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From: Presidency

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To: Law Enforcement Working Party

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Subject: Final report on Joint Police Operation HERMES

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Delegations will find in annex the final report on the Joint Police Operation HERMES, prepared on the basis of the guidelines set out in the Guide for Joint Police Operations (JPOs) (doc. 16825/10 ENFOPOL 343 JAI 995 COSI 76).

The LEWP is invited to approve the recommendation contained in this final report.

## Final report on Joint Police Operation HERMES

### 1. Background of the JPO, general description and operational methodology

Operation HERMES was aimed at refining and completing the map of routes used for illegal immigration and smuggling of human beings within the Schengen area together with the non-Schengen Member States, and possibly drawing conclusions from this map.

The operation was carried out in two phases:

During the first phase, the participating Member States were asked to share certain national statistics about the interception of illegal migrants in their territory.

The second phase of the project consisted of a coordinated field operation in the 22 participating Member States with the collaboration of the AQUAPOL, TISPOL and RAILPOL networks.

### 2. Leading Member State of the operation and coordination structure

The operation was coordinated by the Belgian Presidency.

During the first phase, a request for statistical data was launched to the Member States via the CIREFI working group.

During the second, operational phase, the participating Member States were requested to appoint national contact points which were responsible for the coordination of the operation in their respective country as well as for gathering of and forwarding the operational data to the Belgian project leader.

### **3. Participating countries, authorities and/or organisations**

#### First phase:

Slovenia, Ireland, Spain, Poland, Hungary, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Germany, Czech Republic, Estonia, Bulgaria, Cyprus, France, Greece, Slovakia, Finland, the Netherlands, Italy and Belgium.

#### Second phase:

Law enforcement services from Sweden, Italy, Greece, Slovakia, Luxemburg, Cyprus, Portugal, Finland, Bulgaria, Spain, France, Switzerland, Ireland, Germany, Czech Republic, Austria, Poland, Slovakia, Estonia, the Netherlands, Hungary, the United Kingdom and Belgium.

### **4. Objectives of the operation**

The objective of the operation HERMES was the creation of comparable maps of the two phases of this operation, thus creating an overview of the movements of illegal migration within the European Union.

### **5. Summary of the operational results (based on indicators) and statistics**

#### First phase:

In a very general way, the main travel routes of illegal migrants were identified as entering Europe in Greece or Italy, then one flux to the UK and another one to the Nordic countries (based on the exploitable data from 13 Member States).

#### Second phase:

During the second phase, a total of 1900 illegal migrants were controlled in the 22 participating Member States.

43 % of them were found on a train, 37.3% on the road, 10% on the waterways, 5% of these migrants had the intention of travelling to another EU country by plane and for 4.8% the transport mode was unspecified.

The top 10 countries of origin of the intercepted individuals were the following: Afghanistan, Iraq, Ukraine, Nigeria, Morocco, Algeria, Pakistan, India, Palestine and Turkey.

## **6. Costs**

The operation was carried out by only redirecting available capacity in the Member States with no additional costs.

## **7. Evaluation of the operation:**

### **- Level of realisation of the aims and objectives of the JPO**

#### First phase:

The aims and objectives of the first phase of this JPO were only partially achieved. The data from only 13 out of the 19 participating Member States were exploitable due to the fact that it was particularly difficult to determine (for each of the participating Member States) which exactly body(ies) or service(s) at the national level were responsible for the gathering and processing of statistical data with regard to illegal immigration in their respective territory. In a series of Member States no such central service was in charge of this task, therefore, the information requested was only partially relayed. Furthermore, it also became quickly apparent that each Member State had its own way of gathering and processing statistical data. It was particularly difficult to draw unequivocal conclusions from the received data, as the data were not at all or barely comparable.

Second phase:

All the aims and objectives of the second phase of the operation HERMES were achieved.

- **General assessment, including the analytical results, the added value and usefulness of the operation (including its cost efficiency) as well as difficulties encountered and lessons learned**

First phase:

The statistical phase of Operation HERMES clearly identified a gap. Indeed, whereas the mapping and risk analysis of the pressure of illegal immigration at EU external borders have already reached an advanced stage, there was no common image of illegal immigration within the EU whatsoever. This made an integrated approach of the phenomenon virtually impossible.

Second phase:

All the goals of the operational phase were achieved. The operation resulted in a map being drawn up with a graphical representation of the travelling routes of the top 10 intercepted nationalities of illegal migrants.

However, a one-week coordinated operation was not enough to gather a large enough sample of data to be really representative.

- **Recommendations for possible future improvements or best practices and/or further action**

It is recommended that the initiative be repeated periodically. As part of a trio (ES-BE-HU), the BE Presidency made sure that the HERMES operation would not remain limited to a single operation. It was agreed with the incoming Hungarian Presidency that it would carry on this initiative, be it in a slightly different form, with operation MITRAS.