

FRONTEX
LIBERTAS SECURITAS JUSTITIA

European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders
of the Member States of the European Union

Annual Risk Assessment 2008

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Note

Executive Summary

In 2007, the main areas in Europe identified as highly affected by illegal migration according to the number of detections and apprehensions of illegal migrants were:

- Land borders in South-Eastern Europe, [REDACTED]
- Air borders in North and West Europe, [REDACTED]
- Sea borders in South and South-Eastern Europe, [REDACTED]

The detections at the land borders were more than half of the total number of detections at all the borders. Taken into account that Romanian and Bulgarian nationals have not been included in the statistics on migration as from 2007, the overall situation shows a status quo or a slight upward trend.

The general situation at the sea borders improved and the number of detected illegal migrants declined. However, the situation at the southern maritime borders remains a source of serious concern.

The number of detections at the air borders went up compared to 2006. [REDACTED]

In total more than 130,000 Third Country nationals were refused entry to the EU in 2007. Most of the refusals were made at the land and air borders. [REDACTED]

Member States detained over 20,000 Third Country nationals using false or falsified travel documents. [REDACTED]

More than 11,500 suspected facilitators were detected by Member States Border Guard authorities. More than half of the detections took place inland and one quarter at the land borders of the Member States.

In total, the Member States reported more than 250,000 detections of illegal stay in 2007. Italy reported the highest number with more than 50,000 detections. Most Member States reported illegal stay inland only and not at the exit checks.

The Member States reported almost 150,000 asylum claims in 2007. Almost one fourth of them were made in Sweden, followed by Greece and the UK. Most asylum claims were filed by Iraqi nationals followed by nationals from the Russian Federation claiming to be of Chechen origin.

The pressure of illegal migration towards Europe remains high on the Western African and Central African routes. Facilitators have also provided new embarkation points and modi operandi for sea crossings.

The flow of illegal migrants from Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan on the Eastern Mediterranean and Eastern Balkan route increased. It is assessed that especially Turkish OCGs have profited from the situation.

[REDACTED]

The number of by illegal migrants using the Eastern European route is falling but still significant especially at the [REDACTED]

The number of illegal migrants from Iraq increased markedly also on air routes in 2007. Iraqi nationals targeted a large variety of air routes towards Europe with interdiction points including Istanbul, Amman, Kuala Lumpur and Damascus, Moscow and Kiev. Also most of the asylum claims at the air borders were made by Iraqi nationals. [REDACTED]

Brazilian nationals were by far the most refused nationals at the air borders. They were reported by the airports of the UK, Portugal, France and Ireland. Chinese nationals were refused entry all over the EU [REDACTED]

Almost 12,000 false or falsified documents were detected at the Member States' air borders. Nigerian, Chinese and Iraqi nationals were detected most often using false or falsified documents. Counterfeiting, forgery, alteration or fraudulent use of travel or ID documents by South American illegal migrants is an upward trend.

Illegal migration to Europe continues to be driven above all by lack of economic opportunities in Third Countries particularly when combined with population explosion, regional conflicts and suppression of ethnic/religious/political minorities. Economic collapse, war or environmental disaster in Europe's neighbouring areas could lead to a sudden and substantial increase in the number of migrants. Ethnic communities continue to attract illegal migrants. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Besides economical situation and job opportunities, Member States' legal and policy situation/changes also drive or restrain illegal migration.

Visa regulation, border control policy, geography, transportation connections and presence of organised crime (OC) networks in the EU and the main transit countries, especially in the neighbouring area, are the main factors influencing migration routes and modi operandi.

Based on the above mentioned factors and the situation at the external borders in 2007, it is expected that:

- The number of illegal migrants coming to the EU is likely either to stay at the current level or increase slightly.
- The pressure of illegal migration and the risk of loss of life will remain high at the southern maritime borders.
- The number of illegal migrants taking air route to the EU will continue to grow.



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1 Introduction

The Annual Risk Assessment (ARA) is intended as the basis for the planning of operational activities at the external borders of the European Union (EU). The report is limited to the current scope of Frontex operational activities, that is, illegal migration at the external borders of the EU and the Schengen Associated Countries, although, according to the concept of integrated border management, border management should cover all security threats present at the external borders.

The name of report has been changed from the previous versions to reflect the evolution of the ARA into a more future-oriented intelligence product. The ARA 2008 forms the basis for the Frontex Programme of Work 2009.

The ARA 2008 consists of three parts. The first part of the report (Chapters Three and Four) describes the situation regarding illegal migration at the external borders of the Member States of the EU in 2007. It provides firstly an EU overview primarily from the basis of national statistics provided by Member States within the Frontex Risk Analysis Network (FRAN) on illegal border crossings, refused entries, detected false or falsified documents, detected facilitators, asylum claims and illegal stay. Secondly, patterns and emerging trends regarding the main nexus points, nationalities, facilitation and modi operandi are described with respect to the main migration routes to the EU which include:

1. Western African route;
2. Central Mediterranean route;
3. Eastern Mediterranean route;
4. Eastern Balkan route;
5. Western Balkan route;
6. Eastern European route and
7. Air routes.

The second part of the report (Chapters Five and Six) outlines the situation and the outlook for the key push and pull factors driving illegal migration to the EU as well as the factors influencing the routes and modi operandi such as changes in visa regulations and border control policies in Member States and in Third Countries, especially in the neighbouring ones, as well as facilitation, including the involvement of organised crime groups (OCGs).

In the third part of the ARA 2008 (Chapters Seven and Eight), the outlook for the situation regarding illegal migration to the EU in 2009 and related recommendations are developed and elaborated for each type of border. As the ARA 2008 aims to look into future, the Outlook for 2009 should be understood as the conclusions of the report.



2 Methodology

The ARA 2008 focuses mainly on illegal migration as observed at the external borders of the Member States of the EU as Third Country nationals attempting to cross the external borders illegally, that is, detected as illegal migrants or refused entry. The pressure encountered by Member States' Border Guard authorities at the external borders also includes the detection of false or falsified documents as well as the detections of suspected facilitators. In addition, Third Country nationals who abuse the right for asylum to enter the EU as well as those who enter with a valid visa but overstay it, are sometimes detected by Member States Border Guards inland or on exit as illegal migrants.

2.1 Data Collection

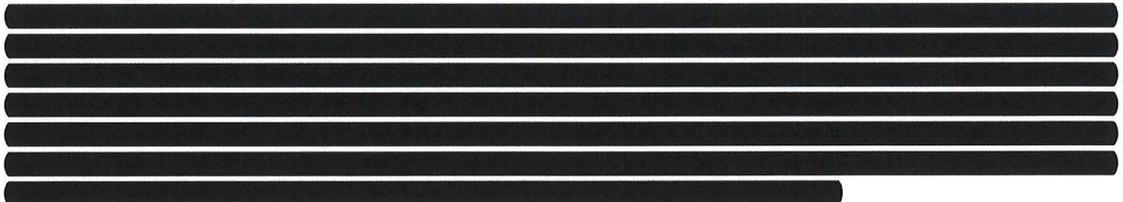
The backbone of the ARA 2008 are the Member States' statistics provided within the framework of the FRAN on monthly basis. This routine data collection was launched in September 2007 covering the entire yearly period 2007. Member States Boarder Guard authorities provide FRAN monthly data on:

- Illegal border crossings at the Border Crossing Points (BCPs) and outside BCPs;
- Refusals of entry;
- False or falsified travel documents;
- Detected facilitators;
- Illegal stay;
- Asylum claims.

Member States report the collected data by type of border. The land border is further broken down by border section. So far, Member States have not been requested to break down data for air and sea borders, but Frontex intends to do so in 2008.

After Member States' monthly reports were compiled by Frontex into national annual statistics in the beginning of February 2008, they were sent back to Member States for the final verification and confirmation.

Most Member States provided statistical data in all required categories. Although the FRAN definitions are similar to those used by the CIREFI Working Party data collection, the level of detail is higher and some Member States were not always able to comply with the requirements.



Nevertheless, Member States' commitment and willingness to comply with the requirements of the data collection, efforts made at national level as well as constructive feedback will surely enable Frontex to improve the FRAN data collection in 2008.

The national statistics for 2006 as reported to the European Borders Found (EBF) in the beginning of 2007 were used as the reference point when establishing trends with regard to detections at the external borders.



With regard to the nationalities of detected illegal migrants or facilitators, Member States were requested to report only 'top-10' nationalities. Therefore, the numbers of nationalities in the ARA 2008 do not provide the complete national and EU picture, but an advanced estimate. Nationalities in the top-10 vary, not just from Member State to Member State, but also in the same country due to, for instance, seasonal changes.

Member States' bi-monthly analytical reports and incident reports on detections and irregularities at the external borders within the FRAN and Member States' data collected for the Tailored Risk Analysis drawn up in the second half of 2007 as well as incident reports issued by some Member States formed an important source of information especially when analysing routes and modi operandi. In this respect, also the evaluation reports of the Joint Operations (JOs) coordinated by Frontex in 2007 provided a lot of valuable information.

Open sources information, that is, reports issued by governmental agencies, non-governmental organisations and various 'watchdogs' as well as official EU reporting such as the Commission's strategic reports regarding Third Countries, and main stream news agencies were exploited especially when outlining the main push and pull factors for illegal migration to the EU.

2.2 'Look into the Future'

Although the Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model (CIRAM) does not include a methodology for assessing future developments, it was considered important that the ARA 2008 attempts to 'look into the future' and develop an outlook for 2009 regarding illegal migration at the external borders of the Member States of the EU. In general, unanticipated increases of migration flows could cause even large-scale political and economic upheaval, especially in the frontline Member States, by straining public services, undermining national security, increasing the supply of illegal workers and fuelling social tensions.

In the ARA 2008, the outlook for 2009 was based on the analysis of the state of play regarding illegal migration at the external borders of the EU, push and pull factors as well as factors impacting routes and modi operandi.

Push and pull factors refer to motivational reasons for which illegal migrants leave their home country and choose their destination country in the EU. The analysis of push factors focused on the most relevant countries and factors only, that is, economical, social and political factors in the main source countries for illegal migration to Europe. The analysis of pull factors was limited to main economical, social and legal factors.

Once migrants decide to 'enter the illegal migration stream', they will test various receiving states' defences, even repeatedly. They do so regardless of whether they must risk their own lives, pay exorbitant fees, or subvert the asylum system or any other available means of entry. Factors influencing routes and modi operandi include geography (which, however, cannot be changed and will not be discussed in this report), existing visa regime, border control policies including readmission agreements, and 'services' provided by OCGs in the EU and the main transit countries, especially in the neighbouring ones.

The analysis of the above mentioned factors serves in the ARA 2008 as an environmental scan identifying possible threats and opportunities in the external environment. To a limited extent it also identifies strengths and weaknesses of the EU with regard to illegal migration pressure. The approach adopted in the ARA 2008 is thus a modified version of the SWOT analysis¹ used widely as a strategic planning tool.

¹ Analysis of one's own strengths (S) and weaknesses (W) together with the opportunities (O) and threats (T) in the external environment.



Due to the extreme complexity of the topic – illegal migration is a global phenomenon – only the key issues could be analysed within the framework of the ARA 2008. It is acknowledged that when scanning the external environment, it is recommended to cover the whole scope of political, economical, social, technological, environmental and legal aspects (PESTEL analysis), but due to the time constraint and lack of resources, it was possible to concentrate on key factors only. Furthermore, as the ARA 2008 only adopts a short-term perspective, a full PESTEL analysis was not considered meaningful for this purpose.

Recommendations were developed on the basis of the assumption that vulnerabilities are caused firstly due to an intelligence gap or lack of awareness which can be remedied by intelligence gathering, better information flow/exchange and training. Vulnerabilities may also result from the lack of resources either technical assets or human resources. This can be overcome by building technical capacities or by launching joint operations (JOs).



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[Redacted]

Taken into account that Romanian and Bulgarian nationals have not been included in the statistics on migration as from 2007, the overall situation shows a status quo or a slight upward trend. A similar pattern was noticed in 2005 when nationals of the ten new Member States were not included in the official statistics anymore as illegal migrants. Especially the pressure at the air and land borders seems to be on the increase.

3.1.1 Land Borders

More than half of all the detections of illegal border crossings reported by Member States were made at the external land borders.

[Redacted]

- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]

3.1.3 Air Borders

The number of detections at the air borders increased when compared to 2006. [REDACTED]

3.1.4 Nationalities

Reportedly, Albanian nationals were detected crossing the EU external border illegally most often (figure 3). [REDACTED] Iraqi nationals were on the second place and [REDACTED] and at the air borders of various Member States. Moroccan illegal migrants, who were usually detected at the sea borders, but also at the land border between Spain and Morocco, were the third most detected nationals. The nationals of Afghanistan, Egypt, Algeria, Eritrea and Somalia were detected at the sea borders, while illegal migrants from Palestine, Pakistan and Serbia mainly at the land borders. Chinese nationals were mainly detected at the air borders, followed by Brazilians.

FIGURE 3: Illegal Border Crossings in 2007 by Nationality.

Nationality	Total	Land	Air	Sea
Albania	46,101	45,673	256	172
Iraq	12,103	7,933	1,491	2,679
Morocco	11,144	3,266	205	5,119
Afghanistan	7,068	1,399	53	5,616
Palestinian Territory, Occupied	5,784	4,290	14	1,480
Egypt	5,531	9	59	5,463
Algeria	4,030	495	68	3,467
Eritrea	3,704	193	16	3,495
Somalia	3,347	619	188	2,540
Pakistan	2,703	2,374	118	211
Syrian Arab Republic	2,255	2,109	123	23
China	2,196	429	1,473	294
Brazil	2,176	7	480	36
Serbia	2,024	1,895	111	18
Nigeria	1,815	181	308	1,326
Turkey	2,580	858	401	1,321
Senegal	933	10	627	169
Tunisia	1,564	119	1	1,444
India	1,506	457	321	728
Moldova, Republic of	1,472	1,195	248	29
Other	40,096	8,633	9,831	13,878
Total	160,132	82,144	16,392	49,508



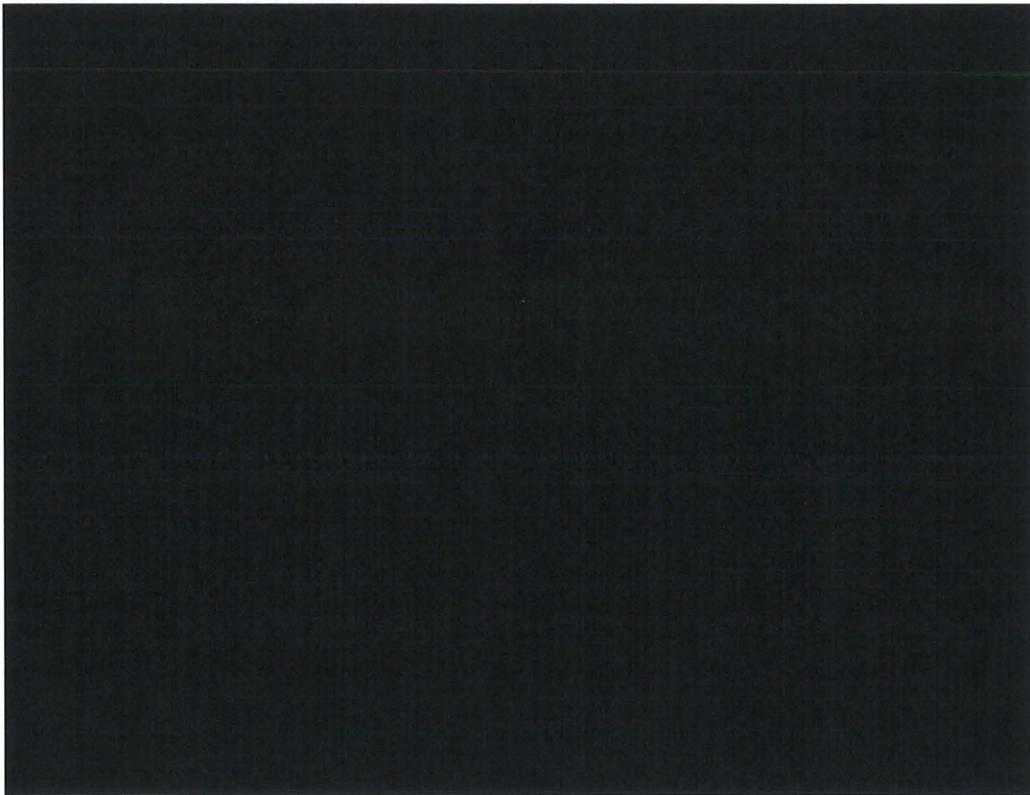
3.1.5 Pressure at the External Borders of the Member States

In 2007, the main areas in Europe identified as highly affected³ by illegal migration (figure 4) according to the number of detections and apprehensions of illegal migrants were:

- Land borders in South-Eastern Europe, e 

- Air borders in North and West Europe, 
- Sea borders in South and South-Eastern Europe, especially 


FIGURE 4: Hot Spots at the External Borders of the Member States in 2007.



³ Detections in these areas were 15 per cent or more of the overall figure at that particular type of border.

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The highest number of refusals took place at the land borders of the Member States. Nationals of Turkey were also refused entry at the EU land borders with the Western Balkan countries and at the air borders [REDACTED]

FIGURE 6: Refusals of Entry in 2007 by Nationality and Type of Border.

Nationality	Total	Land	Air	Sea
Ukraine	21,128	20,446	446	236
Brazil	10,338	29	10,158	151
Belorus	10,158	10,038	108	12
Russia	7,871	6,696	1,022	153
Moldova, Republic of	6,353	5,918	409	26
Turkey	6,060	4,576	1,187	297
Serbia	5,719	5,371	329	19
Croatia	4,270	4,256	10	4
China	3,848	163	3,549	136
Morocco	3,679	132	3,282	265
India	2,832	45	914	1,873
Nigeria	2,384	28	2,333	23
Paraguay	2,215		2,215	
Macedonia	1,987	1,935	51	1
United States of America	1,929	26	1,838	65
Bolivia	1,611	5	1,587	19
South Africa	1,379		1,368	11
Venezuela	1,313		1,313	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,143	1,098	45	
Malaysia	1,108		1,095	13
Other	33,774	3,816	26,840	3,118
Total	131,099	64,578	60,099	6,422

The refusals of Chinese nationals took place at all airports of the Member States, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

3.3 Detections of False or Falsified Documents

Member States detected more than 20,000 Third Country nationals using false or falsified travel documents in 2007. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

FIGURE 8: Origin of the False or Falsified Documents in 2007 by Alleged Issuing Country and Type of Border.

Country of Document	Total	Land	Air	Sea
France	2,013	429	1,220	187
Romania	1,753	1,285	334	77
Italy	1,656	529	916	152
Bulgaria	807	520	234	8
Ukraine	771	765	6	
Venezuela	736	5	731	
Belgium	634	94	493	48
Poland	621	535	81	5
Nigeria	619	27	294	2
Germany	605	262	313	30
Spain	499	56	430	13
Portugal	481	160	134	84
United Kingdom	460	62	115	23
Hungary	364	350	14	
Netherlands	364	108	165	65
Greece	337	89	218	30
Lithuania	331	166	76	46
South Africa	244	1		
Serbia	238	234	4	
Slovakia	233	222	9	2
Other	7,191	1,628	5,093	451
Total	20,957	7,538	10,880	1,223

3.4 Suspected Facilitators

More than 11,500 suspected facilitators were detected by Member States Border Guard authorities in 2007. More than half of the detections took place inland and one quarter at the land borders of the Member States (figure 9).

FIGURE 10: Suspected Facilitators in 2007 by Nationality.

Nationality	Total	Land	Air	Sea	Not established (inland)
Italy	1,148	12	1	8	1,127
China	869	3	15		792
Albania	681	321	1	4	355
Iraq	512	84	19	16	43
Turkey	449	283	13	78	75
Morocco	355		1		244
Romania	346	164	18	12	152
Greece	343	269	2		72
Poland	285	168	1	11	105
Slovakia	253	222		3	28
Slovenia	227	5	1		221
Hungary	205	174	23		8
Germany	192	111	7	22	52
Egypt	189	3	1	8	177
Ukraine	185	130	2		53
France	177	41	7	20	99
Czech Republic	175	158			17
Bulgaria	171	154		5	12
Serbia	146	121	3	1	21
Pakistan	117	12		1	103
Other	4,551	727	150	210	3,075
Total	11,576	3,162	265	399	6,831

3.5 Illegal Stay

In total, Member States reported more than 260,000 detections of illegal stay in 2007. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Most Member States reported illegal stay inland only and not at exit checks [REDACTED]

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FIGURE 12: Illegal Stay in 2007 by Nationality and Place of Detection.

Nationality	Total	Inland	Exit
Morocco	27,197	16,856	42
Iraq	24,389	21,842	210
Brazil	16,966	13,479	366
Ukraine	10,839	7,950	2,813
Algeria	10,615	8,558	83
China	8,961	6,648	880
Albania	8,782	8,771	11
India	7,656	5,376	101
Turkey	7,001	4,358	2,643
Bolivia	6,819	553	1
Senegal	6,361	3,694	2
Serbia	5,929	4,805	1,124
Tunisia	5,415	5,397	18
Moldova, Republic of	4,888	4,524	364
Nigeria	4,322	2,801	22
Somalia	4,189	3,332	6
Afghanistan	4,002	1,706	2
Russia	4,001	2,185	1,816
Pakistan	3,732	1,899	7
Egypt	3,727	3,668	59
Other	87,218	64,809	5,337
Total	263,009	193,211	15,907

Most detected illegal aliens came from 1) the neighbouring countries such as Ukraine, Albania, Serbia, Turkey and Moldova, 2) North Africa, 3) long-term conflict areas such Iraq, Somalia and Afghanistan, or 4) from the most populous countries in the world (Brazil, China, India and Nigeria). The only exception to these categories was Bolivian nationals, who were mainly detected in Spain.

3.6 Asylum Claims

Member States reported almost 150,000 asylum claims in 2007 (figure 13). [REDACTED]

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[Redacted]

4 Main Routes to the EU

4.1 Western African Route

4.1.1 Nexus Points and Nationalities

Western African route is a combination of land and sea routes including several by-passing itineraries. The route usually departs from the continental Africa, but sometimes even from Asia. Illegal migrants of African origin mainly come from Central Western Africa.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

FIGURE 14: Illegal Border Crossings on the Western African Route in 2007 by Nationality.

Third country	[Redacted]
Morocco	2,684
Algeria	1,500
Senegal	1,284
Gambia	971
Guinea	817
Mali	709
Cote d'Ivoire	576
Ghana	295
Guinea-Bissau	247
Burkina Faso	92
Other	2,576
Total	11,751

⁴ TRA on Asian Migration through Africa, Frontex, February 2008.

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[Redacted text block]

4.1.2 Facilitation and Modi Operandi

Illegal migrants of African origin pay from EUR 304 to EUR 1,219⁶ for the crossing to the Canarys on a *Cayuco*. [Redacted text]

As there are more job opportunities and more knowledge on risks related to illegal migration to Europe in the coastal areas, facilitators mainly target would-be migrants in rural areas. Local religious authorities are allegedly involved in human smuggling; [Redacted text]

Chinese, Indian and Pakistani criminal groups facilitating human smuggling to Europe through Africa offer package deals with a money-back-guarantee for an average price of EUR 17,000. [Redacted text]

Illegal migrants departing from Senegal and Mauritania are provided with accommodation in Dakar, Zinguichor, in the province of Casamance, Saint-Louis du Senegal and Nouadhibou.

Migrants coming from Central Africa usually stop in the border area between Mali and the Republic of Guinea before reaching the capital, Conakry. Migrants are taken care by criminal groups from Guinea-Bissau, are hidden in safe-houses in Sao Domingos, Bugueguette, Varela and the Bijagos Islands.

4.2 Central Mediterranean Route

4.2.1 Nexus Points and Nationalities

The Central Mediterranean route funnels migrants from Central-Northern Africa and even from the Horn of Africa to Europe. It follows one of the oldest routes in the world – the Nile Valley. As the route also attracts migrants from the Maghreb countries, another branch of the route crosses the Libyan Desert from Niger. Migrants board on fishing boats or specifically designed boats departing from the North African coast to the European islands in the Central Mediterranean Sea.

⁵ 'Frontex English.xls' provided by Spanish NFPOC, 28 January 2008.

⁶ Original prices are in CFA Francs (from CFA 200,000 to CFA 800,000).

⁷ [Redacted footnote text]

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[Redacted]

The origin of the land route is in the Central-Northern African region; Sudan and its secessionist province of Darfur, Chad where refugees from Darfur are looking for a safe-haven and Niger, which is a major transit country for migrants. From Niger migrants reach the nexus point of Chirfa to Tamanrasset or Djanet in Algeria. From there they cross the Sahara northwards to Ghat in Libya before heading to the final land destination of Sabah, Ghadamis and Tripoli.

Another flow takes a land route passing through Khartoum from where facilitators smuggle illegal migrants to Libya through Al-Awayanal up to the Al-Koufrah oasis.

The last main route departs from Gao in Mali to Adrar in Algeria from where illegal migrants are transported by cars along Tanezrouft to Ghardaïa, then Ghadames and finally to Tripoli.

The ports of departure to cross the Mediterranean Sea are in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia:

[Redacted]

In Libya migrants depart from Zuwara, Zliten, Misratah and Tripoli on the Tripolitan Coast and the Benghazi region on the Cyrenaica.

[Redacted]

An emerging trend of mainly young Algerian nationals boarding more or less seaworthy fishing boats to cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe was reported by the affected Member States during the summer. [Redacted]

[Redacted] The sudden flow resulted most likely from the strengthened border control measures on the West African route. [Redacted]

The points of departure for Algerian illegal migrants were widespread along the Algerian coast until the Tunisian border.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

FIGURE 15: Illegal Border Crossings on the Central Mediterranean Route in 2007 by Nationality.

Third country	Total		
Egypt	5,144		
Eritrea	3,221		
Morocco	2,354		
Algeria	1,773		
Tunisia	1,442		
Iraq	1,215		
Somalia	1,108		
Nigeria	1,056		
Ghana	776		
Cote d'Ivoire	460		
Other	4,762		
Total	23,311		

4.2.2 Facilitation and Modi Operandi

Facilitation usually starts in the source countries. OCGs flourish in the Horn of Africa, especially in Somalia even to the extent that Puntland has become a nexus of all kind of criminal activities. OCGs are affiliated to 'warlords' who have ruled Somalia since the early 1990's. Migrants are smuggled firstly through the Gulf of Aden to Yemen which closed its borders in January 2007.

The price for a trip to Europe is USD 500 to USD 1,200. Depending on the amount paid, migrants either cross the Libyan border in trucks or pick-ups or on foot in the region of Ghadames guided by smugglers. On many occasions, interviewed illegal migrants referred to law enforcement officers involved in the smuggling, especially in Libya. In addition, Libya is traditionally a stronghold for OCGs. Reportedly, OCGs recruit migrants actively in Tunisia, for instance in Sfax.

There are several stop-overs along the Central African route. The main transit and lodging area is Al-Koufrah oasis, located at the exit of the corridors of al-Awaynat, close to the Sudanese border, and of Abd-el-Malek mountains close to the Egyptian border. The oasis seems to be a hub for criminal activities; migrants are lodged there as long as needed to negotiate a better price that can reach USD 2,000 to USD 2,500.

Another stop-over in the departing port is needed to keep groups of migrants ready for the crossing at short notice. Facilitators shelter migrants in groups of 30-200 people for two to fifteen days (sometimes even longer) in safe-houses usually close to the beach.

Embarkation varies depending on the point of departure and its remoteness from the closest entry point to Europe.

¹¹ Final Evaluation Report JO NAUTILUS 2007, Frontex/RAU, October 2007.

Justification 4

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Illegal migrants of African origin usually cross the continent with their genuine IDs or passports before destroying them during the sea journey. On arrival they claim either that they lost them or that facilitators seized their documents.

4.3 Eastern Mediterranean Route

4.3.1 Nexus Points and Nationalities

Eastern Mediterranean route originates in the Middle-East and Central Asia transiting through Turkey, where it is divided into Eastern Mediterranean (sea) route and Eastern Balkan (land) route.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Most Afghani illegal migrants interviewed during the JO POSEIDON 2007, departed from Mazar-e Sharif in Afghanistan to Arat from where they continued to Masshad in Iran. They crossed Iran (Teheran, Tabriz) in eight days to two months and entered Turkey in the border region of Oromya and Van. After this they travelled 20-30 days to Istanbul.

Migrants escaping from conflict and war zones were the most numerous among illegal migrants taking the Eastern Mediterranean route. They originated from Afghanistan, Somalia, Palestine, and Iraq (figure 16).

¹² 'HERMES Background Paper', JO HERMES, March 2008.

FIGURE 16: Illegal Border Crossings on the Eastern Mediterranean Route in 2007 by Nationality.

Third country	Greece
Afghanistan	4,562
Somalia	1,411
Palestinian Territory Occupied	1,226
Iraq	890
Egypt	311
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	159
India	110
Pakistan	108
Eritrea	93
Turkey	73
Cote d'Ivoire	399
Total	9,342

According to Cyprus, mainly nationals of Syria (2,021), Palestine (1,074), Iran, Iraq and even Georgia firstly landed in the part of the island not effectively under the control of the Cypriot government from Turkey or Syria, after which they were detected while crossing the cease-fire green line.

The economic migrants taking the Eastern Mediterranean route came mainly from Egypt, Libya and India.

4.3.2 Facilitation and Modi Operandi

Some Turkish OCGs facilitate illegal migration across the border to the EU, while in other cases migrants are assisted until reaching final destination in the EU. Migrants transiting Turkey are usually taken in charge by different local smugglers. Migrants interviewed during the JO POSEIDON 2007 reported how, after having been smuggled from the border village of Van, they were led to Istanbul, where they were dispatched in lodges, safe-house or small hotels for which they had to pay and where they were kept under custody. [REDACTED]

Allegedly, the number of involved facilitators is high; they keep eye on their 'human merchandise' and protect themselves by for instance, changing frequently their SIM cards and using pseudonyms. Usually collective departures by small inflatable boats are organised to overwhelm the surveillance display. Facilitators provided migrants with life-jackets and briefed them on how to operate the boat and to claim to be an Afghan, Iraqi or Palestinian nationals.¹⁴

Illegal migrants taking the sub-route from Turkey and Syria to Cyprus usually try to board fishing boats or even regular ferries to the part of the island not controlled by the Cypriot government, in

¹³ Final Assessment of JO POSEIDON 2007, Frontex/RAU-S1, 15 October 2007.

¹⁴ Athens News Agency, 7 October 2007.