were reported in the Mediterranean area, an increase of 112% compared to 2014.

Official statistics from Member States are not comprehensively archived and often follow investigation procedures that remain classified. In addition, even if available, these data would only concern the number of bodies found. However, during maritime accidents, the number of missing persons may be larger than the number of recovered bodies, and in the absence of passenger list, this number often remains unknown.

In 2013, IOM launched the 'Missing migrants project' that endeavours to record the number of deaths and missing persons when attempting to cross borders. This project relies on official statistics complemented with media reports. This methodology is prone to underestimation when accidents are not reported by the media (for example when other news prevail), or overestimation (for example when missing migrants are first reported and later the number of found bodies), but is the most comprehensive and systematic attempt to gather information on missing migrants.

**According to IOM estimates, about 3 770 persons went missing or died while crossing the border in the Mediterranean area in 2015.**

While this estimate should be treated with caution, it confirms that the **Central Mediterranean** is the most dangerous migration route. Smugglers on this route typically make use of frail, overcrowded boats, with limited fuel available to maximise their profits, putting migrants' lives at considerable risk.

The large number of simultaneous departures makes rapid interventions

to all distress calls impossible. Due to a limited number of assets, some have to be given priority, putting the lives of others at risk. The increasing death toll during 2015 seems to confirm the assumption that the increased number of vessels engaged in rescue operations is not necessarily a guarantee for a reduction in the number of fatalities as many unseaworthy boats depart from the coast and count on a quick rescue. Even with many more vessels now engaged in rescue operations it is simply impossible to effectively rescue everyone, as there are often multiple simultaneous rescue operations over a large sea area, requiring a high level of coordination.

Migrants are aware of the more dangerous sea crossing conditions during the winter months, with stronger winds and colder water, and try to plan their crossing between April and September. In the past two years, the deadliest accidents took place either at the onset of the season, in April, or at its end, in September, when migrants wrongly assumed that fair weather conditions were prevailing. These periods are associated with the highest risk of large accidents.

In addition to be the most dangerous sea-crossing, the **Central Mediterranean route** also implies for most of the migrants the very risky crossing of the Sahara desert. Indeed, most migrants originally come from sub-Saharan countries and travel overland to the Libyan coast. This means routing through Agadez, Niger, where an industry of smuggling services is constantly growing. Evidence from debriefing of migrants on the Central Mediterranean route suggests that many of them started their journey after receiving information or encouragement from friends and relatives already in the EU. The suggestion was that it was fairly easy to reach the EU, regardless of the risk of dying in the desert or at sea in the Mediterranean.

The **Eastern Mediterranean route** is the second most dangerous route. It

includes fatalities reported during the often short sea crossing between the Turkish coast and the Greek islands, and during crossing of the Evros River.

Fatalities when crossing the Evros River are also regularly reported. The most dangerous areas are in the delta, where shallow waters spread over kilometres. The lower course of the river is also very vulnerable to flooding.

The winter months also represent highest risks for migrants' lives, and health hazards in general. When migrants undertake a long journey, which may take several days, through the forests and rural areas and are forced to sleep outdoors or in cold shelters at temperature below 16°C, they are prone to hypothermia, frostbites and other health conditions. Their risk increases if they lack proper clothing, food and medical care.

On the **Western Mediterranean route**, the sea crossing between Morocco and Spain is relatively short, but fatalities are often reported, in particular due to the fact that small vessels are used. Accidents resulting in casualties have also been reported during group attempts to cross the fence. Poor health conditions have also been reported among migrants in the makeshift camps near the border. However, the size of the population in the camp has been reported decreasing due to efforts by Moroccan authorities to return migrants to their country of origin.

Few fatalities were reported in 2015 on the **Western African route** leading to the Canary Islands. However, between 2003 and 2006, it used to be the route with the highest death toll, with annual estimates by some NGO reporting over one thousand dead or missing persons.<sup>1</sup> Migrants departing from Mauritania or Senegal had to sail for several days in *cayucos*, small wooden boats not designed for such a long sea voyage, resulting in a large death toll.

Since irregular migration was effectively closed on this route, following a

<sup>1</sup> *Fatal Journeys: Tracking lives lost during migration*, IOM, 2014





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set of measures including cooperation with country of departure and effective implementation of a return agreement,

**several thousand lives have been saved.**

Crossing the border illegally between BCPs is the *modus operandi* representing the highest risk for migrants' lives, in particular during a long sea crossing. However, fatalities are also reported when **migrants hide in vehicles**. Few fatalities have been reported at the border itself, but in 2015, several dramatic incidents took place within the EU. The most tragic was discovered in Austria when 71 bodies were found dead in a truck. This incident highlighted the high risk of suffocation for migrants hiding in vehicles, and this calls for strengthened measures at the border itself and more thorough checks of vehicles.

This short overview of the most dramatic aspect of illegal border-crossing shows that sea-crossing is by far the riskiest *modus operandi* for migrants' lives.

Preventing departures, as demonstrated on the Western African route includes a set of measures ranging from

strengthened surveillance to cooperation with third countries and effective implementation of return agreements in the case of migrants not entitled to international protection.

On the other hand, for many refugees who cannot return home because of a continued conflict, war or persecution, resettlement programme may offer an alternative to seeking the services of people smugglers. According to UNHCR, 28 countries resettled refugees, and in 2015 Italy became a new country of resettlement. However, out of the 14.4 million refugees of concern to UNHCR around the world, fewer than 1% are subject to resettlement.

Figure 13. SAR by the Belgian vessel *Godetia*, Operation Triton



## 6.5. Health risks

The main focus of Frontex is on strengthening border-control cooperation to facilitate bona fide migration management, combat cross-border crime and prevent threats to the Member States. This includes the prevention of threats to public health, as defined by the International Health Regulations of the World Health Organization. The *Risk Analysis for 2016* presents the WHO Regional Office for Europe's review of the potential public health risks associated with the migration phenomena and ways to adequately address them, prepared under the project 'Public Health Aspects of Migration in Europe' (PHAME).

Migrants are exposed to a number of different health risks during the mi-

gration process. However, the impact of the journey varies depending on the category of the migrant, undocumented migrants being among the most vulnerable given the often harsh conditions of the journey and the limited access to health services. The following analysis, therefore, focuses on undocumented migration.

The public health aspects of migration affect both healthcare and non-healthcare workers involved in the various stages of the migration process, as well as resident communities. In the countries of destination, migration often stretches the capacity of healthcare systems to adapt to the additional demand for health services, and

the unfamiliar and changing health profiles and needs. Due to the common lack of proper preparation and information, the health risks posed by migrants are often overestimated by the receiving communities.

### Migrants

#### Pre-departure

The risk of acquiring vaccine-preventable diseases depends on the presence of susceptible individuals in the population and their epidemiological profile. In many countries of origin and transit the healthcare systems are weakened by civil unrest, wars, economic crisis and natural disasters. The provision of public health services including vaccination to the population is often interrupted or



### Travel and transit

Health risks at this phase vary depending on the conditions and duration of the travel. The conditions to which migrants are exposed to during the journey as well as in the countries of destination put them at risk of sexual victimisation, violence and sexual ill health.

Refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants, especially women, infants and children, were identified as the most vulnerable ones. Other health risks arising throughout the journey and specially during rescue operations include traumatism, burns, hypothermia, dehydration, drowning, heatstroke, foodborne diseases, respiratory and skin infections.

### Upon arrival

WHO does not recommend obligatory screening of refugee and migrant populations for diseases, because there is no clear evidence of benefits (or cost-effectiveness); furthermore, it can trigger anxiety in individual refugees and the wider community.

WHO strongly recommends, however, offering and providing health checks to ensure access to healthcare for all refugees and migrants in need of health protection. Health checks should be done for both communicable and non-communicable diseases, with respect for migrants' human rights and dignity.

In spite of the common perception that there is a link between migration and the importation of infectious diseases, there is no systematic association. Refugees and migrants are exposed mainly to the infectious diseases that are common in Europe, independently of migration. The risk that exotic infectious agents, such as Ebola virus, will be imported into Europe is extremely low, and when it occurs, experience shows that it affects regular travellers, tourists or healthcare workers rather than refugees or migrants.

Triage is recommended at points of entry to identify health problems in

refugees and migrants soon after their arrival. Proper diagnosis and treatment must follow, and the necessary health-care must be ensured for specific population groups (children, pregnant women, elderly).

Each and every person on the move must have full access to a hospitable environment, to prevention (e.g. vaccination) and, when needed, to high-quality healthcare, without discrimination on the basis of gender, age, religion, nationality or race. This is the safest way to ensure that the resident population is not unnecessarily exposed to imported infectious agents.

### Host community

At reception centres, overcrowding and inadequate hygiene and sanitary conditions coupled with limited access to healthcare are well known risk factors for acquiring a variety of communicable diseases. The risk of measles, diphtheria and whooping cough is enhanced in the presence of susceptible individuals. Furthermore, scarce hygiene and sanitary conditions increase the risk of gastro-intestinal and skin infections.

### Workforce at the border and in the reception centres

Health risks for healthcare and non-healthcare workforce vary depending on the resistance and vulnerability of each individual, the working conditions as well as the potential exposure to biological agents. Rescuers may be exposed to trauma, injuries, hypothermia, drowning and heatstroke during rescue operations. Due to their difficult working conditions, psychological support to the workers both at the border and in the migration centres is also relevant. Adequate screening procedures focused on communicable, non-communicable diseases as well as mental health should be performed when required and with full respect to human rights.

even withheld, resulting in a dramatic reduction of the immunisation coverage. For instance, in the Syrian Arab Republic, the immunisation coverage has fallen from 91% registered in 2011 to 68% in 2012. Although efforts have been made to improve immunisation coverage, there are still deep concerns on the immunisation status of Syrians, including those asking for asylum in European countries.

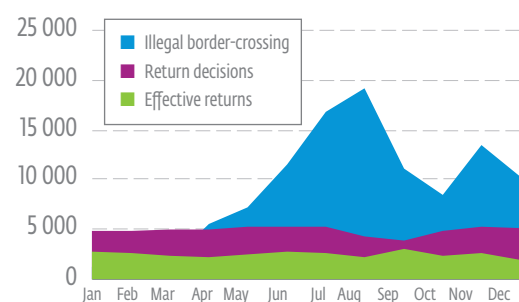
In countries with high tuberculosis (TB) incidence and prevalence, large portions of the population have a status of latent TB infection that can be developed to TB disease, often contagious, in case of decreased immune response. Such situation may be created by the hard conditions of a journey which may start before crossing the border of the country of destination.

## 6.6. Overcoming the obstacles to effective returns

In its European Agenda on migration, the European Commission states that ‘one of the incentives for irregular migrants is the knowledge that the EU’s return system – meant to return irregular migrants or those whose asylum applications are refused – works imperfectly.’ The Commission proposes several key actions in this regard, including to reinforce and amend the Frontex legal basis to strengthen its role on return, as well as the development of the concept of safe country of origin.

Implemented alone, return policies may not be sufficient to curb the flows, but when implemented as part of a comprehensive strategy developed with third countries, returns are pivotal in effectively reducing the pressure at the external borders. This is clearly illustrated by the case of the Western African route, that used to be the main point of entry towards the EU around the year 2005, but that has been effectively closed due to the implementation of a set of measures including increased surveillance, strengthen collaboration with countries of origin to prevent departures and effective returns guaranteeing that those who do not need asylum are quickly returned.

Figure 14. **Detections of illegal border-crossing, return decisions and effective returns for selected nationalities having a first-instance asylum recognition rate of less than 30% at EU level in 2015 (Algerian, Bangladeshi, Ghanaian, Malian, Moroccan, Nigerian, Pakistani and Sri Lankan nationals).**



Source: Frontex data

The measures that prevented departures from West Africa to Spain, and that contributed to saving thousands of lives, cannot be applied straightforwardly to today’s challenges, with a large proportion of refugees arriving from Syria and the lack of counterparts in Libya. Yet, this analysis examines how to best support the EU policy of safe countries of origin.

### Few effective returns but many difficulties to return

Comparing the total number of return decisions or the total number of effective returns against detections of illegal border-crossing does not take into account the fact that many detections of illegal border-crossing will be followed by positive asylum applications. For this reason, it is preferable to focus on those nationalities who are unlikely to obtain asylum, as they represent the nationalities most likely to be subject to return.

Considering only some of those nationalities that showed a first-instance asylum recognition rate<sup>1</sup> of less than 30% (Algerian, Bangladeshi, Ghanaian, Malian, Moroccan, Nigerian, Pakistani and Sri Lankan nationals), the analysis shows that despite a strong

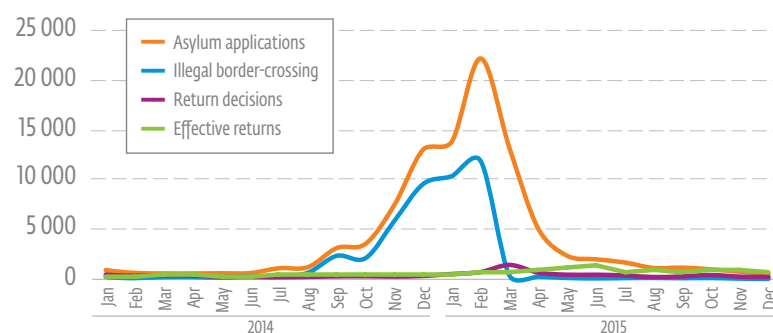
1 According to data provided by EASO

increase in the level of irregular migration into the EU, the number of return decisions for these nationals is only slowly growing, and the number of effective returns remains rather stable, never exceeding 3 000 per month (see Fig. 15). This first comparison indicates that effective return are not responsive, or even disconnected, to sharp increases in irregular migration flows. This may be due to national procedures to process asylum applications and return decisions, and frequent difficulties in obtaining the collaboration of the countries of origin in the identification process. The fast track procedure introduced in several Member States for third countries with low positive rate of asylum decision is a step to remedy the situation. To be effective, however, it requires a rapid implementation of the returns, so that the persons bound to return do not abscond. The pooling of resources among Member States can contribute to the effective implementation of Member States return decisions.

In addition, it is often the case that for nationals coming from countries with a low first-instance asylum recognition rate, they do not spontaneously apply for asylum, but their return procedure is often the outcome of detections of illegal stay (most often overstayers), and they frequently apply for asylum during the return procedure. This often results in longer detention time, and thus limiting the number of available detention places.

The analysis of the situation of people from Kosovo\* also reveals some difficulties in rapidly implementing returns. Indeed, considering the period 2014–2015, and thus lessening possible time-lag due

Figure 15. **Detections of illegal border-crossing, illegal stay, return decisions and effective returns for Kosovo\*, 2014–2015**



to the length of the procedure, it is obvious that the peak in detections of illegal border-crossing observed between September 2014 and February 2015 did not correspond to an increase in effective returns. Between January and April 2015, more than 80 000 Kosovo\* citizens applied for international protection in the EU/Schengen area. In contrast, the number of return decisions made by EU Member States increased only temporarily and to a limited extent, and peaked at around 1 400 in March 2015. Likewise, the average monthly number of effective returns doubled from a very low level in 2014 to only around 840 in 2015, which after all means that only around 15 percent of all Kosovo\* citizens with negative asylum decisions were effectively returned to their home country.

Delays in return also often encourage additional arrivals, because for those unsatisfied with the local economic conditions even a temporary provision of food and shelter combined with a small allowance is an incentives to travel to the EU. This creates further back logs in the systems, while for the migrants the most likely consequence will be to stay illegally in the EU.

The challenges to return are indeed numerous, starting with the difficulties to actually take into account in the spontaneous return, out of any official record, of a certain number of migrants for whom a return decision has been issued. However, data from detections of illegal stay on exit do not show significant volume of detections. For example, in the case of Kosovo\*, 2 645 were detected staying illegally while leaving the EU in 2015.

Another challenge arising from the data is that the number of return decisions largely depends on the legislative framework and regulation of a Member States. For example, the more possibilities a person has to lodge appeal procedure, the more likely the same person can be notified several times a return decision after one of the appeal procedures has been rejected.

There are also numerous practical challenges, in particular the difficulties to obtain adequate travel document from the Embassies of the origin countries. There are many constrains to this, and among them is the fact that many migrants have been registered in the EU

under different identities than in their home countries. It is thus sometimes difficult for the home countries to issue the travel document.

## EU safe countries of origin

The Commission is proposing a list of safe countries of origin<sup>2</sup> to facilitate the use by all Member States of the procedures to increase the overall efficiency of their asylum system as concerns applications for international protection which are likely to be unfounded. The initial EU list designating as 'safe', includes Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo\*, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey.

Among this list of safe countries, the main impact on the border and on asylum come from nationals from Kosovo\* and Albania who, in 2015, were detected at the border for illegal border-crossing in large numbers, and who formed the largest contingent of asylum applicants.

The concept of safe countries of origin is distinct from the notion of safe third country, which can be broadly defined as a country of transit of an applicant which is considered as capable of offering him or her adequate protection against persecution or serious harm. However, this concept is not applied uniformly by all EU Member States, some using it, some referring to it but not applying it in practice. In 2015, Hungary published an official list of safe countries of origin and safe third countries that includes Serbia. It is on this basis that the returns of Syrians were organised to Serbia.

## Effective returns

With regard to the return of those without the right to stay in the EU, statistics demonstrate that there is a considerable gap between the persons issued with a return decision (286 725 in 2015) and those who, as a consequence, have been subject to an effective return (approximately 158 345). There are multiple reasons for this gap, including in particular lack of cooperation from third countries of origin or transit (e.g. linked

with problems in obtaining the necessary documentation from third countries' consular authorities) and lack of cooperation from the individual concerned (s/he absconds).

Statistics also revealed stable annual trends in decisions and effective returns, and this stability is in stark contrast to the high variability of other indicators like detections of illegal border-crossing. This stability is likely to be an indication of the limited resources Member States have at their disposal to conduct returns. Indeed, given the requirement in terms of trained police-officers and detentions, the number of effective returns are strongly constrained. These constrains do not enable to have a flexible response to sudden and large number of return decisions.

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/2\\_eu\\_safe\\_countries\\_of\\_origin\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/2_eu_safe_countries_of_origin_en.pdf)



## 7. Looking ahead



## Why develop scenarios?

Scenarios are created to form a basis for an annual monitoring of changes in the environment. Very different stakeholders can make use of these scenarios to develop their own internal strategies or monitor how their internal strategies fit a changing environment. Scenarios aim at supporting strategic decision makers whose decisions will have middle-to-long-term impacts so that they can come up with realistic strategies which are not focused on fixed expectations or ideals about the future.

Indeed, in a dynamic and very complex environment like irregular migration, it is difficult to develop reliable forecasts based on past data. Similarly, in the face of changes in the environment of border management, it is not adequate to rely on trend analysis. Scenarios are thus a tool that can be used as a foresight instrument at strategic level.

## What kind of scenarios is necessary?

One of the key objectives of the scenario process is to foresee strategic changes as early as possible, so that decision makers at EU and Member State levels can prepare, react or proactively decide. Therefore, it is necessary to include in the development of scenarios not only issues related to border management, but also to take into account its environment: international migration and cross-border crime, European actors and policies as well as general developments from econ-

omy, society and geopolitics. Some of the aspects of the scenarios cannot directly be influenced by border-control authorities, including Frontex, but rather by politics or society. For this reason, they describe possible side-conditions for the development of Frontex work and these scenarios should therefore be interpreted as 'external scenarios' in which Frontex will develop its activities.

## How have the scenarios been developed?

These scenarios came up as the result of an interactive team process, involving experts from Frontex, Member States, and the European Commission and from other EU Agencies like Europol, EASO, the Fundamental Rights Agency, the European External Action Service (EEAS), as well as from the OECD and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

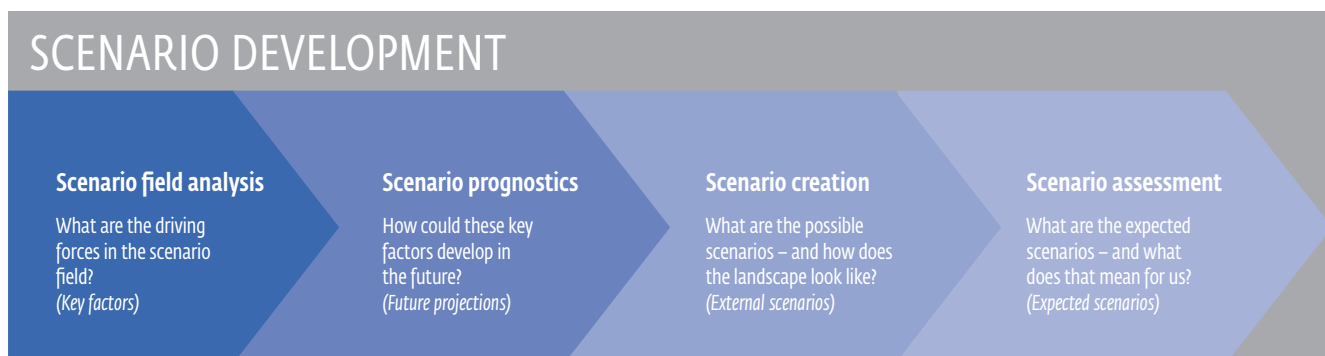
The scenario team used the scenario-management approach, which is based on four steps:

- **Detection of key factors** (Phase 1). The building blocks of the scenarios were gathered from the four-tier of the border control access model and resulted in the description of influence factors. Based on a systemic interconnection analysis the dominant drivers and those representing nodes have been worked out. The scenario team selected 25 key factors for further consideration.

- **Foresight of alternative projections** (Phase 2). In the next step, possible developments for all key factors have been identified. These so-called 'future projections' represent the three to five alternative futures within the next 5–10 years regarding each and every single key factor. This time reference helped the participants to imagine the future beyond the current events.

- **Calculation and formulation of scenarios** (Phase 3). Based on an assessment of the consistencies between all future projections, all possible combinations have been checked by a software. This led to seven possible futures which have been analysed and described. These scenarios represent the whole 'window of possibilities' and are visualised in a 'Map of the future'.

- **Scenario assessment and consequences** (Phase 4). Finally the scenarios have been assessed by the scenario team so that the current status as well as expected futures are examined. In addition consequences of each scenario for border management in general and Frontex have been identified.





## What drives future developments?

The seven scenarios represent the most significant possible environments for border management in Europe. An analysis of the core differences of these scenarios showed the following main drivers:

- **European integration:** Scenarios 1 to 4 include a stagnating or decreasing political integration process in the EU, while Scenarios 5 to 7 describe a more harmonised development on a political and societal level as well as for border management.
- **Global pressure:** Scenarios 1, 2 and 7 refer mostly to situation of continuous development of side-conditions, Scenarios 3 to 6 describe a significantly higher global pressure – and due to that a more proactive European foreign policy and a stronger focus on border management.
- **Level of migration:** Scenarios 1, 3, 6 and 7 represent scenarios with permissive migration policies and a higher degree of migration while Scenarios 2, 4 and 5 contain more restrictive policies and a lower degree of migration.

Additional important drivers applying to selected scenarios are the **openness of societies** combined with a successful integration (Scenarios 3, 5, 6 and 7), a low security **orientation** (Scenarios 1 and 7) and stricter implementation of **internal border controls** within the EU (Scenarios 1 and 2).

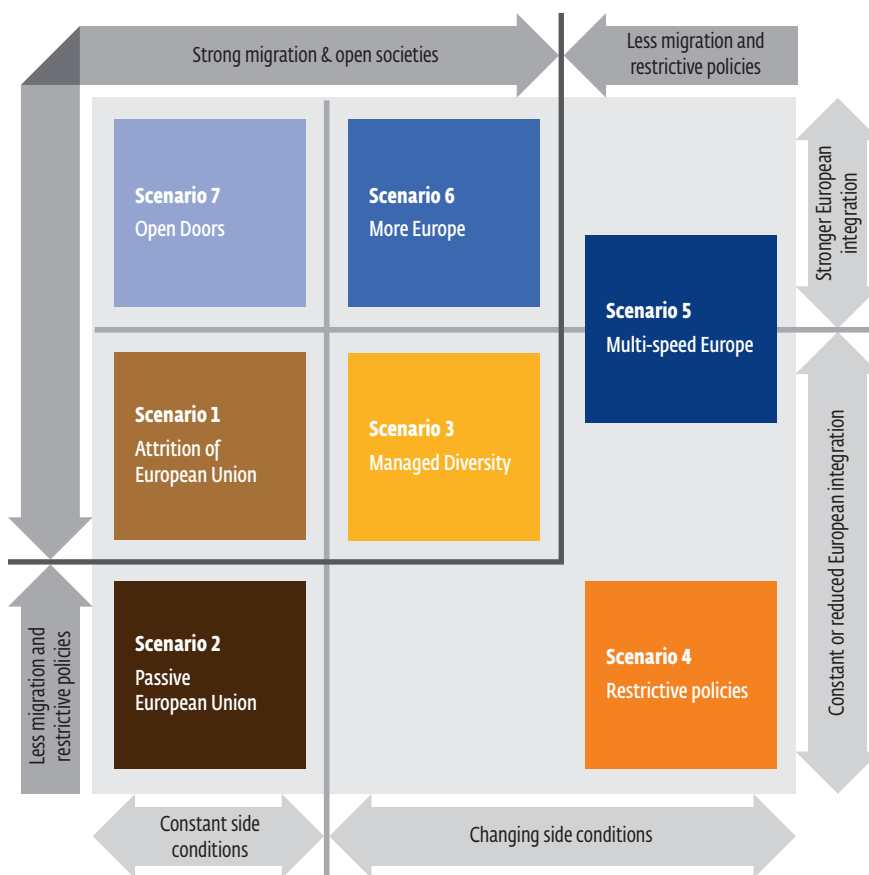


Figure 16. **Map of the future**

### Scenarios...

- describe alternative, possible futures (and not a single future);
- are based on the interconnection of the most important, long-term drivers (and not on a few, currently dominating factors);
- describe side-conditions for border management activities in the future (and not, what Frontex will, could or should do in the future);
- are a thinking tool for the next years (and a basis for a continuous assessment within planning processes).

The scenarios describe external side-conditions for the management of the EU external border within the next years. This means a set of possible scenarios for the environment in which border management will act in the future. These scenarios should cover all imaginable developments within the next 5–10 years – but part of some scenarios may develop earlier. This wider focus of the scenarios is set to support a continuous scenario assessment process within the next years, monitoring which scenarios are actually prevailing.

## Scenarios: Overview



Scenario 1

### Attrition of the European Union

Extensive migration and failed integration leads to conflicts and nationalism

Global threats do not reach a tipping point, so countries and existing alliances prefer to work on their individual challenges. While most countries focus on their economic interest, a common European identity loses relevance. Policies are mainly oriented on political correctness and short-term public opinion. Former agreements, like Schengen and Dublin, failed and became drastically less important or completely void. The high numbers of economic migrants – mostly with low educational qualification and with a different cultural background – are not truly integrated into European societies. This causes social conflicts and critical perception of migration – but without important security issues. Border management is Member States' affair, there are very few common activities, and EU institutions are only barely involved.



Scenario 2

### A Passive European Union

Fear and passivity leads to mistrust, security focus and walling-off

The politically and economically fragmented world faces an increasing number of conflicts. The EU stopped enlargement and turned into a loose and economically oriented alliance of Member States with a low level of political and societal integration. Member States act completely differently on migration and asylum policies. This leads to more internal border controls even within the Schengen area. Migration pressure on EU borders is highly related to the volatile global conflicts: Numbers of refugees, countries of origin, routes and affected borders sections change permanently. Despite differing migration policies, the control of EU external borders is a common interest with high priority on security. In reality foreign policies remain passive and there are only few concerted actions in border management.



Scenario 3

### Managed Diversity

Controlled migration into diverse and safeguarded societies

Due to international cooperation, numerous regional conflicts can be solved. The European Union withdraws from further political integration but remains open to new Member States. Most societies have a positive perception of migration and welcome new citizens even with different cultural backgrounds. Migration pressure stays manageable, but organised crime groups and terrorist activities remain a threat for EU borders. The Dublin process is implemented to control migration flow and free movement within the enlarged Schengen area is preserved. Proactive foreign policies keep stability and migration manageable on a long-term view. Actions regarding border control are the responsibility of rather independent Member States, but communication and collaboration is on a very high level.

<b>Global environment</b>	Constant global side-conditions with economic migration pressure	Growing global conflicts and strong economic migration pressure	Globalisation, ecological and security problems – but less global conflicts
<b>Cross-border crime (CBC) / organised crime groups (OCG)</b>	Limited development of CBC; constant threat of terrorism	OCG focus on specific fields; constant threat of terrorism	Wide range of OCG activities; growing threat of terrorism
<b>European integration</b>	Erosion of EU and possible exit of selected Member States	Closed EU without stronger integration	EU with significant growth perspective, but no further integration
<b>European foreign policy</b>	Passive policy based on short-term expectations of the public	Passive policy based on <i>Realpolitik</i>	Proactive policy based on <i>Realpolitik</i>
<b>Migration and integration</b>	Strong migration but split societies, less acceptance and conflicts	Closed societies – less migration and no willingness for integration	Strong migration into open societies with high level of integration
<b>European asylum policies</b>	Restrictive access to process – but problems in Dublin implementation	In general, restrictive policy – but less harmonised implementation	Generally permissive policies – relying on Dublin implementation
<b>Security and internal mobility</b>	Low security orientation and increase of internal border controls	High security orientation and internal border controls	Free movement and high security orientation
<b>Border management (BM)</b>	BM by individual Member States – few but inefficient common procedures and fewer returns	BM by individual Member States – few but inefficient common procedures and fewer returns	BM as bilateral / joint cooperation – efficient registration & information, fewer returns



#### Scenario 4

##### Restrictive Policies

###### Restrictive and uncoordinated migration policies but common long-term security strategy

Growing global conflicts and economic disparities between EU and third countries are substantial push factors for migration. The EU has turned away from the idea of a stronger integrated federation. Traditional values dominate, and in many Member States there are critical views on foreigners for different reasons, which leads to restrictive migration and asylum policies. Even the integration of few migrants is difficult. Nevertheless the variety of global conflicts and terrorist threats strengthened the wish for a common security policy. Foreign policies focus on containment, and the Dublin process is strictly implemented to control migrants directly at the external border. Member States act individually, the EU mandate for border management is often symbolic. Member States cooperate mostly bilaterally, which in many cases results in efficient actions.

Fast changing side-conditions: global conflicts and strong economic and ecological migration pressure

Wide range of OCG activities; growing threat of terrorism

EU with significant growth perspective, but no further integration

Proactive policy based on *Realpolitik*

Closed societies – less migration and no need (and no willingness) for integration

More easy access to process – and implementation of Dublin process

Free movement and high security orientation

BM as bilateral / joint cooperation – efficient registration & information, fewer returns



#### Scenario 5

##### Multi-speed Europe

###### Limited migration and successful integration in an adaptable EU

The world has speeded up, with further globalisation, intensification of international conflicts and terrorist activities. Within the EU, there are different views on the integration process. This has led to a 'multi-speed Europe' where some Member States create more integrated systems, and others stick to their national values and interests. Europe has withdrawn from a value-driven foreign policy, and opted for a *Realpolitik* line, including restrictive migration policies. This comprises legal migration for a small number of highly educated migrants who can easily be integrated. The Schengen area includes border controls, but some aspects of free movement remain. In border management, Member States cooperate, and major tasks are done by a European border and coast guard corps.

Fast changing side-conditions: global conflicts and strong economic and ecological migration pressure

Wide range of OCG activities; growing threat of terrorism

Multi-speed Europe based on current Member States

Proactive policy based on *Realpolitik*

Limited migration but high acceptance and good integration of well-educated migrants

More easy access to process – and implementation of restrictive process for distribution of applicants

Free movement and high security orientation

BM as bilateral / joint cooperation – efficient registration & information, many returns



#### Scenario 6

##### More Europe

###### Integrated EU profits from migration and copes with global challenges

The world has to face significant political and environmental challenges, and for this reason, countries all over the world close ranks and cooperate. EU Member States understand that they have to act consistently in times of external challenges. The integration within a number of Member States intensifies. Society lives the 'European idea' and understands itself as open union. Migrants from different cultures are seen as enrichment and integrate eagerly. Legal migration and asylum processes are set up consistently within all Member States. Nevertheless the pressure on the external border remains high, so that security is still a main topic. Europe tries to react considerably by a long-term proactive foreign policy and a common border management addressed to the uniform European border and coast guard corps.

Growing global conflicts and special migration pressure (ecology, health risks)

Wide range of OCG activities; growing threat of terrorism

Stronger integration of current Member States

Proactive policy based on *Realpolitik*

Strong migration into open societies with high level of integration

Generally permissive policies and implementation of a distribution of applicants

Free movement and high security orientation

European border and coast guard corps – efficient procedure including decisions, fewer returns



#### Scenario 7

##### Open Doors

###### External borders lose relevance in a peaceful world

The world is able to breathe again as conflicts can be solved and environmental degradation can be slowed down. In this peaceful world, Member States close ranks and crime or terrorist activities play no significant role. They understand Europe as political, economic and social union with one common mindset. Foreign policy is proactive as Europe believes in its values and wants to manifest human rights all over the world. Due to this social conviction, Europe opens its arms and welcomes large numbers of migrants, especially by a permissive legal migration policy. Migration is not seen as a security problem, and Member States closely coordinate their actions. In case of crisis, EU intervenes self-contained; but overall: Common border management is not a significant topic.

Conflicts can be solved and environmental degradation can be slowed down

Limited development of CBC; constant threat of terrorism

Stronger integration of current Member States

Proactive policy based on values and human rights

Strong migration into open societies with high level of integration

Open external borders (no further access) and focus on distribution of applicants

Free movement and low security orientation

Common BM is not a significant topic; Reinforced EU intervention in crisis situations

## Scenario assessment: Expected development paths

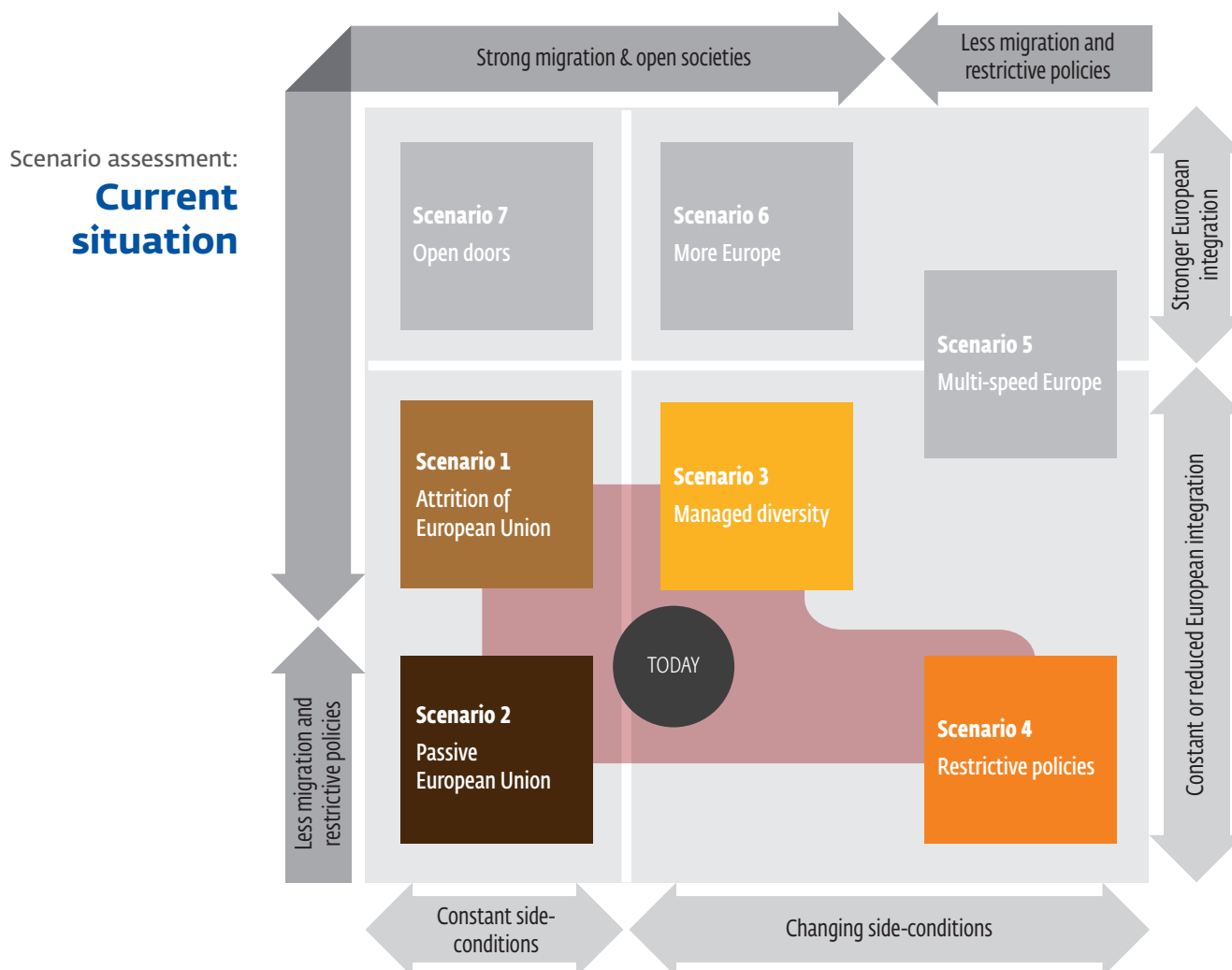
The seven scenarios are initially ‘thinking tools’, without any assigned probabilities. In this way, they are to be considered to stimulate thinking and a tool to identify little-used thinking paths. For their use into specific strategy and planning processes, it is necessary to evaluate them in more detail. The scenario team assessed the different scenarios in two ways:

- **Nearness to the current situation:** Scenario 2 (‘Passive European Union’) was seen as the future image closest

to the current status. In addition, scenario 4 (‘Restrictive policies’) included a lot of topical elements. Scenario 7 (‘Open doors’) has the greatest distance to the current situation.

- **Expectation for 2025:** Three scenarios have been assessed as the most expected ones: Scenario 2 (‘Passive European Union’), Scenario 4 (‘Restrictive policies’) and Scenario 5 (‘Multi-speed Europe’). Scenario 7 (‘Open doors’) has the greatest distance to the expected future, too.

In general the scenario assessment showed that the scenario team expected a continuous development with restrictive policies and limitations of migration – but within a stronger changing global environment which forces the need for a proactive European foreign policy and a common European border management.



## How to use the scenarios

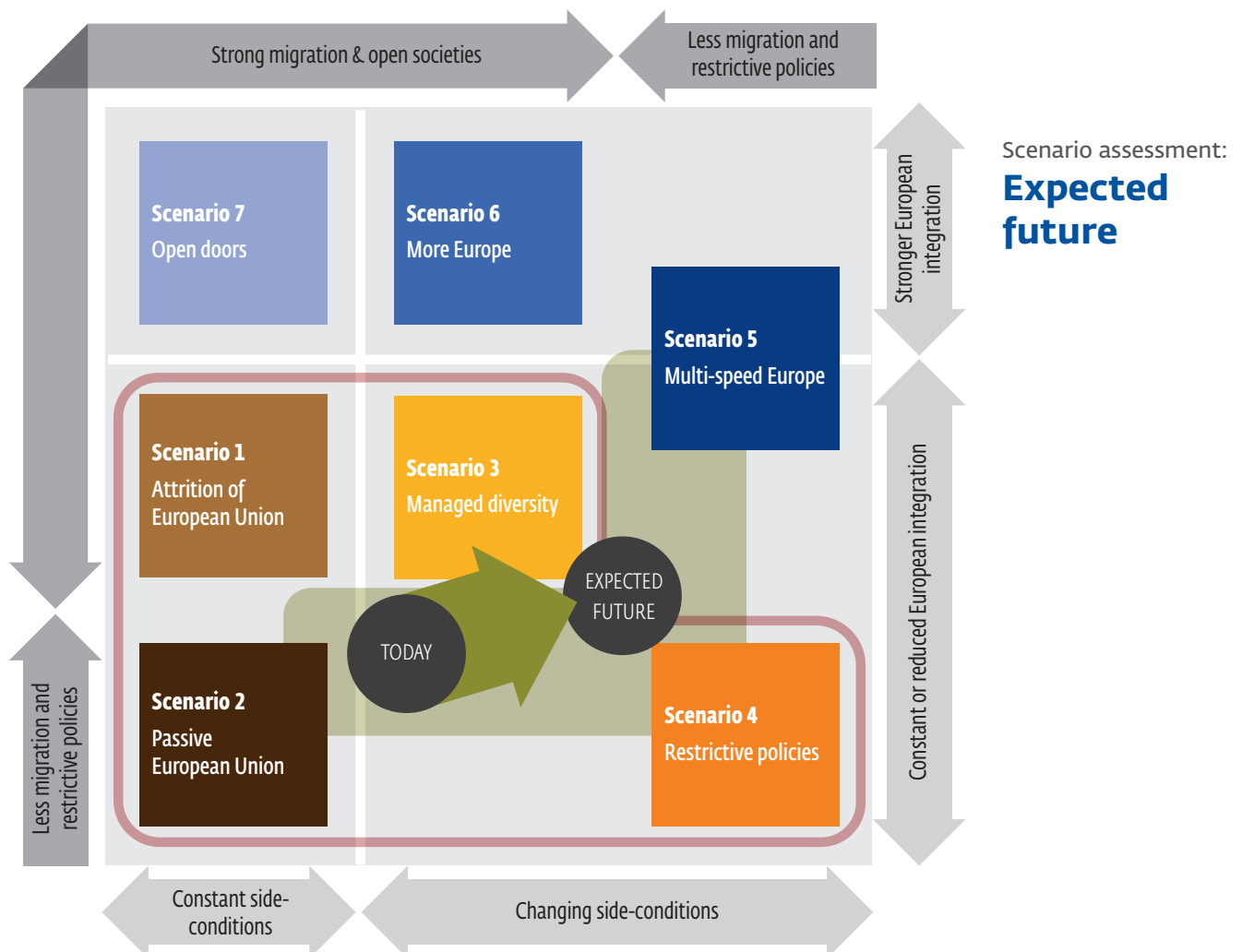
These scenarios form a basis for an annual monitoring of changes in the environment and to support strategic decision makers whose decisions will have middle to long-term impacts so that they come to realistic strategies, which are not focused on fixed expectations or ideals about the future. The scenarios could be used not just by Frontex, but also by decision makers at the EU and Member State levels. Therefore they may be used for different objectives:

- **Consequence analysis:** Scenarios could be used to analysing the effects of different possible futures on an organisation. In this process, all scenarios should be kept 'in play' for as long as possible to also identify the opportunities hidden in scenarios perceived as negative and the of-

ten ignored dangers of superficially 'good' scenarios.

- **Robustness check:** Scenarios are like 'long-term weather reports' for a vision, a strategy or an action plan. Therefore, existing concepts can be reviewed in light of their potential under different future possibilities. In this manner, the risks of current strategies become clearer. At the same time, it becomes possible to detect whether and how far existing concepts are robust against changes in the environment.
- **Scenario-supported decision-making:** How an organisation handle uncertainty depends on how many and which external scenarios are considered for strategic decisions. Options range from focused strategies (fit to one or a few scenarios) to robust strategies (fit to many or all scenarios).

- **Strategic early warning:** Scenarios are like 'maps of the future' – therefore, they should not be discarded after first use, but continue to be used. This process of regular observation is called scenario monitoring and this is particular aspect will be followed-up in future annual analysis, thus creating a reference platform of knowledge for strategic decision makers in the field of border management.
- **Scenarios in change processes:** Scenarios have also turned out to be an important instrument in systematic change processes. They clarify opportunities and needs for change as well as one's own options for action – and they contribute to the openness of managers and organisations towards the future.







## 8. Conclusions

The EU external borders are confronted with three major challenges: an unprecedented rise in migratory pressure, an increasing terrorist threat and a steady rise in the number of regular travellers. The challenge for border-control authorities is thus to become more effective and efficient whilst maintaining the necessary quality standards.

Given the threats visible at the external borders of the EU, it is evident that border management has an important security component. What useful function can be played by the border authorities in the area of counter-terrorism? The threat of terrorist activities and the methods of entry into the EU have been much discussed during the past year due to several incidents which occurred within the EU in 2014 and 2015. Delineating the tasks and potential tools of those working at the borders to help combat this threat is an important discussion which should be undertaken.

The corollary of the unprecedented number of arrivals was the strain placed on border-control authorities, which left them with fewer resources available for identifying those attempting to enter the EU. This then resulted in high numbers of entrants were not even attributed a nationality, let alone their identity thoroughly checked. The importance of this issue is twofold; firstly, granting international protection to those in need is a legal obligation. Hence, there is a strong need to ensure the correct and full identification of those arriving at the borders so as to provide the full necessary protection, where required. Secondly, the identification issue concerns the potential threat to internal security. With large numbers of arrivals remaining essentially unclassified for a variety of reasons, there is clearly a risk that persons representing a security threat maybe entering the EU.

Second-line checks on arrivals are a crucial step in the identification process. They also provide an important source of

information which can be further used for intelligence and risk analysis purposes. Improving intelligence and analytical capacities is thus also of great importance. The development of risk profiles of arrivals and training for border guards involved in these fields would also help to ensure greater identification.

One improvement which has been evident in the preceding years is the increasing pool of sources of information and data from the external border. Information is key to situational monitoring and for analytical purposes and so the improved availability of information is of critical importance. However, with greater information comes a greater challenge in utilising it effectively. This is especially the case in emergency situations when large amounts of information are available but time is scarce. It is in this context that data and situational information are sometimes not enough, but authorities will require the analysis and intelligence derived from them to make the fully informed decisions. The management of this knowledge process is critical.

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

## 9. Statistical annex

### LEGEND

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

**Source:** FRAN and EDF-RAN data as of 22 January 2016, unless otherwise indicated

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



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

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

	2012	2013	2014	2015	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>All Borders</b>						
Syria	7 903	25 546	78 764	594 059	33	654
Not specified	2 113	3 571	386	556 432	31	144 053
Afghanistan	13 169	9 494	22 132	267 485	15	1 109
Iraq	1 219	537	2 110	101 285	5.6	4 700
Pakistan	4 877	5 047	4 059	43 314	2.4	967
Eritrea	2 604	11 298	34 586	40 348	2.2	17
Iran	611	404	468	24 673	1.4	5 172
Kosovo*	990	6 357	22 069	23 793	1.3	7.8
Nigeria	826	3 386	8 715	23 609	1.3	171
Somalia	5 038	5 624	7 676	17 694	1	131
Others	33 087	36 101	101 997	129 645	7.1	27
<b>Total all borders</b>	<b>72 437</b>	<b>107 365</b>	<b>282 962</b>	<b>1 822 337</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>544</b>
<b>Land Border</b>						
Not specified	1 817	3 469	189	556 285	70	294 231
Syria	6 416	8 601	12 066	97 551	12	708
Afghanistan	9 838	4 392	9 445	55 077	7	483
Kosovo*	990	6 350	22 069	23 792	3	7.8
Pakistan	3 344	3 211	555	17 448	2.2	3 044
Iraq	1 027	413	939	10 145	1.3	980
Albania	5 460	8 833	9 268	9 450	1.2	2
Bangladesh	4 751	687	311	4 413	0.6	1 319
Iran	457	214	262	1 550	0.2	492
Congo	502	175	138	1 124	0.1	714
Others	14 581	10 847	7 526	12 409	1.6	65
<b>Total land borders</b>	<b>49 183</b>	<b>47 192</b>	<b>62 768</b>	<b>789 244</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1 157</b>
<b>Sea Border</b>						
Syria	1 487	16 945	66 698	496 508	48	644
Afghanistan	3 331	5 102	12 687	212 408	21	1 574
Iraq	192	124	1 171	91 140	8.8	7 683
Eritrea	1 942	10 953	34 323	39 773	3.8	16
Pakistan	1 533	1 836	3 504	25 866	2.5	638
Iran	154	190	206	23 123	2.2	11 125
Nigeria	575	2 870	8 490	22 668	2.2	167
Somalia	3 480	5 054	7 440	16 927	1.6	128
Morocco	700	672	3 042	12 704	1.2	318
Sudan	61	302	3 432	9 349	0.9	172
Others	9 799	16 125	79 201	82 627	8	4.3
<b>Total sea borders</b>	<b>23 254</b>	<b>60 173</b>	<b>220 194</b>	<b>1 033 093</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>369</b>

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

Annex Table 2. **Clandestine entries at BCPs**

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

	2012	2013	2014	2015	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>Border Type</b>						
Land	476	558	2 972	3 627	100	22
Sea	115	41	80	15	0.4	-81
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>						
Syria	36	181	1 091	1 868	51	71
Afghanistan	190	128	1 022	966	27	-5.5
Iraq	14	12	85	305	8.4	259
Algeria	61	48	120	144	4	20
Pakistan	24	30	63	90	2.5	43
Guinea	8	4	66	62	1.7	-6.1
Morocco	24	33	16	52	1.4	225
Palestine	24	5	7	34	0.9	386
Iran	5	3	33	18	0.5	-45
Myanmar	0	2	83	15	0.4	-82
Others	205	153	466	88	2.4	-81
<b>Total</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>3 052</b>	<b>3 642</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>19</b>

Annex Table 3. **Facilitators**

Detections reported by place of detection and top ten nationalities

	2012	2013	2014	2015	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>Place of Detection</b>						
Land	903	695	1 214	4 711	39	288
Inland	5 076	5 057	6 828	4 669	39	-32
Sea	471	394	585	1 137	9.5	94
Land intra-EU	494	566	811	872	7.3	7.5
Not specified	320	267	457	357	3	-22
Air	358	273	339	277	2.3	-18
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>						
Morocco	455	366	959	1 138	9.5	19
Not specified	514	693	681	703	5.8	3.2
Spain	498	241	510	613	5.1	20
Albania	241	279	413	611	5.1	48
Syria	79	172	398	533	4.4	34
France	351	271	417	469	3.9	12
Bulgaria	157	211	322	426	3.5	32
Romania	362	225	275	413	3.4	50
Turkey	232	185	396	411	3.4	3.8
Italy	513	675	487	370	3.1	-24
Others	4 260	3 934	5 376	6 336	5.3	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>7 662</b>	<b>7 252</b>	<b>10 234</b>	<b>12 023</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>17</b>

#### Annex Table 4. **Illegal stay**

Detections reported by place of detection and top ten nationalities

	2012	2013	2014	2015	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>Place of Detection</b>						
Inland	242 270	253 103	366 467	<b>632 286</b>	90	73
Air	35 410	31 009	33 793	<b>39 559</b>	5.6	17
Land	19 883	17 677	15 345	<b>18 704</b>	2.7	22
Land intra-EU	5 832	3 216	3 929	<b>5 763</b>	0.8	47
Between BCPs	724	574	2 160	<b>2 609</b>	0.4	21
Not specified	56	38	2 372	<b>2 023</b>	0.3	-15
Sea	4 585	1 396	901	<b>681</b>	0.1	-24
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>						
Syria	6 907	16 402	53 618	<b>140 261</b>	20	162
Afghanistan	19 980	14 220	22 358	<b>95 765</b>	14	328
Iraq	6 812	4 452	5 800	<b>61 177</b>	8.7	955
Eritrea	3 243	5 975	32 477	<b>39 330</b>	5.6	21
Morocco	20 959	25 706	28 416	<b>32 549</b>	4.6	15
Albania	12 031	15 510	21 177	<b>28 485</b>	4.1	35
Pakistan	18 092	14 034	12 803	<b>23 199</b>	3.3	81
Ukraine	12 965	12 345	15 771	<b>22 615</b>	3.2	43
Kosovo*	3 949	5 192	9 548	<b>16 018</b>	2.3	68
Algeria	15 420	14 116	14 769	<b>15 587</b>	2.2	5.5
Others	188 402	179 061	208 230	<b>226 639</b>	32	8.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>308 760</b>	<b>307 013</b>	<b>424 967</b>	<b>701 625</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>65</b>

\* 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. Refusals of entry

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

	2012	2013	2014	2015	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>All Borders</b>						
Ukraine	18 108	16 380	16 814	25 283	21	50
Albania	12 932	11 564	13 001	15 025	13	16
Russian Federation	10 113	22 698	10 772	10 671	9	-0.9
Serbia	5 652	8 181	8 657	6 883	5.8	-20
Belarus	5 035	4 572	5 171	4 715	4	-8.8
Morocco	4 256	5 372	4 439	4 085	3.4	-8
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1 693	3 523	4 010	3 784	3.2	-5.6
Turkey	3 086	2 999	3 048	3 250	2.7	6.6
Brazil	3 042	2 524	2 313	2 634	2.2	14
Algeria	1 407	2 075	2 730	2 435	2.1	-11
Others	52 072	49 347	43 932	39 730	34	-9.6
<b>Total all borders</b>	<b>117 396</b>	<b>129 235</b>	<b>114 887</b>	<b>118 495</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3.1</b>
<b>Land Border</b>						
Ukraine	17 007	15 375	15 573	23 857	36	53
Russian Federation	7 306	20 236	9 013	9 299	14	3.2
Albania	8 250	6 504	7 005	7 893	12	13
Serbia	4 810	7 405	7 868	6 016	9	-24
Belarus	4 912	4 430	5 009	4 588	6.9	-8.4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1 532	3 363	3 843	3 578	5.4	-6.9
Morocco	2 738	3 938	2 975	2 370	3.6	-20
Turkey	1 479	1 514	1 634	1 946	2.9	19
FYR Macedonia	1 781	1 758	1 707	1 523	2.3	-11
Moldova	992	736	754	1 038	1.6	38
Others	15 170	13 347	8 320	4 395	6.6	-47
<b>Total land borders</b>	<b>65 977</b>	<b>78 606</b>	<b>63 701</b>	<b>66 503</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4.4</b>
<b>Air Border</b>						
Albania	2 689	3 159	3 762	4 601	9.8	22
Brazil	2 980	2 481	2 275	2 598	5.6	14
Algeria	1 330	2 001	2 642	2 335	5	-12
United States	1 966	2 305	2 307	1 737	3.7	-25
China	1 195	1 186	1 422	1 550	3.3	9
Not specified	1 948	1 910	1 668	1 535	3.3	-8
Nigeria	1 709	1 647	1 653	1 388	3	-16
Ukraine	965	921	1 124	1 318	2.8	17
Russian Federation	1 650	1 812	1 584	1 293	2.8	-18
Morocco	997	963	893	1 124	2.4	26
Others	26 634	26 400	26 962	27 234	58	1
<b>Total air borders</b>	<b>44 063</b>	<b>44 785</b>	<b>46 292</b>	<b>46 713</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0.9</b>
<b>Sea Border</b>						
Albania	1 993	1 901	2 234	2 531	48	13
Morocco	521	471	571	591	11	3.5
Turkey	185	228	188	273	5.2	45
Tunisia	128	139	136	190	3.6	40
Afghanistan	40	52	56	165	3.1	195
Syria	129	125	133	115	2.2	-14
India	258	151	83	109	2.1	31
Ukraine	136	84	117	108	2	-7.7
Iraq	111	58	70	105	2	50
Algeria	45	46	72	93	1.8	29
Others	3 810	2 589	1 234	999	19	-19
<b>Total sea borders</b>	<b>7 356</b>	<b>5 844</b>	<b>4 894</b>	<b>5 279</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7.9</b>

## Annex Table 6. Reasons for refusals of entry

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

	Total Refusals	Reasons for refusals of entry (see description below)										Total Reasons
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	n.a.	
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>												
Ukraine	25 283	106	186	6 582	23	12 367	1 265	1 698	844	148	2 153	25 372
Albania	15 025	147	173	324	10	5 038	582	3 310	4 005	161	1 334	15 084
Russian Federation	10 671	101	12	7 325	16	945	306	452	173	859	699	10 888
Serbia	6 883	227	53	312	3	1 204	2 112	1 219	1 566	56	163	6 915
Belarus	4 715	117	2	2 114	5	386	265	637	156	434	669	4 785
Morocco	4 085	927	76	924	64	506	30	250	699	335	266	4 077
Bosnia and Herzegovina	3 784	852	3	144	4	1 311	66	1 169	118	68	51	3 786
Turkey	3 250	289	16	1 961	24	339	253	91	108	23	149	3 253
Brazil	2 634	13	19	144	1	558	111	118	189	8	1 479	2 640
Algeria	2 435	42	20	225	13	1 298	25	639	32	13	130	2 437
Others	39 730	2 179	1 046	9 591	613	9 438	1 342	2 209	1 872	471	11 184	39 945
<b>Total</b>	<b>118 495</b>	<b>5 000</b>	<b>1 606</b>	<b>29 646</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>33 390</b>	<b>6 357</b>	<b>11 792</b>	<b>9 762</b>	<b>2 576</b>	<b>18 307</b>	<b>119 212</b>

Descriptions of the reasons for refusal of entry:

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

Annex Table 7. Reasons for refusals of entry

Reasons for refusals of entry at the external borders reported by border type

	2012	2013	2014	2015	Share of total	% change on prev. year	Highest share
<b>All Borders</b>							<b>Member State</b>
E) No justification	25 261	26 511	24 567	33 390	28	36	Ukraine (37%)
C) No valid visa	35 941	50 030	34 841	29 646	25	-15	Russian Federation (25%)
Reason not available	11 127	12 449	14 772	18 307	15	24	Ukraine (12%)
G) No subsistence	10 885	11 128	10 870	11 792	9.9	8.5	Albania (28%)
H) Alert issued	15 423	10 787	12 682	9 762	8.2	-23	Albania (41%)
F) Over 3 month stay	5 346	5 045	7 219	6 357	5.3	-12	Serbia (33%)
A) No valid document	7 845	8 997	6 333	5 000	4.2	-21	Morocco (19%)
I) Threat	3 262	3 077	2 753	2 576	2.2	-6.4	Russian Federation (33%)
B) False document	3 712	2 571	2 052	1 606	1.3	-22	Not specified (13%)
D) False visa	1 842	1 552	1 139	776	0.7	-32	Morocco (8.2%)
<b>Total all borders</b>	<b>120 644</b>	<b>132 147</b>	<b>117 228</b>	<b>119 212</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1.7</b>	
<b>Land Border</b>							<b>Member State</b>
C) No valid visa	25 033	40 163	25 195	21 054	32	-16	Russian Federation (32%)
E) No justification	11 802	12 724	10 688	18 972	28	78	Ukraine (62%)
G) No subsistence	7 342	7 517	6 594	7 278	11	10	Albania (29%)
H) Alert issued	10 980	7 289	9 094	6 564	9.8	-28	Albania (37%)
F) Over 3 month stay	4 497	4 018	5 566	4 920	7.4	-12	Serbia (41%)
Reason not available	0	595	1 427	3 048	4.6	114	Ukraine (60%)
A) No valid document	3 478	5 071	3 275	2 579	3.9	-21	Morocco (33%)
I) Threat	2 064	1 803	1 615	1 856	2.8	15	Russian Federation (44%)
B) False document	1 352	498	393	372	0.6	-5.3	Ukraine (47%)
D) False visa	640	434	176	135	0.2	-23	Morocco (16%)
<b>Total land borders</b>	<b>67 188</b>	<b>80 112</b>	<b>64 023</b>	<b>66 778</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4.3</b>	
<b>Air Border</b>							<b>Member State</b>
Reason not available	10 713	11 372	12 641	14 302	30	13	Brazil (10%)
E) No justification	12 806	12 930	12 885	13 395	28	4	Albania (13%)
C) No valid visa	8 647	8 372	9 029	7 918	17	-12	China (7.6%)
G) No subsistence	3 297	3 332	3 649	3 644	7.7	-0.1	Algeria (17%)
H) Alert issued	2 686	2 335	2 556	2 153	4.6	-16	Albania (36%)
A) No valid document	2 611	2 647	2 443	1 973	4.2	-19	Not specified (29%)
F) Over 3 month stay	834	949	1 565	1 388	2.9	-11	Albania (11%)
B) False document	2 239	2 009	1 600	1 172	2.5	-27	Not specified (17%)
I) Threat	1 121	1 149	1 014	609	1.3	-40	Suriname (23%)
D) False visa	1 126	1 043	854	596	1.3	-30	India (5.5%)
<b>Total air borders</b>	<b>46 080</b>	<b>46 138</b>	<b>48 236</b>	<b>47 150</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>-2.3</b>	
<b>Sea Border</b>							<b>Member State</b>
H) Alert issued	1 757	1 162	982	1 045	20	6.4	Albania (77%)
E) No justification	653	857	987	1 023	19	3.6	Albania (66%)
Reason not available	414	482	704	957	18	36	Morocco (20%)
G) No subsistence	246	279	626	870	16	39	Albania (96%)
C) No valid visa	2 261	1 492	610	674	13	10	Tunisia (15%)
A) No valid document	1 756	1 279	615	448	8.5	-27	Turkey (27%)
I) Threat	77	125	124	111	2.1	-10	Albania (58%)
B) False document	121	64	55	62	1.2	13	Syria (29%)
F) Over 3 month stay	15	78	88	49	0.9	-44	Turkey (41%)
D) False visa	76	75	106	45	0.9	-58	Morocco (42%)
<b>Total sea borders</b>	<b>7 376</b>	<b>5 893</b>	<b>4 897</b>	<b>5 284</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7.9</b>	

## Annex Table 8. Document fraudsters – external borders

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

	2013	2014	2015	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>Border Type</b>					
Air	7 058	6 511	5 331	64	-18
Land	2 141	2 484	2 671	32	7.5
Sea	605	425	367	4.4	-14
Not specified	0	1	4	0	300
<b>Top Ten Nationalities Claimed</b>					
Ukraine	536	519	1 186	14	129
Not specified	1 197	742	1 013	12	37
Morocco	666	767	867	10	13
Syria	1 209	1 447	745	8.9	-49
Albania	1 008	573	425	5.1	-26
Iran	321	263	340	4.1	29
Nigeria	481	516	291	3.5	-44
Iraq	149	338	245	2.9	-28
Sri Lanka	126	315	207	2.5	-34
Congo (D.R.)	169	142	148	1.8	4.2
Others	3 942	3 799	2 906	35	-24
<b>Total</b>	<b>9 804</b>	<b>9 421</b>	<b>8 373</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>-11</b>

## Annex Table 9. Fraudulent documents – external borders

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

	2013	2014	2015	Share of total	% change on prev. year	Highest share
<b>Country of Issuance</b>						<b>Type of Document</b>
Poland	597	492	1 011	10	105	Visas (84%)
Spain	761	1 020	973	10	-4.6	Residence permits (30%)
Italy	1 048	1 154	931	9.6	-19	ID cards (33%)
France	1 335	1 165	906	9.4	-22	Passports (39%)
Belgium	465	383	477	4.9	25	Residence permits (35%)
Germany	560	396	476	4.9	20	Residence permits (38%)
Greece	1 390	917	473	4.9	-48	Passports (28%)
Morocco	116	515	341	3.5	-34	Passports (96%)
Sweden	374	298	162	1.7	-46	Passports (61%)
Nigeria	131	165	159	1.6	-3.6	Passports (96%)
Others	4 571	4 266	3 779	39	-11	Passports (68%)
<b>Type of Document</b>						<b>Type of Fraud</b>
Passports	5 046	4 953	4 068	42	-18	Forged (39%)
Visas	1 816	1 617	1 934	20	20	Authentic (53%)
Residence permits	1 763	1 507	1 384	14	-8.2	Counterfeit (39%)
ID cards	1 112	1 414	1 207	12	-15	Counterfeit (42%)
Stamps	1 411	1 047	903	9.3	-14	Counterfeit (77%)
Other	200	233	192	2	-18	Counterfeit (68%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>11 348</b>	<b>10 771</b>	<b>9 688</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>-10</b>	

## Annex Table 10. Return decisions issued

Decisions issued by top ten nationalities

	2012	2013	2014	2015	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>						
Syria	8 129	12 599	26 489	27 937	9.7	5.5
Albania	15 356	17 983	21 287	26 453	9.2	24
Morocco	15 436	12 486	19 789	22 360	7.8	13
Afghanistan	23 147	9 301	11 861	18 655	6.5	57
Ukraine	9 255	9 242	11 026	17 709	6.2	61
Iraq	5 629	3 517	3 292	16 093	5.6	389
Pakistan	24 707	16 567	13 717	12 777	4.5	-6.9
India	10 628	10 193	8 860	8 287	2.9	-6.5
Nigeria	9 345	8 549	7 135	7 059	2.5	-1.1
Algeria	13 771	8 732	7 790	6 832	2.4	-12
Others	134 546	115 136	120 744	122 563	43	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>269 949</b>	<b>224 305</b>	<b>251 990</b>	<b>286 725</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>14</b>

## Annex Table 11. Effective returns

People effectively returned to third countries by top ten nationalities

	2012	2013	2014	2015	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>						
Albania	13 149	20 544	26 442	30 468	17	15
Ukraine	7 645	7 763	9 582	15 010	8.6	57
Kosovo*	3 666	4 537	4 744	10 136	5.8	114
India	8 946	8 958	7 609	9 419	5.4	24
Morocco	7 667	6 758	8 595	8 158	4.7	-5.1
Pakistan	10 488	12 127	9 609	8 089	4.6	-16
Serbia	7 520	6 512	6 243	7 482	4.3	20
Iraq	3 125	2 584	1 932	4 831	2.8	150
Russian Federation	6 894	8 216	6 652	4 595	2.6	-31
Syria	795	938	2 495	4 522	2.6	81
Others	89 060	81 481	77 406	72 510	41	-6.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>158 955</b>	<b>160 418</b>	<b>161 309</b>	<b>175 220</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8.6</b>

\* 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 12. **Effective returns by type of return**

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

	2012	2013	2014	2015	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>TYPE OF RETURN</b>						
<b>Forced</b>	<b>82 061</b>	<b>87 465</b>	<b>69 400</b>	<b>72 473</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>4.4</b>
Enforced by Member State	71 568	76 062	50 418	54 195	75	7.5
Not specified	8 759	9 832	17 014	15 724	22	-7.6
Enforced by Joint Operation	1 734	1 571	1 968	2 554	3.5	30
<b>Voluntary</b>	<b>65 596</b>	<b>64 588</b>	<b>63 896</b>	<b>81 681</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>28</b>
Others	36 433	34 615	37 488	54 466	67	45
IOM-assisted	15 417	16 035	11 325	14 391	18	27
Not specified	13 746	13 938	15 083	12 824	16	-15
<b>Not specified</b>	<b>11 298</b>	<b>8 365</b>	<b>28 013</b>	<b>21 066</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>-25</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>158 955</b>	<b>160 418</b>	<b>161 309</b>	<b>175 220</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8.6</b>
<b>TOP TEN NATIONALITIES</b>						
<b>Forced</b>						
Albania	11 944	19 296	6 306	10 249	14	63
Morocco	3 275	2 943	7 158	6 802	9.4	-5
Kosovo <sup>o</sup>	2 063	2 266	2 708	4 742	6.5	75
Serbia	2 943	3 353	3 164	4 049	5.6	28
Syria	593	789	1 504	3 695	5.1	146
Nigeria	2 714	2 707	2 488	2 311	3.2	-7.1
Tunisia	5 137	3 123	3 048	2 268	3.1	-26
Algeria	2 521	2 617	2 811	2 232	3.1	-21
Pakistan	7 178	8 369	2 942	2 067	2.9	-30
India	3 427	2 898	2 314	1 932	2.7	-17
Others	40 266	39 104	34 957	32 126	44	-8.1
<b>Total Forced Returns</b>	<b>82 061</b>	<b>87 465</b>	<b>69 400</b>	<b>72 473</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>4.4</b>
<b>Voluntary</b>						
Ukraine	6 079	6 248	8 122	13 017	16	60
India	5 462	6 032	5 111	7 399	9.1	45
Kosovo <sup>o</sup>	1 603	2 271	2 035	5 363	6.6	164
Albania	1 100	1 171	2 013	4 626	5.7	130
Pakistan	3 076	3 663	3 507	4 479	5.5	28
Iraq	2 071	1 493	1 094	3 643	4.5	233
Russian Federation	5 532	6 715	5 018	3 469	4.2	-31
Serbia	4 552	3 126	3 020	3 374	4.1	12
Bangladesh	1 427	1 872	1 402	2 198	2.7	57
China	2 702	2 796	2 391	2 122	2.6	-11
Others	31 992	29 201	30 183	31 991	39	6
<b>Total Voluntary Returns</b>	<b>65 596</b>	<b>64 588</b>	<b>63 896</b>	<b>81 681</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>28</b>

<sup>o</sup> 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 13. **Passenger flow on entry**

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

	Air		Land		Sea		Total		Share of total	% change on prev. year
	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015		
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>										
Not specified	90 333 109	98 460 249	35 059 165	26 648 082	15 779 407	13 810 322	141 171 681	<b>138 918 653</b>	62	-1.6
EU MS/SAC	9 036 096	12 988 627	24 067 501	33 359 678	503 579	1 514 408	33 607 176	<b>47 862 713</b>	21	42
Ukraine	193 219	285 457	10 285 108	12 175 572	50 207	51 130	10 528 534	<b>12 512 159</b>	5.6	19
Russian Federation	579 054	1 370 134	9 554 369	7 702 667	303 693	254 801	10 437 116	<b>9 327 602</b>	4.2	-11
Belarus	45 696	147 116	4 925 467	4 450 792	2 030	2 682	4 973 193	<b>4 600 590</b>	2.1	-7.5
Serbia	11 528	33 893	2 456 862	2 646 078	3 372	3 770	2 471 762	<b>2 683 741</b>	1.2	8.6
Moldova	9 148	16 408	1 028 245	1 363 351	418	5 962	1 037 811	<b>1 385 721</b>	0.6	34
Turkey	147 642	249 865	157 063	991 935	11 211	18 788	315 916	<b>1 260 588</b>	0.6	299
Israel	321 532	670 099	22 305	27 662	6 443	6 311	350 280	<b>704 072</b>	0.3	101
FYR Macedonia	2 290	9 686	149 691	559 422	913	660	152 894	<b>569 768</b>	0.3	273
<b>Total</b>	<b>101 863 139</b>	<b>116 207 439</b>	<b>88 074 244</b>	<b>90 518 230</b>	<b>17 183 825</b>	<b>16 205 725</b>	<b>207 121 208</b>	<b>222 931 394</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7.6</b>

## Notes on FRAN data sources and methods

The term Member States refers to FRAN Member States, which includes the 28 Member States and the three Schengen Associated Countries (Iceland, Norway and Switzerland). For the data concerning detections at the external borders of the EU, some of the border types are not applicable to all FRAN Member States. This pertains to data on all FRAN indicators since the data are provided disaggregated by border type. The definitions of detections at land borders are therefore not applicable (excluding borders with non-Schengen principalities) for Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. For Cyprus, the land border refers to the Green Line demarcation with the area where the Government of the Republic of Cyprus does not exercise effective control. For sea borders, the definitions are not 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 Iceland, Ireland and Spain, and in Greece these detections are included in the data for indicator 1A. Data for Norway only include detections of illegal border-crossing at land and sea BCPs (1B), not between BCPs (1A).

Data on detections of illegal border-crossing between sea BCPs (1A) are not available for Ireland. For 2013, data from Slovenia include detections at the EU external borders only until June 2013. Data from Spain at the land border with Morocco have been revised by reporting only detections of persons crossing the border irregularly by climbing the fence.

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

For the data concerning detections of illegal stay (FRAN Indicator 3), data on detections on exit are not available for Denmark, Ireland, Italy and the UK. Data on detections of illegal stay inland have not been available from the Netherlands since 2012. Data from Sweden for Illegal stay have been revised starting with 2010.

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

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

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





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