



Council of the  
European Union

**Brussels, 23 November 2015  
(OR. en)**

**14425/15**

**LIMITE**

**JAI 905  
COSI 156  
FRONT 257  
ASIM 153  
ENFOPOL 368**

**NOTE**

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From:	FRONTEX
To:	Standing Committee on Operational Cooperation on Internal Security
Subject:	Frontex support to the operationalisation and coordinated implementation of the Common Risk Indicators

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**State of play of the implementation of the Common Risk Indicators by Member States**

The Common Risk Indicators (CRIs) were established to provide for risk analysis that would justify border checks on persons enjoying the community right of free movement. Since Frontex's role, as also described by the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator (CTC), is primarily to support the operationalisation and implementation of the finalised CRIs by Member States, their needs in this regard seem to be the obvious starting point for Frontex.

According to the Presidency document (12540/15) on the application of the CRIs by Member States, the use of the CRIs is widespread and they have been integrated in the daily activities of border guards through national products or practices. These products are also being updated with operational information and intelligence from security authorities. In some Member States, awareness has also been increased through training activities.

Furthermore and importantly, Member States, based on their risk analysis, have increased checks on persons enjoying the right of free movement.

The findings of the Presidency document suggest that the implementation of the CRIs is well on track. However, the CTC also made a critical analysis with regard to the progress considering that the rate of checks against the volume of passenger flow varies considerably between Member States as presented by him in the COSI on 16 November. Furthermore, the CTC underlined the limitations of Frontex's mandate that may prevent it from having a leading role in the coordinated implementation of the CRIs.

### **Cooperation between Frontex and Europol on the implementation of the CRIs**

Frontex participated in the two CRIs-related meetings in January and February 2015 organised by DG HOME. In these meetings Frontex highlighted the fact that the Agency may not be well positioned to contribute content-wise to the exercise, but stands ready to support their implementation, if needed, with its knowledge and expertise from day-to-day work at the EU's external borders. This has remained Frontex position.

Frontex offers to support Member States with the implementation of the CRIs in with Europol:

- Frontex offers its Focal Points Land Joint Operation with 38 border crossing points (BCPs) active in 2016 to be used upon request by the hosting Member States for this purpose. The request can be put forward to Frontex at any time.
- Frontex also offers all its air border operations in 2016 to be used upon request by Member States to support the implementation of the CRIs. The first operation takes place in March and the related questionnaire collecting Member States' requirements is sent out in December.
- It should be noted that the hosting as well as the participating Member States need to agree with the inclusion of this particular operational objective in the operational plan and with the related annexes, one of which is the operationalised CRIs with up-to-date risk profiles for each selected BCPs.

- If Member States request Frontex support in implementing the CRIs as describe above, Frontex will ask for Europol’s advice for the updated operational plans and the operationalisation of the CRIs including the creation of up-to-date risk profiles during the preparatory phase.
- Furthermore, before the start of the actual operational phase Frontex will ask Europol to brief those involved with the operational activities (both local staff and deployed Guest Officers).
- With the experiences gained from these operational activities and depending on Member States’ feedback, Frontex could also deliver, in close cooperation with Europol, an awareness product on relevant CT issues and CRIs. Frontex could also address Member States for their contribution so that their experiences and especially Best Practices could be taken on board for the benefit of other Member States.

### **The limited scope of the CRIs**

Frontex highlighted in its Annual Risk Analysis 2015 that risks to the EU internal security are on the increase as resources at EU borders are needed to manage the growing number of search-and-rescue operations and humanitarian crises.

The pressure towards the EU’s blue and green borders is expected to continue at a very high level from the high risk areas with Da’ish presence. This is why Frontex proposes to reconsider the current narrow scope of the CRIs and develop them further to: (1) cover risks represented by foreign fighters who are third-country nationals; and (2) take into account the specific circumstances related to detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs. Frontex could be involved with this work to the extent possible within its mandate.