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WORKING DOCUMENT

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Working Party on External Aspects of Asylum and Migration (EMWP)
Subject: Working Party on External Aspects of Asylum and Migration (EMWP) - presentations

Delegations will find enclosed the presentations given by EUROPOL, FRONTEX and EUAA, during the meeting of the EMWP held on 28 September 2022, item 3 on agenda - CM 04277/22.
Migrant Smuggling in the Western Balkan 2022

European Migrant Smuggling Centre

28 September 2022
I. Situational picture
Statistic, main trends & threats

II. Europol’s response
• The migration flow from the Western Balkan region strongly affects EU countries;
  
  **Example:** increased migration flow to AT, CZ, DE, HU and SI

• Migrant smugglers and criminal networks strongly involved in facilitation of migration flow from the Western Balkan region

• January – August 2022 increase in detected migrant smuggling cases
  
  **Example:** HU 89%, SI 20 %, HR 14 %
Situational picture in 2022

Main trends

• Most common modi operandi of migrant smugglers: no change

Smuggling is concealment in vehicles, in particular cars, (mini-)vans, and lorries

Arrested smugglers: drivers citizens of WB countries & 3rd country nationals sharing nationality with irregular migrants

Source: HU border police
Situational picture in 2022

Main trends

• Potential abuse of visa policies of Western Balkan Countries

  Increased reporting on smuggling Cuban, Indian, Tunisian and Turkish from the region

**Cubans:** A mixed transnational network with criminal cells along the route: RU – RS – NM – GR (IT) – ES

**Turkish:** by plane from Turkey to Serbia to neighboring countries – in vehicles – cars, vans and lorries – on their way to the final destination in the EU.
Situational picture in 2022

Main trends & threats

Increase reporting on use of violence along the Western Balkan routes
- deadly traffic accidents (cars, vans & lorries)
- attacking/shooting at law enforcements officers
- migrant smuggling advertising video showing weapons
- criminal networks armed with weapons
- clashes between criminal networks

Possible further increase in migrant smuggling cases & violence
Europol’s response

- Operational agreement with AL, BA, ME, NM & RS
- Working arrangement with XK*
- Liaison Officers in Europol: AL, ME, NM & RS – JLT Migrant Smuggling & THB
- Priority cases: supporting on going investigations in the field
- Under construction: Operational Task Force (OTF) aiming to combat violent migrant smuggling networks operating along the Western Balkan Routes

*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence
Thank you for your attention
Any questions?

www.europol.europa.eu
Frontex in the Western Balkans

Situational picture and cooperation framework

Presentation for the EMWP meeting
Session 3: Western Balkans migration route

Pawel Sliwinski
Team Leader, EU Pre-Accession Countries
28 September 2022
NUMBER OF ILLEGAL BORDER-CROSSINGS JAN-AUG 2021/2022

Route Name

Total number of incidents
Percentage change from last year

2021

2022

Western African
10 595
13%

Western Mediterranean
7 977
-25%

Eastern Mediterranean (total)
25 592
123%

Central Mediterranean
52 900
34%

Western Balkan
86 581
190%

Exits towards the UK
41 067
80%

Eastern Land Border
3 943
-37%

The designations employed and the presentation of material on the map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the European Union concerning the legal status of any country, territory or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.
Frontex and the Western Balkans - cooperation framework

- Status Agreements
- Working Arrangements
- Joint risk analysis: WB-RAN
- Liaison Officers: Belgrade, Tirana
- Partnership Academies network
- EU-funded capacity building projects
Joint operations with executive powers

- JO Albania - since 2019
- JO Montenegro - since 2020
- JO Serbia - since 2021
- JO Moldova - since 2022
- North Macedonia - advanced preparations
- Bosnia and Herzegovina - preparations not started yet
EU-funded capacity building projects under IPA

IPA II
protection-sensitive migration management

2016-2021

IPA III
protection-sensitive migration management

Jan 2022 - Dec 2025

EURODAC
Returns
Contingency plans

IPA III border security

Q4 2022 - Q4 2026

IBM platform
Hosting operations
EUROSUR
Upcoming priorities of Frontex in WB

- Implementation of Status Agreements 2.0
- Implementation of two IPA III-funded projects
- Renewal of Working Arrangements
- Information exchange under EUROSUR
- Coordination with other actors in WB
- Frontex - CZ PRES event on Status Agreement operations
Thank you for your attention!

Pawel Sliwinski
Team Leader, EU Pre-Accession Countries
Asylum Trends in EU+ countries along the Western Balkans Route

EMWP

28 September 2022

This presentation is based on data exchanged under the EUAA Early warning and Preparedness System (EPS), which consist of statistical data provided to the EUAA by European Union Member States plus Norway and Switzerland (EUs) via a standard template. These data are provisional, unvalidated and therefore might differ from validated data submitted at a later date to Eurostat (according to Regulation (EU) 2020/851 amending Regulation (EC) No 862/2007).
Asylum Trends in EU+ Countries along the Balkan Routes so far in 2022

- Austria: The most since at least 2014
- Bulgaria: The most since at least 2014
- Croatia: The most since at least 2014
- Greece: The most since at least 2014
- Hungary: The most since at least 2014
- Romania: The most since at least 2014
- Slovakia: The most since at least 2014
- Slovenia: The second most on record

Source: EUAA EPS
Aug 2022 data partially based on weekly aggregates
Main Citizenships of Applicants in EU+ Countries along the Balkan Routes

Afghans and Syrians continued to lodge the most applications along the Western Balkans (Jan-Aug 2022)
Weekly Asylum Trends in 2022 until 18 September

**Weeks 36-37**

- **76% IN, AF, SY & TN**
  - Austria
  - Greece
  - Bulgaria
  - Romania

- **57% SY, PK, SO, AF & IQ**
- **85% SY & AF**
- **66% BD, IN & SY**

Source: EUAA EPS

*Based on weekly data*
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(only for staff of asylum authorities in EU+ countries)

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