

**FRONTEX EVALUATION REPORT 2014****EPN CONCEPT****JO EPN Aeneas 2014****Operations Division  
Joint Operations Unit  
Sea Borders Sector**Approved at Warsaw  
/ / 2014.....  
Signature**Gil Arias**  
*Executive Director a.i.*

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**ANNEX:**

Observation of Fundamental Rights Officer

Operational activity number: 2014/SBS/06

Prepared by: [Redacted] Manager

- Presented at Directorate Meeting on .....
- Circulation Directorate

Approved by ED/ DED: .....  
Date

Director of Operations Division: .....  
Klaus Rösler

**Commented [A1]:** The non-disclosed text contains the names of actors participating in Frontex activities. The disclosure of such information would undermine the protection of the privacy and the integrity of the individual, in particular in accordance with EU laws regarding the protection of personal data. In this regard the text is not disclosed pursuant to the exception laid down in Article 4(1)(b) of Regulation (EC) 1049/2001.

## 1. Background information

### 1.1. Brief risk assessment

At the beginning of 2014, the migratory flows towards the south of Italy were affected mainly by the deterioration in stability in Syria receiving a massive influx of Syrian refugees departing directly from Syria and from the transit countries to Italy. During the first six months of 2014, more than 19 936 Syrian migrants arrived in the EU, using all the possible routes (air, land and sea). In addition, the worsening security situation in Afghanistan and the increase in terrorist activities in 2014, together with the approaching of the withdrawal of the international forces from Afghanistan, were emphasising the current outflow of Afghans fleeing their country towards the EU.

With regard to transit countries, at the beginning of 2014 the easy access to reach Egypt for Syrian migrants, as well as for migrants from the Horn of Africa and Sudan, was used by the facilitation networks to exploit the sea route from Egypt to Italy. In addition, at the beginning of 2014, Turkey continued to be the main departure country towards Italy with a large concentration of would-be migrants in Istanbul who arrived from Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

### 1.2. Operational aim

The operational aim of the JO EPN Aeneas 2014 was to implement activities at the external sea borders of the Central Mediterranean region in order to control irregular migration flows towards the territory of the MS of the EU and to tackle cross border crime.

### 1.3. Period of implementation and operational areas

JO EPN Aeneas 2014 started on 01 June 2014 (00:00 LT) and ended 30 September 2014 (24:00 LT).

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**Commented [A2]:** The blanked out parts contain information regarding the operational area. Their disclosure would expose law enforcement officials patrolling the area and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, thus facilitating irregular migration. This would undermine the protection of the public interest as regards public security. In light of the above, the text is not disclosed pursuant to the exception laid down in the first indent of Article 4(1)(a) of Regulation No 1049/2001.

#### 1.4. Participants

The Host MS<sup>1</sup> was Italy while the Home MS were Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. In total, 17 different authorities (3 from the Host MS and 14 from Home MS) took part in the activities.

In total 10 assets (5 from the Host MS and 5 from the Home MS) and 28 experts (8 from the Host MS and 20 from the Home MS) were deployed during the JO.

Frontex cooperation, established through the Italian points of contact during 2013 with European Police (EUROPOL) as well as European Maritime Security Agency (EMSA), European Fishery Control Agency (EMSA) and European Asylum Support Office (EASO), continued within JO EPN Aeneas 2014. In addition, cooperation with European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was established.

Albania, Georgia and Turkey took part in the JO by deploying observers as Third Countries (TC).

#### 1.5. Financial information

The budget initially committed for activities was equal to 2,000,000.00 €. The level of payments on 19 November 2014 was equal to 1,022,737.81 € (51 % of the committed budget). The amount of 928,657.35 € (47 %) is still to be paid.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of the present document, the term "Member State" includes also the States participating in the relevant development of the Schengen acquis in the meaning of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and its Protocol (No 19) on the Schengen acquis integrated into the framework of the European Union

## 2. Achievement of objectives

**Enhance border security:** Effective border control at external borders maintaining preventive effects, enhanced detection and prevention of cross border crime.

**Fully achieved** - JO EPN Aeneas 2014 has provided an effective border control at external borders of the EU in terms of decreased migration flows towards Southern Italy and maintaining preventive effect. It also enhanced the detection and prevention of cross border crime.

**Enhance efficiency of border security:** Detection of all targets enabling to intercept persons, to prevent unauthorized border crossings, to counter cross-border criminality and to take measures against persons who have crossed the border illegally as well as to report the other illegal activities observed.

**Fully achieved** - The total percentage of detections at sea during the JO showed the high percentage of incidents reported at sea compared to previous JOs, and together with zero fatality cases reported in JO over the past 3 years, highlights the rapid and effective intervention by assets patrolling in JO. Moreover, the JO increased the capabilities for detection of cross-border crimes like drug smuggling.

**Enhance operational cooperation:** High level of MS participation in JO; Enhanced inter-agency cooperation and cooperation between national authorities of Host MS as well as on EU level; seeking involvement of TC in operational activities; Multi-character operational concept applied.

**Fully achieved** - The level of Home MS in JO was high. The level of cooperation among authorities of the Host MS has increased. The cooperation with other EU agencies, bodies and international organizations has reached a very good level in terms of regular exchange of information via well established and functioning communication channels. Good level of cooperation with TCs was reached by familiarizing the TC observers with Host MS operational structures and activities within JO.

**Enhance exchange of information:** Collection of operational information from all actors involved in order to obtain intelligence, thus improving the risk assessments that underpin the operational activities.

**Partly achieved** - In 2014 the rapid mobilisation of the Joint Debriefing Team (JDT) in the landing areas, especially in Crotone, confirmed the added value of this deployment. The information collected was new and provided an updated understanding of the irregular migration flows arriving in the south of Italy. The collected information assisted Frontex in detecting emerging trends and the analysis of the information recommended operational responses at local and regional level, as well as at horizontal level (other Frontex coordinated JOs linked to JO EPN Aeneas).

The Team Leader (TL) Landing Report and EUROPOL Template facilitated the exchange of information among the participants involved in the JO.

As mentioned already last year the exchange of Liaison Officers (LO) between International Coordination Center (ICC) Pratica di Mare and ICC Piraeus being satisfactory at operational level needs to be improved concerning intelligence sharing by the LOs deployed in ICC Pratica di Mare.

**Enhance efficiency of the exchange of information:** Implementation of fully automated online reporting system; Seeking standardized format and quality of the reports and interviews.

**Fully achieved** - The information exchange between all the actors involved in JO was successful. The daily information package proved to be the most efficient way of reporting between the ICC and Frontex. The validation process of the incidents inserted in Joint Operations Reporting Application<sup>2</sup> (JORA) that required a subsequent modification has positively improved in 2014, reducing the number of requests.

The pool of four Intelligence Officers (IO) created by the Italian authorities in order to carry out the related tasks in the ICC and the pool of TL, who are members of the Italian Task Force, with full dedication to the

<sup>2</sup> <https://fis.frontex.europa.eu/jora/>

Frontex activities during their deployment has proved to be a successful system when related to the quality and the efficiency of the exchange of information, as well as when managing the JDT.

**Identify possible risks and threats:** Updated knowledge about the irregular migration related criminal activities and networks operating in the area and higher identification of the risks and threats related.

**Fully achieved** - The information gathered during the debriefing activities facilitated the identification of some of the facilitation networks involved in the smuggling of persons to the south of Italy (information shared with EUROPOL), as well as relevant information on the profile of the migrants, routes and places where the migrants stayed/transited. This information was then used to assist the police in identifying and arresting facilitators involved in the smuggling of irregular migrants. In addition, a constant awareness was elaborated thanks to the detailed information gathered by the JDT regarding the security situation in most of the countries of origin and transit, in particular information regarding the situation of minority groups.

**Establish and exchanges best practices:** Fostering practical cooperation between the authorities involved in prevention and tackling irregular migration as well as cross-border crime; Delivering workshops, briefings, operational meetings to participants.

**Fully achieved** - JO fostered the practical cooperation between the Host MS authorities as well as with other authorities involved in JO in terms of tackling irregular migration and cross-border crime. The centralized operational briefings in ICC Rome, which were delivered to all experts, National Officials (NO) and observers at the beginning of each deployment, offered the Italian authorities and Frontex staff an opportunity to outline common approaches to all new participants of the JO. The briefing for the crew members was delivered via NO deployed to ICC. The support of the Debriefing Adviser to the JDT enhanced the quality and the efficiency in the performance of the experts, and increased the shared experience, knowledge gained and best practices in debriefing activities amongst the participants.

The consolidation of the EUROPOL Template (recording the information exchange with EUROPOL), and the TL Landing Report template (first information and intelligence gathered upon the arrival of migrants) proved to be good for gathering and sharing information among all the participants. These two templates have been proposed to be used in all Frontex maritime operations.

**Support establishment of permanent structures:** Continue fostering cooperation/information exchange between MS NCC/ICC/LCC (Local Coordination Centre).

**Fully achieved** - ICC Pratica di Mare played a decisive role in managing the assets at their disposal with the support of the LCC Taranto. The level of cooperation and management of the Debriefing Experts between the IO, the TL and the National Coordination Centre (NCC) was effective and the results of the sound teamwork proved successful in gathering information.

**Support provisions of trainings:** Implementation of targeted specific training activities.

**Fully achieved** - In order to update the staff of the ICC on pollution control issues, EMSA delivered to the ICC via video-conference a specific training on pollution control. The knowledge acquired during the video-conference was later on delivered by the Italian Guardia Costiera LO to each of the crews participating in the JO.

JORA training was provided on spot to LCC, ICC and NCC staff by a Frontex Support Officer (FSO). JORA refreshment training for ICC operators was delivered in Frontex HQ.

### 3. Link to other Frontex activities and best practices

**EPN Concept:** JO EPN Aeneas 2014 and JO EPN Hermes 2014, both under the umbrella of the EPN Concept, have been focusing on irregular migration and cross border crime in the Central Mediterranean. Both JO have been coordinated from the ICC Pratica di Mare. Migrants rescued within Mare Nostrum/JO EPN Hermes and disembarked in the ports of Calabria and Apulia regions were interviewed by JDT deployed within JO EPN Aeneas.

**JO Poseidon Sea 2014:** there has been an exchange of LOs at operational level between ICC Pratica di Mare and ICC Piraeus. 2 LO from Hellenic Coast Guard were deployed to the ICC Pratica di Mare, and 2 LO from Italian Polizia di Stato (PdS) (on rotation basis) were deployed to ICC Piraeus, with the view to facilitate the information exchange and operational cooperation between Italian and Hellenic authorities.

**EPN Staff Exchange:** the EPN Staff Exchange was implemented in order to reinforce the cooperation among the operational structures, involved in implementing JOs at sea borders, specifically exchange of TL. Officers from Italy participated in the EPN Staff Exchange by visiting different JOs as well as accepted the visitors from the other MS.

In September, TLs from Italy, Greece and Spain participated in the first staff exchange involving debriefing TLs. The first meeting was organized in Italy, visiting the debriefing sites in Bari and Crotona. The exchange of working procedures and experiences regarding debriefing activities and flow of information between TLs, IO and OA, resulted in highlighting those best practices when dealing with the new migrants arrived, as well as in the reinforcement of the protocols and templates used to gather and share information. For this purpose, the Frontex debriefing adviser participated in both meetings in order to emphasize best practices and main purposes of the debriefing activities in the landing areas, as well as in the reception centres.

## 4. Assessment of joint operational activities

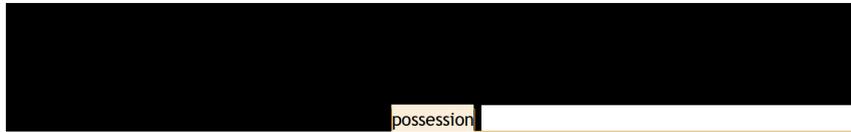
### 4.1. Supporting Response

#### 4.1.1. Operational concept

The Italian authorities were responsible for all border-related operational activities in the operational areas and in the reception/detention centres. On behalf of Italy, the main Frontex partners of JO EPN Aeneas 2014 were PdS, Guardia di Finanza (GdF) and Guardia Costiera (GC).

According to risk analysis, allocated budget and experience from previous JO, Frontex planned the operation in close cooperation with the Italian authorities defining an operational concept with the needed number and profiles/type of resources to be deployed. The participating MSs contributed with requested human and technical resources allowing enough flexibility adapted to local circumstances during the operational period.

The actions during the implementation of the JO consisted of the deployment of assets and Debriefing Experts, aiming to perform border surveillance and information gathering, thus providing additional support to the Italian authorities in the management of the external border of the EU.



The ICC staff and all the participants in the JO were constantly briefed about the last findings and risk indicators, routes and *modus operandi* during the JCB meetings on a daily basis and via the Weekly Analytical Reports (WAR).

The fundamental rights of the individuals were safeguarded during the JO. All operational activities at sea were conducted in full compliance with EU law, the relevant national legislation and existing provisions of international law. Consequently, no allegations on possible violations of fundamental rights during the JO have been reported.

#### 4.1.2. Operational results

From 1 June to 30 September 2014, 34 incidents were reported in the areas of Apulia and Calabria. Of the 34 incidents, 29 incidents related to illegal migration involving the apprehension of 2 196 irregular migrants and the arrest of 12 facilitators (Egyptian, Turkish, Italian and Pakistani). A decreasing trend (-11%) can be noted in the number of migrants apprehended during the operational period, compared to the same period of 2013. During the operational period, the main nationalities reported in the areas of Apulia and Calabria were Syrian (1 640), Pakistani (119), Somali (118), Afghan (106), Iraqi (91), Egyptian (47), and Bangladeshi (26).

<sup>3</sup> CARA - Center Accoglienza Richiedenti Asilo (center for asylum seekers in Italy)

**Commented [A3]:** The blanked out parts contain operational information regarding the modus operandi of law enforcement officials. Their disclosure would jeopardize the work of law enforcement officials and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, thus facilitating irregular migration. Therefore, public security will be affected. In light of the above, the text is not disclosed pursuant to the exception laid down in the first indent of Article 4(1)(a) of Regulation No 1049/2001 relating to the protection of the public interest as regards public security.

The operational areas of Aeneas in the Ionian Sea reported zero fatalities in 2014, as in previous years. Of the total number of incidents reported (34) during the JO Aeneas 2014, 56% were reported inland and 44% at sea. This percentage of detections at sea and inland is similar to previous years. During the 122 days of the joint operation, 10 vessels required search and rescue interventions. During these SAR operations, a total of 958 migrants were rescued.

In addition, four incidents were reported in Apulia and Calabria related to drug smuggling and involved with the seizure of 2 692 Kg of marijuana, and the arrest of four Albanian smugglers. One other incident related to other activities at the Italian blue border. No incidents related to pollution were reported during the operational period.

Of the total number of irregular migrants who arrived in the operational areas of Apulia and Calabria from 1 June to 30 September (2 196), -43% departed from Turkey, -26% departed from Greece, -26% departed from Egypt while 5% departed from unconfirmed locations.

Compared to previous years, the migratory flows towards Apulia and Calabria during the operational period in 2014 showed the following trends: +130% increase in the number of vessels arrived directly from Turkey; -55% decrease in the number of vessels arrived directly from Egypt; and -29% decrease in the number of secondary movements from Greece.

The total number of interviews carried out during the period of the JO Aeneas 2014 was 177 (Bari 88 and Crotone 89). In addition, 61 landing reports were issued by the debriefing teams in Bari and Crotone (including those disembarkations related to the JO Hermes). Besides interviewing those migrants who arrived in the regions of Apulia and Calabria, the debriefing experts provided support to the JO Hermes interviewing those migrants intercepted at sea in the Central Mediterranean and afterwards transferred for disembarkation to ports located in the regions of Apulia and Calabria.

#### *EU added value of the operational activity*

The main purpose of the activities developed within JO was to further develop a permanent and flexible cooperation framework enabling MS to tackle identified threats and risks affecting the EU external maritime borders. In this sense, Frontex provided sustainable operational presence and information exchange/gathering in the operational areas at external borders, thus substantially contributing to the situational awareness. Moreover, cooperation and coordination with other EU entities was enhanced while addressing the irregular migration phenomenon.

The operational activities of JO contributed to a consolidated approach by the MS to the prevention and effective management irregular migration phenomenon on EU level; detecting, preventing and reacting to cross-border crime activities, reporting incidents to the competent authorities of the Host MS and other EU agencies and bodies.

#### **4.1.3. Operational coordination structures**

The ICC was established in the premises of the GdF in Pratica di Mare in Rome. The ICC partly met Frontex requirements for the JO.

[REDACTED] same [REDACTED]

The LCC was established in Taranto, in the premises of GdF, thus providing the ICC with close to real time maritime operational picture in order to coordinate the maritime and aerial assets participating in the JO. The LCC also performed the task of updating the JORA database.

**Commented [A4]:** The blanked out parts contain operational information regarding the coordination structures of law enforcement officials. Their disclosure would jeopardize the work of law enforcement officials and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, thus facilitating irregular migration. Therefore, public security will be affected. In light of the above, the text is not disclosed pursuant to the exception laid down in the first indent of Article 4(1)(a) of Regulation No 1049/2001 relating to the protection of the public interest as regards public security.

The practical deployment and operational coordination of the national and foreign resources was led by the JCB according to the Operational Plan. There were no major shortcomings in that regard identified.

The role of the NCC was mainly related to the final validation of the incidents in the JORA. Good level of cooperation between the NCC and the IO deployed in the ICC allowed all participants to be updated as regards the statistics and intelligence.

The facilities used in the centres of Bari and Crotone were sufficiently equipped to host the debriefing activities.

The establishment of a pool of TLs in Bari and Crotone has facilitated the contact and the support to the local/regional authorities, including the support to the police stations, reception centres and the immigration offices. In addition to the pool of TLs, a new protocol has been established by the Italian authorities within the JDTs, which reinforces the contact with the local authorities. This protocol establishes that the TL has to arrange a meeting with the local authorities in order to introduce them all the members of the JDT (guest officers and cultural mediators). This initial meeting has been highly appreciated by the local authorities, as well as by the guest officers. This first contact at local level has facilitated the activities of the JDT at the landing points and inside the reception centres.

#### 4.1.4. Resources deployed

##### *Assessment of capacity and performance of deployed human resources*

During the JO 17 different authorities from 13 MSs contributed with the deployments. In total 28 experts (8 from the Host MS and 20 from the Home MS) were deployed<sup>4</sup>:

- 13 Debriefing Experts including 2 Seconded Guest Officers (SGO)
- 5 National Officials (NO) from Home MS
- 2 Team Leaders of JDT
- 2 Cultural Mediators
- 2 Liaison Officers from Host MS deployed to ICC Piraeus
- 2 Liaison Officers from Greece deployed to ICC Pratica di Mare
- 1 LCC staff
- 1 Liaison Officer - Technical Equipment (LO-TE)

ICC Coordinator, ICC staff, IO and Guardia Costiera LO were deployed within JO EPN Hermes 2014 and were acting for both JO EPN Hermes and Aeneas. They carried out their tasks with high level of professionalism and commitment.

The level of cooperation between the IO and the TL was effective and the results of the sound teamwork proved successful in gathering information. In this regard, the JDTs were able to immediately collect information and evidence at the disembarkation points. The information related to the transfer of migrants from the location of disembarkation to the CARA centres was promptly reported to the IO.

The information provided by the aerial/maritime assets and the information gathered by the JDTs, contributed towards formulating recommendations regarding planning of maritime/aerial activities in terms of effective patrolling.

It is important to maintain the current structure and operational activation of the JDT and the IO. The participation of the members of the pool and their rotation during the operational period allowed to take advantage of the knowledge of the JO and the expertise gained in previous operations by the team leaders and intelligence officer.

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<sup>4</sup> ICC staff was deployed within JO EPN Hermes

Several positive aspects could be gleaned from the deployment of the Debriefing Experts as SGO in the framework of the JO. For instance, with regard to debriefing activities, the flexibility and mobility of the Debriefing Experts (SGO) and the longer period of deployment provided continuity of activities from month to month. In addition, the knowledge gathered during the longer period enhanced the quality of the information gathered. The Debriefing Experts (SGO) supported the TL in the transmission of the knowledge gained during the deployment to the new experts deployed on monthly basis.

The LO-TE on board of Home MS aerial assets have been very effective advisors, using their knowledge in the area and overcoming sometimes the language barriers when there was a need to contact directly the local authorities or other assets in the area.

The deployment of NOs in the ICC has proved to be an added value for the proper implementation of the operational activities. NOs have all the knowledge about the crew, the asset, their surveillance capabilities and can provide the recommendations during the JCB meetings based on this knowledge.

#### *Assessment of capacity and performance of deployed technical equipment*

During the JO EPN Aeneas 2014, 5 Fixed Wing Airplanes (FWA) were deployed from 4 Home MS: France, Greece, Poland and 2 deployments from Spain. The Host MS deployed a helicopter in [redacted] area.

All FWA and helicopter deployed in the JO fulfilled the number of hours committed in the SFDs.

All the aerial assets deployed were equipped with sufficient surveillance systems.

The aerial assets were the most important tool for surveillance, detection and identification. Aerial surveillance was assured for all the period of JO, when the high number of migrants was expected to arrive. In order to fit into budget, out of 5 FWA deployed within JO EPN Aeneas 4 were short range. The short range FWA were able to deliver the same number of hours as long range by performing sometimes 2 missions a day and are cost effective, however the coverage of patrolling area remains limited.

The aerial-naval coordination worked very well due to the deployment of LO-TE on board of each FWA.

A total of 4 CPBs were deployed by the Host MS during the JO per month - [redacted]

Deployment of CPBs as fast interception boats was an important tool to implement the concept of the JO. Due to the fact that CPBs have high speed and low draft they are good for interception of targets in the shallow coastal waters.

Flexible deployment and implementation of the proper operational concept has been the key of success of the participating assets. Throughout the JO participants demonstrated maximum flexibility in terms of accepting the changes into mission schedule and readiness to perform unplanned missions when required.

## 4.2. Situational Awareness

### 4.2.1. Threats and Risks, *modus operandi* and trends identified

[redacted]

**Commented [A5]:** The blanked out part contains information regarding the operational area. Their disclosure would expose law enforcement officials patrolling the area and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, thus facilitating irregular migration. This would undermine the protection of the public interest as regards public security. In light of the above, the text is not disclosed pursuant to the exception laid down in the first indent of Article 4(1)(a) of Regulation No 1049/2001.

**Commented [A6]:** The blanked out parts contain detailed information on the analytical findings and on the measures to be taken based on those findings. Their disclosure would be tantamount to releasing pieces of intelligence gathered by law enforcement officials to tackle irregular migration, as well as their follow up actions. The operation would lose its element of surprise. This would weaken similar current and future operations and facilitate irregular migration. In light of the above the text is not disclosed pursuant to the exception laid down in the first indent of Article 4(1)(a) of Regulation No 1049/2001 relating to the protection of the public interest as regards public security.

Syrian migrants continue to be the main nationality reported in the Ionian Sea, arriving from Egypt, Greece, and Turkey, while Somali migrants showed the highest increase in terms of percentage, thereby becoming the fifth ranked nationality in terms of numbers. Moreover, Somali migrants were comprised of a large number of females, all arriving from Greece.

During the period under review, the following *modi operandi* and trends were identified:

**From Turkey:**

- Turkey became the main departure country of irregular migrants in 2014. These migrants targeted the operational area of Calabria and the east coast of Sicily. During the operational period, a total of 953 irregular migrants arrived from Turkey, a 130% increase compared to the same period in 2013. A significant increase in the number of apprehensions was also reported on the east coast of Sicily (2 118). The increasing trend started to reported at the end of July.

The critical situation in Syria and Iraq has increased the number of migrants and refugees crossing the Turkish border and has also increased the number of migrants and refugees stranded in those cities close to the border or in Istanbul. Istanbul remained the main transit point of migrants arriving from Asia and Africa, as well as the main point of contact between would-be migrants and facilitators.

- The main nationalities departing from Turkey were Syrian, and to a lesser extent Afghan, Iraqi, Iranian and Pakistani.

**From Egypt:**

- During the operational period of the JO Aeneas, a total of 569 irregular migrants arrived from Egypt, a 55% decrease compared to the same period in 2013.
- In 2014, in terms of irregular migrant numbers, the route to Italy from Egypt showed a decrease in the operational area of Calabria, while a significant increase in the number of apprehensions on the east coast of Sicily (12 858) was recorded. The increase in arrivals in Sicily was related to a well-established facilitation networks from Egypt to Italy, which smuggled migrants from Egypt to the final destination in the North of Europe. In addition, migrants rescued in the Central Mediterranean by naval assets (*Mare Nostrum*) were transferred to the east coast of Sicily, increasing the number of detections in this area.

From Egypt, there are two main *modi operandi* used by facilitation networks to reach the EU.

- The main nationalities departing from Egypt were Syrian and to a lesser extent Egyptian.

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**From Greece:**

- During the operational period, a total of 572 irregular migrants arrived from Greece (secondary movements), a 29% decrease compared to the same period in 2013.

[REDACTED]

- The main nationalities departing from Greece were Syrian, Somali, Pakistani and to a lesser extent Iraqi and Bangladeshi. It is worth mentioning the exponential increase in the number of Somali migrants during the reporting period of the JO Aeneas. In particular, there was a high number of Somali females detected. Some females stated that they fled their country in order to avoid forced marriages with al Shabab fighters. Other females stated that they wanted to join their relatives who are established in northern countries, and who had financed their journey from Somalia to the EU. In addition, after the beginning of the conflict in Iraq, a slow increase in the number of Iraqi nationals was reported at the EU's external borders (land and sea borders) with Turkey and afterwards in the operational areas of Aeneas. The number of Afghan nationals apprehended in the JO Aeneas 2014 sharply decreased, because of the shift from the sea route to Italy towards the land route across Western Balkan countries, mainly due to the fact that the land route was considered cheaper than the sea route.

**Commented [A8]:** The blanked out parts contain detailed information on the analytical findings and on the measures to be taken based on those findings. Their disclosure would be tantamount to releasing pieces of intelligence gathered by law enforcement officials to tackle irregular migration, as well as their follow up actions. The operation would lose its element of surprise. This would weaken similar current and future operations and facilitate irregular migration. In light of the above the text is not disclosed pursuant to the exception laid down in the first indent of Article 4(1)(a) of Regulation No 1049/2001 relating to the protection of the public interest as regards public security.

#### 4.2.2. Information gathering and exchange

*Assessment of quality of information gathering, information flow and reporting between all actors involved in the operational activity. Information exchange applications used*

The reporting structure was carried out following the Operational Plan. The cornerstones consisted of the Daily Package, prepared by the ICC staff to be distributed to all involved actors/institutions and the use of JORA.

The Italian authorities reinforced the current intelligence structure of the IO and the JDT by creating a pool of officers, who rotates on a monthly basis and are fully dedicated to the assigned tasks when deployed in a Frontex JO. This structure has proved to be optimal regarding the quality of the information and intelligence gathered, and efficient concerning relations with the local authorities.

The prompt reaction of the IO to activate the JDT to be present during the disembarkation of newly arriving migrants continued to be efficient and improved the quality of the information gathered upon the arrival of the migrants and the information was shared among the participants of the JO. In particular, the information gathered and the smooth flow of information during the operational period met the expectations of the operational analyst.

[REDACTED]

Technical Equipment Mission Reports from participating assets were delivered timely, contributing updated maritime situational awareness.

The Operational Team upheld a prompt and effective channeling of organisational and logistical information.

The information exchange between all the actors involved in the JO worked out well. The ICC, MS crew members and deployed experts were constantly updated about changes in the operational area, flows, risk

indicators, risk profiles and typical *modus operandi* of cross-border crime in the defined area by the OA weekly and bi-weekly analytical reports/updates.

The Frontex Situation Centre (FSC) was responsible to manage close to real time the data processing by collecting, validating and compiling operational information. A constantly updated situational picture was provided through Daily Situational Reports (DSR) and the visualization in the JORA Dashboard and EUROSUR application. The JORA was used to exchange operational information with all the participants of the JO by collecting data via a standardized Incident Report template.

Furthermore FSC was responsible to provide a prompt response on serious incidents, based on information received through JORA, operational reports and open source information.

To provide a complete picture of the situation, the Senior Duty Officers (SDO), in FSC, were dependent on the Frontex Operational Coordinator report (FOC report) to manually insert additional information into the DSR.

During all implementation phases, FSC was reinforced with support officers deployed by participating Member States to Frontex HQ. The FSC was available during working days as well as on weekends.

The reporting performance in regards to timeliness arrival of incidents from the reporting units the following picture came apparent.

During the operational phase 34 incidents were reported to FSC. A very good result namely 73% of the incident reports were inserted in time according to the Operational Plan.

In the intermediate validation process (LCC/ICC) only 35% of the incidents were validated within the limits. The summary of the first and second point mentioned above results in 20% of 34 incidents were reported in due time to FSC. Compared to 2013 where 43 incidents were processed in JORA the overall reporting performance was 18% within the agreed time frame. An improvement of 2% in regards to timeliness reporting of incidents was achieved in 2014 but with less incidents processed. Bearing this in mind the reporting performance didn't change in 2014 compared to 2013.

The quality of the incident reports in terms of accuracy of data was on a good level which contributed to the quality of the FSC Daily Situational Reports. The number of incidents inserted (34) and validated in JORA that required a subsequent modification (29% of the total number of incidents reported) has been positively reduced in 2014 compared to last year. This reduction indicates an improvement in the validation process in order to reduce the requests of subsequent modifications.

In accordance with the Operational Plan, the operation was properly created in the JORA, and within the deadline.

The reporting structure was respondent to the operational needs, and the incident template for the data collection was created on time.

During the operation, the Service Management provided remote support to users, in accordance with the requests received, and managed accordingly the users' feedback.

From a technical perspective, the results of the implementation are considered satisfactory.

The Frontex-One-Stop-Shop (FOSS) portal was used in order to share operational-related information with all JO participants. In addition, e-mail service was used for daily reporting. FOSS was used according to the standards defined in the Operational Plan. Since FOSS is the main platform and central reference point for operational related information, it is recommended that awareness raising activities would be undertaken to further promote its use and functionalities, particularly among national authorities and at the deployment locations.

### 4.3. Development

#### 4.3.1. Operational cooperation

##### *Cooperation between host and home MS*

As the JO EPN Aeneas has been hosted by Italy since 2011, Italian authorities are familiar with the Operational Plan and the cooperation with Home MS was performed accordingly.

All participating MS that deployed assets in JO showed an excellent commitment to the activities developed with the needed flexibility.

In general, approach of the Host MS authorities in terms of supporting deployments of technical assets and human resources was positive.

##### *Cooperation between national authorities in host MS*

Since the establishment of the NCC in the Ministry of Interior in Rome, cooperation between GdF, GC and PdS has been enhanced and fostered further within JO every year. All 3 authorities were cooperating closely upon detection, interception and disembarkation of migrants in order to facilitate the information gathering, identification of facilitators/skipppers and to collect operational information related to incidents.

The establishment of the NCC has contributed also to overcome the lack of timely information flow in the past in regard to the incidents with the involvement of Carabinieri. As from 2013 the LO of the Carabinieri's is deployed in the NCC and contributing timely to the information flow.

ICC played an important role in enhancing the cooperation between the authorities. The presence of LO from GC in the ICC was crucial in terms of the daily cooperation between the authorities and specifically updating ICC concerning the SAR incidents.

##### *Cooperation with other Union agencies and bodies or international organizations*

Frontex established cooperation, through the Italian points of contact, with EUROPOL, as well as with EMSA, EFCA, EASO, FRA and UNHCR. In practice, the cooperation with the aforementioned institutions worked as following:

- **EUROPOL:** as initiated in 2013 in the two Frontex JOs launched in Italy, a new template was established to record all the information exchanged with EUROPOL. During the operational period, 51 interviews and 12 landing reports conducted in Bari and Crotone by the debriefing teams were selected by the IO, and sent to EUROPOL via EUROPOL's National Unit in Rome, which enables the flow of information between the Italian authorities, Frontex and EUROPOL in accordance with the agreement defined in the operational plan.

During the JO Aeneas 2014, the level of cooperation amongst Frontex, EUROPOL and the Italian authorities was high and information was constantly shared.

EUROPOL representative took part in the Planning Meetings of JO EPN Aeneas 2014 as well.

- **EMSA:** it was agreed that EMSA will receive through the Italian GC the whole collected information (pictures and/or videos) related to possible pollution cases that were detected by participating assets during patrolling activities. No pollution incidents were reported during the JO.

**Commented [A9]:** The blanked out parts contain information regarding the airports used, and the operational area. Their disclosure would expose law enforcement officials patrolling the area and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, thus facilitating irregular migration. This would undermine the protection of the public interest as regards public security. In light of the above, the text is not disclosed pursuant to the exception laid down in the first indent of Article 4(1)(a) of Regulation No 1049/2001.

**Commented [A10]:** The blanked out parts contain operational information regarding the modus operandi of law enforcement officials. Their disclosure would jeopardize the work of law enforcement officials and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, thus facilitating irregular migration. Therefore, public security will be affected. In light of the above, the text is not disclosed pursuant to the exception laid down in the first indent of Article 4(1)(a) of Regulation No 1049/2001 relating to the protection of the public interest as regards public security.

In order to improve the performance of participating assets, Frontex requested EMSA the possibility to provide the ICC with a specific training on pollution control that would be later on delivered to the crews of the participating in the JO by the Italian GC/LO, as defined in the Operational Plan. The training was provided via video-conference.

- **EFCA:** based on the existing Working Arrangement (signed on 25 November 2009) Frontex offered to EFCA the possibility to cooperate in the framework of the JO, based on the exchange of information/reports related to EFCA' activities in the maritime domain, specifically addressed to tackle irregular fishing activities. Emails and telephone were established as communication channels.

During JO no illegal fisheries were detected in the operational area.

- **EASO:** EASO received from Frontex on regular basis information about the migratory flows from the Middle East, Greece and Egypt towards Italy and intelligence on migratory patterns in the region.
- **UNHCR:** UNHCR updated regularly participants of the JO regarding their activities on centralized operational briefings in Rome.

#### *Cooperation with Third Countries*

Within JO EPN Aeneas 2014, 1 observer from each country: Albania, Georgia and Turkey were deployed in the ICC for the period of 1 week. During the deployment observers were familiarized with the JO by participating in centralized operational briefing and visiting the most relevant coordinating centres as NCC, MRCC and ICC with the view to be presented with the full scale of activities carried out.

#### *Frontex coordination role*

The Operational Team (OT) was composed of the Operational Manager (OM), 2 OT members, OA, Operational Support Officer and Assistant. OM was responsible for the overall planning, monitoring and evaluating of activities. The cooperation between Host MS authorities, in particular the Minister of Interior (MoI), Dipartimento della Pubblica Sicurezza, Direzione Centrale dell'Immigrazione e della Polizia delle Frontiere, Servizio Immigrazione 1st and 2nd Divisions) and the OM was excellent.

The implementation of the JO was monitored by a Frontex Coordinating Officer (FCO) assigned for JOs hosted by Italy.

The FOC was deployed continuously to coordinate the activities in the ICC, to monitor the implementation of the activities and foster the cooperation among the deployed resources of both JO EPN Aeneas and JO EPN Hermes. The FOC cooperated closely with Frontex HQ on a daily basis, particularly with the OT and FCO, as well as the ICC Coordinator and NOs.

The OA monitored the performance of the IO and the JDT, and issued Weekly Analytical Reports/Updates (WAR/U), presenting the analytical findings, making recommendations to improve the performances of the resources deployed, aiming to enhance the operational results. Furthermore, the OA made important recommendations to the IO in order to improve the quality of the information gathering process.

Operational component of the Frontex Liaison Office (FLO) provided limited support by briefing the air crew from Greece prior deployment to Italy.

#### **4.3.2. Operational briefing / debriefing**

A good preparation of deployed staff to any activity is a common objective and has impact on the operational success. In order to reach this objective, the new operational briefing concept was introduced by Frontex in March 2014, which consists of two complementary parts: the general briefing part provided by Frontex

and the national briefing part provided by the host MS (based on common briefing package, which has been launched by TRU).

Operational briefings to all participants of the JO were provided by the OT including respective RAU staff from HQ as well as the host MS on central level in the premises of the Ministry of Interior of Italy.

The centralized operational briefings were delivered to all participants, for the exception of the crew members, who received the operational briefings via NO. The centralized operational briefings were led and national part of the briefing delivered by the Ministry of Interior.

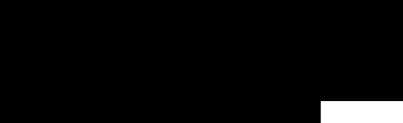
In second semester 2014 national briefings provided by Host MS were partly monitored by TRU due to quality management reasons.

On 2 September 2014 the operational briefing for 7 GOs and 2 Observers, who were participating in JO EPN Hermes and Aeneas, was monitored at Central Directorate for Immigration and Border Police of Italian Ministry of Interior in Rome/Italy. As a conclusion, the operational briefing has been accomplished; supportive feedback for further improvements has been shared with involved stakeholders, which could be taken into consideration for 2015.

The operational debriefings were mainly delivered by TLs on the spot.

The concept of operational briefings/debriefings introduced in JO 2013 proved to be operational and cost efficient.

## 5. Main conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions	Recommendations
<u>Supporting Response</u>	
<p>Although a decrease in the number of apprehensions was recorded during the JO compared to the same period in 2013, the operational period was planned in a way that it best supported the Host MS during the busiest months with the largest number of migrants apprehended compared to the rest of the year.</p>	
<p>During the JO 44% of the incidents reported were interceptions at sea. In addition, zero fatalities were reported.</p>	
	
<p>Four cases of drug smuggling reported during the JO indicates that multi-purpose operation concept and the use of Frontex JO as a platform for the “EU interagency cooperation” enhanced the level of border surveillance with regard to countering cross border criminality.</p>	<p>To continue the implementation of the multi-purpose operation concept and the use of Frontex JO as a platform for the “EU interagency cooperation”.</p>
<p>During the JO the JDT deployed in the CARA Bari and Crotona also supported the JO EPN Hermes 2014 conducting interviews with those migrants intercepted in the operational area of the abovementioned JO and afterwards disembarked in the ports of Apulia and Calabria by the Italian authorities.</p>	
<p>Current concept of JO where operational activities of assets are based on risk analyses and tactical awareness and supported by the reporting application proved to be well adapted to the current environment where JO is carried out.</p>	<p>It is recommended to continue the current concept of JO based on four pillars: operational, risk analyses/intelligence, reporting, and supporting activities.</p>

**Commented [A11]:** The blanked out parts contain detailed information on the analytical findings and on the measures to be taken based on those findings. Their disclosure would be tantamount to releasing pieces of intelligence gathered by law enforcement officials to tackle irregular migration, as well as reveal their follow up actions. The operation would lose its element of surprise. This would weaken similar current and future operations and facilitate irregular migration. In light of the above the text is not disclosed pursuant to the exception laid down in the first indent of Article 4(1)(a) of Regulation No 1049/2001 relating to the protection of the public interest as regards public security.

### Situational Awareness

It is expected that the high migratory pressure will continue from Egypt to the coast of Italy with a large number of Syrians on board of fishing vessels. These vessels are expected to depart from Egypt towards Italy and transit across the triangle where SAR areas of Malta, Greece and Italy are established.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Although the LOs from Hellenic Coast Guard deployed within the framework of the exchange of LOs between ICC Pratica di Mare and ICC Piraeus contributed to the exchange of operational information there is still room for improvement in terms of intelligence sharing.

[REDACTED]

The use of the template to record all the information exchanged with EUROPOL, and the use of the TL Landing Report proved to be efficient for gathering information and for the transparent exchange of information.

Continue using these two templates in this JO, and consider using these templates for all of Frontex maritime JO.

### Development

The JORA briefing performed at the beginning of the JO with the assistance of the NCC and ICC reporting officers proved to be beneficiary for both Host MS and Frontex.

JORA operational briefings should be performed every time when there is a change of the reporting officers (in-person or via videoconference).

The centralized operational briefings in the Mol give for Italian authorities and Frontex an opportunity to outline a common approach for all the participants in JO except deployed crew members.

To continue with the current practice of centralized operational briefings.

Operational briefing for the crews of the assets on the spot has proved to be good practice in Frontex coordinated maritime JO.

Italy needs to nominate national trainers at the local level to carry out national briefings for the crews of the assets.

## FACT SHEETS - STATISTICS

### 1. Time schedule

Preparatory meeting with the Host MS	28.02.2014
Planning meeting with participating MSs	27.03.2014
Implementation of the joint operation	01.06 - 30.09.2014
Evaluation meeting	

### 2. Participation

MS/SAC	Authority	Human and technical resources	Deployment dates	OMNTE/Additional TE GO/SGO
Belgium	Federal Police	1 Debriefing Expert	02.06 - 04.07	GO
Denmark	National Police	1 Debriefing Expert	02.06 - 15.08	SGO
		1 Debriefing Expert	01.09 - 30.09	GO
France	DCPAF Customs	1 Debriefing Expert	28.07 - 05.09	GO
		1 FWA	01 - 18.06	OMNTE
		1 National Official	01 - 18.06	GO
Germany	Federal Police	1 Debriefing Expert	02.06 - 01.08	SGO
		1 Debriefing Expert	30.06 - 01.08	GO
Greece	Hellenic Coast Guard	1 Liaison Officer in ICC	01 - 31.07	GO
		1 Liaison Officer in ICC	01 - 30.09	GO
		1 FWA	01 - 31.08	OMNTE
		1 National Official	01 - 31.08	GO
Italy	Polizia di Stato	2 Team Leaders	01.06 - 30.09	
		2 Cultural Mediators	01.06 - 30.09	
		1 Liaison Officer in ICC Piraeus	09 - 22.06	
		1 Liaison Officer in	31.07 - 18.08	

		ICC Piraeus		
Italy	Guardia di Finanza	1 LO-TE (FWA)	01.06 - 30.09	
		1 LCC Staff	01.06 - 30.09	
2 CPB		01.06 - 30.09	OMNTE	
1 HELO		01.06 - 30.09	OMNTE	
	Guardia Costiera	2 CPB	01.06 - 30.09	OMNTE
Lithuania	State Border Guard Service	1 Debriefing Expert	30.06 - 01.08	GO
Poland	Border Guard	1 FWA	01 - 31.07	OMNTE
		1 National Official	01 - 31.07	GO
Portugal	Immigration and Borders Service	1 Debriefing Expert	01 - 30.09	GO
Romania	Border Police	1 Debriefing Expert	12.08 - 30.09	GO
Spain	National Police Force Guardia Civile	1 Debriefing Expert	02.06 - 04.07	GO
		1 Debriefing Expert	28.07 - 05.09	GO
		1 FWA	19 - 30.06	OMNTE
		1 FWA	01 - 30.09	OMNTE
		1 National Official	19 - 30.06	GO
		1 National Official	01 - 30.09	GO
Sweden	National Criminal Police	1 Debriefing Expert	28.07 - 05.09	GO
Switzerland	Swiss Border Guard Corpse	1 Debriefing Expert	01 - 30.09	GO

### 3. Financial information

JO EPN Aeneas 2014 - budget approvals		
Approved on	Changes	Amount
03/03/2014	Business as Usual Template and Budget Breakdown (BaU) - incl. EPN Aeneas 2014	2,000,000.00 €
29/10/2014	BaU Amendment no 2 (decrease of 12,238.25 EUR)	<u>1,987,761.75 €</u>

Budget overview in JO EPN Aeneas 2014 (including payments in process up to 19/11/2014)			
Total budget	1,987,761.75 €	=	100%
Committed in total for SFDs	1,951,395.16 €	=	98%
Payments (including payments in workflow)	1,022,737.81 €	=	51%
Decommitted in 2014	36,366.59 €	=	2%
Open amount (to be paid)	928,657.35 €	=	47%
Estimated budget consumption	1,900,000.00 €	=	96%

### 4. Statistics

Table 1: Total figures reported during the operational period of the JO EPN Aeneas 2014

JO EPN Aeneas 2014 1Jun - 30Sep 2014	APULIA	CALABRIA	Total
Total incidents	15	19	34
Total Migrants	629	1567	2196
Incidents AT SEA	8	7	15
Migrants AT SEA	398	1031	1429
Incidents INLAND	7	12	19
Migrants INLAND	231	536	767

Chart 1: Top 5 nationalities of irregular migrants apprehended in Apulia and Calabria during the operational period of JO EPN Aeneas 2014

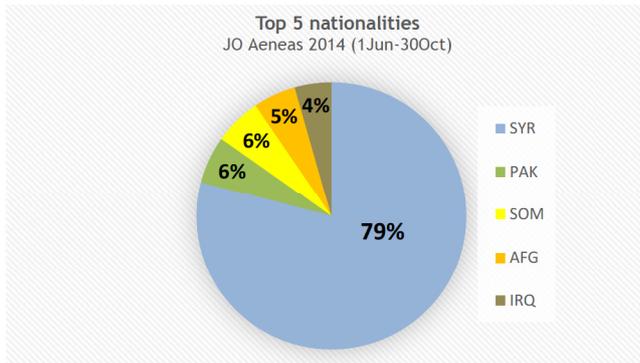


Chart 2: Total incidents reported during JO EPN Aeneas 2014 by place of interception (%)

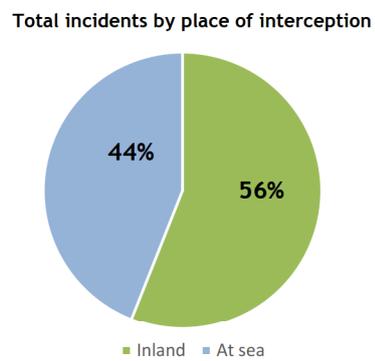


Chart 3: Initial insertion of incidents into JORA during JO EPN Aeneas 2014

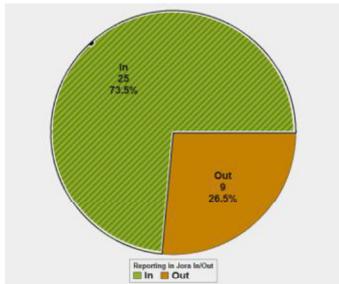


Chart 4: Intermediate validation of incidents on national level during JO EPN Aeneas 2014

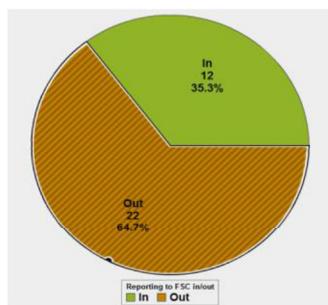
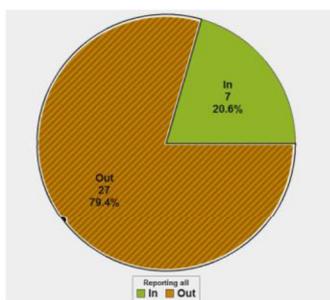


Chart 5: Summary of the entire reporting from insertion until FSC validation of JO EPN Aeneas 2014



## 5. Maps



**Commented [A12]:** The blanked out parts contain information regarding the operational area. Their disclosure would expose law enforcement officials patrolling the area and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, thus facilitating irregular migration. This would undermine the protection of the public interest as regards public security. In light of the above, the text is not disclosed pursuant to the exception laid down in the first indent of Article 4(1)(a) of Regulation No 1049/2001.

## ANNEXES:

Observation of Fundamental Rights Officer (full text)

Internal Evaluation (for HQ internal use only; not to be presented to Directorate meeting) - [as a separate document](#):

- Frontex performance ([what is considered to be as internal Frontex issues](#))
- Specific conclusions / recommendations
- Miscellaneous