

Western Balkans Annual Risk Analysis 2016





Western Balkans

Annual Risk Analysis 2016



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Cover photo: Syrian refugees walking across the Serbian-Croatian border in September 2015 on their way to the EU.

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The contents of open-source boxes are unverified and presented only to give context and media representation of irregular-migration phenomena.

Throughout the report, references to Kosovo* are marked with an asterisk to indicate that this designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

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Executive summary

Large-scale migration flow and border management/security

The numbers of non-regional migrants transiting the Balkans reached unprecedented and extraordinary levels during 2015 with over 2 million illegal border-crossings reported by all the countries in the region. For comparison, this was roughly 30 times more than in 2014.

For several years, the main routes have remained the same: Turkey-Greece-former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia-Serbia-Hungary/Croatia and Turkey-Bulgaria-Serbia-Hungary/Croatia.

This extraordinary situation resulted in the largest migratory crisis in Europe since the Second World War.

The steep increase in migratory pressure in the Eastern Aegean brought about a range of political decisions from attempts to prevent irregular migration to inter-governmental agreements on facilitated transit across the region towards the main destination countries (e.g. Germany).

The countries in the region adapted to the rising migratory flows in response to the decisions taken by their neighbours or the main destination countries. The aim was to avoid a situation where people would become stranded.

These high-level decisions also reflected the enormity of the challenges as numbers started to rise to several thousand people per day. This resulted in temporary inability of some countries to perform border-control tasks as stipulated by relevant legislation, including

the Schengen Borders Code and the EURODAC regulation.

At the end of 2015, the European Commission initiated an infringement procedure against Greece and Croatia for failing to implement the EURODAC regulation.

Uncoordinated measures and shift of focus resulting in displacement/redirection of the flow

After a summer of chaotic scenes when many migrants forced their way across different borders and thousands of people walked along the main highway between Budapest and Vienna, the Hungarian government decided to erect physical barriers along the entire border with Serbia. As a consequence, the flow shifted towards the Croatian-Serbian and then the Croatian-Hungarian border. After the latter was also fenced off by Hungary on 15 October 2015, the flow was redirected towards the Croatian-Slovenian border.

During the entire period, the flow continued to accelerate as migrants were taking advantage of the organised transportation. This acceleration was also supported by confusing media messages regarding restrictive or welcoming measures planned by the main transit and destination countries (as migrants were attempting to reach the destinations which would welcome them ahead of transit restrictions in the region or policy changes in their destination countries).

Proper verification of the country of origin remained almost impossible

Even later decisions to restrict passage for migrants who did not originate from conflict areas (i.e. not Syrian, Iraqi or Afghan) were difficult to implement. Verifying the country of origin of persons at the moment of the crossing remained very limited. Most authorities were confronted with a lack of interpreters and screeners, and mainly relied on the documents that migrants presented to attest their nationality. None of these documents bore security features, which made them easy to abuse.

More coordination after October 2015

At the end of October 2015, the European Commission organised a mini summit where leaders representing Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia agreed to improve cooperation and step up consultations between the relevant authorities along the route. They also agreed on a 17-point plan of pragmatic operational measures that eventually made it possible for the countries to start reapplying national border-management legislation and the EU law in this field.

Main lessons learned

The unprecedented massive flows of people along the Western Balkan route proved to be unmanageable for the border authorities involved. These flows also exposed clear limits of border controls in

the absence of uniform EU-wide migration and asylum policies.

All contingency plans were designed with lower numbers in mind and with a presumption that the arriving people would not refuse to follow the existing procedure.

Some people also refused to be registered and wanted to continue their journey by crossing to the next country as quickly as possible. Clashes with the authorities and between different eth-

nic groups were regular occurrences in such circumstances.

Perhaps the biggest lesson is the fact that perceptions and rumours matter a lot. Many would-be migrants from Syria, Iran, Iraq, North Africa or Pakistan decided to travel to Greece en masse after they became convinced that the Western Balkan route was open, fast and cheap and that some EU Member States would accommodate them. These perceptions proved to be very difficult to dispel.

In conclusion, the 2015 migratory crisis resulted from a mixture of compounding factors, including the prolonged war in Syria, advancing Daesh and a growing threat from Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan. However, by far the most influential factors allowing for the astonishing daily figures were the introduction of a facilitated transport corridor across the Western Balkans and a temporary suspension of national and EU border-management legislation.

1. Introduction

As was the case with the previous five issues, the *Western Balkans Annual Risk Analysis* (WB-ARA) 2016 has been prepared in cooperation between the risk analysis units of the competent border-control authorities of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Kosovo*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYR Macedonia), Montenegro, Serbia and the Frontex Risk Analysis Unit (RAU).

The joint analytical activity is an integral part of the Western Balkans Risk Analysis Network (WB-RAN), in which

all the mentioned Western Balkan countries actively participate.

The WB-RAN was established following the proposal made by Frontex in May 2009.

The WB-ARA 2016 builds on knowledge from previous editions of the annual report, reporting provided within the WB-RAN throughout 2015 and other privileged reporting available to Frontex.

The WB-ARA 2016 is structured around the following elements: (1) a description of the general context in which border controls at common borders occur; (2) annual

risk assessment, which includes identification and detailed description of the main risks affecting both the area of the Western Balkans and Member States or Schengen Associated Countries; (3) outlook and mitigating actions summary, which take into account relevant EU policy developments.

The statistical annex of the WB-ARA 2016 includes summary tables describing the key indicators of irregular migration in detail.

The Frontex Risk Analysis Unit would like to thank all WB-RAN and FRAN members for their active participation throughout 2015 and their valuable input.

2. Methodology

In order to facilitate the exchange of information between WB-RAN countries and Frontex, the Commission and Frontex set up a secure Internet platform on the European Commission's Circa server similar to what is available for the FRAN. This platform (transformed into CIRCABC during 2012) is used exclusively by WB-RAN countries and the Frontex Risk Analysis Unit. WB-RAN statistical data have been available since January 2009.

The core of monthly statistical data from WB-RAN and neighbouring FRAN countries (only common borders) is focused on six key indicators of illegal migration: (1) detections of illegal border-crossing; (2) detections of facilitators; (3) detections of illegal stay; (4) refusals of entry; (5) asylum applications; and (6) detections of false documents.

In addition to this core data set, other data available to Frontex were also used. Those include data of the European Union Document-Fraud Risk Analysis Network (EDF), Turkey-Frontex Risk Analysis Network (TU-RAN) and reporting from different Joint Operations coordinated by Frontex. Importantly, as agreed by all WB-RAN members, Kosovo* Border Police was invited to participate in the work of the network (starting from 2014).

Many other qualitative and quantitative sources were also used, in particular, bimonthly and quarterly analytical reports of both Member States and WB-RAN countries, Frontex reporting in the context of the Post Visa-Liberalisation Monitoring Mechanism and analy-

sis presented in the *Frontex Risk Analysis for 2016* (ARA 2016).

Furthermore, all WB-RAN countries contributed additional information and graphical material following the 2015 Annual Analytical Review meeting that was held in Warsaw.

Open sources of information were also effectively exploited. Among others, these sources included reports issued by government agencies, EU institutions and international or non-governmental organisations. Additional input was provided by both Member States/Schengen Associated Countries and WB-RAN countries during the Western Balkans Expert Meeting on 10 March 2016.

2.1. Quality of available data

Consistent with other law-enforcement indicators, variation in administrative data related to border control depends on several factors. In this case, the number of detections of illegal border-crossing and refusals of entry are both functions of the amount of effort spent detecting migrants and the flow of irregular migrants. For example, increased detections of illegal border-crossing might be due to an actual increase in the flow of irregular migrants, or they may in fact be an outcome of more resources made available to detect migrants. In exceptional cases, additional resources may produce an increase in reported detections while effectively masking the actual decrease in the flow of migrants, resulting from a strong deterrent effect.

2.2. Changes in data scope after Croatia's entry to the EU

Important changes in the collection and use of data for Western Balkans analytical products were introduced upon Croatia's joining the EU in July 2013. Firstly, data for Slovenia, which now has no external borders with non-EU Western Balkan countries, have not been included in the report since the third quarter of 2013. Slovenian historical data were also excluded from the tables in order to make the comparison with previous quarters analytically meaningful.

Secondly, as the Croatian-Hungarian and Croatian-Slovenian border sections have now become internal EU borders they are no longer covered by this report.

Thirdly, after joining the EU, Croatian data on illegal stay data are limited to detections at the border. More precisely, Croatia's illegal stay data only include cases detected on exit, while inland detections are not included. The analysis of the illegal stay indicator takes this fact into consideration.

2.3. Changes in data scope after Kosovo's* entry to the WB-RAN

Starting from the first quarter of 2014 data from Kosovo* on key indicators of irregular migration have been included in the reporting, making it possible to get a more comprehensive picture on the irregular movements in the region. However, as there are no historical data available for Kosovo*, the new data do, to some extent, affect the comparisons of the examined period with previous quarters. When necessary for analytical purposes, some comparisons are made excluding data from Kosovo* and this is noted in the text.

3. Situation at the common borders – the overall context

Figure 1. General map of the Western Balkans region

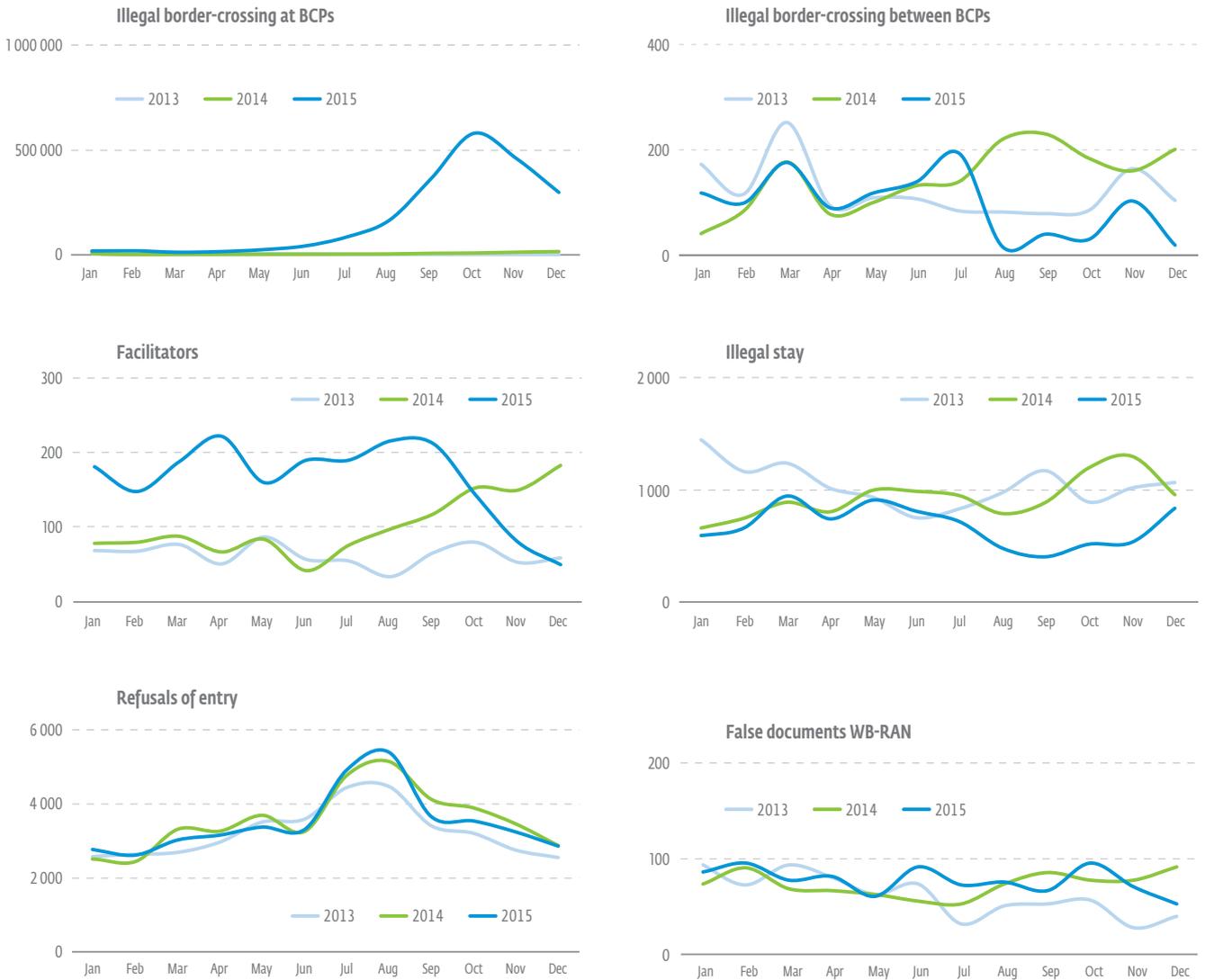


Table 1. Overview of indicators as reported by WB-RAN members

	2013	2014	2015	% change on previous year
WB-RAN Indicator				
Illegal border-crossing between BCPs	40 027	66 079	2 081 366	3 050
Illegal border-crossing at BCPs	1 336	1 747	1 142	-35
Facilitators	750	1 218	1 980	63
Illegal stay	12 508	11 270	8 208	-27
Refusals of entry	36 954	42 715	41 800	-2.1
False travel-document users	709	880	931	6

Source: WB-RAN data as of 16 February 2016

Figure 2. Evolution of WB-RAN and FRAN indicators – common borders in 2013–2015



Source: FRAN and WB-RAN data as of 16 February 2016

3.1. Passenger flow analysis

Serbia's borders were by far the busiest regional borders in terms of regular passenger flow. More precisely, there were over 58 million entries and exits recorded by the Serbian authorities making up 40% of the regional passenger flow. Border crossings took place mostly at Serbia's borders with Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Hungary.

The second busiest borders, with 29% of the regional share of regular passenger flows, were those of Bosnia and Herzegovina, whose border with Croatia accounted for 70% of the almost 42 million entries and exits reported.

Around 61% of the entries and exits at the regional level were related to passengers who were not nationals of the reporting country (the so-called foreign travellers).

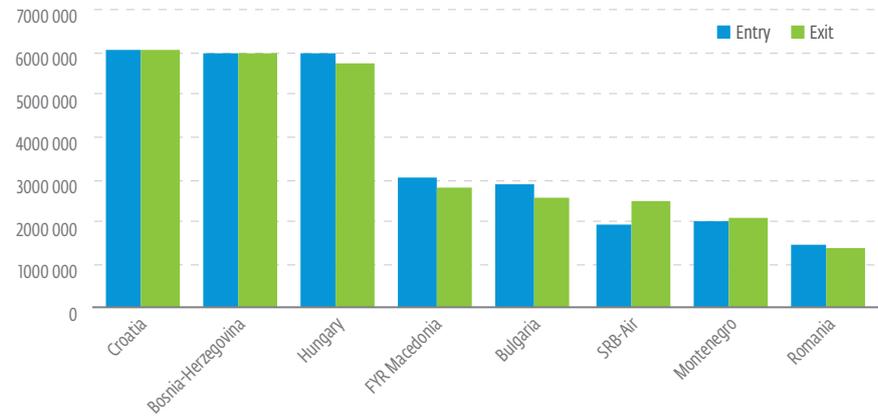
There were around 1 440 000 more entries (9%) than exits by foreign travellers mainly from the direction of Hungary, with the largest discrepancies in July and August, suggesting a largely bona fide nature of these movements (busy holiday season).

The ratio between entries and exits can serve as a proxy measurement of bona fide travel patterns, since it provides an indication of how many persons exited a country and later returned in a given fixed period, and hence did not overstay their legal period.

Overall, at regional level there were 700 000 (5%) more exits by citizens of the regional countries who share a common border with EU Member States than entries by the same nationalities (Fig. 4). The biggest discrepancy between exits and entries appear to be at Serbia's border with Hungary, where 257 000 more Serbians exited their country than returned. The second largest difference was related to nationals of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia at this country's border with Greece, where 160 000 more people exited than returned. Third place was occupied by Bosnia and Herzegovina's border with Croatia, with a difference of roughly 133 000, while Al-

Figure 3. Serbian passenger flow continued to concentrate on the EU's borders

Passenger flow from the perspective of Serbia towards its neighbouring countries in 2014



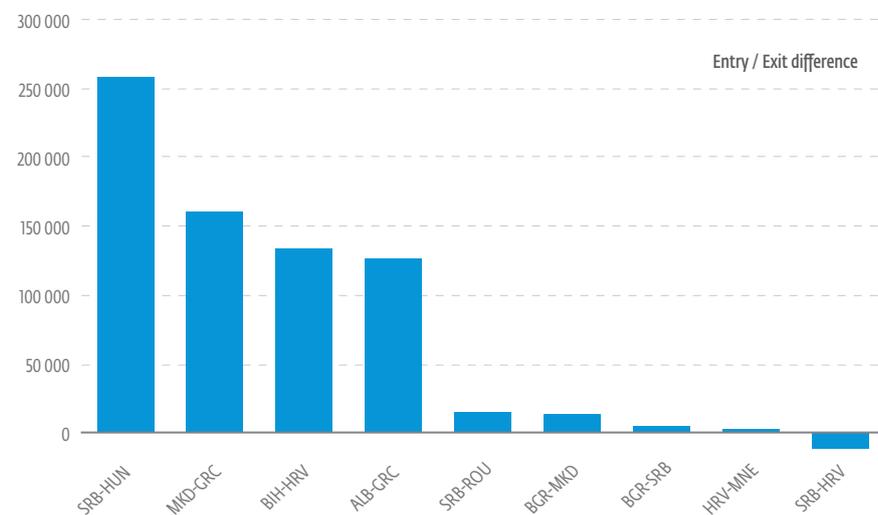
Source: WB-RAN data as of 16 February 2016

bania's border with Greece ranked close behind with roughly 126 000 more Albanians exiting.

However, judging by the number of Serbians, Albanians, Bosnians and nationals of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia reported for overstay in EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries during 2015, the situation appears more stable. Specifically, out of 700 000 more exits to the EU only roughly 43 000 persons were reported for

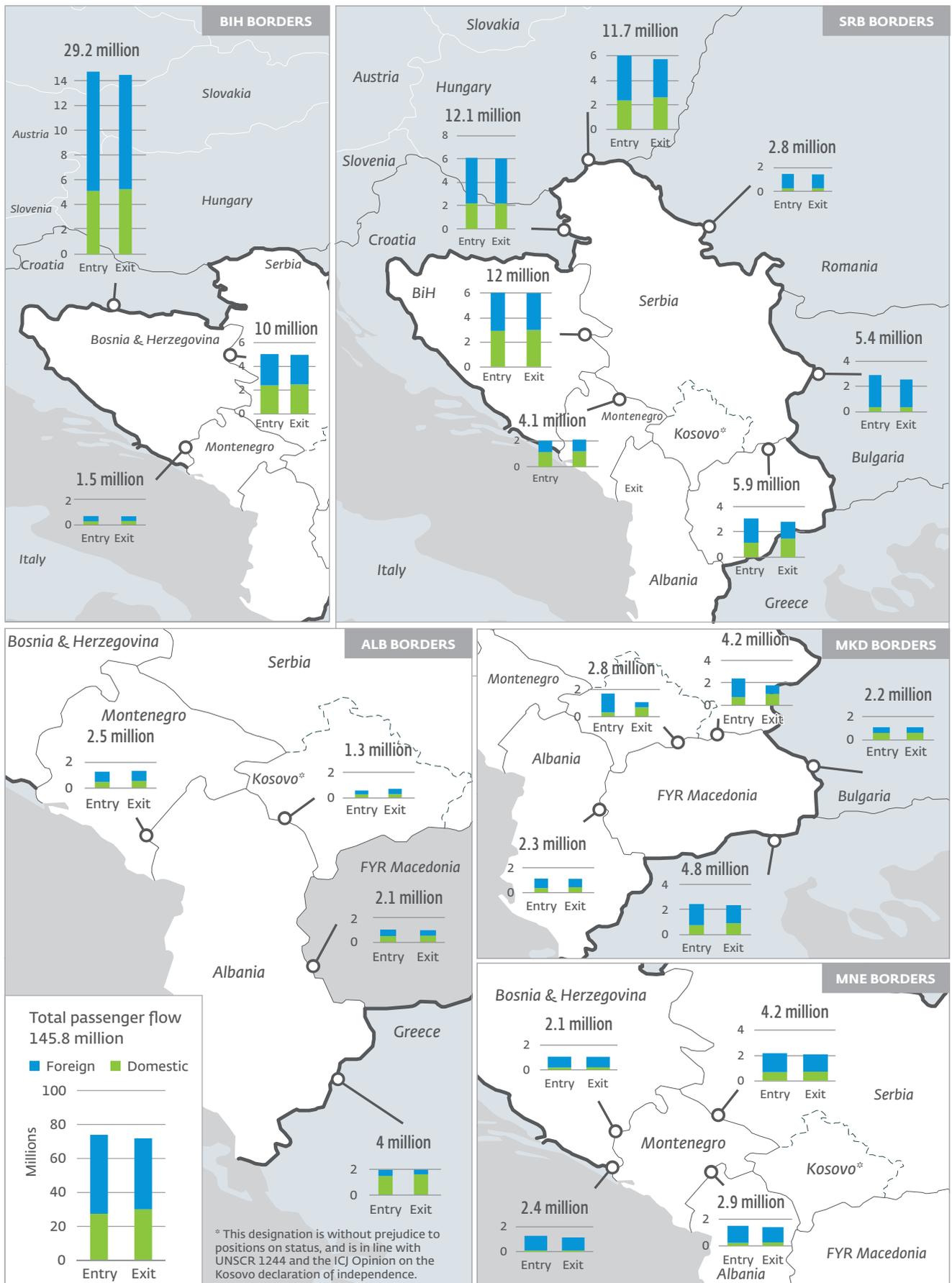
illegal stay in the block. Nonetheless the highest ratio between the over stayers and the higher number of exits is in the case of Albanians (i.e. 1:4 or 29 000 over stayers to 126 000 more exits to Greece than entries). The second highest ratio is for Serbians, scoring at (1:30 or 8 700 over stayers to 261 000 more exits across the borders with Hungary, Romania and Croatia). For the other two nationalities the ratios are considerably lower.

Figure 4. Discrepancies in the numbers of nationals of the regional countries moving across the common borders with the neighbouring EU Member States (difference refers to the nationals of the respective regional country)



Source: WB-RAN data as of 16 February 2016

Figure 5. **Borders of Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina remained the busiest ones in terms of regular passenger flow**
 Passenger flow across common and regional land borders in the Western Balkans during 2015



3.2. Refusals of entry

In 2015, 41 800 decisions to refuse entry were issued, a slightly lower number (-2%) than that of the previous year. However, what stands out is the large number of refusals issued to Turkish nationals, i.e. 73% more than in 2014. This increase was mainly registered in the second half of the year. If a high number of refused Turks during Q3 can be regarded as relatively normal (as it is generally associated with the seasonal trend of workers returning to the EU after the summer holiday period), the sustained increase in Q4 likely indicates that more of these nationals try to take advantage of the unprecedented migratory flow in order to irregularly reach Western Europe.

As in the previous year, a large majority of refusals of entry were issued at the land borders (89%), while the remaining 11% were mostly reported at the air borders. Interestingly, Turks received 58% of the refusals issued at the air borders, ranking first at this border type, and a little over 3% of the decisions issued at land borders, where they occupied the sixth position. This situation indicates that Turkish nationals largely prefer travelling by air (i.e. they received over 2 600 refusals at air borders and over 1 200 at land borders).

Most of the refusals reported by the neighbouring EU Member States were issued to nationals of Western Balkan countries (92%). In turn, as regards refusals issued in the six countries of the region, 34% concerned local residents, followed by nationals of EU Member

States/Schengen Associated Countries (31%) and Turkish nationals (15%).

The overall number of refusals issued to the non-regional nationalities associated with the migratory flow originating from Turkey/Greece continued to account for a very low share of the total (i.e. only 433 refusals, or just over 1% of the total were issued to persons of nationalities representing the top five non-regional migrants detected in 2015 – SYR, AFG, IRQ, IRN and PAK). This seems to confirm that the non-regional transiting flow either directly targets the green borders or takes advantage of the orderly transit policies.

3.3. Irregular migration

In 2015, roughly 2 044 000 illegal border-crossings by **non-regional migrants**¹ en route from Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria were reported at the common and regional borders. This is a number that is unprecedented and beyond comparison with any previous period (being over 19 times higher than the total of such detections over the past six years). The volume of the flow was steadily increasing in the first half of the year, running at levels slightly above those of the final months of 2014, before significantly accelerating in the third and fourth quarters to peak in October at over 577 000 detections.

As in previous years, this flow entered the region across its southern common borders with Greece and Bulgaria, before transiting it northwards and exiting across the Hungarian-Serbian and

the Croatian-Serbian border, especially in the final quarter.

As the non-regional flow reached record values during the second half of 2015 (at some point over 12 000 detections per day), it unsurprisingly overwhelmed border-control authorities' screening and registration capacities (i.e. roughly 38% of the non-regionals being reported as 'unknown nationality') and causing a shift in focus from ensuring border-control measures to providing an orderly transit to migrants in an attempt to avoid build-ups of migrants and tensions with the local population.

At the same time, around 38 000 illegal border-crossings by **regional migrants**² were reported, a number similar to that of 2014 and which represents around 2% of the total detections in the Western Balkans in 2015. The largest proportion of such detections occurred in the first quarter of the year and was associated with the outflows from Kosovo*. These flows subsided at the end of February due to an array of concerted international measures implemented in the origin, transit and destination countries. For the rest of the year the regional flow remained low. Actually, it was even below the expected seasonal trend and was confined to the southern part of the region, mainly linked to the Albanian circular migration to Greece. However, the lower than usual numbers of regional migrants especially in the second half of the year could also be attributed to the possibility that many of them passed undetected taking advantage of the massive transiting flow.

1 Migrants who are not citizens of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Serbia or the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

2 Migrants who are citizens of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, Serbia or the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

4. Annual risk assessment

In line with the previous edition of this annual report, the WB-ARA 2016 considers risk as defined by the updated CIRAM: a function of threat, vulnerability and impact (see Fig. 6). Such an approach endeavours to emphasise risk analysis as a key tool in ensuring the optimal allocation of resources

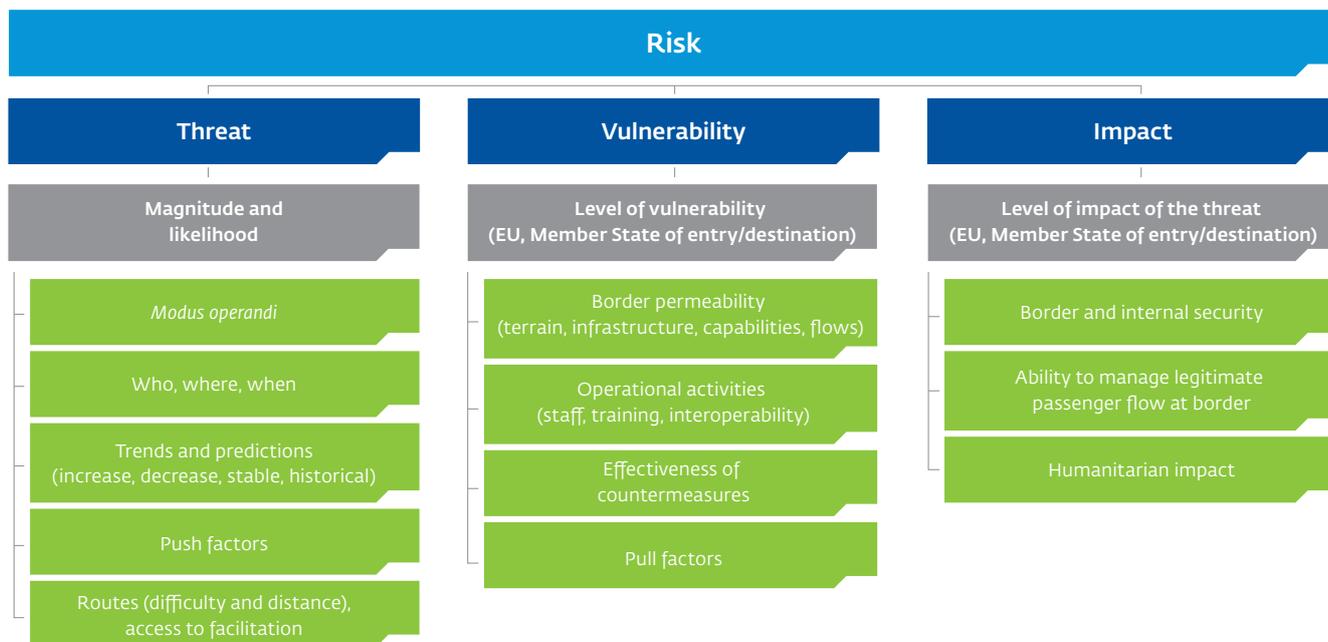
within constraints of budget, staff and efficiency of equipment.

According to the model, a ‘threat’ is a force or pressure acting upon the external borders that is characterised by both its magnitude and likelihood; ‘vulnerability’ is defined as the capacity of a system

to mitigate the threat and ‘impact’ is determined as the potential consequences of the threat. In this way, the structured and systematic breakdown of risk is presented in the annual risk assessment.

The current issue largely builds on the main findings from the same exercise for the drafting of the WB-ARA 2015.

Figure 6. Risk as defined by the Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model (CIRAM)



Source: RAU – Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model (CIRAM)

4.1. Large and sustained transit by the non-regional³ flow through the Western Balkans

Illegal border-crossing at the green borders

The non-regional migration flow transiting the Western Balkans is mainly a function of the developments occurring at Turkey's borders with Greece and Bulgaria and thus, by extension, in the Middle East. The continued insecurity in this area throughout 2015 provided for an ever increasing pool of would-be migrants and/or refugees to accumulate on Turkish territory ready to use all known migration routes towards the EU.

The direct link between the non-regional migration flow transiting the Western Balkans and the one affecting Greece's borders especially in the Eastern Aegean Sea was also maintained during 2015. Specifically, the pressure from the Aegean Islands manifested itself on the Western Balkan route with a certain

time lag, which was basically the time migrants needed to organise their onwards movements (Fig. 7).

With this observation in mind it can be considered that the record values registered in the Western Balkans during 2015 are a direct consequence of the unprecedented number of migrants reported in the Eastern Aegean in the same period (the highest number since data collection began, roughly nine times larger than the totals recorded for this area over the past five years).

Considering that the migratory flow transiting the Western Balkans is generally the same as that running via the Eastern Mediterranean, the difference in reporting between the two routes may seem odd. However, this is only natural as a migrant transiting the Western Balkans needs to go across several border sections on the way to his destination

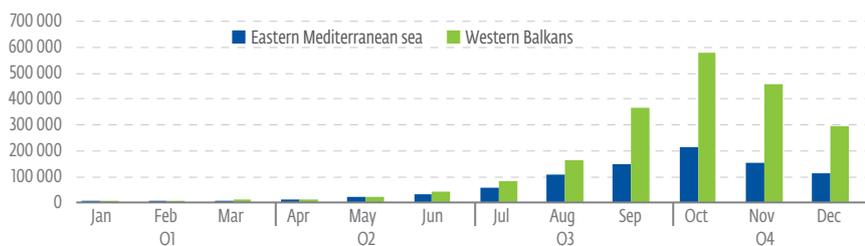
Western Balkans across the **southern common borders** with Greece and Bulgaria before heading north and exiting the region at first across the Hungarian-Serbian border and after this section was sealed in mid-September almost exclusively across the Croatian-Serbian section.

However, in 2015 roughly 2 044 000 illegal border-crossings by **non-regional migrants** en route from Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria were reported at the common and regional borders of the Western Balkans. This is a number that is unprecedented and beyond comparison with any previous period (being over 19 times higher than the total of such detections over the past six years).

In the course of the year, two different trends could be observed in the volume of the flow. While in the first half of the year it was relatively stable, running slightly above the levels of the final months of 2014, it accelerated significantly in the third and fourth quarters to peak in October at over 577 000 detections.

Figure 7. The migration pressure observed in the Eastern Aegean is later reflected in the Western Balkans

Detections of illegal border-crossing by migrants originating outside the Western Balkans



Source: FRAN and WB-RAN as of 8 February 2016

³ Migrants of nationalities other than those of Serbia, Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro or Kosovo.*

and thus can be detected several times.

Similar to the previous years, during the reference period the non-regional migration flow continued to enter the

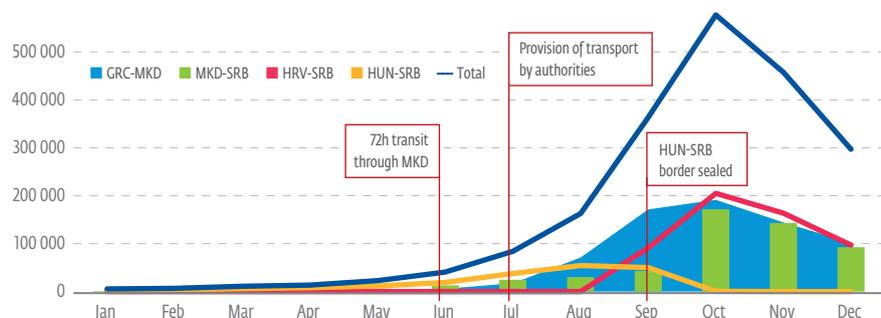
Main factors accelerating the flow and at times deflecting it

Uncoordinated measures

In response to the rising migratory flow the most affected regional countries implemented a series of sometimes contradictory measures. These measures ranged from relaxed entry/stay provisions for those expressing a wish to claim asylum, though attempted border closures (of GRC-MKD, SRB-MKD sections), successful closures (of HUN-SRB and HUN-HRV border sections), all the way to an almost 'open doors policy' im-

Figure 8. **In the second half of 2015 there was a dramatic surge in the non-regional flow at the top four border sections**

Illegal border-crossings between BCPs by non-regional migrants and main developments introducing their level in 2015



Source: WB-RAN data as of 3 February 2016

plemented by offering planned and organised bus and train transportation across most of the region.

Starting at the end of June, the Asylum Law in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was amended to allow 72-hour legal transit and access to public transportation to migrants expressing an intention to claim asylum. Furthermore, at around the same time the authorities of affected countries started to announce restrictive measures in mass media. These developments were amongst the first in a series of factors which accelerated the migratory flow. More exactly, migrants took advantage of the legal travel opportunities in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and accelerated their transit in order to reach the desired EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries in time before the Hungarian or Croatian authorities toughened their migration policies and imposed border restrictions. Furthermore, migrants' perceptions influenced by mixed media messages about destination countries also played an important role in accelerating and attracting the flow.

As a consequence, en masse migration (groups of 500–1 000 people) became common starting from the third quarter.

Shift of focus from border management and security to migration flow management

In an attempt to relieve the high migratory pressure at their borders and within

their territories, the most affected countries adopted high-level political decisions, shifting the focus from preventing irregular migration to concluding agreements on directed transit across the region towards the main destination countries.

Following these decisions migrants went from trying to organise their own trips to relying on the organised transportation provided by the authorities.

As a side effect, these decisions de facto limited border guards' possibility of preventing illegal border-crossing. Namely, instead of ensuring the fulfilment of the legal conditions for border crossing through the designated BCPs, border guards found themselves simply enforcing an orderly passage of irregular flows, issuing various registration papers and trying to maintain public order in the border area and at train stations.

This shift of focus to organising and guiding the migratory flow across certain points at common and regional borders led to an immediate transfer of the pressure from certain areas to others.

Lack of real possibilities to identify the flow hindered attempts to restrict transit

The later decision to restrict passage for migrants who did not originate from conflict areas (i.e. not Syrians, Iraqis or Afghans) was difficult to implement. Although these actions were taken in a coordinated manner by most of the

countries along the main route (SVN, HRV, SRB, MKD) the possibility of verifying the nationalities of persons at the moment of the crossing remained very limited. Most of the implementing countries were confronted with a lack of interpreters and screeners, and mainly relied on the documents presented by migrants which bare no security features and in many cases could be falsely obtained or easily altered.

Furthermore, in November the Greek authorities noticed that Syrian, Afghan and Iraqi migrants started to apply for more than one registration certificate on the Eastern Aegean Islands (even moving from island to island or returning there from Athens) claiming to have lost their documents. Some of these people would sell the superfluous certificates to migrants of other nationalities that would otherwise not be allowed to cross the border from Greece to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

In this context, between 19 November and 31 January, the authorities of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia discovered a large number of altered Greek registration papers used by migrants trying to enter across the southern border.

Developments at different common and regional border sections in 2015

The south of the region remained the main entry point for the non-regional flow

The developments at the border between **Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** greatly influenced (and were in turn influenced by) the decisions taken in the region. 18 June 2015 can be regarded as a very important date, as it was the day when Skopje modified its legislation to provide detected migrants expressing the intention to claim asylum with documents allowing them 72 hours to move within the country and reach one of the reception centres.

Although it was taken as an attempt to reduce the impact of difficult transit

on the health and security of the migrants, this decision coincided with the surge in the transiting flow. While mitigating the risk to the wellbeing of migrants by giving them no reason to take dangerous routes or interact with criminal groups, the new legislation had a significant impact on the border management in that it was used by migrants for transiting the country rather than reaching reception centres.

Following the increase of the flow, organising onwards transportation became a necessity. Although migrants were at first simply given access to public transport in order to reach reception centres, the situation quickly escalated leading to high-level decisions to increase the number of trains and buses (as a way of easing the pressure in the border area and preventing conflicts with the local population). These actions set the stage for what later became the first part of a trans-regional orderly transportation corridor based on various agreements.

Later attempts at filtering the flow (i.e. allowing entry only to migrants originating from conflict areas, specifically Syrians, Afghans and Iraqis starting from 19 November), apart from being difficult to implement due to a lack of screeners and facilities, resulted in the refused migrants accumulating on the Greek side of the border. On several occasions groups of migrants tried to force their way through the border.

In response, the authorities had a protective wire fence built in the most critical places along the border with Greece (covering roughly 30 kilometres in total). This fence was designed to prevent chaotic crossings and stream-line the flow through designated points where orderly checks could be performed.

Also in the south of the region, the **Bulgarian-Serbian** border section appears to have significantly gained importance as an entry point. More exactly, over 48 000 illegal border-crossings between BCPs were reported from this section during 2015, a number almost 60 times higher than that of the previous year. This massive increase also largely

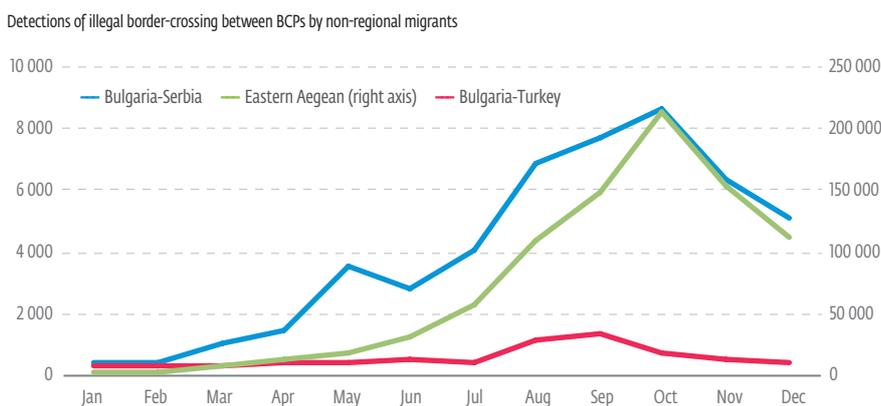
corresponded to the surge registered in the Eastern Aegean Sea, and was most notable during the second half of the year, with a peak of over 8 600 detections in October.

During 2014, the border between Bulgaria and Serbia appeared to primarily reflect the pressure originating at the Bulgarian-Turkish land border and accumulating in Bulgaria, as the stranded migrants were searching for a way out. However, in 2015 this correlation does not appear so clear anymore as the numbers at the Bulgarian-Turkish land border were low compared to those reported at the Bulgarian-Serbian section (i.e. 7 000 vs 48 000 detections, respectively). Fig-

ure 9 reveals an important correlation between the trends of monthly detections in the Eastern Mediterranean and at the Bulgarian-Serbian border. A possible explanation would be that some migrants manage to cross undetected into Bulgaria either directly from Turkey across the common land border or indirectly across the internal EU border from Greece.

Information from January 2016 shows that migrants travel overland from Turkey to Bulgaria by taking the Eastern-most route (i.e. crossing the border in the areas of Malko Tarnovo or Bolyarovo). Even though the figures on migrant apprehensions remain low, an increase

Figure 9. **Clear discrepancy between the number of detections at the BGR-SRB and BGR-TUR border can be observed in 2015**



Source: WB-RAN and FRAN data as of 9 February 2016

Figure 10. **Technical measures implemented by Bulgaria on the common border with Turkey by February 2016**



Source: Frontex

(+196%) can still be observed in this particular area during the first weeks in 2016 compared with the same period of 2015. This could be linked to the restrictive measures at the border between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Greece, but may also be the result of increased protection measures accompanying further extension of the engineering technical obstacle on that particular border section.

Trying to prevent crossings at their common land border with Turkey, the Bulgarian authorities decided to extend the current 30-kilometre engineering technical obstacle and the integrated border surveillance system implemented in previous years. These systems are envisioned to ultimately cover a total of 132 kilometres of the common border with Turkey. By mid-February 2016, an addi-

tional 36 kilometres were covered and construction was ongoing for another 14.

The **Greek-Albanian** border section appears to have become less attractive for the non-regional migrants in the analysed period. Namely even in the context of the unprecedented migratory flow affecting the region, this section reported 17% fewer illegal border-crossings compared with 2014. This decrease appears to have been mostly due to a deflection of the flow caused by the increased attractiveness of the more direct routing from Greece to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia starting from June.

The number of detections at the Greek-Albanian border was especially low after June, when a significant increase was reported at the Greek border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, indicating a deflection in the pressure towards the latter section.

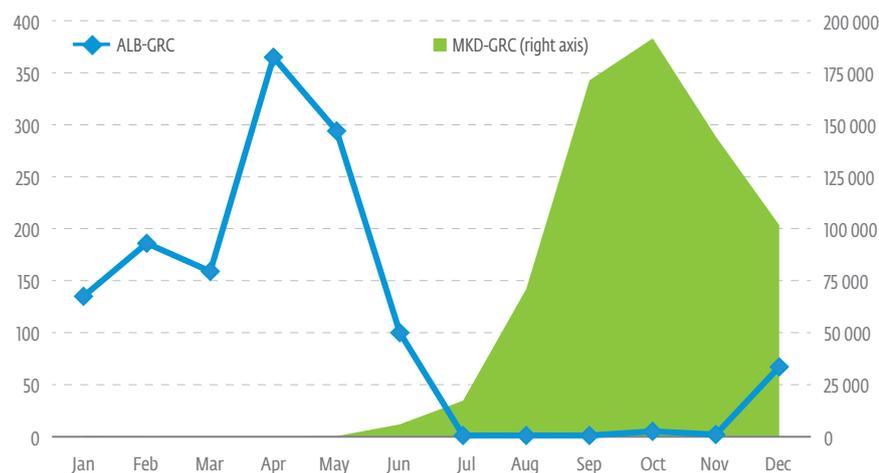
The northern part of the region remains the main exit point

Most of the non-regional migrants entering the Western Balkans across the southern common borders with Greece and Bulgaria later transited Serbia as they moved north, at first towards Hungary and then Croatia. Therefore, the border between Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was one of the most affected by the transiting flow during 2015, registering a 155-fold increase in number of detections in relation to 2014.

This border section was also affected by the change in approach regarding migration. At the beginning of the migratory surge (beginning with the third quarter), the Serbian authorities implemented a series of prevention measures (such as increasing the number of personnel, enhanced control activities and opening a new migrant reception centre in Presevo). Later, however, the focus was shifted from prevention measures to organised orderly transit, registration and onwards transfer by public transport (i.e. towards Hungary and after September towards Croatia).

Figure 12. **Although low, the pressure at the GRC-ALB border drops even further as the flow starts preferring to first enter MKD from June onwards**

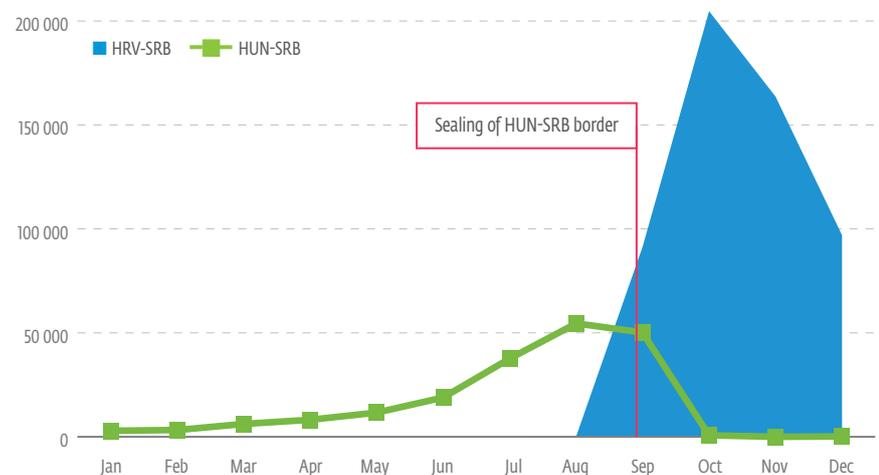
Detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs by non-regional migrants



Source: WB-RAN data as of 9 February 2016

Figure 13. **Clear deflection of the flow towards Croatia after September**

Detections of illegal border-crossing by non-regional migrants



Source: WB-RAN data as of 9 February 2016

The **Hungarian-Serbian** border section was the exit point from the region preferred by the non-regional migrants between January and mid-September 2015. In response to the high number of transiting migrants, the Hungarian authorities started preparing a set of countermeasures to protect their borders. The whole process of preparing the new border measures (i.e. public debates, migration-related banners on the streets, a national consultation of the population, and various legislative proposals) was widely reported in mass media. This wide media coverage of these preparatory measures appears to have played an important role in accelerating the migratory flow, as people tried to reach their destinations ahead of the restrictions' entry into force.

Later, in mid-September these preparations resulted in the finalisation of a fence along the green border between Hungary and Serbia, adoption of legislation incriminating any damage done to the fence and other measures to direct the flow through designated transit areas.

Before these measures were implemented (January–mid-September) roughly 193 000 illegal border-crossings associated with non-regional migrants were reported from this section. Afterwards, the flow dramatically dropped to a total of 930 illegal crossings reported between October and December.

However, despite the drop reported at the Hungarian border, the overall flow did not stop but was merely diverted towards the **Croatian-Serbian** section while its volume continued to increase. As a result, this last section went from reporting an average of 66 detections per month between January and August to being confronted with a flow of almost 557 000 between mid-September and December, thus becoming the main exit point from the region.

Following the surge in numbers, the authorities began organising onward transportation of the migrants first towards Hungary and then Slovenia (mid-October).

Recent initiatives that could affect the migratory flow in the future

In the period between November 2015 and February 2016, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Austria implemented an array of concerted measures aimed at tackling and curbing the unprecedented flow of irregular migrants moving towards the EU via the Western Balkans.

The first such measure was taken at the end of November 2015, when the authorities of the most affected countries decided to only allow transit of Syrian, Afghan and Iraqi nationals. Starting from February 2016, a series of high-level meetings of the heads of the regional police services were organised and additional restrictive measures were agreed. The new measures ranged from requiring migrants to be in possession of an identity document and filtering out certain nationalities to allowing the possibility of introducing daily transit quotas.

At the beginning of March 2016, Slovenia and Croatia announced the decision to close the transit corridor altogether and return to the rule of law and full implementation of the Schengen Border Code. In this respect, only persons who fulfil the legal entry conditions or those who express the wish to apply for asylum and later remain on their territories will be allowed to enter the respective countries.

The implementation of these measures produced a cascading effect of daily quotas and green border closures along the route, which consequently limited the flow of migrants via the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and led to a growing number of people stranded in the border area of Idomeni, in particular, and Greece, in general.

Top nationalities

Contributing to the record number of detections, Syrians and Afghans were the two main reported nationalities, with 35% and 15% shares of the non-regional flow, respectively. However, in terms of

absolute numbers, both nationalities registered high increases compared with the previous year (over 56- and 28-fold rises, respectively). Iraqis, Pakistanis and Iranians completed the top five of the known non-regional nationalities, with numbers ranging from 20 000 for Iranians and over 140 000 for Iraqis. Together, these top five nationalities accounted for roughly 60% of the total non-regional flow transiting the Western Balkans.

As the non-regional flow reached record values in the second half of 2015 (at some point over 12 000 detections per day at a single border section), it unsurprisingly overwhelmed border-control authorities, impacting their screening and registration capacities and causing a shift in focus from ensuring border-control measures to providing an orderly transit to migrants in an attempt to avoid pressure build-ups and tensions with the local population.

As a result, roughly 38% of the non-regional flow was reported as 'unknown nationality'⁴, mostly in the second half of the year.

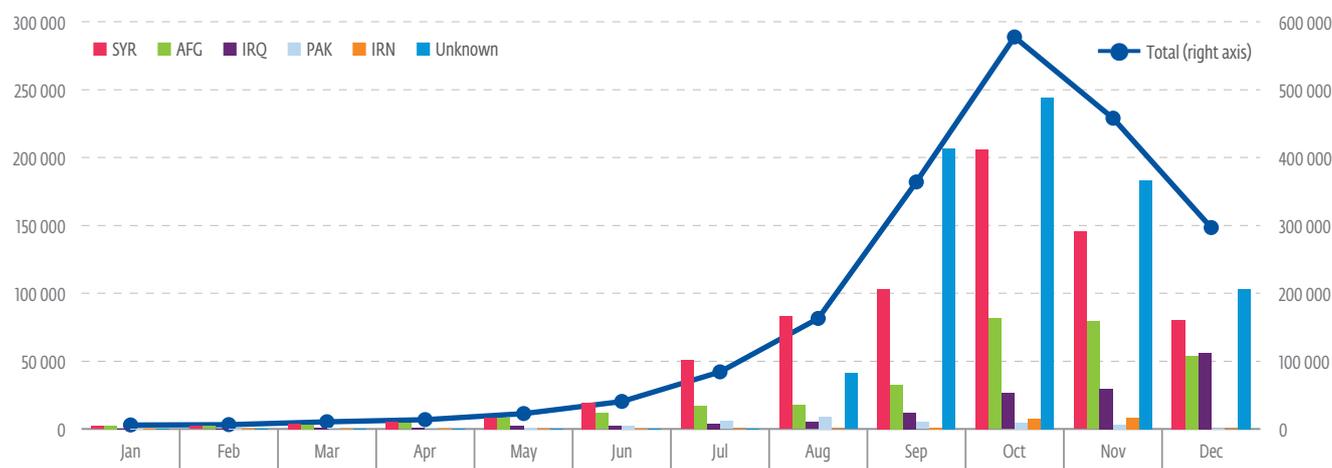
An interesting development was the high rise in illegal border-crossings involving Iranians in the fourth quarter (i.e. over sevenfold rise compared to Q3 and the highest reported number for this nationality). This development could be explained by better flow filtering capacities implemented by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and by Serbia. These countries started to discover migrants with altered or forged Greek registration papers used to declare false nationality and be allowed passage along with the accepted flow of Syrians, Afghans and Iraqis.

Having shown a rising trend for the most of the year, the final quarter brought about a significant drop in detected Pakistanis. However, as it largely

4 The number of persons reported as unknown is analysed as part of the non-regional migration flow as the authorities are considered capable of identifying regional residents.

Figure 14. **Top non-regional nationalities**

Detections of illegal borer-crossings between BCPs



Source: WB-RAN data as of 9 February 2016

coincides with the introduction of transit restrictions limiting the flow to just Syrians, Iraqis and Afghans.

Following Asia, Africa was the second most reported region of origin of detected migrants, registering an over tenfold rise compared to 2014. The new record in detections of African migrants (a number higher than the sum total of the previous six years) reveals a partial displacement of the pressure from the Western towards the Eastern Mediterranean route and the Balkans in the second half of 2015 as the news about the availability of this option began to spread. The most detected African nationalities were Somalis, Moroccans, Eritreans and Nigerians.

Nationality swapping

Nationality swapping is a *modus operandi* used by migrants hoping to gain benefits by falsely claiming to be citizens of another country. The most typical reasons for this practice are the higher acceptance rate of asylum applications of certain nationalities and the hope of avoiding readmission.

In the case of migrants arriving in Greece from Turkey, it was most beneficial to falsely claim Syrian, Iraqi or Afghan nationality, considering that:

- Greece was granting six months of suspension of repatriation for Syrian and Iraqi nationals;
- The acceptance rate for Syrian, Iraqi and Afghan nationals applying for asylum in the EU is much higher than for nationals such as Pakistani, Moroccan, Iranian, etc.;
- The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia introduced a measure to allow only Syrian, Afghan and Iraqi nationals to enter from Greece as of 19 November 2015;
- Criminal networks in Turkey and Syria offer forged Syrian ID documents (ID cards, passports, birth certificates, etc.) of both low and high quality, which helped substantiate false claims of Syrian nationality.

In 2015, 173 042 migrants who claimed Syrian nationality were screened; of

which 85.8% were assumed by screeners to be Syrian nationals. As regards the rest, 8.6% were assumed to be Iraqi; 2.5% – Palestinian, 1% – Moroccan, and 2.1% were assumed to be of other nationality. Thus far in 2016, the breakdown has been fairly similar.

In 2015–2016, as many as 26.8% of those assumed to be Iraqi have falsely claimed Syrian nationality. While the measures taken by the authorities in some transit and destination countries afford some to Iraqi nationals, the benefits offered to Syrians have induced over a quarter of the screened Iraqis to falsely claim Syrian nationality.

The case of Moroccan migrants is different. Those arriving in Greece from Turkey are detained by the Greek authorities and many of them are removed from the country. Furthermore, even if a Moroccan

Nationality swapping observed also at the region's borders

Since 19 November, when the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia introduced the decision to allow only Syrian, Afghan and Iraqi nationals to enter from Greece, the authorities began refusing a large number of persons at the border. Specifically between 19 November 2015 and 31 January 2016 a large num-

ber of migrants were returned to Greece. The greatest part were returned for using forged Greek registration documents, followed by those with original documents but for nationalities not allowed transit and those with no registration documents and who were screened as not being Syrian, Iraqi or Afghan.

national managed to make it to mainland Greece, he/she would be refused entry at the GRC-MKD border. Therefore, if a high number of Moroccan nationals resorts to nationality swapping, it could mean that they are going to travel across the GRC-MKD border legally, using the registration document which they acquired on false grounds. If the ratio is low, then it might be the case that they are going to stay in Greece as long as they need to plan their onwards journey, using the 'parallel services' of migrant smuggling networks. The existence and increasing involvement of such parallel services have been reported by Hungary, where the number of detections have been increasing since the beginning of 2016.

In 2015–2016 almost 40% of those migrants screened and who have been assumed to be Moroccan have claimed Syrian nationality.

Underlying factors influencing the irregular migration by the most reported nationalities

Syrians

Syrians were the top reported nationality, accounting for 35% of the flow transiting the Western Balkans, which is hardly surprising, keeping in mind that their country has been ravaged by war for five years and that the number of these nationals displaced in the immediate region reached almost 4.6 million in February 2016 (over 2.5 million are registered only in Turkey).

Afghans

Afghan migrants were increasingly reported for illegal border-crossing on the Eastern Mediterranean route during 2015. With a total of over 213 000 detections, most of which (137 000) during Q4, these nationals accounted for almost a quarter of the overall flow affecting this area.

As a consequence of the increased detections of Afghans in the Eastern Aegean, their numbers also rose on the

Figure 15. **Over a quarter of screened Iraqi migrants falsely claimed Syrian nationality**

Iraqi migrants subjected to screening activities in the Eastern Aegean in 2015



Source: JORA data as of 16 February 2016

Western Balkan route, where they were the second most detected nationality throughout 2015, very close behind Syrians. Specifically, in 2015 there were over 314 000 reported illegal border-crossings by Afghans at the common and regional borders of Western Balkan countries.

This rising trend may be explained by the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan after the retreat of the International Security Assistance Force. In this context open-source reporting from the end of October 2015 suggests that every night roughly 60 buses travel from Kabul to Nimruz (the most common last departure place for Afghan migrants who intend to travel overland across Iran and onwards).

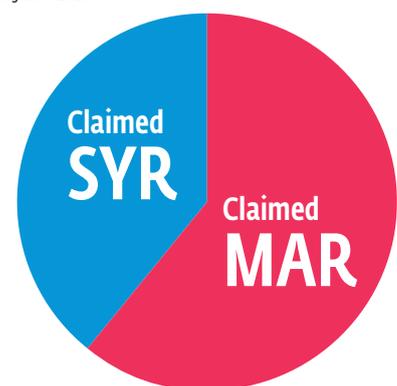
However, the pressure observed on the abovementioned routes could just as well originate from internal developments in Iran or in Pakistan, as these countries are assessed to be hosting over 5.5 million Afghans between them.

Rough estimates of the presence and status of Afghans in Iran

The Iranian Ministry of Interior estimated a total of around 3 million Afghans to be present on their territory, which could be roughly divided into three categories.

Figure 16. **Almost 40% of screened Moroccan migrants falsely claimed Syrian nationality**

Moroccan migrants subjected to screening activities in the Eastern Aegean in 2015



Source: JORA data as of 16 February 2016

Specifically, UNHCR estimates around 950 000 to be registered as refugees, while IOM estimates between 1 and 1.4 million to be undocumented. Moreover, media reports and Human Rights Watch (HRW) data indicate a shrinking third category of people with documents but not registered as refugees (i.e. holders of temporary visas), who decreased from roughly 760 000 to 450 000 between June 2014 and August 2015).

Main push factors from Iran

In 2012, the Iranian Bureau of Aliens and Foreign Immigrants' Affairs announced that they planned to return 1.6 million unlawful persons and a total of 900 000 refugees to their countries of origin by 2015. It was expected that by 2015, 200 000 refugees would voluntarily return and that 700 000 would no longer be refugees (meaning that 700 000 of the refugee-card holders would not have their cards renewed by 2015 and would be expected to return).

In June 2014, media reports emphasised increased pressures by the Iranian authorities to accelerate returns of Afghans by stretching the tripartite Iran-Afghanistan-UNHCR agreement on voluntary returns.



Figure 17. **Proof of Registration issued to Afghans in Pakistan**

Also apparently in line with this policy, media reports between June 2014 and August 2015 indicated a reduction of approximately 310 000 in the number of the temporary visas offered to Afghans residing in Iran and not registered as refugees. In June 2014, Iran renewed temporary visas to 760 000 unregistered Afghans for a period of six months (until December 2014). In December 2014, according to HRW, the Iranian authorities again renewed temporary visas but this time only to 500 000 Afghans until June 2015. The latest such renewal was done in August 2015 for a period of four months and only covered roughly 450 000 holders of temporary visas.

Rough estimates of the presence and status of Afghans in Pakistan

According to information presented by different sources, Pakistan hosts a minimum of roughly 2.5 million Afghans. Out of this total, around 1.5 million are registered in possession of Proof of Registration (only valid until June 2016) while another 1 million are unregistered.

Main push factors from Pakistan

According to an IOM report, between January and May 2015, over 73 000 Afghans returned from Pakistan to Afghanistan. Out of these, 6 600 were reported as ‘deportees’ enforced by the authorities, while the rest, or roughly 67 000, were reported as ‘spontaneous returnees’. The spontaneous returns are legal, under a tripartite agreement between Pakistan, Afghanistan and UNHCR signed in 2007 and apparently still in force, which allows voluntary repatriation of Afghans and sets an obligation for Afghanistan to accept and integrate them.

Moreover, at the end of November 2015, the authorities unveiled a plan to repatriate the 1.5 million registered Afghans residing on their territory within two years. Initially, it was announced that their right to stay would not be extended beyond December 2015 but a six-month renewal was then offered until June 2016. This short extension does not significantly mitigate the uncertain future Afghan residents are facing in Pakistan. Logically, the announced policies and uncertain future will constitute important push factors for both the registered and unregistered Afghans living in Pakistan.

The fact that UNHCR can process roughly 7 000 people per year and issue refugee documents recognised by the government can be a mitigation factor but it only has a limited effect (considering that 1.5 million registered and over

1 million unregistered Afghans could face repatriation within the next two years).

Pakistanis

Between January and December 2015 over 24 200 illegal border-crossings by Pakistani migrants were detected on the Eastern Mediterranean route, of which roughly 12 500 during the fourth quarter. As a knock-on effect, roughly 32 000 illegal border-crossings between BCPs by Pakistanis were registered on the Western Balkan route, of which almost 20 000 in the third and 8 000 in the fourth quarter.

It may seem unusual that the number of illegal border-crossings of this nationality is higher in the Western Balkans than at the first entry point in the Eastern Mediterranean. However, the same migrant may be reported several times at different border sections while transiting the Western Balkans region.

Moreover, this difference could also be explained by the fact that the incentives for nationality swapping were high in the Aegean Islands (as, for example, Syrians were released quicker after apprehension) but then gradually disappeared in the Western Balkans (where at first migrants faced no obstacles even if stating their real nationality). Later on, the new filtering measures introduced in the region (i.e. allowing passage only to Syrians, Afghans and Iraqis) reinforced the incentive for nationality swapping also on this route, thus potentially explaining a sudden drop in reported Pakistanis during the final quarter.

Figure 18. **Main departure points and routes used by Afghans to reach Greece**

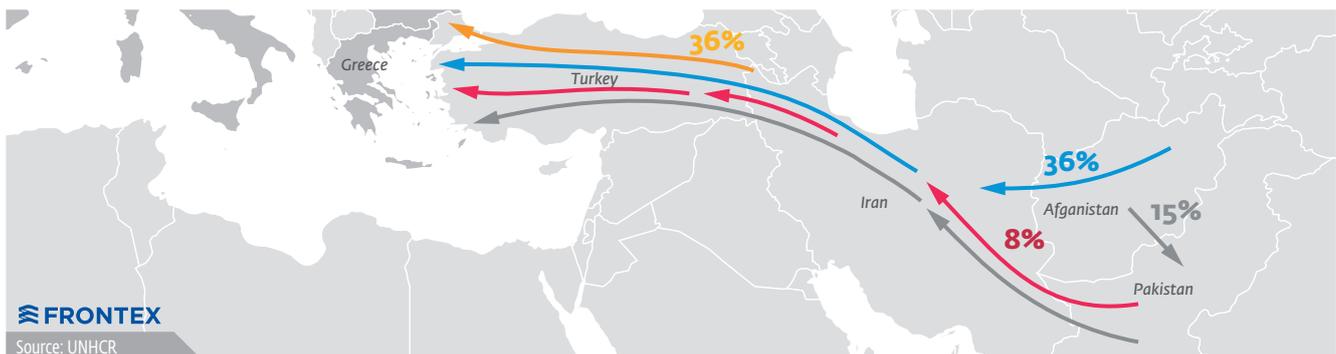
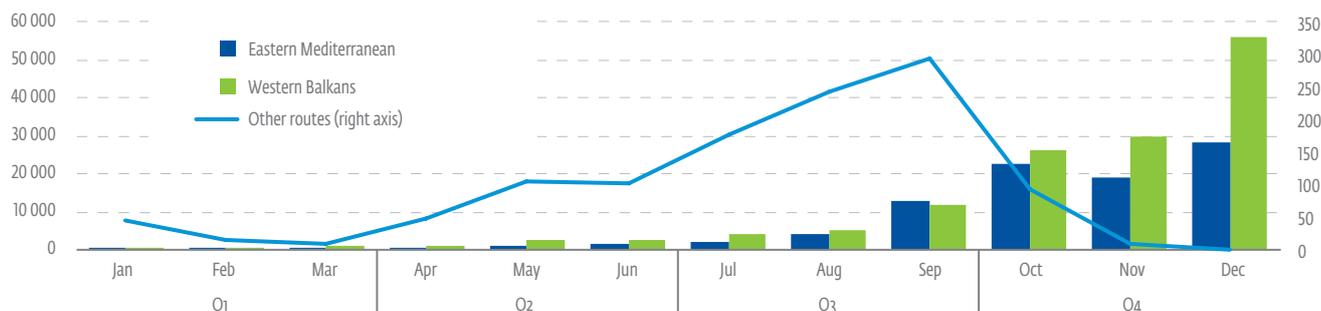


Figure 19. **The Western Balkan and Eastern Mediterranean routes were the most transited by Iraqi migrants on their way to the EU**

Illegal border-crossings between BCPs by Iraqi migrants on top routes in 2015



Source: FRAN and WB-RAN data as of 9 February

Judging by open-source information, there were no significant developments in Pakistan that would justify a rise in the migration flow originating from this country.

From a security point of view, the Austrian Fact Finding Mission Report of September 2015 indicates that the situation in Pakistan, despite not being perfect, has improved at national level compared with 2013. Importantly, the same report indicates that, statistically, the security situations in all FATA (Federally Administrated Tribal Areas) regions has either already improved or is improving, due to the various military operations conducted by the authorities. This is important, as a number of Pakistani migrants interviewed in the course of Frontex debriefing activities claim that they originate from these areas and that they were forced to leave the country due to insecurity.

Analysing the country's situation **from an economic point of view** may shed some light on the increased migratory flow observed in the analysed period.

Pakistan saw two consecutive years of growth in 2014 (4.03%) and 2015 (4.2%). While the GDP growth rate is commendable given Pakistan's past performance, it is still far below the 5-7% required to absorb new entrants into the labour force and to check rising unemployment.

According to the State Bank of Pakistan, remittances⁵ from overseas migrants amounted to USD 18.4 billion in the fiscal year 2014-15, representing a 16% increase over the previous period. Inflows from Saudi Arabia were the largest source of remittances, followed by those from the United Arab Emirates, together accounting for USD 9.8 billion. Remittances from other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries also amounted to USD 2.1 billion. This means that the GCC accounts for a 65% share of the remittances to Pakistan, while the rest is divided between the UK and the United States (a 22.8% share), and, to a lesser extent, Norway, Switzerland, Australia and other countries (a 7% share).

Remittances apparently account for an increasing share of Pakistan's GDP (rising from 5.7% in 2011 to almost 7% in 2015).⁶ Logically, the recent increase in remittances also contributed to the GDP growth registered in 2014 and 2015.

Moreover, according to a September 2014 study 'Determinants of International Migration in Pakistan', published in the *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*⁷, 80% of the surveyed persons declared low pay-

ing jobs as push factors for migration and 70% saw higher salaries as pull factors.

The same study indicates that 'the higher rate of poverty reduction among the migrants' families in the rural and urban areas of Pakistan, the greater chance will be likely to the international migration'. In other words, the better migrants are able to reduce the poverty of their families through the money they send home, the more attractive migration becomes for others.

Therefore, the recent increase in the amount of remittances received by Pakistan is likely to encourage more economic migration, especially as the majority of questioned persons see higher salaries as the main pull factors for migration.

Judging by the size of remittances, the oil-rich Middle Eastern countries remain the first choice for Pakistani economic migrants for the time being. However, the fact that a considerable amount of remittances also originates from EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries, especially the UK, Norway and Switzerland, also highlights these countries as important destinations.

Therefore, it is logical to assume that a slow-down of infrastructure spending by GCC countries (likely if the oil prices remain low for a longer period) would negatively impact Pakistani employees and consequently reduce the flow of remittances from this part of the world. In the same context, if remittances originating

5 <http://tribune.com.pk/story/920286/pakistan-pockets-remittances-amountingto-18-4b/>

6 <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS>

7 <http://www.mcser.org/journal/index.php/mjss/article/viewFile/3948/3864>

from EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries remain at the same level or continue to increase, more Pakistani economic migrants may opt for European countries as their final destinations.

Iraqis

Iraqi migration is assessed to be strongly affected by the Syrian crisis, geographical proximity of Iraq to both Syria and Turkey, and various perceptions held by people.

Between January and December 2015, roughly 496 000 Syrians (448 000 almost equally divided between Q3 and Q4) and about 93 000 Iraqis (70 000 in Q4) were reported in the Eastern Mediterranean. As a knock-on effect, roughly 710 000 illegal border-crossings between BCPs by Syrians (432 000 in Q4) and 141 500 by Iraqis (112 000 in Q4) were registered on the Western Balkan route.

Given the geographical proximity of these two countries of origin to the Eastern part of the EU and the Western Balkans, it is natural that the highest number of detected Syrian and Iraqi migrants are reported on the two mentioned routes.

Perceptions generally play an important role in migration decisions. One of such perceptions is that Syrian nationals are offered better prospects of moving to and receiving international protection in the EU (ever since 2014 Syrians have not been kept in closed reception centres after apprehension in Greece, and during 2015 they were the first allowed to leave the Aegean Islands aboard ferries in order to go and register their asylum request in Athens).

This perception, along with the geographical proximity, the ethnic, cultural and linguistic similarities of Iraq and Syria, may have encouraged many Iraqis to migrate and falsely claim Syrian nationality in order to enter the EU, often successfully.

Open-source reporting suggests an increased propensity of Iraqis to leave their country. Specifically, it appears that during 2015 living standards in Iraqi

Kurdistan rapidly deteriorated as politicians haggled over power. Basic services, electricity, cooking gas and water supply were not guaranteed and corruption permeated the quasi-institutions of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and society at large.

Furthermore, the bad security situation in Iraq also plays an important role in the decision to migrate. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), there were at least 4 million internally displaced persons in Iraq as of 15 June 2015, which can also be regarded as a push factor.

Apparently, a growing proportion of Iraqi Kurdistan population is frustrated by recent developments and more eager to leave the country. There are no precise figures but the United Nations estimates that more than 50 000 people left Iraq in the summer of 2015.

Moreover, in September and October 2015 Iraqi authorities were confronted with an unusually high demand for new passports (roughly 13 000 applications per day), while flights from Baghdad to Turkey were booked for months in advance.

All these factors suggest an increased propensity of Iraqis to leave their country.

Illegal border-crossing at BCPs

In 2015, 929 non-regional migrants were detected while trying to cross at BCPs illegally, most of them hiding in vehicles. This represents a 40% drop compared with 2014 and is the lowest figure of such attempts since 2010.

This appears to be connected with the fact that the orderly transit measures organised by authorities make travel cheaper, safer and faster, thus partly eliminating the need for more cumbersome organisation of passing through BCPs clandestinely.

In terms of nationalities, similar to the situation at the green border, Syrians and Afghans were the most detected, together accounting for 81% of all detections.

Additionally, only 213 regional migrants, mostly Albanians (69%) were reported trying to enter at BCPs. The highest number of detections (roughly 65%) occurred at the common borders with the EU, most likely linked to persons trying to avoid entry bans due to previous visa liberalisation misuse.

Use of false documents

In 2015, there were 280 false documents used by **non-regional migrants** at the common and regional Western Balkan borders reported within the WB-RAN, which represents a minor 3% increase compared to 2014.

As regards reporting countries, Serbia continued to rank first, with 59% of all regional detections, followed by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, with a 13% share each. Concerning nationalities, Syrians continued to rank first amongst false travel document users, followed by Turkish and Iraqi citizens.

The most commonly used false documents were passports, ID cards, visas and residence permits. Unsurprisingly, the ID cards were all (85) EU Member States' documents, as they can be used to move freely within the Schengen area and the EU. As far as detections of false passports are concerned, the majority (56 out of 140) were reportedly issued by EU countries, followed by Turkey (38) and the Russian Federation (13).

The largest number of detections occurred at **air borders** (149), mostly on entry, involving Turkish, Syrian and Iraqi nationals. Most detections (115) were reported from Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Interestingly, Turks ranked top among document fraudsters at the regional air borders, with a number similar to that of the Syrians (35), and were mostly reported by Bosnia and Herzegovina (27) and, to a lesser extent, by Serbia (6).

The second place was occupied by the **land borders** with 122 detections, mostly reported on entry from Greece to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedo-

nia and on exit across Serbia's borders with Hungary and Croatia. Interestingly, Turks ranked second in detections of document fraud at the regional and common land borders, after Syrians. They were mainly reported on exit from Serbia to Hungary or Croatia, being the top reported nationality at both of these sections, which seems consistent with their *modus operandi* of reaching the region by air and then trying to illegally move towards the EU overland.

The fact that Syrians and Iraqis were amongst the most detected nationalities of document fraudsters at both the land and air border comes as no surprise given their overall detections for illegal border-crossing between BCPs. However, the fact that Turks were detected in similar numbers to Syrians is interesting in view of the fact that they did not even feature among the top 20 nationalities detected at the green border.

For example, Turks' ratio between the use of false documents and illegal

border-crossing between BCPs in the region is roughly one document fraudster for three illegal border-crossers between BCPs, a remarkably high rate compared with that of Syrians, for example, which is of one document fraud case for over 8 200 cases of illegal border-crossing.

Despite being a less common *modus operandi*, the use of false travel documents should not be disregarded, as many affluent non-regional migrants choose this option of illegal entry to the EU as more comfortable, especially if they come by air.

4.2. Large and sustained irregular movements by nationals of Western Balkan countries

Illegal border-crossings from the region over the common EU/Schengen borders

During the analysed period there were roughly 37 500 nationals of Western Balkan countries detected while illegally crossing the regional and common borders, which represents a 2% share of the overall illegal border-crossing detections in the region. The majority of the cases were registered between BCPs, while only 213 persons were discovered hiding in vehicles. Except for the persons originating from the territory of Kosovo*, the illegal border-crossings by nationals of the region were by and large linked to previous visa liberalisation abuse and an attempt to avoid entry bans.

The vast majority (36 876) of the nationals of Western Balkan countries detected

while attempting to illegally cross the borders were reported at the common borders with EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries (in the first quarter especially towards Hungary and during the rest of the year mainly towards Greece).

The largest proportion of such detections occurred in the first quarter of the year and was associated with the outflows from Kosovo*, which at the end of February subsided due to an array of concerted international measures implemented in the origin, transit and destination countries.

For the rest of the year the regional flow remained low. Actually, it even ran a little below the expected seasonal trends and was confined to the southern part of the region, mainly linked to the Albanian circular migration to Greece.

This is also visible in the shares of the main nationalities.

For example, while in the first quarter Kosovo* nationals targeting the Hungarian-Serbian border accounted for almost two-thirds of the regional flow, in the remaining three quarters the phenomenon subsided, Albanians and became the top reported nationality, with an 84% share of the regional detections, mainly targeting the Greek-Albanian border and, to a lesser extent, the section between Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

However, the lower numbers of regional migrants⁸ especially in the last two quarters of the year could also be attributed to the fact that many of them passed undetected taking advantage of the massive transiting flow affecting the region.

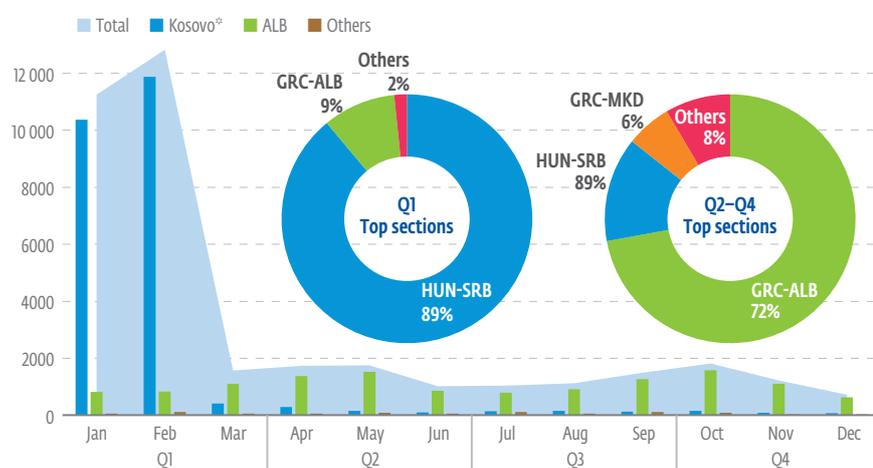
Illegal stay in the EU

During the analysed period there were almost 59 000 illegal stayers from the Western Balkans region reported at the level of the EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries, of which 43 000 were citizens of the five visa-exempt countries and 16 000 Kosovo* citizens.

Amongst the five visa-exempt nationalities Albanians ranked first, registering a 35% increase compared to last year, while the rest of illegal stayers from the region were detected in lower numbers, with drops ranging from a marginal -1% for the nationals of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to -22% for Montenegrins. Most detections of illegal stayers

Figure 20. Significant drop in regional flow during Q1 and change of top border sections

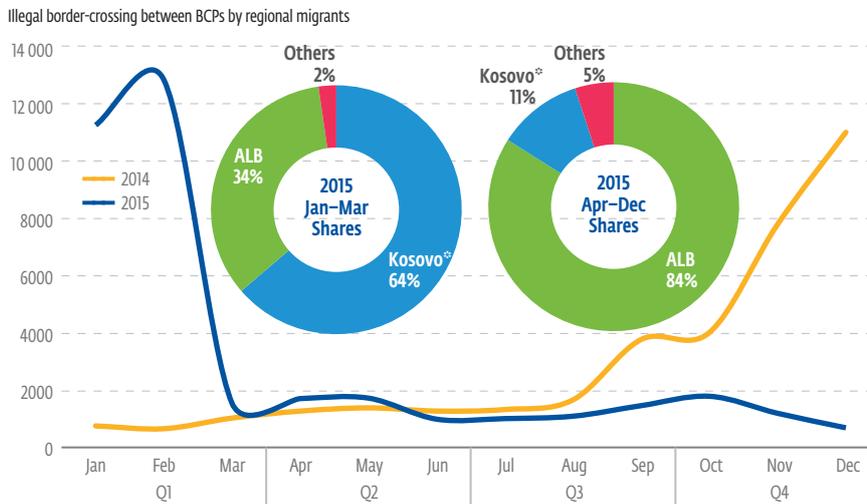
Detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs by regional migrants



Source: WB-RAN data as of 10 February 2016

8 Migrants who are nationals of Serbia, Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro or Kosovo.*

Figure 21. Significant drop in regional flow and consequent changes of nationality shares after Q1



Source: WB-RAN data as of 10 February

from these countries were reported by Germany, France, Greece and Hungary, which together accounted for 70% of all detections at EU Member State/Schengen Associated Country level.

Albanians were the most reported nationality in each of the top four coun-

tries, with the exception of Hungary, where Serbians returning from the EU were the most numerous.

Compared to 2014, the numbers of illegal stayers from Kosovo* showed a 68% increase, which was in line with their surge in illegal border-crossings and sub-

sequent asylum applications and misuse in the second half of 2014 and the first quarter of 2015.

Also in line with the situation observed in the previous year, Hungary and Germany reported the highest numbers of illegal stayers from Kosovo*, which indicates these countries as the main transit and destination countries for Kosovo* citizens. After the outflow from Kosovo* at the end of 2014 and in the first quarter of 2015, the numbers of these nationals detected in the EU decreased significantly (i.e. from almost 7 000 in February to a monthly average of 537 between April and December 2015). Compared to the same period of 2013, the monthly average of 537 was still slightly higher (+15%) but the situation significantly improved compared to 2014.

Document fraud in the EU/Schengen area

In 2015, there were 2 857 nationals of the five visa-exempt Western Balkan countries and 42 Kosovo* citizens reported using false documents on intra EU/Schengen travels. Most cases were reported by the UK (726), Italy (676) and, to a lesser extent, Germany (240).

As regards nationalities, similar to the situation on entry at external borders, the great majority of false document users from Western Balkan countries reported on intra EU/Schengen travel were Albanians, accounting for 94% of all such cases reported in 2015.

The detections on intra-EU/Schengen movements represent 69% of the total detections of false document users from Western Balkan countries, while only around 14% were reported on entry from third countries.

In terms of documents, 3 149 false documents were used in 2015 by the visa exempt nationals of Western Balkan countries (3 102) and Kosovo* (47) on intra-Schengen/EU travel. Most of these documents were issued by EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries, with Italy and Greece accounting for a 68% share of the reported total.

Recent decisions mitigating the propensity for misuse of asylum systems in Germany and Sweden

In Germany – Albania, Kosovo* and Montenegro have been classified as safe countries of origin, a decision bringing with it quicker processing, employment bans, and an obligation for the asylum applicants to reside in specially designated facilities pending a decision or return.

Furthermore, family reunification has been suspended for the recipients of subsidiary protection, while benefits for unmarried persons were reduced and obstacles to returns removed (i.e. difference in the medical care systems of the origin country is no longer considered ground for halting returns). A central registration system is also underway, to avoid multiple registration and distribute applicants according to their origin within dedicated clusters thus speeding up decisions and reducing afforded benefits.

In Sweden – besides the temporary re-introduction of border controls for ferry connections with Germany and over the bridge with Denmark and denying entry to undocumented persons, new asylum rules were also envisioned. These new rules include granting temporary residence permits (not only permanent as in the past), restricted right for family reunification (only available to recipients of refugee status), tougher maintenance requirements (those granted refugee status will have to prove ability to support their spouses and minor children in order to be granted the right to reunite with them). Also assistance for adults is going to end when a final rejection decision has been made.

These changes in the two much targeted countries are likely to partially mitigate protection misuse not only by Western Balkan nationals but by migrants of all nationalities.

4.3. Misuse of international protection system in the Western Balkans by transiting migrants to avoid detention and impede return procedures

In terms of misuse of international protection system in the Western Balkans by migrants as a way of avoiding detention and continuing their trip there were no major changes compared to the situation in previous years, apart from the very high increase in the overall numbers.

More exactly in Serbia during 2015 almost 580 000 persons expressed an intention to claim asylum, of which little over 11 000 registered in reception centres and only 583 actually filled in an official application. A positive decision was issued for 16 persons, 9 received subsidiary protection while 551 applications were rejected as most of the people absconded before the procedure could be finalised.

The situation was comparable in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, especially after it amended its legislation in June to allow an in-stages asylum procedure similar to the one of Serbia. More exactly, out of the roughly 390 000 expressed intentions for asylum, only around 85 persons filled in an official application. Out of these just 3 positive decisions were reached while the rest did not wait for the procedure to be finalised and were therefore rejected.

Misuse of asylum provisions hampers prosecution of facilitators

The fact that expressing an intention to claim asylum legalises the stay and movements of the migrant for 72 hours also has implications on police activities against facilitators. Even if evidence sug-

gests that certain persons are transporting migrants in order to facilitate their onward transit for profit, such individuals are very difficult to prosecute because technically the persons they are transporting have the right of free movement within the territory. However, facilitation became unnecessary after the authorities started to organise the transportation of the flows themselves.

In the last two months of 2015, the decision to restrict entry to migrants who did not originate from Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan could again justify a certain need by some of the denied individuals to resort to facilitation services for onward transit.

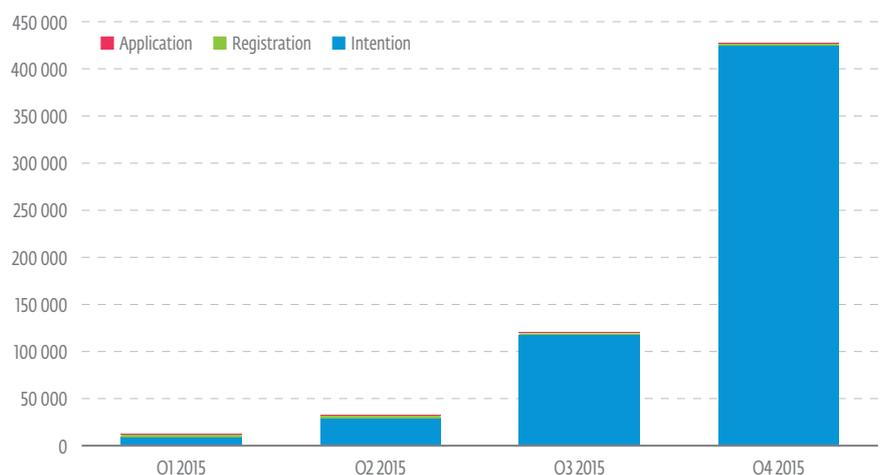
On 30 December, Serbia changed its legislation and started providing regis-

tration certificates to migrants originating from conflict areas (SYR, AFG, IRQ) which allow them 72 hours' transit across the country even if they do not express an intention of applying for asylum. This certificate is not likely to change much in the migratory flow, as it continues to allow transit of the territory.

This decision, however, further legalises the status of an irregular migrant even if he/she is not in real need of international protection, which continues to limit the efficiency of any border-control measures. Furthermore, given the difficulties the authorities face in identifying the migrants (described in Section 4.1.), such certificates are likely to contain fabricated personal data and may spread confusion further along the route where they can be taken for granted as 'official documents' (similar to the registration documents issued in Greece).

Figure 22. Ratios between the three stages of the asylum procedure in Serbia highly indicative of misuse

Number of migrants entering the three stages of asylum procedure in Serbia in 2015



Source: Serbian data as of 21 February 2016

Reception centres generally empty as people want to transit quickly

Available information indicates that reception capacities are not a real issue as migrants generally try to transit as fast as possible (and the accommodation centres are generally empty). Only in rare cases, when they need to wait for some friends/relatives who fell behind or when some of them need medical attention, do migrants choose to go to the

centres. In the majority of situations migrants avoid centres altogether trying to transit as fast as possible or stay in hotels when they want to rest.

Widespread abuse of registration documents – no legal obligation or incentive for people to be truthful about their origin and personal status

In terms of false documents use, in late 2015 the phenomenon was largely linked

to documents migrants needed to prove that they were of nationalities still allowed passage through the Western Balkans (i.e. SYR, AFG, IRQ). More exactly, most of the false documents discovered by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were not necessarily travel documents which would allow a legal border-crossing but other types of documents used by migrants as a means to falsely claim Syrian, Afghan or Iraqi nationality.

4.4. Smuggling of firearms across the regional and common borders

In the attempt to create a better understanding of the international dimensions of firearms smuggling in the region and to facilitate more efficient solutions through coherent and concerted regional approaches, the Frontex Risk Analysis Unit together with the representatives of the Western Balkan countries taking part in the WB-RAN plan to launch a pilot project aimed at a regular data collection related to cases of firearms possession/smuggling detected by the border police forces of the respective countries.

The pilot project is planned to cover a collection of statistical data regarding detections of firearms which will occur during 2016 through standardised periodical reporting.

For the beginning provisional definitions/indications were created for the collection of the most relevant information related to cases of firearms detections. These definitions/indications are subject to improvement, based on practical experience and further discussions which will take place throughout 2016.

The collection is also aimed to allow reporting on the means of transport used by type and registration (if available), the nationality of the persons detected with firearms, and various ways in which the goods were transported/concealed. Also the detection place should be generically indicated by border section and type, BCP (if available), or specific location (i.e. close to the border, in the border area or deeper inside the territory).

As a result of a data collection exercise conducted within an organised workshop, a set of information was made available on the detections registered

during 2015. This information was collated and standardised, and will serve as a basis for comparison of the data which will be reported in the future thus facilitating analytical observations regarding the dynamics of the phenomenon.

In 2015, in the course of performing their tasks the border police forces of the six regional countries detected a relatively high number of weapons (firearms, gas or converted), explosives, grenades and ammunition pieces. At the regional level, 140 weapons were reported (67 firearms, 67 gas, six converted all detected in 76 cases), three and a half kilograms of explosives (detected in three cases), two grenades (in one case) and almost 13 000 pieces of ammunition (reported in 44 cases).

As many as 117 persons were detected while carrying the reported prohibited goods, while in 12 cases the perpetrators remained unknown (generally having abandoned the goods). The great major-

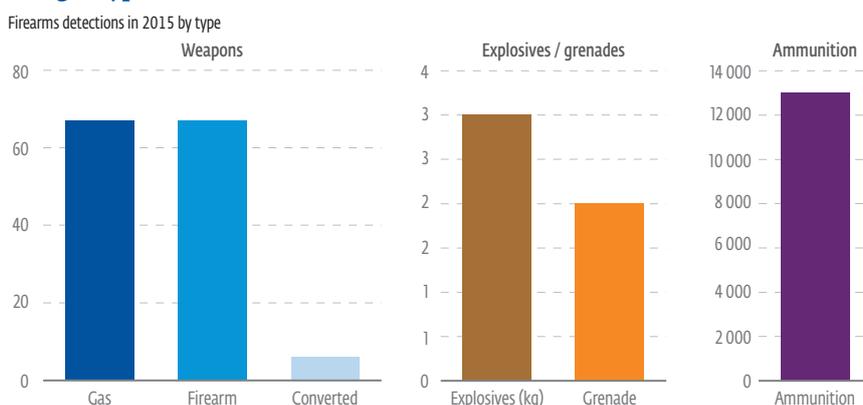
ity (84) were citizens of the countries in the region, followed by EU nationals (22) and other third-country nationals (11).

Detections of weapons (firearms/gas/converted)

Amongst the detected firearms, the majority were handguns (46), followed by long rifles/shotguns (14) and fully automatic firearms (7). Regarding the gas weapons, 55 were handguns and 12 were long rifles or shotguns. Additionally, six converted weapons of other types were reported. Most of the detections were reported in the border areas or at BCPs and in few cases further away from the borders (outside the normal area of competence of border police forces).

Serbian authorities detected the largest number of weapons accounting for 60% of the overall regional totals. Serbian data included firearms, gas weapons and a lower number of converted weapons of other types. The majority of these detections occurred at the border with Bulgaria and also at the border with Hungary.

Figure 23. Detections of weapons appear equally divided between firearms and gas types



Source: Frontex data as of 17 February 2016

Kosovo* authorities ranked second in detections of weapons, with most of the detections occurring at the border with Montenegro.

Bosnia and Herzegovina reported the third highest number of weapons detected, while Montenegro ranked fourth.

As regards detections of **explosives, detonators and grenades** at regional level, there were 3.45 kilograms of ex-

plosives reported (mainly by Albania and Kosovo*), and two grenades reported by Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Additionally, there were almost 13 000 **ammunition pieces**, reported at regional level, most of them detected by Serbia (mainly at the borders with Hungary and Croatia), followed by Kosovo*, which mostly reported such prohibited goods at the borders with Albania and

Montenegro. Montenegro ranked third in detections of ammunition with most cases reported at the border with Serbia.

By and large, the prohibited goods detected were meant for personal use or hunting, and the detected cases did not involve large quantities of smuggled weapons.

5. Statistical annex

LEGEND

Symbols and abbreviations: n.a. not applicable
: data not available

Source: WB-RAN and FRAN data as of 16 February 2016, unless otherwise indicated

Table 1. Overview of indicators as reported by WB-RAN members

	2013	2014	2015	% change on previous year
WB-RAN Indicator				
Illegal border-crossing between BCPs	40 027	66 079	2 081 366	3 050
Illegal border-crossing at BCPs	1336	1 747	1 142	-35
Facilitators	750	1 218	1 980	63
Illegal stay	12508	11 270	8 208	-27
Refusals of entry	36 954	42 715	41 800	-2.1
False travel document users	709	880	931	6

Annex Table 2. Detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs

Detections reported by Western Balkan and neighbouring countries, by purpose of illegal border-crossing and top ten nationalities

	2013	2014	2015	% change on prev. year	Share of total
Purpose of Illegal Border-Crossing					
Irregular migration	8 694	23 011	1612 832	7 009	77
Other	24	382	260 920	68 304	13
Not specified	31 309	42 401	207 006	488	10
Smuggling	0	285	608	213	0
Top Ten Nationalities					
Not specified	47	234	779 235	332 906	37
Syria	2 706	12 536	709 920	5 563	34
Afghanistan	4 065	10 963	314 406	2 768	15
Iraq	59	542	141 536	26 014	6.8
Pakistan	5 132	563	32 549	5681	1.6
Kosovo*	6 399	23 521	23 919	1.7	1.1
Iran	93	230	20 196	8 681	1.0
Albania	10 072	11 662	12 782	9.6	0.6
Bangladesh	884	311	7 801	2 408	0.4
Somalia	713	435	6 262	1 340	0.3
Others	9 857	5 082	32 760	545	1.6
Total	40 027	66 079	2 081 366	3 050	100

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

Annex Table 3. Detections of illegal border-crossing at BCPs

Detections reported by Western Balkan and neighbouring countries, by *modus operandi*, purpose of illegal border-crossing and top ten nationalities

	2013	2014	2015	% change on prev. year	Share of total
Clandestine/Other					
Clandestine	930	1 462	672	46	59
Others	321	281	411	146	36
Not specified	85	4	59	1475	5.2
Purpose of Illegal Border-Crossing					
Irregular migration	50	780	939	120	82
Not specified	1 283	904	112	12	10
Other	3	59	52	88	4.6
Smuggling	0	4	39	975	3.4
Top Ten Nationalities					
Afghanistan	181	702	425	-39	37
Syria	263	366	331	-9.6	29
Albania	83	121	147	21	13
Iraq	8	20	73	265	6.4
Kosovo*	33	31	33	6.5	2.9
Not specified	12	42	24	-43	2.1
Serbia	37	29	22	-24	1.9
Somalia	25	25	13	-48	1.1
Algeria	79	39	11	-72	1
Pakistan	161	69	10	-86	0.9
Others	454	303	53	-83	4.6
Total	1 336	1 747	1 142	-35	100

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

Annex Table 4. Facilitators

Detections reported by Western Balkan and neighbouring countries, by place of detection and top ten nationalities

	2013	2014	2015	% change on prev. year	Share of total
Place of Detection					
Land	581	1 044	1 781	71	90
Inland	128	155	188	21	9.5
Air	3	5	6	20	0.3
Sea	7	14	5	-64	0.3
Not specified	1	0	0	<i>n.a.</i>	0
Top Ten Nationalities					
Serbia	321	546	1 090	100	55
Albania	114	190	179	-5.8	9.0
Bulgaria	31	60	174	190	8.8
Greece	23	77	98	27	4.9
FYR Macedonia	44	90	95	5.6	4.8
Not specified	22	54	71	31	3.6
Hungary	22	22	44	100	2.2
Bosnia and Herzegovina	34	25	31	24	1.6
Kosovo ^o	19	20	28	40	1.4
Pakistan	11	4	25	525	1.3
Others	79	130	145	12	7.3
Total	720	1 218	1 980	63	100

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

Annex Table 5. **Illegal stay**

Detections reported by Western Balkan and neighbouring countries, by place of detection and top ten nationalities

	2013	2014	2015	% change on prev. year	Share of total
Place of Detection					
Land	5 186	5 275	4 601	-13	56
Inland	6 701	5 453	3 170	-42	39
Not specified	611	542	437	-19	5.3
Top Ten Nationalities					
Serbia	2 574	3 308	2 932	-11	36
Syria	1 282	2 468	1 109	-55	14
Albania	598	870	631	-27	7.7
FYR Macedonia	538	545	428	-21	5.2
Turkey	534	437	271	-38	3.3
Bosnia and Herzegovina	555	228	271	19	3.3
Afghanistan	1 410	343	228	-34	2.8
Kosovo*	250	195	163	-16	2.0
Eritrea	289	283	145	-49	1.8
Montenegro	97	197	140	-29	1.7
Others	4 381	2 396	1 890	-21	23
Total	12 508	11 270	8 208	-27	100

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

Annex Table 6. Refusals of entry

Refusals reported by Western Balkan and neighbouring countries, by border type and top ten nationalities

	2013	2014	2015	% change on prev. year	Share of total
Border Type					
Land	34 178	39 814	37 146	-6.7	89
Air	2 649	2 868	4 571	59	11
Sea	68	33	83	152	0.2
Not specified	59	0	0	<i>n.a.</i>	0
Top Ten Nationalities					
Albania	7 450	10 012	10 685	6.7	26
Serbia	8 013	9 677	7 113	-26	17
Bosnia and Herzegovina	5 743	5 710	5 069	-11	12
Turkey	1 900	2 259	3 898	73	9.3
FYR Macedonia	1 627	2 016	1 805	-10	4.3
Kosovo*	1 601	1 779	1 522	-14	3.6
Bulgaria	605	988	1 091	10	2.6
Not specified	1 644	850	982	16	2.3
Germany	406	814	962	18	2.3
Croatia	666	500	774	55	1.9
Others	7 299	8 110	7 899	-2.6	19
Total	36 954	42 715	41 800	-2.1	100

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

Annex Table 7. Persons using false documents

Detections reported by Western Balkan countries, by border type, document type, top ten nationalities claimed and top ten countries of issuance of documents

	2013	2014	2015	% change on prev. year	Share of total
Border Type					
Land	477	532	556	4.5	60
Air	115	231	307	33	33
Sea	117	115	63	-45	6.8
Not specified	0	2	5	150	0.5
Document Type					
Passports	185	473	545	15	59
Identity cards	111	190	183	-3.7	20
Stamp	10	58	107	84	11
Residence permits	66	66	51	-23	5.5
Visas	13	24	36	50	3.9
Unknown	324	69	9	-87	1
Top Ten Nationalities Claimed					
Albania	134	242	370	53	40
Kosovo ^o	132	245	144	-41	15
Serbia	195	87	103	18	11
Syria	43	95	75	-21	8.1
Turkey	46	39	60	54	6.4
Iraq	1	8	26	225	2.8
Not specified	20	35	19	-46	2
Pakistan	6	3	17	467	1.8
Bosnia and Herzegovina	12	8	16	100	1.7
Iran	7	8	11	38	1.2
Others	113	110	90	-18	9.7
Top Ten Countries of Issuance of Documents					
Albania	56	180	266	48	29
Serbia	14	87	110	26	12
Greece	40	75	88	17	9.5
Italy	25	55	74	35	7.9
Bulgaria	48	65	40	-38	4.3
Turkey	14	12	38	217	4.1
FYR Macedonia	3	43	25	-42	2.7
Kosovo ^o	0	10	23	130	2.5
France	16	18	21	17	2.3
Slovenia	17	24	21	-13	2.3
Others	476	311	225	-28	24

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

Annex Table 8. **Detections of firearms in 2015**

Prohibited goods	Type	Total	Top nationalities involved		Transportation means	
Weapons	Firearms	67	Kosovo*	26	Car	83
	Gas	67	Serbia	20	Bus	12
	Converted	6	Bosnia and Herzegovina	15	On foot	11
Explosives	Explosives (kg)	3.5	Uknown	11	Train	5
	Grenades	2	FYR Macedonia	8	Van	5
Ammunition pieces	–	12 995	Albania	8	Abandoned	2
			Turkey	7	Searches	2
			Montenegro	6	Truck	1
			Italy	4	Other	4
			Austria	3		
			Others	19		
			Total	127	Total	125

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

Explanatory note

Detections reported for Member States for indicators Illegal border-crossing between BCPs, Illegal border-crossing at BCPs, Refusals of entry and Persons using false documents are detections at the common land borders on entry only. For Facilitators, detections at the common land borders on entry and exit are

included. For Illegal stay, detections at the common land borders on exit only are included. For Asylum, all applications (land, sea, air and inland) are included.

For Western Balkan countries, all indicators – save for Refusals of entry – include detections (applications) on

exit and entry at the land, sea and air borders.

Each section in the table (Border type, Place of detection and Top ten nationalities) refers to total detections reported by WB-RAN countries and to neighbouring land border detections reported by Member States.



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