

FRONTEX EVALUATION REPORT 2018

Joint Operation Coordination Points 2018 Land

**Operational Response Division
Field Deployment Unit
Operational Planning and Evaluation Sector**

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[signed]

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1. Background information

1.1. Brief risk assessment

In order to achieve the objectives of the Joint Operation Coordination Points Land 2018, the Frontex Risk Analysis Unit undertook an analysis of the migratory pressure and cross-border criminal activities in the third countries hosting the JO Coordination Points Land 2018 mostly affected by the irregular migration flow and cross-border crime. Risk Analysis identified specific risks and possible emerging threats in the Western Balkan region and at the EU eastern neighbouring third countries and recommended deployments of seconded team members and team members within that operational area.

1.2. Operational aim

The operational aim of the Joint Operation Coordination Points Land was to establish a system for the exchange of information related to early detection of recent, present and future illegal migration trends towards the EU through the territory of the TC. Furthermore, the establishment and exchange of common best practices in order to enhance practical cooperation between the competent authorities involved in controlling of irregular migration flows and to tackle other cross-border crime.

The operational aims were implemented in full compliance with the relevant EU law, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the relevant international law, including the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees from 1951, the respect for fundamental rights in particular the access to international protection and the compliance with the principle of non-refoulement and taking into account the recommendations of the Frontex Consultative Forum.

1.3. Period of implementation and operational areas

The JO was implemented during the period 27 February - 4 December 2018.

The joint operation was hosted by Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Ukraine and Kosovo¹.

1.4. Participants

17 MSs and SACs participated in the JO, namely Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland. Each MS/SAC participated with one authority.

During the implementation period of the Joint Operation, 77 EU experts were deployed as advanced level document officers, stolen vehicles detection officers, second line officers and dog handlers. Some EU experts were deployed for more than one deployment period thus total number of human resources amounted to 115.

1.5. Financial information

The budget for JO Coordination Points 2018 Land was initially planned at the level of € 600,000. After adjustments, the estimated operational budget amounted to € 746,249.

¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on the status, and in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

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2. Achievement of objectives

1. Enhance border security. ACHIEVED.
2. Enhance operational cooperation. PARTLY ACHIEVED.
3. Enhance exchange of information. PARTLY ACHIEVED.
4. Identify possible risks and threats. PARTLY ACHIEVED.
5. Establish and exchange best practices. ACHIEVED.

3. Link to other Frontex activities and best practices

Communication between Team Members deployed to different Frontex coordinated operational activities is an important part of effective information exchange. In course of implementation of JO Coordination Points 2018 Land, deployed EU experts exchanged information and experience several times with the Team Members deployed to **Focal Points** and vice versa. As an already recognized best practice, Local Coordinators of new Coordination Points were deployed to Focal Points prior to the activation of the Coordination Points.

Focal/ Coordination Points **Staff Exchange** programme was maintained with the aim to enhance the cooperation and exchange of information as well as best practices among the Focal as well as Coordination Points. Staff Exchange is conducted in the framework of JO Focal Points Land and it is meant for Focal Point Commander and Local Coordinator.

4. Operational Results

During the period of implementation of the JO Coordination Points 2018 Land, 17 Coordination Points (CPs) were activated between 27 February and 4 December 2018. In total, 813 incidents, involving 1 357 persons were reported in JORA (Joint Operation Reporting Application). Compared to the results of the JO Coordination Points 2017 Land, which was implemented between 7 March and 12 December 2017 (with 19 CPs activated), the number of reported incidents increased by 47% (from 552 in 2017), while the number of persons reported grew by 115% (from 631 in 2017). During the JO, most of the incidents (56%) related to refusals of entry, followed by detections of overstayers, the use false or falsified documents and the smuggling of goods. In total, there were 452 incidents related to refusals of entry with 910 persons being refused entry. In addition, 89 incidents involving 137 persons were reported as overstayers. There were also 73 incidents concerning the use of false or falsified documents involving 84 persons, 70 cases involving the smuggling of goods, as well as 24 vehicles reported as stolen.

4.1. EU added value of the operational activity

The JO Coordination Points 2018 land increased the level of cooperation among the competent authorities from Member States and Third Countries involved in the control of irregular migration flows and tackling cross-border crime. In order to facilitate operational cooperation, Frontex ensured coordination of actions implemented by TCs. Activities implemented within the framework of the operation promoted European border management standards and exchange of experience and expertise in Integrated Border Management.

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The JO was also used as platform to support the implementation of the EU Policy Cycle for organised and serious international crime and related European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats (EU Policy Cycle/EMPACT) in the priorities led or co-driven by Frontex.