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**Council of the
European Union**

**Brussels, 6 December 2016
(OR. en)**

15212/16

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**JAI 1043
COSI 206
ENFOPOL 461
CRIMORG 164
ENFOCUSTOM 213
COPS 360
RELEX 1026
FRONT 469
COMIX 803**

NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Standing Committee on Operational Co-operation on Internal Security (COSI)

No. prev. doc.: 9931/16 RESTREINT UE + 15213/16 + ADD 1 RESTREINT UE

Subject: EU Policy Cycle: Monitoring of the Operational Action Plans 2016
- Priority "Illegal Immigration"

Delegations will find attached a Europol summary report on the implementation of the 2015 and 2016 OAPs on "Illegal Immigration". This annex was discussed during the National EMPACT Coordinators meeting held at Europol on 22-23 November 2016.

Facilitation of illegal immigration

The 2016 FII Fraud OAP lists 20 actions of which 9 are operational.

Since April, FP Checkpoint received 5220 messages via SIENA and over 819 new cases were initiated.

The EMSC is currently supporting more than 50 large-scale investigations. Interaction with the EMPACT platform is constantly improving and Europol is not only giving full support to EMPACT with their specialists and analysts, but also working on major harmonisation of its priority cases with OAP-related cases.

A Joint Operational Office has been established in Vienna (OA 2.1) to support regional operational investigations. 18 international investigations are on-going supported through the JOO. The JOO has been widely used for regional meetings, coordination of investigations and action days leading to arrests and seizures, also supporting other actions in the FII OAP (especially eastern land routes, OA 2.2 and Eastern Mediterranean routes, OA 2.7). Several operations and arrests were also made in the implementation of OA 2.2 and in a previous action led by Hungary (OA Falko). Amongst others, Operation Sirocco II (with 39 facilitators arrested) and Operation KAPO (with 6 persons arrested belonging to a Kosovo-based OCG).

JOT Compass (FR led, OA 2.3) investigation on secondary movement continues and new cases are identified to be supported within this framework. A Common Action Day (Op. Capsulerie) resulted in 12 facilitators being arrested and a Chinese OCG dismantled.

Money laundering within FII is a problem, as migrant smugglers try to elude legal banking systems. This will be addressed by looking into underground banking and raising more awareness among experts and practitioners with two new NL and AT led projects.

Within OA 2.5, Greece concluded an important investigation (Op. Ermis) which led to 19 arrests and seizure of hundreds of fraud documents, including print shops.

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OA ID fraud (3.1 led by FR) has worked at multi-disciplinary level, by drafting a handbook on fraud documents and at operational level by running an extensive Joint Action Day (Op. Elster) which led to 31 facilitators being arrested and the seizure of hundreds of fake documents, including impostors.

Marriages of convenience (OA 4.1) are emerging, currently no additional intelligence was provided.

JOT Mare, tackling OCGs organising ship facilitating in the Mediterranean has currently 5 SNEs (2 UK, IT, DE, ES, GR). JOT MARE remains focussed on key partners in the Mediterranean and in analysing new sources of information. In that respect JOT MARE has set up closer cooperation with EUNAVFOR MED operation Sophia and EUBAM Libya. A temporary EUNAVFOR MED special advisor has been placed in the JOT MARE team to facilitate information exchange between Europol, the EU MS and EUNAVFOR MED. Meetings have been held with EUBAM Libya, in particular to discuss the state of play in Libya and possibilities for future cooperation. This initiative was further supported by Italy, who organised, jointly with EUROPOL, an additional meeting aimed at creating a network of points of contacts for future police cooperation with Libya.

Eurosur Fusion Services, through Frontex, is developing. From January to August, Frontex received 17 service requests of which 12 may fall under objectives of the OAP FII.

Frontex, within their activities, supported tailored, selected joint operations in air and land borders. Within this framework, Joint Operation Danube, run by Frontex in close cooperation with Hungary and several other MS, with the full support of Europol and Interpol, led to the arrest of 10 facilitators, apprehension of more than 600 irregular migrants, detection of false documents and other illicit commodities such as alcohol or cigarettes. Information gathered within this Operation boosted on-going investigations, opened new intelligence cases and supported the investigative cooperation between Hungary and Serbia. Within OA 2.6 Pegasus led by Frontex at airports, over 200 document fraud cases were detected and more than 200 irregular migrants and facilitators apprehended.